

the eyes of Israel in the wilderness ; and they should be taught to follow its indications as trustfully, loyally, obediently, and universally as the congregation of the Lord of old followed the movements of the guiding pillar.

Once more in view of the colossal magnitude of the world's evangelization let it be observed.

3. *That the great commission is a call to absolute dependence upon forces of super-human power.*

The instrument which the church is bidden to employ for the conversion of the world is the Gospel of Divine Grace. "Preach the gospel to every creature." The forces upon which she is expected to rely for success in the use of this instrument are the infinite grace and almighty power of her exalted Lord. In the accomplishment of her task she must therefore depend upon the Gospel and upon those Divine forces which centre in the Gospel. This is apparent enough from the terms of the commission itself. But it is scarcely less apparent in view of the inadequacy of mere human instrumentalities and human forces for the accomplishment of the desired object. It is quite true that much has been made in the past, that very much is made at present, of the power of education, culture, and civilization to regenerate society, to set it on the path-way of true progress, and to keep it moving onward and upward. But do not those who magnify most the power of these forces either ignore or overlook the fact that in their highest scope they never set before themselves the accomplishment of the great aim of the gospel. Education, culture, civilization do not undertake to heal the breach between man and his God ; they never attempt to effect reconciliation between the sinful creature and his offended Creator. Neither do they claim that they bear any message implying that this reconciliation has been effected. Confessedly they move upon a lower plane, and are abundantly satisfied with the attainment of a much less lofty end. But even if it were otherwise, we might well ask what have these forces wrought apart from those scenes in which they have been introduced and fostered by the gospel itself ? Where is the record of the instances in which the advocates of the gospel of education, culture, and civilization have ever done anything worth while to reach and elevate the more degraded portions of the human race ? When and

where have they been known to send forth their choicest men and women in any considerable numbers to spend their lives in efforts to elevate and save heathen and savage people ? In fact every one knows that they are well content to leave the heathen severely alone. And even if they were to undertake the task what could they effect in the line of the aims of the gospel ? For civilization is as powerless to contend with human depravity as it is to restore man to his lost relations with his God. Education and culture are unequal to the task of regenerating even a single human soul, much less of regenerating the great mass of humanity. If the church had nothing to depend upon but forces such as these her task would be absolutely hopeless. Nor would it be much more hopeful if she were expected to trust in the human instrumentality employed in the preaching of the gospel, or even in the truth of the gospel itself. For efficiency does not spring either from the number of preachers, or from their learning, or from their eloquence, or from their zeal, or from their possession of gifts or attainments of any sort. Nor does efficiency proceed even from the truth revealed in the gospel, admirably adapted as that truth is to serve the end in view. It has its origin rather in these divine forces which centre in Christianity, and are put into operation by the arm of Him who wields the sceptre of the universe in the interests of his church and people. Hence our Lord in the very act of giving this commission brings into great prominence the power with which He had been endowed as mediator to give effect to the efforts of those to whom the commission was given. "All power is given unto me in Heaven and in earth go ye therefore teach all nations &c." Hence too he bade his disciples to "tarry at Jerusalem" even after they had been commissioned "till they should be endued with power from on high."

The Divine forces which centre in the gospel must therefore be the exclusive ground of our trust and hope. The church needs above all things else the manifest presence and almighty power of God's Spirit. The presence and energy of the Holy Spirit are the exclusive source of her power, the great secret of her success. Without this she may multiply her missionaries and perfect their equipment, and yet fail to reach the results at which she is aiming. To put the statement of our