

HOW THE GOSPEL IS SPREAD.

The Gospel Missionary.

WHEN the Society has accomplished its mission in any particular field—that is, when the Gospel has been “propagated,” and the Church can stand alone—it withdraws from that field and turns to another where the same work requires to be done. In this way the Society has been the instrument, in God’s hands, of planting and building up, in all parts of the world, Churches which are not only self-supporting, but are also taking their part in the evangelization of the world. The greatest of these branches is the American Church, which now has seventy-nine bishoprics, four being in foreign countries—West Africa, China, Japan, and Haiti. But besides the heathen in foreign countries, the American Church finds much to do among the heathen within its own borders. How this work is being done among the Indians of Dakota is thus shown in the *Spirit of Missions* for January last:—

A REMARKABLE GATHERING.

The prevailing skepticism as to the utility of Christian missions, especially among the Indian tribes of the far West, cannot but be silenced as it contemplates the nature and character of that gathering of more than 3,000 Indians in attendance upon the twenty-fifth annual convocation of the Church in South Dakota, held last autumn, on the Rosebud reservation. There, drawn together by the ties of Christian love and fellowship, were Indians not only from the Rosebud and Pine Ridge agencies, but also from Standing Rock, near the North Dakota line, Cheyenne River, Santee, Yankton, Sisseton, Lower Brulé, Flandreau, and Crow Creek—a gathering in actual numbers of 2,586 Indians, representing tribes formerly in hostile relations with each other, now sitting together around one common board and participating in a great feast that had been prepared by Christian hands, before the convocation opened. Such a scene was doubtless most picturesque and phenomenal, and one that was an object-lesson of the fruitful result of Christian missions.

A few years ago the Rosebud reservation was a desolate prairie, inhabited by this unfortunate people, roaming about in comparative idleness, sunk in vice and every kind of wickedness, illiterate, savage, having no ambition to rise above the level of the brute beasts, and living like them in squalid indifference. How changed is the scene to-day! Scattered over that prairie waste of a few years ago are chapels and schools and seventy separate congregations. Four substantial boarding-school houses have been erected, together with forty-eight neat churches and thirty-four small but comfortable mission-houses. Out of the Sioux tribe have been gathered into the Church 5,000 Indians, who have been confirmed since the mission work was begun, and from among them twelve, especially trained and educated, have been ordained and sent forth to preach and administer the Sacraments.

With the evidence of these profound and radical changes before us, who can predict the outcome of another twenty-five years of missionary work among these people? . . .

The news from Dakota will cheer the hearts of those who are laboring in other parts of the Mission-field. We trust that it will also help

to stir up many Christians to do their *duty* in supporting Foreign Missions. There are many places where evangelists are needed quite as much as they are, or were, in Dakota. And here it is only just to remember that the claims of the S.P.G. are stronger than those of any other Missionary Society, because it has done, and is doing, more than any other Society to carry out our Lord’s last command “*Go ye into all the world.*” We say this, not in a spirit of boasting, or with any idea of ignoring the good work of other Societies, but as a simple fact which is not sufficiently known or recognized *at home*.

For instance, with the single exception of the Falkland Islands, the Society’s field of labor has embraced every one of our Colonies, as well as India, and, outside the British Empire, has extended to Central America, Borneo, China, Manchuria, Corea, Japan, the Hawaiian Islands, Melanesia, Madagascar; and, on the African Continent, to West Africa, the Orange Free State, the Transvaal, Swaziland, Delagoa Bay, Gazaland, and Tongaland, or Maputaland; also to British subjects on the Continent of Europe. No wonder, then, that of the ninety-three Colonial and Missionary Bishoprics of the English Church, *all but fourteen contain Missions planted by the Society.*

Then we have the testimony of the great American Church (in the United States), which, at the close of the first century of its existence as a National Church, formerly acknowledged “*with deep and unfeigned gratitude that whatever the Church has been in the past, is now, or will be in the future, is largely due, under God, to the long-continued nursing care and protection of the Venerable Society.*”

“Not unto us, O Lord, but unto Thy Name give the praise.”

We must not, however, let our thankfulness for what has been done cause us to forget that “there remaineth yet much land to be possessed” for our Lord and Master.

“The earth, O Lord, is one wide field
Of all Thy chosen seed;
The crop prepared its fruit to yield,
The laborers few indeed.

We therefore come before Thee now,
With fasting and with prayer,
Beseeching of the love that Thou
Wouldst send more laborers there.

Not for our land alone we pray—
Though that above the rest;
The realms and islands far away,
O let them all be blest.”

Forty-four years ago there was not a single Karen Christian in the mountains of Toungoo. To-day there are over 21,000. Of these, 5,000 are claimed by the S.P.G.