

"*But everything shall live whither the river cometh.*" Every church, with its Heaven-appointed ordinances in any distant locality, becomes a centre from which the waters of life and salvation flow. And when the blessing of God is vouchsafed, then there is a shaking among the dry bones, souls are born unto God—witnesses are raised up, both among the old and the young, for Christ—and what was once a moral desert, is now a well-watered garden of the Lord. "And he said unto me, son of man, hast thou seen this? Then he brought me, and caused me to return to the brink of the river. Now when I had returned, behold at the bank of the river were many trees on the one side and on the other,"*—such trees as have been already mentioned—"whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed."† We can conceive no higher object of Christian benevolence and real philanthropy than that of filling the land with the streams of the water of life, providing the channels in which they are appointed to flow, and praying that the Spirit of God may Himself go along with them in all His convincing and converting and sanctifying power. And were the churches in the land really alive to their duty, and putting forth their resources in that direction, and were Christian men who have been saved with an everlasting salvation, to realize their obligations to the Lord who bought them with His blood, then might we look for the fulfilment in some measure at least, of the words of Scripture, "Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders."‡ "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken, neither shall thy land be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah and thy land Beulah, for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married."§

3. The best interests of the country demand such exertions. The spirit of real patriotism is to countenance and foster whatever tends to improve and ameliorate the condition and character of the people, and to deny oneself for that object. And what can contribute so powerfully to make a loyal, contented, and happy nation, as the principles of the Gospel pervading it from one end to the other? What can so conduce to the exercise of good government—to the promotion of civil and religious liberty? What will so much help to promote a sound and religious education—to banish ignorance—to put down injustice, intemperance, and every form of social evil and vice, and thus to advance the prosperity of a nation? Let there be a God-fearing people, and upon them the blessing of God will not fail to rest. Why has Britain remained unshaken among the nations of Europe, whilst they have been convulsed by revolutions and by intestine commotions and wars? Why has she stood forth as the bulwark of liberty, the asylum of the refugee, the friend of the oppressed, and the enemy of tyranny? Why has she advanced in temporal prosperity? And why has she been honored to do so much for the extension of the Redeemer's cause, though alas! far short of what she might have done? Simply, because the river of the water of life flows throughout its borders. And so it will be with any land where the people drink of the river of life and rejoice therein.

Canada has peculiar claims upon the missionary exertions of the Protestant Churches which have taken root within its borders. Who can tell what this vast and growing Province may come to in the course of years? What a large population may be found in it? And what greatness and power it may attain to, as a nation? Look at the position which the

* Verses 3, 7.

† Verse 12.

‡ Isaiah lx. 18.

§ Isaiah, lxii, 4.