

one of the things from which some shrink in fear: but is it not a fact that already the Alliance exercises to some extent executive functions? Has it not adopted a creed, the basis of its union, does it not refuse admission to those who hold error or fundamental beliefs, and does it not annually call the Protestant Churches of the world to a throne of grace, suggesting to them the days of prayer and the topics? And would not the wonderful readiness with which its call to prayer is answered, from the South Sea Islands to Greenland, and from China to British Columbia, suggest the hope that God has something yet for it to do, not simply in guiding the thought of the Church of Christ, but also its activities? One department of work invites it at this present moment.

There is every appearance that between this time and the end of this century, the efforts of the Protestant Churches in behalf of heathen countries will arise to a magnitude in some small degree becoming the work to be done. Even now the Protestant missionaries in foreign fields outnumber the missionaries of Rome. And as Protestant missionaries pour into China and India, there is much need that some central authority should map out the country and assign to each denomination its field of labour, to prevent collision and seeming opposition, which the church of Rome always uses as its instrument to confound the enquiring heathen, and to prejudice them against the true gospel of Christ. The writer of these lines will never forget a conversation with an enquiring Samaritan while our tents were pitched under the shade of the trees that embower the town of Nablous at the foot of Gerizim. Palestine is chiefly cared for by an Episcopal Mission, at the head of which is that most excellent of men—Bishop Gobat. There are missionaries, however, in the country, belonging to other Protestant denominations. This young Samaritan had come in contact with them all, and his mind was perplexed with questions

of church government, and denominational differences. Thinking that a stranger travelling through the country would give an impartial decision, he came and opened up some of his difficulties, and asked an impartial opinion as to the merits of the Episcopal controversy. What a pity, one could not but feel, that such controversies were heard close by the spot where our Saviour adjourned them to deal with a lost soul on a question of personal and practical piety. And such questions would not, at least not at the outset, perplex enquirers, whose first concern should be personal salvation and public profession, did some middle authority, at the beginning of mission work in Syria, assign not in pride, but in love, the south of Palestine to Bishop Gobat and his evangelical missionaries, and the north to the American board. Even now, without any guiding court, Protestant missionaries are, from Christian instinct as well as reflection, adopting this plan of dividing the field among them, and working so as not to come into seeming collision in the eyes of the heathen. They can in this way, which is a point of great importance, spread themselves over a larger field, and kindle in the darkness of heathenism three torches for one. And would it be an unreasonable thing to say that what is a good plan for the foreign field, might not be a bad plan for some villages and back-settlements in our Dominion, overcrowded with small congregations, and overpreached by zealous preachers, while wide settlements lie waste?

The Evangelical Alliance is a kind of prologue on a small scale of the coming drama, it is the first drops of the coming shower, it is the shadow of the coming unity for which our Lord prayed. Before the Church, however, reaches its full stature of unity of Spirit, unity of incorporation, unity of judgment, unity of design and aim, unity of desire and prayer, unity of love and affection, it must pass, in all likelihood, through discipline of conflict and suffering, and