

face of the most complex difficulties, is it not reasonable to expect, if the Lord will, an immense success, when the laborious initial work has been accomplished, and the word of the Lord begins to have "free course?" In all estimates of modern missions, one should remember how modern they are, and not wonder that the results are limited, for the movement is little more than begun.

2. Compare them in respect of *advantages for the prosecution of the Lord's work*. Here the modern missions have a marked superiority.

(1) The lands of the Heathen and Mohammedan nations are now known and accessible. In primitive times, and in the middle ages, Missionaries made their way into strange unexplored countries, and addressed themselves to nations and tribes, of whose history and numbers and mental and moral habits nothing whatever was known. But the world is now traversed in all directions by intelligent travellers—the great facts of geography and ethnography are ascertained—the census of the world's population is with tolerable accuracy known. Thus the Church is enabled to manage her missionary enterprise with a comprehensive regard to the wants and claims of the various countries and populations of the globe, and the missionary servants of the Church go forth with a clear understanding of the circumstances in which they are likely to be placed.

(2) The principles of religious liberty have made great progress. Former missionary epochs have been in days when no idea of freedom of conscience seems to have been received among men, and opposition and persecution were esteemed necessary features of religious zeal. In such a state of the public mind, the missionaries of the cross of Christ must always have risked liberty and life, and often been much hindered in their work. It is too true, that the Popish, Mohammedan and Pagan systems are still of an intolerant spirit; they cannot be otherwise; but it is also true, that liberty of conscience and of worship is much more generally conceded now than in earlier periods; and, in the Providence of God, the nations that are disposed to refuse religious freedom have become so dependent on the more powerful and enlightened Christian countries, that Missionaries of prudence are in little danger any where of suffering those extremities of torture and death which the ambassadors for Christ in early times were often called to endure.

(3) The printed Bible now goes with the living Missionary—giving to the modern movement an immense superiority over the primitive and the mediæval, and affording an assurance of the thoroughness and permanence of the work. The cause of God, in the Protestant missions of the present century, is built on that sure foundation, the word of God which "endures for ever."

What is lacking yet? Millions of printed Bibles in many tongues—preachers—money—influence—open doors of usefulness—the Church has in an unexampled degree. What is now needed, but an increase of missionary zeal, prompting to larger gifts and more fervent and continual prayer?

O'er the realms of pagan darkness,
 Let the eye of pity gaze;
 See the kindreds of the people,
 Lost in sin's bewildering maze:
 Darkness brooding
 On the face of all the earth.

Light of them that sit in darkness!
 Rise and shine, thy blessings bring:
 Light to lighten all the Gentiles!
 Rise with healing in thy wing:
 To thy brightness
 Let all kings and nations come.