

course, in mission work as in everything else, those who are exceptionally bright or successful will make a name, but it comes unsought. We should blame a young seminary graduate if he entered upon ministerial and pastoral work with the strong and controlling idea of pushing his way as rapidly as possible to the pulpit of the largest or wealthiest or most influential church in the country. If such an idea is blamable at home, how much more so is it in the mission field, where men are bound together so firmly that such ideas are sure to be soon discovered, and are almost sure to become a rock of offense.

These few cautions, while implying some of the unpleasant and undesirable features of missionary life, and so taking away, perhaps, a little of that romantic feeling which is sure to arise in the mind of the young man or woman who is just starting for his or her foreign field, are yet necessary as enabling one to forearm against foreseen dangers. May the men and women whom God sends into the harvest be *wise as serpents and harmless as doves!*

THE LAW OF THE ADVANCE.

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No Christian will deny that every command of Christ is to be obeyed, because he is our Lord, so that debate concerning the command to preach the gospel to every creature is limited to the manner of our obedience. The only question is, *How* shall the work be done?

Some say that when the Master bade us begin at Jerusalem, He meant that we were to go over the countries of the world in order, finishing it in one land before we proceed to another; but that cannot be true, for preaching the gospel, like woman's work, is never done. So that if other lands must wait till the work is done in one, their chance for hearing the gospel will be very small. It may be replied, however, that it is not necessary to wait so long, but the work is to be done as one ploughs a field, *i. e.*, we are to begin at the point designated, and regularly advance from there, leaving no places unploughed, but throwing the soil from each furrow into the hollow of the preceding one, and that along its whole line without a balk.

This sounds very well. It is a beautiful picture to look on and see the work advance so regularly and so smoothly; but beautiful ideals are not often realized in practice. The actual carrying out of the idea differs very widely from the imaginary original. God has a perfect knowledge of the difference between the ideal and the actual, and would it not be well, if instead of reasoning *a priori* what it ought to be, we simply ask how has the Lord of the harvest actually carried on the work up to the present time? Holy Scripture is not a collection of theories, but a history of actual transactions that have been brought to pass by the Providence of God working through men in accordance with their nature.