

the life to come there is no light, no comfort, and no hope. Is it possible that any Christian can know God and love Jesus Christ, and not long to give the knowledge of Him to those, who like himself are sinners, but who unlike him have known no Saviour from sin?

Now, it is a deep mystery (we cannot clear it up, but we cannot deny its existence), it is a deep mystery, that millions upon millions of our fellow-men have none of that knowledge, which we know to be the life of our souls. We need not seek to fathom all the counsels of the Almighty. If we seek, we must fail. But concerning them, at least, we read in Scripture that they are now sitting "in darkness, and in the shadow of death." And concerning them we read in the world's history, that their whole life here is as it were a living death. Do not we ourselves feel that our own being would be utterly insupportable, if we had no God to trust in, and no Saviour in whom to hope? Now this is, and must be their estate. The heathen and the ignorant of God must needs be hopeless. He may shut his eyes upon the future; but he can never look forward to it but with despondency.

And we need not go far to find multitudes whom this description suits. There are, no doubt, heathens in China and Central Asia, amid the burning sands of Africa, and in the islands of the southern seas. But we can find millions and hundred of millions of our own fellow-subjects, who know no more of truth and see no more the light of life, than the naked savage who sells his offspring to the slaver, or who eats his enemy after he has slain him.

I am asked to-day to bring before your memories two great societies for spreading the truth of Christ. One works chiefly in our vast Colonial empire, amid our brethren who have gone out thither, and among the heathen whom they have found and conquered there. The other works both at home and abroad, circulating the Word of God, teaching the doctrine of the faith, aiding to educate the young, and striving to strengthen the hands of the Church.

The work of the *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel* is this. England's empire reaches to India with its more than 100,000,000 souls, heathens and outcast—to a portion of America, equal in geographical extent to the whole of Europe—to Australia and New Zealand, a vast continent with its islands in the south, destined perhaps one day to be what Europe is now—to the South of Africa, to the borders of China—to islands innumerable. Here are our own brethren, gone out from our own homes to seek for livelihood or to amass wealth; gone out, too often, to forget God, to buy and to sell and to labour and to die. Children have gone from us in their infancy, children just learning to lisp the name of Jesus, who may not find there one hand to guide them in his ways, or one tongue even to tell that he died. Fathers and mothers and young men and women have gone out, who have sat with us in this house, joined with us in our prayers, and offered up with us the praises of our God; who now may have no church to go to, who may be far off from the sounds of Sabbath bells, and may be fast forgetting that they once had learned to pray. And near them and all round them there are