

Thus to prepare new homes for man, influences of various kinds are brought into operation. Volcanic forces upheave the earth's crust; tiny insects become a building agency of extraordinary power and perseverance; seeds enveloped in mucous matter, so as to preserve their vitality for a lengthened period from the injurious influences of the sea-water and committed to the currents of the ocean, are wafted to the newly-formed, and as yet barren shores; the numerous islets of the great Pacific arrest the trade-winds, and force from them a contribution of fertilizing rain ere they pass entirely by. And then, after a time, comes the human sea drift. It was thus that the Polynesian race migrated from its original nidus amongst the large islands of the Eastern Archipelago, and spread themselves about from the Sandwich group in the northern hemisphere, to New Zealand in the southern, and from the Tonga group in the west to Easter Island in the east, until it peopled the island world.

There are formations rising out of the deep sea of heathenism far more interesting and important. They are often preceded by moral earthquakes and the fiery eruptions of human passions, causing political convulsions and alterations, distress of nations, with perplexity. These prepare the way for the work of evangelization. The agency employed is one as apparently unequal to the accomplishment of changes in the character of nations, as the coral insect to the formation of the rocks and foundations of islands which it rears. Like the sea-workers, toiling and spinning beneath the waves, it carries onward, with a minute and persevering toil, its labour of love, never contemning the minutest opportunity, contented, in the first instance, with increments so small as to be scarcely perceptible, willing that its primary results should be of such a nature as to remain unseen for a considerable period, until they have gathered strength enough to appear above the surface of society. Meanwhile, Missionary agents are contented to be despised, and patiently to endure the scoffs of an unbelieving world. The old taunt, which troubled the children of the captivity when they addressed themselves to the erection of the second temple, still meets them, and they are reproached with their unfitness for the work which they have attempted, and the feebleness of the results they have produced—"What do these feeble Jews? Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone-walls."

Yet even thus new formations have uplifted themselves above the waves, the loftier summits of a new world slowly, yet surely emerging from the deep sea of heathen ignorance and superstition. Christian churches and congregations, brought into existence in various parts of the heathen world, have assumed sufficient consistency to be designated as permanent structures. Temporary islands have been raised occasionally from the ocean's depths: they assume a tangible outline, but a few months suffice to terminate their existence, and they subside and disappear. And delusive results have, just in the same way, been raised up for a time in the midst of heathenism, like the far-famed Romish Missions in South India, Japan, and Paraguay. They counted their converts by hundreds of thousands. But they had no consistency. What