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THE GROWTH OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

By Rev. J. B. WHITING, M.A.

IN a very interesting paper, read before this Institute three years ago, Professor Lobley traced the vast succession of animal and vegetable creatures, as a preparation of the earth for man.* This preparation, which ultimately covered the earth, was orderly, gradual and final. It bore evidence of having been planned by a mind of wisdom, and carried out by an arm of power. The work was long, there was no hurry. It was the work of God.

We instinctively look for a similar process in what we signify as the Kingdom of God.

We believe in God. The idea of God leads to the conviction that there has been purpose, plan and preparation. We look for successful development; but that development may not be obvious for a long time.

It is, I think, only recently, that we are struck by the fact that an enormous growth has taken place, "The Kingdom of God is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and cast into his garden; and it grew and waxed a great tree."

"This Kingdom" is likened to a field, which contains both tares and wheat. It is of the growth of this Kingdom of God that we assert that it is the subject of an eternal purpose; a divine plan, an intelligent preparation, wherein God hath abounded in all wisdom and prudence, and for which He has "appointed" times and seasons.

Before we proceed further let me adduce evidence of the growth of this Kingdom of God; bearing in mind that it consists of all who call themselves Christians.

The evidence shall be (1) in regard to the population of the world, (2) in regard to the shifting of political power from non-Christian to Christian Governments. Both these lines of inquiry lead us to perceive that this Kingdom of God has become "a great Tree."

When the Saviour became Incarnate, enormous tracts of the earth's surface were without inhabitants. We may take an illustration of this fact. Africa contains 12,000,000 square miles, exactly one-fourth of the habitable surface of the earth,

* *Trans. Vict. Inst.*, vol. xxxiv.

and is nine times as large as India; whilst the number of its various races put together is only two-thirds of the population of Hindustan. Again, when Christ was born in Bethlehem, the area of the whole of the Roman Empire was not larger than the area of India and Burmah, and the population was about 125,000,000. From a very interesting book, *A Century of Christian Progress*, by the Rev. James Johnston,* we learn that, according to an official census of China, taken A.D. 2, the population of China was 59,000,000. We shall, therefore, not be far wrong if we estimate the whole population of the world at more than 300,000,000.

Comparing this with the statements of Gibbon and of Bishop Lightfoot (paper, S.P.G.), we are enabled to draw up the following charts:—

GROWTH OF POPULATION.

Year.	Christians.	Non-Christians.
A.D. 300 	6,000,000	360,000,000
A.D. 1900 	490,000,000	1,250,000,000

That is, while in the year 300 A.D. Christians were as one to sixty non-Christians, in 1900 they were as one in three and a half; and while non-Christians have multiplied four-fold, Christians have multiplied seventy-fold.

Distinguishing now among Christians, we find:—

Individuals.	A.D. 1800	A.D. 1900
Romanist 	107,000,000	222,000,000
Greek, Copt, Armenian, etc....	66,000,000	128,000,000
Protestant 	37,000,000	140,000,000
	<u>210,000,000</u>	<u>490,000,000</u>

It will be seen that there is no ground whatever for the statement made in booklets, which have had a very large circulation, that "the heathen world is increasing faster than the Christian world." The authors take no account of family increase. Had they consulted members of the Statistical Society of London, they would have learned that whilst the non-Christian population of the world increased by 200,000,000 in the nineteenth century, the Christian population increased 250,000,000; the number of living converts from non-Christian faiths in

* p. 167, 1st edition, Nisbet.

A.D. 1900 being 4,000,000, a number in the century four times greater than the whole number of Christians in A.D. 100.

Let us now turn to the question of ruling power. The habitable area of the earth is nearly 50,000,000 square miles. At the birth of our Lord, and for 300 years after, the whole world was under non-Christian government. When Constantine professed himself to have become a Christian, 2,000,000 square miles passed under Christian government. Speaking roughly, this remained so for twelve centuries. Then Christian rule suddenly expanded. The comparative relation of Christian and non-Christian political power will be seen at a glance, the figures representing square miles :—

Rulers.	A.D. 1600	A.D. 1900
Christian	3,000,000	42,000,000
Non-Christian	47,000,000	8,000,000
	<u>50,000,000</u>	<u>50,000,000</u>

The number of subject people under the non-Christian and Christian rule respectively is as follows for the years 1800 and 1900 :—

	1800	1900
Non-Christian	850,000,000	550,000,000
Christian	350,000,000	1,100,000,000
	<u>1,200,000,000</u>	<u>1,650,000,000</u>

Whether, therefore, we consider population or ruling power, we see the marvellous growth of the "Kingdom of God."

These statistics are very surprising from two points of view :—

1. We are apt to imagine that Christianity has always prevailed throughout Europe, whereas, as a matter of fact, the early Church was confined in Europe to the countries bordering the Mediterranean. North of the Danube and east of the Rhine was the home of barbarians and savages, and the greatest part of Europe was in heathen darkness for many centuries. Illustrious missionaries, animated by a zeal as devoted and as heroic as is exhibited by any of the messengers of the Gospel in recent years, plunged into vast forests and preached to hidden tribes. Many of these missionaries went forth from the British Isles, and not a few met a martyr's death. It is not generally known that at the opening of the thirteenth

century the people of Prussia still worshipped snakes and lizards. Maclear (*Christian Missions in the Middle Ages*, p. 339) states that "three gods in particular were held in veneration, the god of thunder, the god of corn and fruits, and the god of infernal regions"; "every town or village had a temple." Infanticide, polygamy, and the burning of widows on the death of their husbands, and human sacrifices, gave rise to "European crusades," and Christianity was forced on unwilling peoples. Till the year 1336 not a ray of light had penetrated the darkness of Lithuania. Nevertheless, great missionary efforts had been attempted in every century. (See Archbp. Trench, *Mediæval Church History*, and Neander.)

2. The statistics given above are very wonderful from another point of view. They show that the previous preparatory history of the world led to a marvellous result, marking out the nineteenth century as an "appointed time." We note that there has occurred a sudden and extraordinary increase in the population. Whilst non-Christians increased on an average 5 per cent. in a hundred years for eighteen centuries; in the nineteenth, owing to the security of life and property under British government, the population of India far more than doubled, so that taking the whole world, the increase was 25 per cent. instead of 5 per cent. Christians, again, who had previously increased on an average fifty per cent. in a hundred years, in the nineteenth century increased 150 per cent.

In passing I notice that in consequence of the systematized missionary work, newly commenced by the Protestant Societies at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the number of their converts now living is over 4,000,000. To effect this languages have been learned, grammars made, Bibles and other books translated, schools provided, new industries introduced, new roads, and even railways constructed, commerce established and character elevated. The Romanist results in the century, omitting the number of the descendants of previous Indian and Chinese Christians, was at least 2,000,000.

I learn from the Rev. James Johnston, that the population of Europe from A.D. 1 to A.D. 1800, was almost stationary, viz.:—about 170 millions.* That population suddenly began to multiply, owing to the shifting of political power, within the

* Mr. Rouse doubts the correctness of this statement on the ground of the vast tracts of forest, especially in Germany, which were cleared for habitation in the latter part of that period.—Ed.

continent, the vast progress of science and machinery, the immense increase of progress and other causes; by the end of the nineteenth century the population of Europe had become about 360 millions, thus supplying a very large proportion of the numbers of the present Kingdom of God.

On the other hand, when speaking of this marvellous growth of the kingdom, we must not omit to bear in mind the virulent and extraordinary opposition of the powers of evil, such as the heresies of Christians, the fearful sacrifice of Christian life in the terrible persecutions under Roman emperors and Roman popes. Nor must we fail to bear in mind the inexplicable outburst of Mahommedan fury in the seventh and thirteenth centuries, the extermination of Christianity in North Africa, and its almost entire suppression in Spain and Asia Minor. At about the same time torrents of armed ruffians from the East overwhelmed the churches founded by the Nestorians in Central Asia. Cruel slaughter of Christians in Persia added vast numbers of men, women, and children to the noble army of martyrs.

Further, whenever conversions in large numbers took place, there invariably followed a reaction and a revival of Paganism; compulsory imposition of the Christian religion gave occasion to the mingling of heathen ideas and practices with the teaching of the new faith: heresies sprang up from the fallen soil of the human heart. The time and prayerful energy of the Church was rightly and necessarily occupied in defining Christian doctrine, and drawing up "articles" of true religion and creeds and "confessions" of faith. Notwithstanding all this, the onward roll of the Kingdom has never been really staid. Defeated in one scene of its triumphs, it has planted the Cross in other lands, and has proved ultimately to be the conquering religion.

With these facts before our minds, let us ask, What explanation does the Bible afford us? In Ephesians iii, 11, and i, 8, we read of the "eternal purpose" carried out "in all wisdom and prudence." The first of these expressions indicates that the overthrow of every opposing power, the destruction of "the works of the wicked one," and the establishment of a universal empire of truth and righteousness, is the Eternal Purpose of "the living God." The second expression used by the inspired Apostle discloses to us that the growth of the Kingdom of God is in His hands, and managed from first to last "with wisdom and prudence." St. Paul learned this from the Old Testament. The passages are too numerous to quote.

For example, let us turn to the prophet Isaiah. As we read the wonderful words, we feel that they rest on the four points of our proposition. In liii, "the pleasure of the Lord," *i.e.*, the Eternal Purpose, is carried out by "the servant of the Lord"; of whom we read in ch. xlix, that He concurred in the Purpose and the Plan. In ch. xl, we have notes of Preparation. Nor is this less evident in the earlier chapters of the Book. Turn to ch. iv, 2: "In that day"—a fixed day—"shall the sprout of Jehovah be for ornament and glory, and the fruit of the earth for majesty and beauty." He who was to be the "sprout of Jehovah," was also to be the "fruit of the earth." On this Dr. Kay quotes Delitzsch: "He was the grain of wheat, which redeeming love sowed in the earth on Good Friday; which began to break through the earth and grow towards heaven on Easter Sunday, whose golden blade ascended heavenward on Ascension Day, whose myriad-fold ear bent down to the earth on the day of Pentecost, and poured out the grains, from which the Holy Church was not only born, but still continues to be born." Here are Purpose, Plan and fixed Times. We have not the space to refer to the numerous instances given by Isaiah in which Purpose, Plan, Preparation, and fixed Epochs are evident, controlling what by some is called secular history. But it is important to notice that Isaiah speaks of this great truth, not as revealed first to him, or in his times, but as long known in all previous ages. For God sends a message to Sennacherib—a heathen in a heathen land—"Hast thou not heard long ago that I have done it? hast thou not heard from ancient times that I have formed it? Now have I brought it to pass."

Turning to the New Testament, our Lord's great prayer of intercession (St. John xvii) establishes the fact that Purpose, Plan, Preparation, and fixed Epochs characterise the growth of the Kingdom of God. "Before the foundation of the world" a "glory" was "given" to the Son, to which the "glory" of which he was a partaker with the Father was antecedent. This given glory involved "power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given Him." This glory He now gives to the Apostles, and He prays that "they may be one, as we are one." This is not the oneness of which He spoke when He said, "I and My Father are one." That was an essential oneness in which His disciples could have no share. This is the oneness of purpose, aim, intention, in which they could share. He received this glorious commission. He was God's "elect," "to do all His pleasure." He now entrusts that glorious commission to chosen Apostles, in

preparing whom for their office he had spent three years. And He intimates that this commission should be carried on to the end of the age. Does not this point unmistakably to Purpose, Plan, Preparation? Can we fail to perceive that for the various events connected with this great Redemption, the hours are fixed? At Cana He had said, "Mine hour is not yet come." Now He lifts His eyes unto heaven and says, "Father, the hour is come." The hour, the very hour fixed in the Eternal Council for the accomplishment of "the eternal purpose which God purposed from eternity." And so when in the course of human history "the fulness of time was come," "God sent forth His Son" (Gal. iv, 4).

The events of the Old Testament all point to pre-arrangement of "times and seasons," *i.e.*, periods of prolonged action, and dates of particular events: the call of Abraham, the "420 years," reaching to "the self-same day," when Israel departed out of Egypt, the birth of Moses, the lineage and training and summons of David, the captivity in Babylon for a fixed "seventy years," the rise of the Greek Kingdoms, the founding of the Roman Empire, "at the time appointed" (Dan. xi, 29). "Know therefore and understand, from the going forth of the command to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince shall be three-score and two weeks" (Dan. ix, 25, 26). See also the fixed numbers in the "Book of the Revelation."

As we turn to the records in the Bible we note many decisive events and epochs, involving an immense number of details, such for instance as, at the timing of the decree of Cæsar Augustus so as to secure that the Holy Nativity should take place, not in Nazareth, but in Bethlehem; and the birth of Saul of Tarsus, "the chosen vessel," in the very decade of our Lord's Incarnation, with the rights of a Roman citizen and a deep interest in Asia Minor.

Or look back to Moses, mark how God secured that he should become learned in all the learning of the Egyptians, and to be trained to be a leader and commander of the people. While yet in the vigour of early life he has to fly from Egypt. He finds refuge in the tents of Jethro. Now Jethro was a Hittite, a member of that nation who were learned men of that age. It is said that there was a college of Hittite scribes in the heart of Egypt. With Jethro Moses was content to spend forty years. Here the learned Hebrew was surrounded by inscriptions engraved on tiles, temples, statues, and rocks, such as have recently been so largely found again and deciphered. Moses, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit,

compiled the chapters of Genesis, chapters essential as the foundation records of our holy religion. When this great work was accomplished he is led back into Egypt, for the persecuting Pharaoh had died, another Pharaoh sat on the throne, and the 420 years were drawing to an end.

Do we sufficiently bear in mind this cardinal principle that "times and seasons" God hath kept in His own power? No doubt there is a reality in human agency; no doubt the Christian is a free agent, responsible for utilizing or neglecting opportunities; no doubt in the Scriptures God speaks to us, or by His Spirit incites, inspires, commands, praises, or blames His people, as free agents. The Holy Spirit carries out the Eternal Purpose through the free agency of man. But the opportunities are God-given, God-appointed, and timed by God.

We must be very careful lest we use language which overlooks the absolute, unerring wisdom of God. If, for example, we say, "If the Church had exerted her energy the world would have been evangelized centuries ago, and the Second Advent would have already taken place; the preparation would have been completed for the glorious appearing of the Great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ, the Kingdom would have come," such unguarded language is unscriptural. For we read that it was in the fulness of time that the First Advent took place, neither too soon nor too late. In the appointed hour and not sooner, will take place the Second Advent. "Though it tarry, wait for it; for it will surely come, it will not tarry" (Hab. ii, 3). This is not inconsistent with the longing expressed by St. Peter, "Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God" (II Pet. iii, 12); nor with the declarations regarding the restoration of the Jew: "I the Lord will hasten it in His time" (Isa. lx, 22); "I the Lord will hasten my Word to perform it" (Jer. i, 12); or with the proclamation regarding the Second Advent, "surely I come quickly," or with the prayer of the Bride, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. xxii, 20). This involves the active, direct working of the Living God.

If we search outside the pages of the Bible, we arrive at the same conviction. The position of the affairs of the world fills us with astonishment. England, in the extreme north-west of Europe, is in the centre of an Empire which girdles the globe; her influence controls the tendency of human thought and energy; she includes under her sway nearly one-third of the human race; her ships enter every port; her language is spoken or understood by 150,000,000; her flag is

the flag of universal liberty ; and she holds "the open door" of commerce. Her greatness depends on the open Word of God ; and her conduct is professedly governed by the simple faith and moral teaching of the Gospel of Christ. Thousands of Christian men and women have gone from her shores to evangelize the rest of the world ; her opportunity for glorifying God and preaching Christ are not only magnificent, but tremendous, and very solemn. Great Britain and Ireland stand before us as a splendid and fitted instrument for bringing about the realization of the Eternal Purpose. It seems plain that our history was in the Divine Plan.

Even if England is hereafter to be superseded by the rise of some new "rod of God's power," she is certainly a prepared agent for carrying forward the growth of the Kingdom of God to a height which we are as yet unable to foresee. If this be so, the hour has come when men of intellectual power, industrious research, and historical knowledge can note the course of events, and make a chart of the plan of the Divine procedure "in all wisdom and prudence."

Looking at each event in its own magnitude, we do not at the moment perceive its connection with what went before, and what happened after it. But when we lay the events all out before our minds, we discover that they have been so steadily working together that we are forced to admit design in history. We see them fit into a plan, like pieces of a dissected map. But with this difference, that each event flowed out and gave birth to what followed in the direct path towards the final establishment of the Kingdom of God.

Make a list of the names of great men from the day of the Apostles, such as Saul of Tarsus, Justin, Origen, Eusebius, Jerome, Athanasius, Augustine, Gregory the Great, Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury, King Alfred, Wickliffe, Huss, Luther, Erasmus, Cranmer, Jewell, Hooper, the Wesleys, Whitfield, Wilberforce, Simeon, the Venns, Buxton, Livingstone, Hannington, Crowther, and hundreds of other workers in God's inner vineyard, whom we cannot pause to name ; look, again, at another line of workers, such as Alexander the Great, Julius Cæsar, Marcus Aurelius, Constantine, Justinian, Charlemagne, Henry the Eighth, Queen Elizabeth, Cromwell, Napoleon, Wellington, Prince Albert, Queen Victoria ; or again, call up the succession of scientific giants—it is evident that each arose at the very period when he was wanted ; they not only served their own day and generation, but were clearly necessary to carry forward the Kingdom of God.

Why did the monastic institutions provide men of leisure to copy manuscripts of the Word of God? Why did the invention of printing occur just when the revival of Greek learning took place in Western Europe, and the thought of making translations of the Scriptures into the language of the people took possession of capable scholars? Why did the seventeenth century prepare for the eighteenth; and the eighteenth, with all its infidel philosophy on the one side, and its evangelistic triumphs among our home population on the other, prepare for the nineteenth, unless it was in the Plan?

On what other principle can we account for the fact that a hundred years ago the minds of obscure servants of God were moved to inaugurate the missionary agencies which have since been so great? The missionary impulse cannot be traced to the political movements of the hour. It cannot be traced to the intellectual tendencies of those particular years. It was wholly distinct from the ideas which led to the marvellous scientific discoveries, which at the same period laid the foundations of magnificent inventions.

Yet where would have been our missionary successes but for the decisive battle of Waterloo, the abolition of slavery, or the overspreading of India by the British power? The practical application of steam and electricity have made the missionary enterprise, and the printing and circulation of many millions of the Holy Scriptures, possible. How could the relation between the Church Missionary House in Salisbury Square, or between the Committees of the other great Missionary Societies, and of the Christian Knowledge Society, the Religious Tract Society, and the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the thousands of missionaries in many hundreds of stations all over the globe, have subsisted without the steam-engine, the electric telegraph, and the post, or without the cutting of the Suez Canal, and the gigantic power of England and the United States?*

It is not altogether reasonable to accuse the Church in past ages as neglectful of the duty of evangelising the world. There have always been great missionaries. But the Church had other work to do—work preparatory for the appointed

* While these pages were passing through the press an important step has been made in extending the Kingdom of God by the joint action of Lord Cromer and the Sirdar of the Soudan, in inviting the Church Missionary Society to send missionaries to the Pagan nations of the Upper Nile, now under British influence.—EDITOR.

nineteenth century. Before the Church could proceed safely with the work of evangelisation, the great doctrines of the Christian Faith had to be defined. Heresies sprang up in earlier days and forced Christians to study the Word of God and learn its true teaching. Articles of religion and creeds had to be drawn up, if the prophets of Christianity were to speak nothing but what is true in the Name of the Lord.

During all this time, and from the very beginning, the forces of evil, the Serpent and his seed, were with great skill striving to hinder the growing Kingdom of God. "Whence had it tares? An enemy hath done this."

Of human history before the call of Abraham we have as yet scarcely any knowledge. But the known world was then 2,000 years old, and men had souls to be saved. That surging human life was under the control and the guidance of God, Who overruled the boundaries of nations, and set events in order, so as to make the necessary preparation for the fulfilment of His great Eternal Purpose to save the world. A careful study has led many scientific and learned men to the conclusion that there has never been an evolution of religious ideas. There is evidence of a devolution from the original Revelation of God, from the original revealed truth and morality, and a perversion of God's plan of saving fallen men. To arrest this downward grade, when it had reached a terrible depth of wickedness, and at the same time to prove that human philosophy and merely human schemes for the amendment of men could never reach his spiritual need, great thinkers were raised up in various countries. It is startling to find that Confucius, the philosopher of China, Buddha the Indian, Zoroaster the Persian, Pythagoras, born of Italian parents in Sidon (who travelled through Egypt, Arabia, parts of India and Persia), and Socrates of Greece were all born between 700 B.C. and 500 B.C.

In a learned essay on Buddhism in relation to Christianity (*Transactions of the Victoria Institute*, vol. xxviii), the Rev. R. Collins speaks of "the evidence of a primeval revelation." Further on he says, "Parallel with these recollections of a Divine worship must have been the recollection of a divinely taught morality." Again he says, "I find in 'The Brahmana of a Hundred Paths,' and in the Hymns of the Rig Vedas, evidences of a religious thought, not constructive, but destructive, nor nearing the light, but receding from it though still catching its last rays." Nevertheless, these are all human systems for regenerating society. It was a necessary part of

the Preparation for Christianity that these experiments should be made. Their failure, even when illuminated by Aristotle and Plato, served to prove the necessity for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The lessons of Plato could not avert the decay of the ancient Greeks, but the Gospel of Jesus Christ, introduced by Marsden into New Zealand, regenerated the cannibal Maoris.

But I turn from all this to draw attention to another point. It was not only necessary that a definite centre in the midst of a prepared people should be ready for the birth of the Church; it was indispensable that there should be a suitable cradle for its first development. Judea and the Jews supplied the first, Asia Minor and its races supplied the second. In both cases the statement of the Prophet is illustrated, "This people have I formed for Myself: they shall show forth My praise."

The recent researches of Professor Ramsay in Asia Minor help us to realise the long preparation of a cradle for infant Christianity. Original wanderers from the family home penetrate into Asia Minor, work the silver-mines which God had placed there, and found the Hittite Empire.

That empire must be removed out of the way, just as the Assyrian and Egyptian powers faded away when their purpose had been served. Asia Minor must eventually include within its borders the necessary elements to give scope to the labours of the first great Apostle of the Gentiles.

The growth of the Hittite Empire was finally checked by the arms of Assyria and Egypt; but its existence was broken up by unknown marauders from the west and the north.

From the south-east of Europe the Phryges enter it B.C. 900. Overrunning a large portion of it, they amalgamate with its original barbarians, and form the Phrygian people. They are driven southward by the Kimmerians, a Teutonic tribe, who crossed the Black Sea from the Crimea about 600 B.C.

Meanwhile Greece and Rome had been founded just before Isaiah began to prophesy. In Greece was developed art and culture and the language which was to be the vehicle for stereotyping the story of the coming Christ. The situation of Greece exactly fitted it for its particular office. But the conditions necessary for this unfitted it for empire. The riches of Asia Minor and the trend of political affairs in the East attracted the attention of the Persians. Their armies reached the Hellespont, and awakened the energies of Alexander the Great. Into Alexander's mind, God, Who ruleth in heaven

above and on earth beneath, inspired a great thought. It became his ruling policy to enable Greek ideas, language and culture to penetrate to the farthest East. He led his armies to India, and returning, died at the age of thirty-three. Had he survived, he would have turned to the West, invaded Italy and prevented the Roman Empire, which became so helpful for the first planting of Christianity in Asia Minor. Meanwhile (270 B.C.) Celtic tribes, repulsed from Italy, and finding no rest or place in the northern regions of Europe, crossed the Bosphorus and gave birth to the Galatian people, to whose peculiarities we owe the Epistle to the Galatians. About the same time, Seleucus, Alexander's greatest general, whose kingdom stretched from the Euphrates almost to the west coast of Asia Minor, transplanted 2,000 families of Jews into all the cities of his kingdom. Their synagogues became centres from which rays of revealed truth began to lighten the Gentiles. Devout men and women multiplied. Their monotheism broke the spell of idolatry; their morals awoke in many heathen minds a yearning for purer life. It was preparing the way of the Lord.

In this same Asia Minor grew up Saul of Tarsus, near enough to Jerusalem and Antioch in Syria to feel the influence of those great centres in which the Church was born, and won its first triumphs, and he naturally turns to the land of his birth, and preaches Jesus and the Resurrection.

As he traverses the great Roman roads, he finds representatives of Celts and Germans, and Phrygians and Greeks, and Romans and Jews. To this it is that we owe the marvellous completeness of his Epistles, and the Epistle to the Hebrews. Among these various peoples sprang up those various spiritual needs which led the inspired Apostle to write his wonderful letters. He had studied the Roman character till he could write the Epistle to the Romans. His versatile mind could grasp the great variety of the statements needful to meet every spiritual difficulty, and to expound the Truth of Jesus Christ in its application to the widely different circumstances of those to whom he wrote, with the result that his Epistles are a complete statement of Christian doctrine and Christian ethics.

Time would fail to speak of the marvellous preparation of the European peoples and especially of the Saxon race for carrying on the great work. Perhaps this may be the subject of a future paper.

RULING POWERS.

PROTESTANT.	AREA.	POPULATION.
British Empire and Protectorates, etc.	12,686,084 ...	410,289,843
United States Colonies, etc. ...	3,941,697 ...	86,999,638
Germany and Colonies	1,336,658 ...	70,654,178
Netherlands and Colonies ...	995,648 ...	41,225,398
Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Switzerland	414,875 ...	14,188,314
Liberia	35,000 ...	400,000
	<hr/>	
	19,409,962 ...	623,756,371
	<hr/> <hr/>	

ROMANIST.	AREA.	POPULATION.
<i>European.</i>		
French	5,279,054 ...	110,107,285
Belgian, including Congo ...	911,873 ...	36,695,894
Italian	299,146 ...	33,275,253
Spanish	447,633 ...	18,742,097
Portuguese	836,098 ...	14,696,094
Austria, Hungary, etc.	241,398 ...	45,414,744
Luxemburg	998 ...	236,543
Monaco	8 ...	15,180
Bosnia and Herzegovina... ..	23,262 ...	1,568,092
	<hr/>	
	8,139,470 ...	250,742,282
	<hr/> <hr/>	

<i>American.</i>		
Argentine... ..	1,158,840 ...	4,794,149
Brazil	218,130 ...	14,333,915
Bolivia	983,982 ...	1,852,657
Columbia	504,773 ...	4,000,000
Chili	279,901 ...	2,712,148
Peru	695,733 ...	5,000,000
Venezuela... ..	593,843 ...	2,323,527
Ecuador, Paraguay, and Uruguay	343,210 ...	2,994,600
Mexico	767,005 ...	13,445,362
Honduras and 7 small States ...	363,214 ...	5,991,364
	<hr/>	
	5,747,031 ...	57,547,822
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Total Romanist Power ...	13,886,501 ...	308,290,104
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GREEK CHRISTIANS, ETC.				AREA.	POPULATION.
Russia and Protectorates	8,774,715	131,054,514
Bulgaria	...	...	...	37,080	3,744,283
Servia	...	...	...	18,630	2,493,770
Roumania	...	...	...	50,720	5,912,520
Montenegro	...	...	...	3,630	228,000
Greece	...	...	...	25,314	2,433,806
Crete	...	...	...	3,326	303,543
Abyssinia	...	...	...	150,000	3,500,000
				<u>9,063,417</u>	<u>149,670,436</u>
NON-CHRISTIAN.				AREA.	POPULATION.
Chinese	...	...	...	4,277,170	426,047,325
Japanese	...	...	...	161,158	46,526,319
Corean	...	...	...	82,000	16,000,000
Siamese	...	...	...	236,000	5,000,000
Nepal	...	...	...	54,000	4,000,000
Afghanistan	...	...	...	230,000	4,000,000
Persian	...	...	...	628,000	9,500,000
Oran	...	...	...	82,000	1,500,000
Morocco	...	...	...	219,000	5,000,000
Turkey	...	...	...	1,279,982	80,619,912
				<u>7,249,310</u>	<u>598,193,546</u>
<i>British Empire.</i>					
Europe	...	...	...	121,098	42,168,111
Asia : British India, Ceylon, etc.	...	...	...	1,114,758	236,415,181
Africa	...	...	...	1,532,226	7,001,073
America	...	...	...	3,342,064	7,531,474
Australasia	...	...	...	3,175,345	5,091,410
Total				<u>8,285,491</u>	<u>298,277,249</u>
India : Native States	...	...	...	679,392	62,461,549
Protectorates :					
Asia, including Cyprus	...	...	...	120,400	1,200,000
Africa	...	...	...	1,250,000	35,000,000
Pacific	...	...	...	800	30,000
				<u>11,336,084</u>	<u>396,968,798</u>
Egypt and Soudan	...	...	...	1,350,000	13,321,045
Grand Total				<u>12,686,084</u>	<u>410,289,843</u>

NOTE.—The figures have been used with the kind permission of Messrs. Macmillan, but I alone am responsible for the grouping of them.—J. B. W.

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN.—I do not think that I need detain you very long, as this paper is sure to provoke discussion ; but I will express my appreciation of the remarks of the writer of the paper as regards the progress of Christianity in India—the country with which I am most acquainted. The progress has been much larger than was expected. At the last Census, in comparison with the one before and with the population, it was much greater than it had ever been in the past. It is not only to be measured by the direct progress—the conversion of the people to the knowledge of the truth of the Christian religion—but also in the indirect gain to the country through the prevalence of Christian truths. In India especially we see it everywhere, but we must not measure the progress of Christianity by the number of nominal Christians. The way is being prepared by the humanizing influences which accompany the true Christian religion, for example, by increased attention to the health of the people and to their comfort, as also the higher position given to women, and the kindness shown to animals. Much as we hear of the kindness of other races such as Brahmans and Hindus, there is a great deal of cruelty due to want of knowledge and to ignorance. I consider therefore that a very great reason why our rule in India is on the whole so successful, is the humanizing influence of the Christian religion. The people themselves also are ready for the spread of Christianity. Some 36 years ago I halted near a temple in the hills in Mewar ; I spoke to one of the Sepoys and asked him why it was the temples about this place seemed to be so very much neglected. “Well,” he said, “what is the use of going to temples ? The English God is so strong, that the poor weak gods of this country are helpless.”

That is one instance of the general opinion of the poor, and such ideas are prevailing amongst many, especially amongst the aboriginal tribes. Progress is somewhat hindered now, because when there is a very strong Protestant mission it becomes, said a Roman Catholic friend, the duty of our Church to stop it. It is not the duty of the Roman Catholic church to go in for extensive propagandism, but whenever the Protestants have made a successful mission it is the Roman Catholic's mission to put their converts right. But there are

many other reasons why our progress is not so great as it ought to be, amongst others being the want of good example which is so often set by Christians, and therefore it behoves us to see that our own example in non-Christian lands is such as is calculated to raise esteem for Christianity. It also seems to me that one of the evidences of the truth of Christianity is the fact that in spite of the shortcomings of nominal Christians, and in spite of the difficulties, Christianity is so steadily progressing.

I will now call upon some of the members to discuss the paper.

The SECRETARY.—Mr. Chairman, I referred to a letter that has been written by Lord Cromer. When I was reading the paper I thought it of such extreme interest that I cut it out and brought it with me. It is within the memory of most of us that the Soudan was added to the British Empire by the victory of Lord Kitchener at Omdurman, and it has been under the authority of a new Sirdar, Sir Reginald Wingate, whom I once had the pleasure of meeting and travelling with from Port Said to Alexandria. He is the right man for the position which he holds with credit to himself and with great advantage to the Empire. He and Lord Cromer have united in requesting the Church Missionary Society to send missionaries not to the Mahommedans, the fanatical Mahommedans of the Soudan, but to the regions beyond, to a very high race of heathen idolaters.

The letter from Lord Cromer is as follows:—

“CAIRO,

“23rd December, 1904.

“The Secretary,

“Church Missionary Society,

“London.

“Sir,

“I understand from Mr. MacInnes, Secretary of your Mission in Egypt, that you are desirous of obtaining an expression of my opinion as to the prospect of missionary work in the Soudan. In my Annual Report for 1902 (p. 60) I said that both Sir Reginald Wingate and myself were of opinion that the time is still distant when missionary work may with safety and advantage be promoted amongst the Moslem population. There was no objection to the establishment of Christian schools in Khartoum, provided that

parents were warned that instruction in the Christian religion was intended. This opinion remains unchanged. The case of the more southern provinces of the Soudan, which are inhabited by pagan population, is different. There is no reason for imposing any restraint upon Christianity there, and the Mission will be welcome. This is more especially the case as regards education. I venture to express the hope that in any work undertaken by your Society special attention will be paid to some simple forms of industrial and agricultural instruction.

“An American and Austrian mission have been established in the Soudan; one on the Sobat river and the other on the White Nile. The Austrian mission has established two mission stations in the district lying west of the Nile. I enclose for your information a map showing that a large and populous district is still neglected.

“From Twi the boundary line proceeds to the Abyssinian frontier, and then follows the frontier to the Uganda border on 5° N. latitude. On the south it is bounded by the northern border of the Congo Free State and the Uganda province; on the west by a line drawn from Mashraël Rek to a point where the frontiers of the Congo Free State and the French State and the Bahr-el-Ghazal meet. No permission as to establishing missionary centres will be given until a sufficient period has been allowed to elapse for your Society to consider whether it wishes to occupy the extensive field now thrown open to it. I should be glad to receive information on the subject. No information from private Societies has been received to establish schools at their own expense, but in order to avoid confusion it ought to be mentioned that should such requests be received they will be considered.

* * * * *

“Sir R. Wingate has seen this letter and fully agrees with all that I have said.”

Considering that this region borders on Uganda to the south and is connected with Egypt—by the Copts and Christians of the Nile—we should have, if this mission is established, a complete line of Christian missionary effort from the Cape to Cairo.

This is a most wonderful opening and one of great interest to us.

Mr. ROUSE.—While not being able otherwise than to rejoice in the growth and spread of Christianity, even though it be largely in

name, in the world, I cannot but disagree with the author in his statement that it might not have been spread long ago and that thus the purpose of God would long since have been achieved. He would have us believe that a definite time having been fixed by the Almighty for the advancement of human good, Christ could not have come again before the end of that time, and therefore it was not to be expected that the Gospel would have spread over the world till the end of that time. But we do find in the Scriptures that God modifies His plans. He would have had the Israelites enter Canaan in two years; and they came to the borders of Canaan within the second year: but, because they had not faith to enter the land, He compelled them to wander thirty-eight years more, until all that generation was wasted away, with the sole exception of the two believing spies and Eleazar the priest.

Again, when the Lord Jesus was on the earth, he spoke of John the Baptist as being Elias, and yet he said that Elias was to come and restore all things (Matt. xvii, 10-13, et pl. cp. Mal. iv, 5, 6). How are we to reconcile the two expressions? except that if the Jews had accepted John the Baptist as the man sent to prepare the way for the coming of the Lord, they then would have received Jesus as the King, and the Kingdom then would have been set up in the world (cp. Luke i, 17). So, too, just after His ascension, the apostles thus appealed to the Jews: "Repent . . . that the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord: and He shall send Jesus . . . whom the heavens must receive until the restoration of all things." (Acts iii, 19, 20, R.V.) Therefore, if they had then repented, "The restoration of all things," that is to say, the visible establishment of God's righteous kingdom over the whole earth, would then have taken place.

Nor can we suppose that God meant Christian men to stop their missionary efforts. The author makes a slip in saying that missionary efforts have never ceased. That is a mistake. McLearn, who, I judge, is a good authority on this subject, distinctly states in his book,* that from the time of the commencement of the Crusades down to the Reformation there was but one missionary; that was Raymond Lull, a man who received very little support

* *The Apostles of the Middle Ages.*

from the Church, but who bravely went thrice to preach to the Mahommedans, in Africa, and was finally martyred amongst them. There was one other whom McLearn does not mention who went all the way to China. But these were the only Roman Catholic missionaries through four centuries and a half.

I cannot agree that it was part of God's plan that the monks should remain in their cloisters, a few of them writing out the Scriptures in Greek and Latin and none doing anything towards spreading a knowledge of them. It required Wycliffe to come into the world and send out his bodies of good men, two by two, over the land, with copies of the Scriptures in their native language, before the word of God could be spread. And what did a leader of the Roman Catholic Church then say—that Wycliffe was casting his pearls before swine; and yet, as Milton remarks, if the Lollards had not been crushed, we should have been the foremost nation in the world in establishing the Reformation in Europe.

Yet, while the Western Church was apathetic, and while the monks in their cloisters were leading lives of little use, there was a body of Christians who were preaching to the heathen world, had ventured right into China, and in India and Burmah had become a great power, with a multitude of converts, but who were regarded by the Roman Catholics as heretics. These were the Nestorians, who have left a monument in Northern China dating from the sixth century. The mistake of the Nestorians, however, was that they did not translate the Bible into the language of the people. Had they done so, their work would have been permanent everywhere. In China there is not a vestige of it left.

Colonel Hendley has told us how Christian supremacy in India is destroying evil customs. We might allude to the customs that formerly prevailed and which the English government has suppressed—the burning of widows on the funeral pyres of their husbands, the drowning of children in the Ganges, the self-destruction of men beneath Juggernaut's car. It has also hindered the very early marriages of Hindus by raising the minimum of age by two years; and of course it has put down lawless crime and violence in all directions. Let us hope that it will succeed in doing a vast deal more. We may further allude to the fact that the English Government has encouraged and established leper hospitals and many institutions for the benefit both of mind and body in India; and undoubtedly

the Hindus in seeing these things cannot but conclude that Christianity is a true religion.

The pagans had no public hospitals or poor-houses or asylums for the advantage of the dumb, the blind, the lame and the insane such as we see spread over Christian countries ; still less any society such as Christian England set the example of founding for protecting poor animals.

Professor LANGHORNE ORCHARD.—Since “nature” and God’s spiritual kingdom are both under the same King, we shall agree with the author of this interesting paper that both may be expected to evidence a similar process of government and working. Undoubtedly, history brings before us “Purpose, Plan, Preparation, and fixed Times,” evident in the growth of the Kingdom of God. The instances adduced from prophecy and from general history abundantly illustrate this pre-arranged timing of events. In connection with the preparation of a “suitable cradle” for Christianity, it is very noticeable that Alexander the Great died just at a time so specially critical, and that Seleucus transplanted two thousand Jewish families into all the cities of his kingdom. Things like these, which cannot be accounted for by any theory of coincidence, constitute a strong, and indeed decisive, argument in favour of the author’s thesis.

I am glad that the author clearly affirms his belief in human free-will. Without free-will there cannot even be morality. God never over-rides free will. But, though He does not over-ride, He uses and over-rules it, to carry out His own purposes. If a statesman, gifted with the wisdom and insight of a Bismarck, could so correctly guess as to what men would do, as often to make their actions subserve his plans, can we find any difficulty in believing that the certain fore-knowledge and unerring wisdom of God employs and over-rules all results of human free-will ?

The great philosophies referred to by the author, reinforced, by the conclusions of the intellect, the conclusions of the heart. Their failure helped to prepare the way of the Lord.

After some observations by Colonel Alves, a cordial vote of thanks to the author was passed and the meeting separated.