

backsliding and of deterioration, because she has listened to other voices than the voice Divine ; has given way to expediency and compromise, to worldliness, to traditions of men, and, above all, to unbelief in the living God.

But, in view of all this defection and unworthiness, how wonderful the longsuffering patience of our God ! Instead of utter destruction there is a prolongation of the day of grace. Yet here a law of the kingdom prevails which we cannot afford to overlook : the Church—any branch of the Church—is “ saved through childbearing ;” her safety, her continuance in existence as a living Church, depends upon her reproduction of churches. And observe, I do not think we are to look to mere enlargement within her existing borders, the addition of new members in the sphere of her local boundaries, although that is sure to accompany the other increase on which I lay stress—namely, the bringing to the birth of churches beyond her limits, or, to use the apostolic expression, “ in the regions beyond.” At the tribunal of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 5 : 10), when the Master reckons with His servants, may we be permitted reverently to conceive Him saying, “ Who hath begotten me these ?” and pointing to Africa and the East, the Church of England would answer that she was the mother Church ; and for some of those in India and China, American and British Presbyterians would reply ; and to those in Madagascar and Mongolia our Congregational brethren would lay claim ; and of those in Burma and on the Congo, the Baptists would own the parentage ; and for those in Polynesian islands of the sea, our Wesleyan friends ; and for those in Garenganze and Malaysia, the Plymouth Brethren ; and for those in Labrador and Little Thibet and among Jerusalem lepers, the Moravian Church. But oh ! the ominous silence of dead and buried churches—dead and buried because the law of their continued existence was set at nought ; no daughter churches after their image, in their own likeness, to “ rise up and call them blessed.” Their name and their memorial has perished with them.

A word concerning the reproduction of mission churches in the likeness of the mother Church. In whose image does any true mother love to see the reflection in the child she has borne ? her own or her husband's image ? There can be but one answer : the mother delights to see the lineaments of her husband reproduced in her child. Is it so in the Church ? Is there not effort everywhere to perpetuate the special features of the mother Church, rather than a jealous longing to see imparted the impress of the living Lord upon newly born churches in heathendom and elsewhere ? Is not precious time oftentimes wasted in the attempt to transmit creeds and catechisms and liturgies which are not essential to the growth and well being of newly gathered companies of believers ; or to repeat, under unsuitable conditions, forms and ceremonies which hinder rather than hasten progress toward full stature ; and which tend to stereotype, on far-off fields, those differences which—in some aspects at least—are a scandal and a weakness to Christianity ?