

church at Calcutta, and such service as there was was held in a private house; when the only recognition of Sunday was the hoisting of a flag; when one of the oldest and best inhabitants of the city could say that he was not sure that he could produce ten righteous men there, but thought he could produce five; when outside the capital there was no assembly for religious worship, nor any evidence that Englishmen had ever a religious instinct; when natives could speak of Christianity as a religion of the devil.<sup>1</sup> These days are gone—they are perhaps forgotten—yet they may well be recalled if their sorrowful memory may quicken the spirit of thankfulness for the present, or may at all deepen the conviction that the debt England owes to India is incalculably great, that it is all the greater from the unfaithfulness of the past, that it should be paid without stint, without hesitation, without delay.

Little also may be said of Persia,<sup>2</sup> where good work is being done, or of JAPAN, for the record of the year is uneventful, and the progress of Christianity seems to pause before the absorption of the people in their new political passions and cares. But there is one fact which illuminates the story with a light of its own, a light sufficient indeed to illuminate many a year of otherwise discouraging labours: it is the history and the yearly record of the Scripture Union,—that Union which already numbers 13,000 members with their 300 local secretaries; which has already done some of the deepest and happiest work of the century; which is planning and attempting more; of which the personal memories are among the most beautiful and the most touching of those of any Christian community.

Already we have surveyed some of the aspects of work carried on in half a world, but so wide is the Society's field, that there yet remains another hemisphere—continents yet unvisited, great movements to which no allusion has been made. Nor can anything beyond an allusion be made to them now, or in pages which do not so much summarise the larger Report as form, in relation to it, a kind of prelude outline. But in that fuller History it will be seen that the first lady colporteur sent out by the Society has found her work among the thirty millions of MALAYSIA,<sup>3</sup> that to the same great field have gone four young Englishmen to join their countrymen there, and to continue the work they have so worthily and successfully begun: that in the WEST INDIES and in CENTRAL AMERICA the Society's operations are being more fully organised and developed; that the political revolutions in the Southern Republics, in CHILI and PERU, in the ARGENTINE, have not

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Flemming Stevenson's *Dawn of the Modern Mission*, p. 159.

<sup>2</sup> The total circulation in Persia was 4,654 copies.

<sup>3</sup> Total circulation for the year in the MALAYSIAN Agency—Centre at Singapore and including Java, Borneo, Sumatra, and other Islands, 36,180 (previous year, 33,483): of this by colportage, 32,355 (previous year, 35,788).

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Testaments, 58,