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### Lessons from Mission fields.

“THE proper study of mankind is man.”

May we not adapt and appropriate the poet's clever phrase to the study of the races of mankind, as brought under our review by missionaries? It is admitted that missionary enterprise has done more to advance our knowledge of mankind than all other agencies. There is no race so lonely, isolated and despicable as to be beyond the limits of missionary effort. Perils, however serious, will not prevent their explorations. The tyrant's power, however recklessly exercised, ceases sooner or later to prove an effectual barrier. Our knowledge of the Chinese, the Japanese, and the Koreans, has been vastly extended by missionaries. In fact, we owe to them our most accurate information regarding these peoples. Commerce has done much. Missions have done vastly more. Where the merchant stands trembling at the gate, the missionary boldly enters.

Missionary societies have reduced hundreds of languages to writing that had never before been written, and have placed God's Word and other books in the hands of people who had known nothing of letters. This is itself an inestimable service to civilization. Our own Church has had to do with

thus civilizing and enriching five or six different languages. How much more we may be called upon to do in this line no one can tell,—for there are still numerous dialects in which there is no literature, and which are waiting to be made vehicles of God's revelation. When the Bible is printed in the language of a tribe or race, and when the people are able to read it, we may at once conclude that law and order prevail; that cannibalism has ceased; that there is comparative safety for life and property. We may even infer that there are openings for lawful commerce among such a people.

Missionaries have explored the recesses of Central Africa, penetrating beyond the reach of the most enterprising explorers and traders. It has been the same in Borneo, and in many another region. More heroism, more of the martyr spirit, is exhibited by these messengers of the Gospel than by any other class of people, more even than by the devotees of science. When, therefore, we send forth men with the Word of God, and able to introduce it to tribes and races that know nothing about it, we are surely doing a good work for time and for eternity. We are working in the line of the highest civilization, and what is still more, we become fellow-workers with God in the extension of that “Kingdom which cannot be moved.”