

we. If they need our forbearance, we too have been in want of theirs. Let every missionary cultivate a generous spirit. Of all men, he has most occasion for it. He is an isolated being; he lives in his own world; he is surrounded by his own converts; he ministers in his own Church. Of all men, let him beware of selfishness—the selfishness of the Hebrew prophet—"I only am left alone, and the worshippers of Baal are many." Nothing, with the grace of God, will more conduce to restrain such feelings than the habit of constant sympathy with missionaries of other churches.

3. And this sympathy must be *diffusive*. It is not difficult to fix upon some one object, or class of objects, and make them the subject of our sympathies. The peculiar cast of our own minds, or the peculiarity of our circumstances, will lead us to this extent. But the sympathy which the Gospel cherishes knows no other boundaries than those of the Church itself—in some respects, indeed, reaching far beyond them. But we are speaking of sympathy with *the brethren*: this must extend to all the brethren, or it fails of its office as a Christian principle. "ALL the saints"—"all that are in Christ Jesus"—all those that call upon the name of Christ, their Lord and ours,—these, according to the Apostolic precept and example are to share our love. It is of great importance that our missionaries, and especially our young men designed for missionary work, should imbibe this principle. There is, in many minds, perhaps in all, a disposition, the result of early prejudice or of natural infirmity, or of the want of Christian discipline, to look with dislike, to use no stronger word, upon some portion of Christ's family. This dislike must be borne down. The question is a very broad one; the answer to which determines, whether or not these men should have my Christian sympathies: it is not this; can I heartily approve of all their principles, or of all their conduct?—It is simply this, are they Christ's? Here amongst the heathen do they preach the Gospel which He sealed with His blood; or is it another Gospel, which is not another? When the question is, Whether a missionary shall receive within the circle of his spiritual affections some other labourer of a different judgment in matters of Church polity, the rule is clear, and we cannot better express it than in the terse words of Robert Hall: "He that is good enough for Christ, is good enough for me."

III. But now we come to our *third* point for consideration,—that of PRACTICAL CO-OPERATION in the entire work as conducted by the different societies. Christian sympathy is not an idle sentiment; it prompts us to the work of faith and to the labour of love. How then, assuming that we possess Christian love towards each other, can we give practical utterance to our affections? In a word, when and how can we co-operate?

Let it be premised that we speak of co-operation such as may, and, we think, should exist amongst men who adhere, nay, perhaps rigidly adhere, to their several notions of Church government. We assume that great differences exist as to which is the right model of Church government; and that we shall still adhere each to his own form, and continue faithful to his own section of the Catholic Church. A brighter day may sometime dawn; but at present our humble task is not to anticipate the future, but to cultivate the opportunities that lie within our reach.

First, then, to begin at home; why should we not have an annual conference of the friends, the committees and officers of all our Evangelical missionary societies? Why should they not assemble once a year at least, and under the direction of a president, to be chosen by themselves, proceed calmly to deli-

berate on their position, their prospects, their difficulties; frankly to avow their mistakes, and cordially to encourage each other? The advantages of such a meeting, were its members actuated by a manly and Christian spirit, would surely be incalculable. Our little jealousies would cease beneath its influence. The low intrigues, the party spirit, the unfounded jealousy, the suspicion and the coldness which isolate our several committees would surely melt; Ephraim and Judah would neither vex nor envy one another. As far as the imperfect condition of the Church allows, we should be what the Church was once—though not, alas! in recent times—when "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul."

It is in vain that we impress upon our missionaries the duty of a catholic spirit and of co-operation with other Churches, unless the example be set at home. Nor are the difficulties, I conceive, insurmountable. Some years ago a "New Model of Protestant Missions" was proposed by a writer whose name was held in great esteem amongst Evangelical Christians. His plan was, I believe, to sink all our peculiarities,—all that distinguishes one section of the Church from another,—and carry out the Gospel to the heathen without any particular Church order or form of government. I do not revive this idea. The plan was impracticable. Yet Churchmen and Dissenters have met ere this to commend a missionary bishop to the grace of God for the work before him. Few of those who were present will forget the day, though more than twenty years have passed since then, when the Bishop of Calcutta, before he set out for India, was thus commended to the tender care of the Great Shepherd, by services in which the venerable Clayton and the venerable Simeon each took a part, and when prayer and praise were offered by brethren of different Churches. In this there was the germ of a missionary conference such as I propose. Something of the kind, I am aware, exists; but I venture to urge a more public formal acknowledgment of the great duty of united conference among the committees of our different societies.

Turning our attention now to the state of things abroad, I would suggest, that since the circumstances of our brethren engaged in the missionary field are so various, no precise plan of action can be proposed. In some places, as in the great cities of our Indian Empire, there may be several missionaries of different denominations living near each other. More frequently the missionary is a lonely labourer. He must travel far to meet with one who is engaged in the same holy calling. Practical co-operation may be in such cases quite impossible. On the whole, then, it is *rather in the cultivation of the catholic spirit*, than by any precise mode of action, that our friends abroad must exhibit their sympathy with other portions of the Church of Christ. Still something may be done where distance does not render it impracticable; there might be conferences on missionary work, where there should be a free exchange of thought as among brethren, and members of one family. They might communicate their plans, explain, as far as they are acquainted with them, the causes of their failures, and invite their brethren, though of other denominations, to share their triumphs—triumphs which, if worth the name, are not those of a sect or a denomination, but of the whole Church of the living God. If a Jew have been led to see his Messiah in the man, Christ Jesus; if a Mahomedan have abandoned his visionary of a carnal paradise, and been transformed by the renewing of his mind; if a heathen have forsaken his dumb idols to serve the living and true God, these are no sectarian triumphs. The shout of victory is heard in that distant land where there is