

to any end that they may serve. If now we ask in what this beauty consists, the general opinion since Plato is that it is in some sort of proportion or harmony. At the basis of music, for example, there are certain fixed ratios. In poetry there are measures and correspondences. Complementary colors, when seen simultaneously, are felt to be beautiful. Regular features are essential to a truly handsome man or woman. Moral beauty is the radiance of the moral law. The mind is made to delight in the unities of God. Its activity is a tendency toward unity. It is satisfied only when such an object is presented as will enable it at once to perceive a law or controlling idea in the object. Hence, those objects the parts of which are thus harmonized we feel to be beautiful, and that without any reference to the purpose to be served.

In the case of relative or dependent beauty such a reference is always implied. Here the proportion required must be, not merely between the parts of the object itself, but also between it as a whole and its design. As before, it is the perception of unity which gives rise to the feeling of the beautiful, but it is a more comprehensive unity. For example, a Corinthian pillar is absolutely beautiful. We should think it so if we had not the least idea for what it was intended. But we feel it to be much more beautiful when we see it used to support a glorious temple. We appreciate the beautiful correspondence between it and its purpose. The fitness of the thing, even apart from its usefulness, would seem to delight us.

Such, then, is the explanation of the two kinds of beauty. The analysis is far from complete or satisfactory ; but it will help us, in the second place, to realize " how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things."

First, foreign missions are absolutely beautiful. They could not fail to be so, for they are the conception of Him " in whom all things consist," and who " worketh all things according to the counsel of His own will." They must, therefore, be characterized by that comprehensiveness and unity of purpose which marks all the thoughts of God. And it is not difficult to discern this unity. In method, foreign missions are one with God's method. They are seen to be beautifully in harmony with all His procedure ; and that, too, without any reference to their design. Now the Divine method is that of means or second causes. God has to an infinite degree what we name executive ability. He called all things into being by the word of His power. In like manner He upholds all things in being. At certain critical epochs He has Himself put forth His hand and wrought signs and wonders. He is always guiding and controlling, and so working through His agents. But He ordinarily employs these, and multiplies them infinitely. The angels are His messengers. Men are His servants. The whole brute creation does His bidding. The forces of nature are His instruments. He uses the universe as a mirror to reflect and so manifest His glory, which in itself no man hath seen or can see. It is, therefore, in beautiful consistency with the Divine method that when out of His infinite