

the briefest. Let these things be noted :

1. The progress of scientific knowledge and the many applications of this knowledge, for the promotion of man's comfort and his mastery over nature. The terribly destructive power which science has put in the hands of war does not involve, perhaps, what it seems to represent; but even were it so, the humane and benevolent purposes to which science has ministered far more than counterbalance any potential evils implied in its advancement. Reflect upon the rapidity and comfort with which we now travel, upon the effects of an enlightened sanitation in promoting health, upon the reduction of suffering by the use of anesthetics in surgery ! And as these benign applications of scientific discovery are multiplied, a higher ideal of the daily life of human beings takes possession of the general mind.

2. The geographical discoveries of the century, we may say, have made us acquainted with every part of the world and its populations. The maps of Africa and regions of Asia which men, not yet very old, used at school are now obsolete. To what a marvellous extent these discoveries have extended commerce and opened up the way for civilization and Christianity !

3. The advancement of popular education is one of the most interesting and hopeful characteristics of the century. At the commencement of this century the educational condition of the masses in most countries, even in England, was a great reproach. The university and great public schools made ample provision for the education of the wealthy, but the people were left largely untaught. Now the educational movement has, in measure, affected every country in Europe, while

in most of the German States we have a model for the nations of the world. The Protestant population of America, as all know, takes rank with the best educated communities of the Old World.

4. Political enfranchisement has made large progress among Anglo-Saxon and some other peoples during this century. The masses are recognized as part of the State, with full civil rights,—the promotion of whose interests must be regarded as a prime object of legislation.

5. The rapid increase of population in many countries, especially in Protestant countries, and the unexampled growth of cities, are facts which we cannot fail to notice in connection with the century. The social problems touching labour and capital, taxation, provision for the poor, etc., stand closely related to these facts. The extension of labour unions has undoubtedly been much promoted by this growth of population and of cities.

6. Above every other feature of the century it is proper that we should here note the missionary activity manifested by nearly every section of the Christian Church. Till the very end of the eighteenth century almost nothing in the way of enlarging the area of Christianity had been attempted for many hundreds of years. The Reformation of the sixteenth century was a great and salutary movement, but the Reformation had to fight for its own life, and could attempt little in the way of foreign missions. At present, the absence of missionary effort, or languor in the missionary cause, would be justly counted a most unfavourable symptom of the spiritual health of any Church. The sense of obligation to preach the Gospel to the whole creation has become strong in the Church of Christ. That exertions commensurate with the