

Church of the middle ages—Roman in form and name—gave a new national life by means of missionaries and monasteries and such agencies to Germany, Scandinavia and Britain; and the present state of modern society is the result of the forces then set a-going. Great institutions have sprung from small seedlings. And now Asia is given to us that it may be regenerated, and India is the heart of Asia, and its doors are thrown wide open to us. But how little are we with our great means doing in comparison with the men of former days with their small means. Pence are given instead of pounds; nothing instead of pence; tracts instead of missionaries; talk instead of prayers. And yet, though there is much indifference, we have no cause for discouragement. Work for India is on the increase. Missionary enterprises in that direction are taking hold of the public mind more and more. The Church of Scotland has acted wisely in putting Dr. Norman McLeod at the head of her India mission, for his large heart and practical intellect will at once stir up interest on the subject throughout the land, and utilize all the means placed at his disposal. If he continues to act as Convener for the next ten years and to labour as he has since his appointment, the India mission of our Church will become an immense scheme, perhaps the most important of the Church. The Free Church of Scotland, however, deserves greater praise for what she is doing in India than perhaps any other Church. She raises more than £12,000 sterling per annum for her India mission, and she has lately shown her determination to do still more by recalling Dr. Luff from Calcutta, and making him Convener of her Mission. If any man living can raise money, or excite enthusiasm for India, it is Dr. Duff. And he, too, knows well where the money is most wanted, what kind of labourers and institutions to encourage, and what success may reasonably be expected. In a speech he delivered lately to the Commission of the Free Assembly, he told of the small beginnings of the India mission of the Church of Scotland, and of the small expectations of its founders, as compared with the present operations, and also warned them against resting on their oars, and congratulating themselves that they were doing well enough. At first it seemed that the General Assembly ordered only an occasional collection, a great part of which was usually put to interest, to serve as a kind of back-bone to the Scheme. They were very tender of the purses of the people, and therefore in enjoining the collection, added, "not to be repeated." At length Dr. Duff states that Dr. Inglis, the founder of the mission, "by his personal influence, succeeded in getting the Presbytery of, Edinburgh to agree to make an annual collection. The Presbyterian congregations in London agreed to come forward and give support; and then he wrote out to India in high glee something to this effect, that between the interest of this enormous capital fund, amounting to little more than £4,000, the annual collection by the Presbytery of Edinburgh, the support to be received from London, and occasional collections and contributions from individuals, he thought he might possibly contemplate raising altogether something like £1,200 a year. By that time—having millions of idolators before one's eyes and the idolatrous sounds ringing everlastingly in one's ears, this rather alarmed, startled, and staggered one by its insignificance; and accordingly writhing from the impulse of the moment this was said—"Oh, don't fix a maximum at all; on the contrary, only fix a minimum, and make that minimum £10,000, and not £1,200 as a maximum; and go on adding to it indefinitely, for the work is indefinitely large." But the remark was thought so strange, so wild, and so extravagant, that a member of the committee of those days, as I saw afterwards on my return from India, had written on the margin—"What, is the man mad? Has the Indian sun turned his head?" (Laughter.) No; the man was not mad, nor had the Indian sun turned his head; but his mind had been opened up of necessity to see things in a different light. And praised be God, for many years this minimum of £10,000 had been more than exceeded by the established and disrupted Church of Scotland. And now, let there be no maximum fixed, for we must go onwards and onwards. From this point, with your permission, allow me to state emphatically, that there is a circumstance that is often forgotten. A mission to the heathen, from its very nature, is, and ought to be, something continually spreading and expanding, or else it must decline and die. It is like the growth of a tree. It has been compared to the growth of a family, and I think that analogy a very good one. Since my return I have found in different quarters various views and feelings expressed with regard to the prospects of missions. I have heard such expressions as 'Have there not been failures?' My answer is, 'Yes, so far as individuals are concerned, and so far as particular localities and particular projects are concerned. There have been failures in these, but there have been no failures with regard to the grand work of God at large; on the contrary, there has been progress and advancement.' Then it has been said—"Has there not in certain parts of the field been retrogression?" I answer, "What if there has? It is incident to advancement in every great enterprise, civil or sacred, that there should be occasional and temporary retrogression." In respect to our missions, it is like the progress of the tide, which goes up to a certain mark, but retires again only to flow up to a greater distance. I believe this is the truth with regard to missions, if a candid view were taken of them, over the