

the characteristic of the relation between whose attributes is perfect proportion, and the law of whose being is that He cannot contradict or deny himself; and also because it is the expression of the all-embracing purpose of Him who is "the truth," and whose most comprehensive as well as highest manifestation of His self, that in His Son as our Saviour, was in order that "He might bear witness unto the truth." It is, moreover, the gem of relative beauty because of its adaptation to its purpose to glorify God. Where else can adaptation so perfect be discerned? The heavens declare God's glory. The seasons, in their regular recurrence, chant His praise. What, however, can honor Him so directly and conspicuously as good deeds, as right words, as a holy life, as a Christ-like character? The universe is the evidence of God's power, the revelation of His wisdom, the demonstration of His presence; but holiness is the reproduction of Himself. In proportion as we become holy does God not merely support and guide us, but act by us, think through us, and live in us. Nothing else, then, could glorify Him as holiness must. Other things may show us what God does; this cannot but show us what He is. In perfect holiness, therefore, would be the perfection of adaptation. No fitness can equal perfect fitness to its infinite end.

Now missions are the acme of "the beauty of holiness." Their one aim is that "all should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth," and this is the wish of God. The life which they require is to leave home and kindred "to seek and to save that which was lost," and this was the life of the Son of God. Their result will be "a great multitude," which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, . . . who shall have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb;" and it will be at the sight of these, the fruit of missions, that from the whole angelic host will burst the magnificent ascription: "Amen. Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might be unto our God forever and ever. Amen." "How beautiful, then, must be the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" No other beauty is so Godlike; no other fitness equals its adaptation to glorify Him.

Do we recognize as we should the beauty of foreign missions? We believe them to be necessary. We know that Christ instituted them and charged His Church to prosecute them. We feel it to be our duty to do so. We wish to do so for our Saviour's sake. And all this is as it should be. No motive is so reliable as the sense of duty, and none is so high and noble as love for Christ. But would it not be helpful if we went to our work also with something of the artist's spirit? His appreciation of the beautiful throws a halo around all his toil. Life is to him a long sweet song, because he recognizes how much of beauty there is in it. This might be true of Christian service. In the strictest and highest sense is the missionary work toward which all really Christian service tends beautiful. Shall we not, then, so cultivate our taste that we may perceive "how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things"?