

cussed. Different views will present themselves. Substantially holding the same fundamental truths, we have unhappily broken up into distinct sections—not always recognising the brotherhood of Christ in those who differ from us. We have Calvinistic and Arminian preachers. We have theories of prophecy accepted by one, and opposed by another; and all this, to superficial, still more to prejudiced observers, seems to interfere with our unity of aim, and of affection too. Now from all these difficulties the missionary work is free. It is the plainest declaration of the simplest truths;—the milk for babes—for I hold that as the heathen congregations arrive "at a full age in Christ," the missionaries' work ceases. They should now become native Churches dependent upon a native ministry. Our work amongst them is that of laying the foundation rather than of building thereupon. Again, the unity of aim in Christian missions is not, to any great extent, affected by that wretched proselyting spirit which exists so much at home. The field is wide; the stations are remote from one another; the missionary's hands are full,—and his heart, too, if he is a man of God. He sees the heathen steeped in sin, plunging headlong into everlasting death! It needs but little of the spirit of his Master to impress him with this deep conviction,—that the form under which the Gospel shall be embraced is a matter of unutterable insignificance, compared with the fact that a heathen is brought out from the strongholds of Satan and made free in Christ. At home the difference between a true Christian and another man is often the difference between morality and spirituality; between a conduct already decorous and a heart now renewed unto holiness. In heathen lands it is very different; there the impressions of sin are hideous! There the unconverted man lives in all the abominations of Satan's worship. Now the soul of this man is the prize for which the missionary contends. Shall he let it go while he invades some neighbouring fold to entice the converted Wesleyan to the Independent camp, or the Presbyterian convert to the Church of England? What would be gained to the cause of Christ by such a triumph? What impression would it make upon the kingdom of darkness? What effect would it produce upon the native Christians—happily still ignorant, for the most part, of the cause of these divisions, of their nature, nay, of their very name? Too long has it been the custom of professing Christians at home thus to bite and devour one another; and, verily, we have had our reward; we have been consumed one of another, while the world has stood by in wonder or in scorn. Ever since the Reformation our divisions have been our bane. Missionaries have many trials but they and their flocks have many peculiar blessings; and amongst them not the least is this, that the proselyting spirit is almost unknown.

In short, God has mercifully granted an opportunity to the world, in these last ages, of seeing in missionary churches that sectarianism is not inseparable from Christianity. These distant pastures have not yet produced the rank weeds of this controversy; they flourish fair and green amidst the deserts that surround them. As yet the simple truths of the Gospel are sufficient for them, and they live thereby. No old wounds rankle there where everything is fresh. The pages of Church history they can read with profit and yet turn over without a blush. The fathers of these converts from the heathen shared in no persecution, such as Christians have inflicted on their brethren, and they have suffered no afflictions such as brethren have received at the hands of Christian Churches. The missionary field, then, invites a grand experiment. It is this; the recovery of the

true catholic spirit so long neglected or denied. There is in all Evangelical missions an essential unity of aim; why should there not be enlarged mutual sympathy? The object in every case is the same; the means in every case, though dissimilar perhaps, are not discordant; the agents are members of the same mystical body, drawing all their powers from one living Head. Does not this impose the obligation of mutual sympathy? This is the second point to which I am conducted by the terms of the proposition in my hand.

II. THE SYMPATHY OF WHICH WE SPEAK ought, then, I conceive, to be *active, constant, and diffusive*. 1. It must be active. Love is a salient principle. It seeks for opportunities; it delights in exercise. A missionary of the right spirit will rejoice with no measured, hesitating joy, in the success which attends the labours of his brethren of another name. He will never grudge the inroads which another makes upon Satan's kingdom. The field is the world. There is ample scope for all God's labourers, were they increased one hundredfold. It is pitiful to observe sometimes the too visible reluctance with which Christians admit the successes, even amongst heathens, of Christians of another name. How silent when they rejoice! How ready to hint disapprobation—to magnify their faults—to dwell with something not far removed from satisfaction on their failures! Where is the mind of Christ in all this? And where the mind of the first and greatest of all missionaries, who could and did rejoice if Christ was preached, though it were only out of strife and contention? The spirit we must cherish is that of *active sympathy*. The successes of those who differ from us are not barely to be recognised; they are not to be received with a cold acknowledgment of their truth. They are either the triumphs of the Gospel, or they are a delusion; and if a delusion, then undoubtedly a triumph of the Devil's! If we are not prepared to place them in the latter class, we must admit their title to the former. They are victories won for Christ; they are His triumphs, and, if His, then ours—ours—for we are Christ's. The want of active sympathy in the successes of other sections of the Church is, to my mind, whenever it is found a conclusive evidence of sectarian spirit.

2. Again, this sympathy should be *constant*. We should ever regard with the kindest interest the toilsome, though unpretending labours of all who work in Christ's vineyard. There are occasions,—bursts of disaster or of triumph,—which will awaken the most listless and provoke the sympathies, or the congratulations, of the most indifferent, but true Christian sympathy runs in a deeper channel. Perhaps we have all of us felt that the missionaries of that particular Society with which we connect ourselves in more direct service, never need our sympathies so much as when they toil and toil, month after month, year after year, with no visible success. We feel that the world, nay, what is far worse, we feel that the Church, is ready to blame them for faults which are none of theirs; for sloth, for needless expenditure, for want of wisdom, aye, and for want of grace. We have to protect such men from the impatience of their own friends, and still more from the reproaches and disparaging surmises of the world without.

Now we at home should learn, and we should invite our missionaries abroad,—to extend this sympathy,—these charitable constructions, this determined hoping against hope,—beyond the narrow confines of our own communion. We must not have one measure for ourselves and another for our brethren. If they have made their mistakes, so have