

*P. Bates*  
*1 Aug 1842.*

TWO SERMONS

PREACHED AT KETTERING ON THE 31st OF MAY, AND THE  
1st OF JUNE, 1842,

BEFORE THE

BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

AT A  
SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING HELD IN CELEBRATION

OF ITS

FIFTIETH YEAR;

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE MEETING.

—

LONDON:

SOLD AT

THE SOCIETY'S HOUSE, 6, FEN COURT, FENCHURCH STREET;

AND BY

HOULSTON AND STONEMAN, 65, PATERNOSTER ROW.

—  
1842.

THE PRESENT POSITION OF THE MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE  
CONTRASTED WITH ITS COMMENCEMENT.

---

## A SERMON

PREACHED AT KETTERING, ON WEDNESDAY MORNING, JUNE 1, 1842.

BY THE

REV. EDWARD STEANE.

## A S E R M O N.

---

ISAIAH XL. 31.

*They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.*

It is the part of wisdom to converse with the past ; and scarcely less culpable is it than foolish to suffer the times in which we live to pass away without an attempt to rescue from oblivion the events and transactions by which they are marked. The divisions of time, the result, as they are, not of human but of divine arrangement, seem as though they were especially intended to aid us in our efforts. Devout men in every age, and the great instructors of mankind, have availed themselves of the periodical recurrence of remarkable epochs to review the course of providence, and to gather up and enforce the principles they have developed of the divine government, or the lessons they have taught of human duty.

The two faculties by which man as an intellectual creature is chiefly distinguished, are those by which he can identify himself at once with the past and the future. Memory enables him to retrace the steps of his earliest years, and, aided by history, he mingles with remote generations, calls up before him the men and the manners of former times, and lives amidst occurrences which transpired ages ago ; while imagi-

be changed, till it become instinct with the vital grace of the Spirit and refulgent with the beauties of holiness, the end may be considered certain when the first impulse has been effectively given. The insertion of the leaven secures the leavening of the whole mass.

These then, as it has occurred to me, are some of the points of view in which our position and capacities for missionary work may be advantageously contrasted with those of the men who commenced it. And if, in circumstances so dissimilar to our own, they, gathering on this hallowed spot, "solemnly agreed to act in society together for the purpose," and did so in the spirit of Carey's magnanimous principle—"Expect great things, and attempt great things," what ought not we to do? Here, while standing on the ashes of one of those holy men, and as if in the conscious presence of the glorified spirits of them all, we are ready, after their example, to devote ourselves afresh to this great service. We follow them to the altar of God, and lay our sacrifice where theirs was consumed; desiring nothing so much as that we may be counted worthy to tread in their footsteps, and, after a few more years of pleasurable toil in promoting the same cause, to unite with them in the everlasting anthem, "Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

## II.

If, then, having arrived at an epoch in our missionary history, we are now prepared to renew the conse-