

concealed in a sepulchre; when the Bible was withheld systematically from the common people, when the Church was living by works and not by faith—and very poor works at that—it is a question whether it was expedient that there should be much activity with regard to foreign missions. Waters could rise no higher in their course than the spring at their source, and it could not be expected that the average of life diffused abroad would be higher than the average of life concentrated at home. Therefore God withheld the Church from large activities in foreign missions till He had first given to her the faith of the Reformation by Luther in Germany, Calvin in Switzerland, John De Wycliffe and John Bunyan in England, John Knox in Scotland, and Savonarola in Italy. The Church has also now education in missions and consecration in missions, and possesses to-day her greatest numerical strength. The Church has also immense financial resources. Then, also, the Church has great political supremacy, which may be an immense advantage in the world's evangelization. Should the British Empire and the United States of America be absolutely united in their intentions to spread the Gospel to the ends of the earth, all the combined forces of papal and Mohammedan and pagan people could not stand against the impact. These two nations could dictate terms to the rest of the world, and they represent the great Protestant peoples of the whole earth. There is no doubt about it that Christian and Protestant nations hold the sceptre of the world to-day!

There are three great military maxims which are strangely illustrated in the history of missions. The first is, "Seize the great centres of the enemy." The second is, "Hold the great outposts of the enemy." And the third is, "Keep open lines of communication between the centres and the outposts." See how God, the great General-in-Chief of the ages, has been leading on His army to follow out those three great military maxims. See how He has enabled the Church to seize the great centres. India, for instance, the centre of all Oriental paganism, round which the entire Continent of Asia might revolve, if set in revolution—India is the possession of the British Queen. Then, see how the outposts are being taken—Australia, the South Seas, Japan, the islands of the sea, and now Africa—girdled, zoned, penetrated by missionary effort. Then look at the open lines of communication between the centres and the outposts, swift and undisputed passage from the Thames to Calcutta, the Ganges, and the Indus, to Australia and to Japan. Let us be sure to keep open lines of communication between the centres of supply and the materials at the outposts of the earth. And so, may the day speedily come when the fitness and fulness of time, having been improved by the Church of God, the dispensation of the fulness of reasons shall come when all things shall be headed-up into Christ, the Apex of the Pyramid, the Dome, the Capstone, and the Crown of the Ages!