

of grammatical rules. Dictionaries had to be made out of the crude materials of these hitherto unformed tongues, requiring the greatest nicety of ear, and the utmost accuracy in reducing sound to its equivalent in words; and last, but not least, the translation of the Word of God had to be made unto these newly formed languages, and fickle and restless savages had to be taught to read the sacred page.

The amount of this kind of work that has been accomplished is almost incalculable and incredible. All this is clear gain, which does not need to be repeated in these languages, which now number probably 400, in all parts of the habitable globe. New missionaries, going to these nations and tribes, find their work in acquiring the language of the people comparatively easy—a clear gain to the church in time and money and men; making spiritual results, under God, more easy and rapid.

Compare also the present with the past in respect of the number of laborers with which we start this new era in missionary effort. Our fathers had to begin with a mere handful of laborers, untrained and inexperienced, with no knowledge of the habits and customs and modes of thought of the various peoples among whom they were to work. They had no native helpers or preachers to assist them in their work. Everything was against them. The possibility of the preaching of the Gospel saving and sanctifying such depraved natures as those of cannibals, was an untried problem. The natural way would have been, like the first Moravian missionaries, to prepare them by education and civilization for the Gospel message. But, with a sublime faith in the Divine commission to preach the Gospel to *every creature*, they went forth with no weapons of modern science or learning, but with the sword of the Spirit, and with that they fought and conquered.

Now, how different are the conditions in the mission field, with 7,000 European and American missionaries at work, half the number ordained ministers, and nearly all of them educated men and women, acquainted with something like 400 languages, or distinct dialects. But what is a greater advantage than these for aggressive work, are the native evangelists, now making little short of 30,000, and of these, nearly 3,000 are educated native pastors, placed over congregations of their countrymen. Greater than even these advantages, are the three million of converts, two-thirds of whom are either active or passive witnesses for Christ in the midst of their heathen countrymen—lights, all the more conspicuous from the darkness which surrounds them.

Take in connection with these advantages in the mission fields of the world, the vast increase in the number and resources of missionary societies at home, with the augmented means, their more complete organization, their knowledge and experience of the methods