

the proudest earthly titles have felt themselves ennobled by becoming Christian, while multitudes of the humbler have been benefitted, in body, mind, and estate, by the elevating power of that gospel, to which they have listened in the parish churches, or the healthful influence exercised over them by the ministers of their respective communions.

What Britain owes to Dissenters cannot be estimated. After all that had been done by the Establishments, much, very much remained to be done. For reasons that need not now be explained, large portions of the population appeared to be beyond their reach, and consequently derived no appreciable benefit from them. As long as men will think differently, various organizations are indispensable to the efficient promotion of Christianity, and could we, with a large-hearted charity, but agree to differ, a much greater amount of good would be accomplished. There is room for each, there is work for all. While the upper and lower orders are largely under the influence of the Establishments, to the Non conforming denominations the spiritual interests of the middle classes have been chiefly entrusted. And well and faithfully have they performed the duty, for, from the mechanical, manufacturing, and mercantile classes have come some of the brightest lights in literature, the greatest apostles in science, the most distinguished masters in art, and the most profound philosophers. And better still, many a moral desert, both at home and abroad, has become a fruitful field, and made to rejoice and blossom as the rose. Their works praise them, their power is felt in every department, they have a strong hold of the national heart, and they have built for themselves a memorial of enduring greatness.

If a tree is known by its fruits, and its character determined accordingly, we can best estimate the worth of our national piety, by what it has done, or attempted to do, in promoting the interests of the kingdom of God. To speak of the various agencies that have originated in the Christian benevolence of our people for the mental, moral, and religious improvement of mankind, would be a pleasing, but practically an endless task. Their name is legion, their labour love, and their reward the gratitude of man and the blessing of God. But from the multitude we select two as sufficient for our present purpose—her Bible and Missionary Societies.

For a long time, Britain has been regarded as the stronghold of Protestant Christianity, and the great champion of the Word of God. Believing the Bible to be the keystone of all national greatness and true civilization—that where it has been suppressed, religion has degenerated into priestcraft, superstition has been rife, and moral and intellectual