

THE HEATHEN WORLD

AND THE
DUTY OF THE CHURCH

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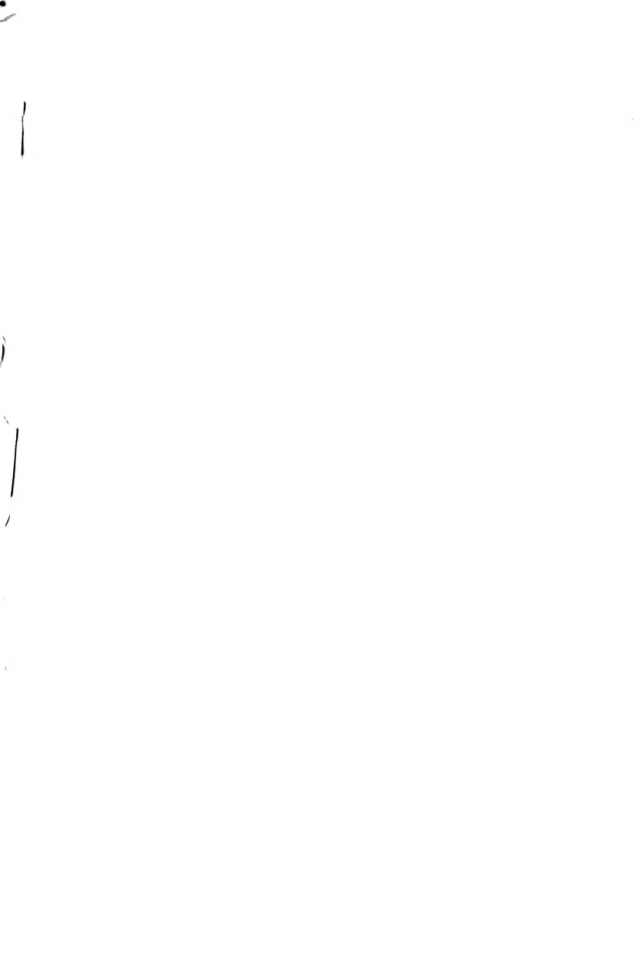




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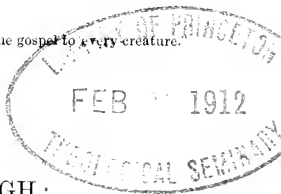
BY THE

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REV. ALEXANDER ROBB, A.M.,

MISSIONARY, OLD CALABAR,

AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF REV. W. JAMESON."

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."



EDINBURGH:

ANDREW ELLIOT, 15 PRINCES STREET.

1863.

PREFACE.

THE following thoughts and appeals are meant for the consciences and hearts of christians. If any of them be led to pray, to work, and to give more, that the gospel of the kingdom of heaven may soon be preached to every man, the Author's end will be gained. He deems it unnecessary to apologize for thus urging his fellow-christians to attempt vastly greater things, that Jesus may possess all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them. Were excuse needful, he would offer only this one, that, being on the eve of returning to the Coast of Guinea—spiritually one of the darkest, and to health one of the most unkindly, regions in the world—to labour with others in preaching Christ, he does not urge fellow-believers to make greater sacrifices for the glory of our Lord, than he himself is willing to make.

This little book has no pretension to literary excellence. And were it far better than it is, both in matter and execution, it would not make up for the want of earnest and faithful missionary teaching, on the part of the ministers of the churches. If it is as much the duty of a christian to publish, as it was, to receive, and as it is, to stand in, the gospel,—if it is as unchristian to be non-missionary as to be immoral,—if a church-member who does not all he can to evangelize the world, disobeys Christ, as much as one who breaks any other of His commands, then, the pulpit dare not overlook missions without keeping back part of the counsel of God, and a part, too, that is very profitable to believers in Jesus. Against some ministers there is brought a charge of keeping back vital *doctrine*. Are others not as guilty of keeping back paramount and pressing *duty*? The Author judges no man: He that judgeth us all is the Lord.

Such as it is, he commends his little volume to the friends of Christ, and seeks for it the approbation and blessing of the Great Master.

CONTENTS.

SECTION I.

	PAGE
THE CONDITION OF THE HEATHEN,	1

SECTION II.

NO SALVATION FOR THE HEATHEN WITHOUT THE GOSPEL,	23
---	----

SECTION III.

“CAN THESE BONES LIVE?”	56
-----------------------------------	----

SECTION IV.

THE WORK WITH WHICH THE LORD HAS CHARGED HIS PEOPLE ON EARTH,	70
--	----

SECTION V.

OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED,	127
----------------------------------	-----

SECTION I.

THE CONDITION OF THE HEATHEN.

IN estimating the vile, sunk, and wretched moral condition of the heathen, it matters not whether we look to China, Japan, Burmah, or Hindostan, lands in which a barbaric civilization has existed alongside of the most childish superstition, or to Africa, whose negro tribes have, since the days of their father Ham, kept on sinking, from age to age, unaided, until now a dreary and bloody fetichism has swallowed up all, and made them the lowest of beings that are called men. Look where we will in heathen lands, we behold the same ghastly scene of death—the same vision of dry bones—and infidelity, in a tone of mockery, and piety, in a tone of sadness, together exclaim, “Can these bones live?” Those who have *seen* what heathens are, do not wonder either that the unbeliever mocks, or that the christian, now and then, loses hope of their conversion from sin to

God. We must take God's lamp in our hands, and go down into the pit in which they lie in death and darkness, and there see with our own eyes, and hear with our own ears, before we can know the length, and breadth, and height, and depth of heathen wickedness and misery.

One element in the misery of the heathen is their ignorance of all that is needful for well-being and well-doing.

A creature of God is necessarily unhappy, if he do not know his father who made, who owns, who upholds him, and with whom he has so much to do. The very soul and body, the very ground and top of man's happiness, in this world and in the world to come, yea, all that is folded up in the words 'eternal life,' is to "know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent." The want of this knowledge is to man what the want of sunlight would be to the earth—darkness and death.

Look, then, at a heathen tribe on the coast of Africa. They have a native name for the Supreme, by which they swear, not so much in solemn, formal oath, as in common talk or sport, just as bad men in christian lands take the holy name in vain. Now and then, they pray to this name for some

earthly good on which their hearts are set. But they know nothing aright of what God is in himself, or of what they have to do with him, or of any of his laws. In their fables they ignorantly speak of him who is great, holy, just, and good, as if he were like themselves, as married and having children, as engaged in trade, as being jealous, revengeful, lustful, and unjust. The closest search discovers not a trace of trust in, or love to, or fear of, our heavenly Father, who is light, and love, and truth. In these fables they speak of one God who surpasses all, and of others who are less mighty, less wealthy, and, therefore, of less importance, bearing to the former the same relation that a poor and powerless man bears to a man of rank and influence. Their fancy peoples the

“Forest, and slow stream, and pebbly spring,
And chasms, and watery depths,”

the creek, the palm-shaded dell, and spreading tree, with beings whom they more dread, and from whom they look for greater good, than the Supreme.

The heathen do not know, and they are very unwilling to believe, that God takes anything to do with what befalls them. They put the fetich in his place, to it look for help, from it dread evil,

to it pay homage: and thus fetichism is one of the lowest kinds of idolatry. They do not know the providence of our Father, who "giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens that cry," who "opens his hand, and satisfies the desire of every living thing." The malady, which threatens them with death, and has arisen from their own sensuality, or from old age, they trace not to the hand of God, who has bound all effects to their own causes, and leaves man, made in his own image, a free choice to do or not to do; but to the charm, or to some secret power, as witchcraft, derived from an evil source, and used for evil ends. Error and ignorance thus lead to crime and cruelty, which could not exist under the light of truth.

Need we add that the heathen know nothing of the truth about the future world? They expect to live in a disembodied state, but very much as they live here. In the town of the dead they will marry, eat, drink, trade, and play; perhaps they will be born again, and come back new men. None more firmly believe in the life after death; but of the Bible hell with its woe, and pain, and dark despair, and of the Bible heaven with its holiness, and joy, and endless safety, they have no knowledge.

The people of that part of Africa of which we speak, have no trace of a thought that their future destiny is shaped by their character and life. And hence their ideas of the unseen world, so far from checking vice and fostering virtue, lead to some of their bloody and inhuman customs.

And how can it be otherwise? How can it be better with men in such circumstances? Dark, indeed, must a people be who inherit the gathered darkness of all the generations before them. The very light that is in them being darkness, cannot give forth one ray to guide them aright. Unless light dawn upon them from without, by the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, their night must deepen into thicker gloom. Left to themselves, heathens can only lose, but never gain any religious ideas that are true. Their death-sleep can but wax deeper and deeper, from age to age, unless Jehovah's voice arouse them, and the Spirit of life enter into their souls.

The character of men thus ignorant of God and of all truth is just what we must look for in such a case.

Heathenism is a school in which man's heart, a quick scholar, learns

“Sly circumvention, unrelenting hate,
Mean self-attachment, and scarce aught besides.”

What wonder, then, that the children of Ham, in their wanderings from the first abodes of the human family, soon became wholly idolatrous, and, as they spread westward and southward across the continent, waxed more ignorant and more wicked, until now it is vain to search for anything but the faintest lines of the law written on their hearts!

God's own picture of the heathen is at once deeply humbling and true to the life:—"The fool hath said in his heart, *There is no God.* They are corrupt: they have done abominable works: *there is none that doeth good.* The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, *and seek God.* They are all gone aside, they are *all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*"*

And, again, see in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans a picture of heathenism from the pencil of inspiration, and as life-like to-day, as it was when first drawn. The heathen heart, with all its affections, and passions, and appetites—with all its active powers—is evil, wholly and for ever evil. It is, and cannot but be, a habi-

* Psalm xiv. 1—3.

tation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, swayed by evil lusts, given up to vile affections.

“Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness : full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity : whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful.”*

And the same is the tenor of the following:—
“This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind: having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: who, being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.”†

The testimony of the Lord is true, that the only things which the heathen care about are, “What shall we eat? What shall we drink? What shall we put on?” It is truly so. Meat, drink,

* Rom. i. 29—31.

† Eph. iv. 17-19.

and covering—the things that affect only the body—are the objects of their chief concern.

In the heathen waste we search in vain for one flower of heaven, one tree of God's planting, one fruit of holiness. There is little that wears even the likeness of virtue. When theft and lying are condemned, it is not because they are evil in the sight of God, but rather because they are hurtful to those who suffer by them. Among heathens "all men are liars." Selfishness is the soul of the little that looks like virtue. Lust and blood, lies and selfishness thus mark heathen society beyond what can be conceived or told. The purity and truthfulness, the love of fellowmen, and the regard for human life, which always belong to a godly character, are unknown, and the richest graces would not be admired unless they were the sources of earthly advantage. True godliness we should no more expect to find in the heathen heart, than we should expect to find corn and wine in a salt and desert land. This arises not from ignorance alone, but from depravity, from hatred to the purest and the best of beings. They do not like to keep him in their knowledge. When the missionary tells them of the love and holiness of the true God, they do not welcome

the discovery. If their thoughts can be drawn, for a little, from the earthly and the sensual to the word of God, the truth about him sounds in their ears as a worthless fable. A trinket or a toy charms them infinitely more than the doctrine of the great I AM, with whom they have evermore to do.

It is true that ungodliness is not peculiar to heathens, but is common to men in all ages and in every clime. It is the distinguishing feature of unrenewed man, whether civilized or barbarous. Mere outward polish, or good breeding, or mental training, makes no unregenerate man less ungodly. But yet the ungodliness of the heathen is peculiarly striking: for in them it is not mitigated by the presence of truth as taught and exemplified by any who are truly godly.

While we are thus forced to use the darkest colours in drawing a true picture of the ignorance and depravity of the heathen, yet must we remark that there are among them some traces of better things. There are everywhere the notion of justice and injustice, the feeling of pity, parental affection, the love of approbation, the sentiment of friendship, and sorrow for the dead. O yes, the worst of these ignorant and depraved beings are

men. They have all the appetites, passions, and affections that belong to the essence of man. But these their active powers are under the sway of the flesh and the devil, and bring forth only the fruits of the flesh.

Look now at the every-day life of these heathens. This is the outcoming of what is in them—the united effect of their ignorance and depravity. So far are they from being ruled by God's will, holy, just, and good, that sin is their obedience; wickedness, their religion; the vices, their virtues; the devil, their god. Crimes of the deepest dye have lost the hue of crime in their eyes; and customs intensely inhuman and wicked, are not only not disallowed, but are even practices of their daily life. We must not weary the reader with a long tale of heathen horrors gathered from all the dark places of the earth, as these have been told by faithful eye-witnesses. A few specimens from the land of Ham will suffice for our present purpose.

The belief in witchcraft is universal throughout Africa. Every person believes that by an evil power, which one may have without knowing it, health, prosperity, or life may be destroyed. And so thoroughly has Satan blinded their minds, that calamity, disease, and death are generally ascribed

to the malice of enemies working through this evil power, or through charms, in the might of which the utmost confidence is placed.

An African chief died in May, 1861, the victim of intemperance and impurity. His brother had become hopelessly idiotic. When the former died, one of his sisters accused another sister of the double crime of destroying the life of the one brother, and the reason of the other, by a secret evil power akin to that which was believed to belong to witches in the dark days of now enlightened Britain. The accused was forced to clear herself by an ordeal. The substance used for this purpose is a deadly poison. And it is believed that, if the accused has the evil thing within, this substance will destroy both him and it, but if he has it not, he will certainly escape unhurt. Those who are thus tried generally perish, as did the poor woman above-mentioned, who was, therefore, accounted guilty.

A heathen father, child of dark superstition, is sick. His disease is old age, or, perhaps, his own debaucheries are breaking him up. He clings to life: for although there is little in a heathen's present life that is desirable, there is yet less in his future, and no wonder that he shrinks from

the dread leap into the black abyss. He tries the native doctor, and after spending much, finds himself no better. Dark thoughts enter his mind. Who is it that is draining the life out of him? Perhaps suspicion arises that his own son has set greedy eyes on his father's property. He must, therefore, face the ordeal, and that heathen father will cause it to be administered. O, what a devil's engine is this! How ready a handle does it afford to revenge, and jealousy, and other evil passions! A barbarian, bent on being the first man in his native town, has been known, by means of this ordeal, to rid himself of those whose rivalry he feared. He charged them with having caused the death of his predecessor, they had to undergo the ordeal, and care was taken to make it fatal. A town has been almost unpeopled on the death of its chief, so many were thus accused and tried. While they profess to believe that the poison ordeal is an impartial inquisitor, judge, and executioner, and that it certainly leaves the innocent unharmed, yet they well know its death-dealing power, and the darker spirits among them do not scruple to use it for the purpose of wilful murder. A chief does not get that respect which he claims from a fellow-townsmen. The latter is summoned

before his peers. The poison is given him as a *quietus*, and if he vomit it, he is otherwise put to death.

Among Africans there is also a firm belief in the power of charms. Charms may be seen everywhere, on the person, in the yard, in the market-square, at the places where paths meet, in the provision field, about the canoe, hanging on the fruit tree, at the river's bank, and at the fountain. They have various forms, according to the purpose in view, whether to cure or to kill, to shield from harm or cause injury, to secure profit in trade, or plenty in the farm, or success in hunting and fishing, or victory in war, or protection to a house while its owners are absent, or to a fruit tree from plunderers. All Africans believe in the power of charms, and all trust and fear them. This is a puerile and pestilent superstition. It is idolatry, for it puts what the Bible calls a nothing in the place of the great I AM, and gives to that nothing His glory and His praise. We find even the more intelligent Africans, who are, to some extent, freed from other superstitions, firmly possessed with the fear of the charm. They fancy that they have seen instances of its deadly power. This arises, we think, from the fact that

poison is, sometimes, given to persons against whom charms are made; and the fatal issue, which is really due to the poison, is put to the credit of the charm. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that all are afraid of the charm doctor, seeing that he is also a poisoner.

Those who procure charms against the life or health of others, are frequently put to death. The victims of this superstition must be myriad in dark Ethiopia. In some places, even children are killed. In the year 1860, the writer visited the island of Corisco. Accompanying an American Missionary brother to his station, we saw a little African girl greet him very affectionately on our arrival. He told us her history. She had been accused of witchcraft, and doomed, child as she was, to die by violence. Our brother, hearing of this, went and ransomed her life by a payment in goods, and but for his timely interference, she would certainly have been another victim of this African Moloch. How unspeakably mournful is the condition into which men sink when left without the lamp of life!

There are those, in our day, who for these and kindred barbarities, would root uncivilized tribes out of the earth. How awfully like one another

all men are ! There are civilized men who would surpass even barbarians in barbarity ! What if all nations that have ever been under the sway of bloody superstition, had been swept away by their superiors in knowledge and power ! Is it in our day, when humanity and religion are favoured to gain wider and nobler triumphs than ever before, heralding Christ's world-wide reign, and showing us the path of progress, that, in this Christian Britain, men are found harbouring and uttering hate like this, men who would let slip the hell-hounds of extermination on any, even the lowest of our fellow-men ? Let those who are of such a mind tell us their names, and they will be the abhorrence of every human heart. Such sentiments as these we not unfrequently find in our current literature ; but we are willing to believe that those who hold them are few, and we are sure the day is coming when they will be looked upon as monsters of inhumanity.

Are we to forget the dark and even bloody superstitions of our own forefathers ? How easy would it be to match not a few African barbarities from the history of Great Britain, as, for instance, the treatment of persons accused of witchcraft. In 1708, a poor woman, Elspet Rule, was tried for

witchcraft before the Court of Justiciary, at Dumfries, found guilty by a majority of the jury, sentenced to be branded on the cheek, and banished Scotland for life. Is it to be forgotten that the last witch-burning in England took place in 1716, and the last in Scotland, in 1722 ; and that it was not till 1735 that the penal statutes against witchcraft were repealed ?* It is thus only 140 years since in the foremost nation in the world human life ceased to be sacrificed to a cruel and childish superstition. While we see a once degraded people, and these our own forefathers, rising out of dark and heathenish superstition, lighted onwards to humanity, justice, intelligence, and peace, by the glorious gospel of the blessed God ; let us magnify the grace that makes us to differ ; let us prize more highly the priceless benefits which God has bestowed on us through the gospel ; and let us be sure that the same grace can, by the same gospel, raise and save the whole of mankind. The superstitions of Africans, at this day, are the growth of four thousand years, during which, we may say, no voice from heaven has fallen on their ears, although God may have kept them from being worse than they are. The superstitions of Britain and the

* Pictorial History of Scotland, ii. 340, 958—966.

cruelties to which they led, existed among a people that had for many centuries been nominally christian and civilized.

Of some other heathen practices let us take a short notice ; and let the reader observe that these are the fruits of ignorance and error, which the word of God alone can remove.

In September, 1858, the Mission family in an African town were alarmed near the hour of midnight, by the arrival of several native women in breathless terror. For a time, they could not tell the cause of their terror, although their very faces shewed that some appalling event had taken place. At length, one of them faltered out that the chief was dead. The chief who had just expired was the master of several thousand slaves. The news of his death spread like wild-fire ; and all these slaves banded themselves together, as one man, for their own protection. Of all whom the chief had called his own, only a few remained to dig his grave, and these few were, all but one, new converts to Christianity, whose conversion had, at first, been far from pleasing to him.

What was the cause of that turmoil and terror? Why were the slaves of an African chief dismayed at his death, when the decease of a European ruler

causes not the shadow of a fear? They feared lest an old and well-known custom should be followed in this case; lest hundreds of themselves should be butchered in cold blood to go with their dead master to the world of spirits, and serve him there as they served him here. Not knowing the unseen world, which the Bible alone reveals, the heathen think that it resembles this world, and that they shall live there as they live here. Their valuables are put into the coffin; friends bring presents of cloth and ornaments to bury in the grave; several slaves are picked out to be killed; and thus the dead man takes with him, or has sent after him, the best of his possessions. It is hardly correct to call the persons thus slaughtered human sacrifices. In this practice there is nothing of the nature of a sacrifice, beyond the killing. The idea is that the dead man, still alive, has the best right to what he owned while here, and should get at least a good share thereof, that he may have plenty and honour among the separated spirits. Ignorance and error about the future state lie at the root of this custom, and it has become fixed by the lapse of time. It is a usage that came down from the dim and distant past, all follow it, and fashion and custom are less powerful in civil-

ized countries than among the tribes of Negroland. Pride and dislike of change make them cling to the ways of their forefathers, even after they hear the truth. But the Spirit of the God of love, who has promised these tribes to the kingdom of his Son, can renew their hearts, and lead them into the light and love of heaven.

Again : * We are entering an African river that stretches wide between its low, tree-fringed banks. As we ascend, we may see canoes sailing along, with flags flying, and we hear the song of the paddlemen, and the beat of the African drum. In one of these canoes sits a woman, dressed and adorned in barbaric style. By and by, she is tossed into the stream, and the canoes pull off, leaving her a prey to the sharks. Why is this? Is this woman a criminal, that she suffers a fate so horrible? Nay : superstition claims another victim. The African values the white man's trade. He thinks that his river god can bring the white man's ship, with its stores of wealth, to his country. And this is a gift to please the deity of the stream, that he may use his power on behalf

* This is not an every-day occurrence ; but that this custom is followed in most, if not in all, the trading rivers, we have convincing evidence.

of the givers. The poor woman herself is taught to look upon her fate as a matchless honour. She believes that she is to be the wife of the *idem* or *juju*,* and, as his partner, have store of wealth. It is said, that, under this belief, and intoxicated with rum, some cheerfully submit to this horrible fate.

Again : What unusual noise is this that greets the ear, in the softening glare of the evening sun, as we look from the Mission House on the native village below ? The telescope shews men in disguise running about, each with a sharp weapon in his hand. What means this ? A man is about to be killed. What has he done ? Nothing whatever ; he is guilty of no crime for which he ought to die. A freeman of the country has broken a law, and the penalty is death. But a freeman's blood must not flow, unless for another freeman's blood that has been shed. And this is the substitute of the offender. The victim is a slave ; white men have taught the African that a slave is nothing, or, at best, only like any other property which a man buys with his money ; and

* *Ju-ju* and *I-dem* (Dem-on?) are different names for the tutelary gods in whose existence Africans believe.

heathen custom allows him to give a fellow-man to die in his room.

Or we are sailing along a creek, and hear a wailing in the bush, a cry of human anguish. Turning aside to see the cause, we behold a woman and two infants bound to a tree. This is a mother, and these are her twin babes. Superstition teaches them that the birth of twins is a calamity, and among some tribes, requires the death of both mother and infants, while among others, the infants only are exposed, and the mothers are banished from town and market, and made to live by themselves. This inhuman custom prevails among the tribes in the Delta of the Niger, from the Old Calabar river on the east, to Lagos on the west. The birth of twins among them, and the dread of twins, lead to untold crimes of the darkest hue.

We need not dwell on the subject of this section, and speak of the almost utter absence of the charities that sweeten life, of the treatment of woman, of social pollutions, of slavery, of wrongs done by the strong to the weak, of the hard lot of many orphans and sick persons. Some of these crimes and evils, being as they are the fruits of human selfishness, are too common among the

civilized ; but if they are so bad where heavenly wisdom lifts her voice to rebuke them, what misery do they cause where Satan has his seat ! Deeply sunk, in themselves helpless, the heathen find no light and no aid in their heathen state, and they seek none ; yet eloquent should their very silence be in the ears of christian love. Their condition itself is reason enough why the people of God should go and help them.

SECTION II.

NO SALVATION FOR THE HEATHEN WITHOUT THE GOSPEL.

THERE are conscientious men who shrink from this view ; there are others who denounce it. Though we believe that the Word of God favours it, and not the opposite, we may fail in convincing those who think otherwise. But if, however some good men are unwilling to take it into their creed, all good men would make it the rule and motive of their practice ; would they act as if it were true, and give, and work, and pray for the spread of the gospel, as if it were certain that no heathen can be saved without it, we should not be very much disappointed even at failing in our argument. We do not purpose to enter into a full discussion of this subject, but only to present a few thoughts, with the desire to urge upon christian readers the practical conclusion just mentioned, that they should seek to spread the

gospel with the same zeal as if the very words at the head of this section were to be found in the Bible.

This passage in the tenth chapter of Romans, seems to take the peril of the heathen for granted : —“For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek ; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed ? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard ? and how shall they hear without a preacher ? And how shall they preach except they be sent ? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things !” * Whoever, be he Jew or Greek, believes in, and applies to, God, “shall be saved.” To restore men to a willing obedience to God is the aim and end of the Saviour’s great enterprise. Men must yield to God’s way of saving, and of their own free choice apply to him. It does not seem to be

* Rom. x. 11-15.

God's plan to save creatures who have chosen evil, except by bringing them, through "the working of the might of his power,"* to make an equally hearty choice of that which is good. This passage is plain ; no calling on God, no salvation ; no faith in the gospel, no calling on God ; no hearing of the gospel, no faith in it ; no preaching of the gospel, no hearing of it. And, therefore, unless the gospel be preached, millions must be shut out from the only way of salvation. "And how shall they preach except they be sent?" Does not this take for granted that the state of men without the gospel is perilous? And does it not bring the responsibility to the door of every christian, who, having the gospel, can send it to every creature? Says Richard Hooker: "Life and salvation God will have offered unto all ; his will is that Gentiles should be saved as well as Jews. Salvation belongeth unto none but such 'as call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,' which nations as yet unconverted neither do, nor possibly can do, till they believe. What they are to believe, impossible it is they should know till they hear it. Their hearing requireth our preaching

* Eph. i. 19.

unto them. Sith there is no likelihood that ever voluntarily they will seek instruction at our hands, it remaineth that, unless we will suffer them to perish, salvation itself must seek them, it behoveth God to send them preachers, as he did his elect Apostles throughout the world.”*

The Saviour’s account of salvation runs thus : “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”† Must we not gather from this that ignorance of God and of Christ is death eternal, unless there are two ways to eternal life, one for those who have revelation, and another for those who have it not, because the Church has not yet bestowed it on them? These words teach that salvation is applied to sinners by a process in which they are brought to *know* God. If this do not convince believers that heathens cannot be saved without the gospel, it will weigh much with them ; it will be considered a strong reason why they should seek to multiply the agencies for spreading the gospel, with as much zeal as if the peril of the heathen were more distinctly stated in the Bible.

* Ecclesiastical Polity, Book v., chap. xxii. 9.

† John xvii. 3.

Again : “Where there is no vision, the people perish : but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.”* Vision means divine revelation. The word, which is translated “perish,” may be otherwise rendered ; but still the great fact lies on the face of the passage, that there is a gulph fixed between the condition of those who have the Word of God, and those who have it not. Says Hooker : “The people which have no way to come to the knowledge of God, no prophesying, no teaching, perish.”† Dr. Wardlaw, commenting on this verse, says that the spirit of the passage “demonstrates and impresses the necessity of divine revelation ; the need in which men universally stand of it ; seeing *even with it*—even where it exerts all its restraining power—men continue in their state of apostacy and rebellion.”‡

Again : § “For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law.” The law here is the *written law*, the will of God as revealed in the Scriptures, and, in that age, revealed to the Jews only, and those who learned it from them. This says that the sinner shall perish, whether he have the Bible or not, whether he

* Prov. xxix. 18.

† Eccles. Pol. v. xxii. 11.

‡ Lectures on Proverbs *in loco*.

§ Rom. ii. 12.

live amid the christian homes and churches of Britain, or the heathen hovels and temples of India, or the juju sheds of Africa. But it also declares that the punishment shall be as the privilege. The heathen sinner is not so great a sinner, and he shall not be so great a sufferer, as those who have the Bible, and love the darkness rather than the light, and neglect so great salvation. But, nevertheless, to “perish” is the fate of the heathen sinner. His want of revelation does not render him meritorious, does not cancel his guilt, does not make him pleasing to God. His doom shall not be measured out by the written law; he shall not be punished for refusing to obey the gospel which the lukewarmness or slothfulness of the church permitted him not to hear. He shall perish “without law,”—“shall be tried, condemned, and punished, not according to a law which he has never possessed, but according to the general principles illustrated in the latter part of the first chapter, and repeated, in the substance and spirit of them, in the fourteenth and fifteenth verses of the second chapter.”* The doom of the heathen shall be perfectly, unimpeachably right-

* Dr. Wardlaw, Lectures on Romans, *in loco*.

eous. But still perdition, and not salvation, is their lot, unless it can be shown that they are not sinners, or that superstition, idolatry, cruelty, and every vice, are not sinful in them; or that their want of the Bible makes their wickedness to be no wickedness.

It is hardly worth while to notice an assertion frequently made in connection with this subject, and with the view of shedding a ray of the light of hope on the dark destiny of the heathen. It is said that those of them who act up to the light which they have, and do good according to the measure of their knowledge of what good is, must be proper objects of divine mercy, and we cannot believe that they perish. It is hardly worth while to examine this assertion, we say, because we have no proof, either in Scripture, or from experience, that any do good, in the estimate of God, who are not previously made good by the "renewing of the Holy Ghost." Nay, this matter is for ever settled by the unerring and righteous judgment of God: "There is none that doeth good, no not one." In the words of Dr. Sibbes, "This is an undoubted truth, *no man ever lived answerable to his rule*; and, therefore, God hath just ground of damnation to any man, even for

this, that he hath not lived answerable to the rule of his own conscience.”* Dr. Owen also puts it down as indisputable, that pagans never obeyed or served God according to the measure of the knowledge which they had or might have had, and, therefore, they are without excuse. †

We add, further, that if the moral state of the heathen be as we have feebly described it in the first section, then they have not the holiness which fits a man for heaven, and “without which no man shall see the Lord;” and they lack the means by which alone God makes men holy, viz., “the truth,” by which the Holy Spirit purifies the hearts of true believers, and prepares them for the place which their Saviour has prepared for them. Speaking of the salvation of heathens, Peter said that “God put no difference between us (Jewish Christians) and them (Gentiles), purifying their hearts by the faith.” ‡ Read along with this the 11th verse of the same chapter: “But we believe that, through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved, even as

* Sibbes' Works, Vol. i. 389. Nichol's Series.

† Theologoumena, p. 62. Johnstone and Hunter's edition.

‡ Acts xv. 9.

they,"* where "even as they" means not merely *as well as*, but *in the same manner as*† they. Peter, doubtless, meant to say that God did not prefer Jews to Gentiles in the matter of salvation, but his words imply that God's mode of saving, of purifying the heart, of making the sinner meet for heaven, is the same for all, and that, if we except infants and innocents, no one is sanctified, unless the truth, which is called the faith, is received and held by faith.

Another and weighty reason in support of the proposition, "No salvation for the heathen without the gospel," is furnished by the manner in which the Epistles speak of the early Christians. Before they were made Christians they were inexpressibly degraded and utterly unfit for true happiness, whether they were born Jews or Heathens. They had been serving the devil and the flesh; they had made a narrow escape from everlasting destruction; they had been on the road to hell; and the gospel had brought them into light and life. In that most humbling account of man in the second chapter of Paul's epistle to the Ephesians,‡ the peril of the heathen is taken for granted.

* Acts xv. 11.

† καθ' ὃν τρόπον κακένοι.

‡ Eph. ii. 1-3.

Speaking of Jewish believers, he says, "We were by nature the children of wrath even as others." "It is every man's case," saith he. He had parted it before ; some things he had said of the Gentiles : 'You'—you Gentiles—'hath he quickened, who were dead in sins and trespasses, wherein in time past ye walked.' Some things likewise he had said of Jews : 'Amongst whom we'—we Jews—'also had our conversation.' But now, in the close of all, he puts them both, Jews and Gentiles, together : 'and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.'" Again : "Others are children of wrath, so are we, we Jews, even as the profanest men in the world."* In the letter to another church in which there were Gentile converts—the church at Colosse—the following words occur :— "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth ; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry : For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience. In the which ye also walked sometimes, when ye lived in them."† The "children of dis-

* Works of Thomas Goodwin, D.D., vol. ii. 114. Nichol's Standard Divines.

† Col. iii. 5—7. The following also bear on this point : 1 Cor. vi. 9—11 ; 1 Pet. iv. 3 ; Col. i. 21 ; 1 Thes. iv. 5.

obedience" include all sinners, heathens, as well as wicked men in a land like ours ; the former as well as the latter are exposed to the "wrath of God ;" and we must conclude that, inasmuch as the heathens of those days were saved by means of the gospel alone, those of our days are not saved without it. If the polished Heathens of Athens, Corinth, and Rome, as well as the barbarous Scythians, nineteen centuries ago, were perishing before they heard and obeyed the gospel, how can any dream that the tribes of Negroland, and the people of India and China, who are as wicked, at least, and as destitute of "the lamp of life," are not in peril of the same perdition ?

Further, even the heathen love their darkness. They are not merely the children of misfortune. When the missionary tells them the story of a living Saviour, and preaches to them in his name, salvation and eternal life, without money and without price, they scorn the message, and infinitely prefer the veriest trifle which the messenger can give them. One Lord's day, the author had gone to an African village, where he was not a stranger. After he had spoken to the people, one stood up and said:—"You always come to speak words to us, words, words, nothing but

words. We do not care for your words. If you would bring something to sell to us, that we should like." The same desperate wickedness and supreme deceitfulness of heart, the same enmity to God, the same dislike of his authority, the same unbelief of the record which he gave of his Son, the same callousness to his love, the same fixed ungodliness, which hinder men of all ranks and classes in Britain from obeying the gospel, also mark the heathen everywhere, and, if possible, in a greater degree. An African—a sharp, decided man—who had learned enough to be able to speak about the matter, once said to the author:—"I know the laws of God (going over the ten commandments), and think some of them good. 'Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not covet.' These I like: they are good laws. But others I do not like. They may do for white men, but we cannot obey them." In a thousand ways, by actual contact with the heathen mind, and by experience of its earthliness and ungodliness, the missionary knows that heathens are, like unconverted hearers of the gospel, unwilling to have their hearts broken for sin and from sin, and to yield themselves up unto God in holy obedience to his blessed will. And as no hearer of the gospel can escape perdi-

tion but by a real and entire submission to Jesus Christ as his Saviour, so that his whole body, mind, and spirit may be made perfectly holy, no more can a heathen who also, and 'not less, hates God and his law be regarded as a child of mercy, unless he become one in the ordinary way.

In the Bible we have the feeling with which God looks on the wickedness of those who are "without the law," "The wicked shall be turned into hell, even all the nations that forget God."* Heathen idolatry incurs the heaviest guilt. It is absurd and wholly inexcusable. Heathens allow that God is their Maker; "Even some of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring."† If we, men, are his offspring, what folly, yea, what wickedness is it to think that our Father God "is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device!"‡ "They that make them are like unto them; *so is* every one that trusteth in them."§ The attentive reader of that satire on idolatry—that always and everywhere true picture of heathen wickedness, in the 44th chapter of Isaiah,—must admit that such utter perversion of reason and high-handed insult to Jehovah's Godhead, are worthy of his wrath, and that such of-

* Ps. ix. 17. † Acts xvii. 28. ‡ *Ibid.* § Ps. cxv. 8.

fenders must lie under heavy guilt. They have mind, they know that every effect has a cause, and, therefore, from the creation of the world God's eternal power and Godhead ought to have been clearly seen, and idolatry ought to have been impossible. They have been, and are without excuse. Idolatry caricatures Jehovah in the most revolting manner ; and no length of time can soften or remove one of its hideous features, or make it other than an abomination in his sight. For ever must the idolater be an outcast and a wretch until he is turned from these vanities or nothings to the only living God. It is harder for us to believe that one who lives and dies an idolater shall be admitted into heaven, than that Divine righteousness and goodness require him to be placed in an abode more suited to his character and history.

We are, indeed, handling an awful subject. It has depths we cannot fathom, and heights we cannot scale, and a darkness we cannot pierce. All that the author aims at is to get christian men to see that the teaching of the scriptures forces, or at least, favours, rather than gainsays the conclusion : "No salvation for heathens without the gospel." We see no ground for the opposite view in the Word of God. We fear not the difficulties

with which it brings us face to face, or the charge that it seems to impeach the justice and goodness of God. All these will at length be cleared up; and, hereafter, we shall know that which we know not now. It is our duty, Christian reader, humbly to receive our Father's word, to obey our Father's command; and if *we* cannot fully meet every charge that is thoughtlessly or wickedly brought against his character and government, he himself will answer it in his own time and way.

The necessity of personal holiness, in order to our seeing God—a holiness which God himself produces by his Word and Spirit—the chosen and cherished ignorance, depravity, and wickedness of all heathens, without exception, and the fact that one must know Christ, and apply to him, in order to be saved, force us to this conclusion, at least, as a ground of christian action in spreading the gospel, that those sinners in China, Hindostan, Africa, and how many other places! who are at this day unblest with the gospel, are being destroyed for lack of knowledge.

This can be met only by supposing that God somehow reveals the way of life to the heathen, and saves them, without their knowing it. We limit not his power and wisdom. Far be it from

us to speak oracularly upon this subject, and to pronounce authoritatively that God does not save heathens in some way unknown to us. We only hold that the people of Christ ought to spread the gospel with the same earnestness and enthusiasm as if they were perfectly sure that no person able to know good and evil can escape without it. Yonder is the stranded ship, and the shivering crew are gathered on its deck, helpless and despairing. Here, Christians, are you with the life-boat which can live in any sea, if you have but the faith to man it. Other life-boat there is none; other means of escape earth knows not of, and heaven has not revealed. To what conclusion are you shut up? Either to man your boat—Heaven's own—and push off to save them, or belie your profession. Woe to you, if your earthly, slothful, selfish, craven spirit permit you either to look with unconcern on the scene of death before you, or put your hands into your gloves, and with easy conscience march away to the comfort of your own firesides. A wretch, and not a christian, must he be, who, called to such a rescue, and having the heaven-prepared means of achieving it in his hands, can think of his indifference, and not feel a sting in his conscience, and not, as it were, for ever hear

ringing in his ears the dying curses of those whom he allowed to perish. Can he really comfort himself with the thought that God may save them otherwise? Woe is unto us if we fail to preach the gospel, on the bare possibility that God will save the heathen without it—a possibility for which we find not the shadow of a warrant in His Word. We see them following their dark course to their latest breath, debauched, debased, idolatrous, shedding the blood of brother men with as little concern as the blood of a dog, enslaving one another, and without a shade of moral purity. We see them thus on the brink of eternity. We behold them thus die. And shall we cling to that dream—without one atom of Bible evidence—that, just in the article of death, God pardons them, and makes them, although tenfold children of hell, and all unconscious of a ray from heaven, meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; saves them just on the confines of the invisible world, or rather *within* its confines, and never gives one of them a moment to say, “Come, my son, or brother, and I will tell you what the true God has done for my soul!” Christians! beware lest you soothe your consciences with this delusion, while you supinely sit at ease, neglecting, or but

coldly executing, the great commission of the Lord: "Preach the gospel to every creature."

The chief objection to the view held in this section, "No salvation for the heathen without the gospel," is, that it clashes with our so-called native ideas of the justice and goodness of God. By some, who hold their own instincts to be more trustworthy than the word of Him who can neither err nor lie, this view, and our advocacy of it, will be unsparingly denounced. We are not careful to answer them, as our anxiety is to deal with the conscience of the true people of God, to whose charge the spreading of the gospel has been divinely committed. We wish that at least they should all think thus: "It may be so; there is reason to fear that the heathen *are* in peril of perdition; the balance of Scripture testimony leans in that direction; if they are safe, well; but if they are not (and we are far from sure that they are), what shall we say to our Lord, and what shall we say to ourselves, when the light of eternity bursts in upon us, and the only time when *we* can work for the salvation of the heathen has for ever passed, if we leave millions of our fellow-men to the mercy of a baseless peradventure?" Let us spread the gospel of the kingdom with as much

zeal and as much self-denial as if we saw it written with a sunbeam on the sky, 'No soul in heathendom can escape but by the gospel door! Christians, to the rescue!'

The objection to which we refer may be variously answered. But we content ourselves with the following. If to allow the heathen to perish in their darkness, and to drive them away in their wickedness, to learn of hell by awaking amid its horrors, and of heaven by seeing it afar off, beyond the fixed and impassable gulf—if this clash with the goodness and justice of Jehovah—if you, Reader, make a difficulty of it, bethink yourself. Is it not still more shocking to you that our righteous and loving Parent has allowed so many generations, each counted by hundreds of millions of souls, to sink into, and remain in, a state so wretched? If there be uncertainty about their future, there is none about their present condition. The fables about the innocence of heathen tribes may very fairly be classed with the tales of the Arabian Nights. There is no doubt now that heathen lands are Satan's seat; that all there is vile, and fitter for hell than heaven; and that great transformations—work for Jehovah's hand—are as necessary there as here to rescue and to bless. If,

then, it is "horrible, most horrible," to cast away such men and women, what is it to have allowed them to follow this dark and downward road without a check? If it be so inconsistent with Divine justice and goodness to throw them into the fire, what is it to have let them wither and dry up into fuel only fit for it? It is, in our view, more difficult to reconcile the existence of so many heathens, and the depth to which they have sunk, with that justice and goodness, than the eternal death of those of them who are not saved by a preached, believed, obeyed gospel, and by the exceeding greatness of Jehovah's power, which uses that gospel as the means of saving. To allow a creature, made in His own image, to become so defaced and so wicked, should be considered more unlike God than the leaving him to perish in his sins. Sin, the cause of all suffering, must be a more hideous thing than any possible suffering. For any to wonder that God should make vengeance to dog the sinner's steps, and at last slay him, when He let him *be* a sinner, is just as reasonable as to wonder that a parent who had the heart to see his child leap into the fire, and try its temper, when he could easily hinder it, should also stand by and see him burn. Surely the permission

of evil is a greater wonder than the punishment of it. But neither the one nor the other is either cruel or unjust. Why should a wicked man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins? God, having revealed his wrath from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, having fixed death as the wages of sin, and given man, made in his own likeness, the power to stand and the freedom to fall, must, forsooth, be unjust and unkind, because his will bends not to the will of the worm that scorns his goodness and defies his power! The conscience of every demon and lost man in hell, and of every angel and saint in heaven, no doubt revolts at the charge which the flippancy and self-conceit of some men on earth insinuate against the Judge of all. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"*

Nay more, Reader, what think you of this inspired account of the matter? Read it carefully, for it triumphantly vindicates the ways of God to man. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteous-

* Rom. xi. 33.

ness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness : because that which may be known of God is manifest in them : for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead ; so that they are without excuse ; because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful ; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible men, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves : who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.”* Let

* Rom. i. 18-28.

none of us, in our little-mindedness, charge God foolishly. The present distance of the heathen from Him is not the journey of one day. They have not, in one age, fallen thus far from God and the light of heaven. It has been a gradual descent, chosen and followed, in spite of God's witness for himself, of the testimony of their own consciences, and of the work of the law written on their hearts.* Did Noah know nothing of Jehovah? If that knowledge was lost by the children of Ham, for instance, who was to blame? Jehovah's Spirit would not always strive with man, would not for ever be humbled, grieved, and vexed, by man's chosen and cherished wickedness. Man *would* quench him. And so the "Holy Dove" flew away to its native heaven, leaving men to walk in their own ways. Each generation served itself heir of all that was bad in its predecessors, as the Jews of Christ's time served themselves heirs of the blood-guiltiness of their fathers who had slain the prophets, inasmuch as they showed that they thought well of their fathers' deeds by doing likewise.†

* "Work of the law,"—the work which the law requires.
Rom. ii. 15.

† Luke xi. 48.

But besides the early revelations thus lost, by being willfully thrown away, there has been, and there is, a continual revelation of God in his works. This is asserted in the 19th and 20th verses of the first chapter of Romans, which we have already quoted. “In the works of creation there have always been exhibited such proofs of the divine being and perfections, as were enough to keep intelligent creatures in mind of these important truths (the existence, and the eternal power and God head of God).”* The same truth is thus emphatically declared : “The living God which made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein, in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.”†

In addition to this revelation, the heathen “are a law unto themselves,” and have “the law written on their hearts.” “Their consciences also bear witness ; and their thoughts accuse or excuse one another.” ‡ “They are without a written law :—

* Dr. Wardlaw’s Lectures on Romans, vol. i. 104.

† Acts xiv. 15 17.

‡ Dr. Wardlaw renders the latter clause thus : “Their reasonings among themselves accuse or vindicate.”

but they are not without a law altogether:—they have certain principles of *natural law*; they have these *in themselves*, written in their hearts. There the law of the Most High was originally written:—engraved, ‘not on tables of stone, but on the fleshly tables of the heart.’ And although by the fall the impression has been mournfully defaced and corrupted, yet it has not been entirely obliterated. By the voluntary erasement of the law of God from their hearts, deep guilt has been contracted. Still, however, the impression is not obliterated; and they continue to ‘treasure up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath,’ when they wilfully act in opposition to the remaining sense of right and wrong which is yet in their minds.”* Disliking their Maker, they let the knowledge of him slip, yea, as it were, sought to blot it out of their minds; and, therefore, are they given up to their own choice, and wander evermore farther from God, and become more wicked and unhappy. Yea, the heathen “know the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death.” Even they cannot be but “sure that the judgment of God is according to

* Wardlaw, i. 163.

truth against them which commit such things ;” and yet they “not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.” The conclusion of the whole matter, Paul says, is that we have proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under sin. Gentiles, without the written revelation, are “under sin,” guilty, exposed to wrath, as well as Jews who were “in the law,”—the former as truly as, and not less than, the latter, although their punishment will be measured by a different rule. God condemns the heathen, and his wrath is revealed from heaven against their ungodliness and wickedness, as withstanding the truth taught them by their reason and conscience, and by the Creator’s works around them. And, therefore, he is just, and good too—good to *all* his works, in “rendering to every man according to his deeds,”—good and kind to his “elect angels” and his “redeemed from among men,” in separating the wicked from their company, and shutting them up by themselves in the one prison-house of the universe,—truly good and just in rendering “unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also

of the Gentile," whether favoured with the Bible or not, in measure according to their mercies, those without the law with few stripes, those in the law, with many.

It may be said that there are tribes whose ignorance has reached such a pitch, that they are almost below the power of using their reason. But does this, were it true, make it unrighteous in God to view them with displeasure? Ought His loathing to be lessened by the growth of their vileness? Then the more ungodly, inhuman, brute-like they become, the better, if, therefore, God dislike them the less. The fitter for hell, then, the fitter for heaven. The more like devils or brutes they become, the more likely are they to share the lot of saints and angels! This would be a new meeting of extremes, and show, were it all right, that light and darkness have communion, and that Christ hath concord with Belial.

If we needed any proof that the reasoning here opposed is at once foolish and insincere, we have that proof in the fact, that such reasoning would not be tolerated, were it a question between man and man, and about matters of earthly concern. Children who surpass wicked parents in wickedness, are not really held to be less amenable to the

laws of society the worse they grow. It is just the very reverse. Previous good character is considered a palliation of crime. Practised wickedness is counted the more dangerous, and needs the more punishment. "Habit and repute" is always an aggravation. Nay, with a strange capriciousness, easy to be understood, when the heathen plunders or annoys the civilised trader or traveller, those who scoff at the idea of his being an object of loathing to a holy God, often doom him to destruction. He may be fit for heaven, but not for earth. And the ungodly world, that makes light of this enterprise of mercy, which seeks to save him from darkness and from death, hounds on its dogs of war to punish the outbreaks of his savagery, which the so-called christian aggressor too often provokes.

Now these things being so, how dare we hope that the heathen are saved without the gospel. If it be unjust to leave them to eat the fruit of their own doings in the eternal world, is it just to let them sow such deathful seed in this? If we see no change, up to the moment of death, on what grounds of reason or scripture can we look to find them in heaven? The Church's only safe ground of action is, "No salvation for the heathen without

the gospel." We repeat, that we argue this question from an intensely *practical* point of view, being anxious that true believers should act on a safe principle in a matter so inexpressibly momentous to the bulk of our fellow-men. Acting as if there were no manner of doubt about our conclusion, if christians err, they will err on the safe side. The appalling nature of the conclusion must move every mind that realises it. We reckon those who have been left without the gospel at 600 or 700 millions. Africa is supposed to have 80 millions, and 200 missionaries. India has 200 millions, and 400 missionaries. China 400 millions, and less than 100 missionaries. Since the soul of one pagan child is of more value than the whole world, the number of souls thus exposed to misery is fitted to appal. Would to God that christians were stirred to adequate efforts for the purpose of sowing this whole field with gospel seed!

There is too much reason to fear that the belief or dream that the heathen are safe without the gospel, is often the excuse of those who do nothing, or little, or less than they both can and ought, for their salvation. They lack the love to Christ which would lead them to give even out of their

poverty, and to pray with the fervency of enthusiasm that Jesus might be exalted among the nations. For anything that they do, every heathen may go down to the grave and to hell unpitied and untaught. And the uneasiness of a conscience which testifies of neglect of duty, indifference to the honour of God, and unconcern about perishing souls, makes them catch at the unreasonable and unscriptural notion, that blinded, superstitious, idolatrous heathens are saved without the only means of salvation of which God's Word makes mention. Jesus commands his people, "Haste ye! go tell every soul of them the good news about me, and bid them turn, believe, and live." Many who profess to be the servants of Christ, sit down, occupied each with his own affairs. This man to his farm, that to his merchandise; and the Lord's great commission is all but forgotten. And that cause which is so dear to Him, and should be the chief concern of his people, is put after everything else. And instead of trying how much each can do to spread the gospel, many, many who profess to prize it above all worlds, seem to try how little they can do. And being uneasy about it, they grasp at the delusion, that notwithstanding they neglect the duty which Christ gives them to

do, He himself will, or perhaps will, or perhaps may, in some other way, save those perishing fellow-men to whom they ought to have sent the word of life. That professing christian who keeps his mind easy over his lukewarmness in, or neglect of, the cause of God in its world-wide aspect, by a groundless perhaps, is trifling with his talent, and had better think of his reckoning with the Master. Yes, God could save the heathen without us. He could set up his kingdom by other hands than ours. But He has put the work into our hands. And if any one fail to see this in the Bible, or refuse to come to the help of the Lord, who so honours us by commanding our service, how can he think favourably of his own spiritual state? Is his own soul safe who can look on millions lost, and soothe his conscience with only the poorest perhaps that they may, after all, be saved, while he does nothing, although commanded by Christ, to give them the means of salvation, or merely casts a penny into the treasury of the kingdom, as he would throw a penny to a beggar to silence his importunity?

We cannot better conclude this section than in the words of Dr. Wardlaw :—“ We are taught ‘by the sure word of prophecy’ to expect a period

when ‘the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.’ Yet if the heathen may be saved without the knowledge and faith of the gospel, we may well inquire, whence the rapturous delight which accompanies the prophetic visions of its universal diffusion? Whence the Divine injunction, ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature?’ The supposition of the safety of the Heathen without the gospel annihilates the most powerful of all incitements to christian zeal. Why should we expose our fellow-creatures to increased peril, by putting it into their power to reject what is, after all, *unnecessary* to their salvation? If a Gentile can be pointed out that is not a sinner,—that has acted fully up to the light and law of nature,—there were good reason on this ground to plead for his safety. But such a character is nowhere to be found. All are guilty; all condemned. The ground of their condemnation is just; and the proportions of their punishment will be just. They shall be judged, not ‘*by the law,*’ but ‘*without the law;*’ and even amongst themselves, when tried according to their own light, some shall be beaten with more and others with fewer stripes. But a Saviour they all require. And besides the

name of Jesus, 'there is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby either we or they can be saved.' 'This is eternal life, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.'"

SECTION III.

“CAN THESE BONES LIVE?”

CAN we expect the Negro race, for instance, to arise out of their present low estate and become civilized and Christian? “Irreclaimable barbarians!” “Destined to extirpation, like the tiger and the kangaroo!” “Monkeys!” “A pack of lazy, good-for-nothing savages!” “What have your missions done among them?” “How many have you converted?” “What results have you to show for the money which has been expended?” “Do you not see that your undertaking is utopian, foolish, fruitless,—that it is and must, to the end, be a miserable failure?” Such are some of the exclamations, execrations, assertions, and interrogations of persons ill qualified and ill disposed either to judge correctly or to decide impartially upon a matter of this kind. Yea, even in evangelical churches there are members who share in the spirit which runs through these expressions

and queries. We would fain hope that church members of this kind are becoming rare and will soon be unknown. Whether ignorance, or want of thought, or covetousness, on their own part, or the lukewarmness, or little-mindedness of their religious guides, be the cause of such a *phenomenon*, it is not the less humbling or less disgraceful, in any who profess to love Christ to shew indifference, not to say hostility, to the enterprise of mercy with which the honour of the Lord is most closely connected.

The question at the head of this section can be shortly and satisfactorily answered to the genuine christian ; and it is to him, we repeat, that we desire to speak. The question, when rightly put, is simply this :—*Can* God regenerate the African ? And *will* He regenerate the African ? No preacher ever yet converted a single soul. When a man speaks of his converts, or when another speaks of any man’s converts, with a conceit of the eloquence, or earnestness, or power of the man that has done such great things, surely it must be “as a smoke in God’s nostrils,” offensive and worthy of his rebuke. Converting power is of God, not of man. God gives the increase. The preaching of the holiest, most earnest, and most eloquent of men, can

go no farther than the ear. It is the Holy Ghost who takes the things of Christ and shews them to the soul.

Seeing, then, that it is God who begins the good work in true saints, and who also finishes it, *can* He make a poor degraded African a true saint? No one will say that He *cannot*, at least none with whom we care to reason. We shall not take time to prove that God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, can shine in the darkest heart on earth, and change the most sunken savage into a citizen of the kingdom of heaven. This is already the blessed faith of those whom we earnestly seek to stir up to new zeal in spreading the gospel.

The following case has happened. A section of the church begin a mission, and send out their agents to some unhealthy coast. Disease disables, death destroys. Others are sent; but the zeal and hope of the first movement are greatly cooled. Ten, fifteen, twenty years pass by; and the apparent converts are counted only by tens. There has been no Pentecostal effusion of the Spirit. The converts are very imperfect christians. Thinking that they were living stones, the missionary took and built them into Christ's house. But the

fire tried his work ; and the seeming jewels were seen to be wood, hay, stubble, not gold, silver, precious stones. The seed of the word never seems to grow or yield a single sheaf in that salt and barren wild of heathenism. It appears to be all love's labour lost. And the good people away in the christian land, who little know what heathens are, and to whom mission work is tinged with the hue of romance, become discouraged at the poor result of their efforts. The tide now turns to ebb. Another mission is begun in what is considered a more promising field, the first love is accounted a sort of drag, and, if it could be done without disgrace, it would be cast off. I firmly believe that a spirit like this will not see success in any mission whatsoever. Such craven souls are the cowards and the traitors in the Lord's army. Far better for themselves and for the church's work that they had no connection with her ; they are the cause of disaster and defeat ; they, and they alone, are her weakness. No mission will be crowned with success, unless its friends are determined that Jehovah shall make it succeed. They must give Him no rest, but pray without fainting or ceasing, and never bate one jot of heart or hope* till He cause our enterprises to yield to

* Isa. lxii. 6, 7.

himself their harvests of glory in the salvation of souls.

Indeed the true light in which to put this matter is the following. The people of God say, "Lord, what wilt thou have us to do for Thee?" The Lord answers, "Send the gospel to Patagonia, to Old Calabar, to Madagascar. Send a mission to Rajpootana, the Punjaub, Ceylon. Send preachers of the Word to Bonny, to Benin, to Japan, to Kamtschatka." The Church has then nothing to do but to obey, and at once separate the best men for the work, and send them to it. She ought to be sure that the Lord himself, having commanded her strength, will use her willing, earnest service, and accomplish that which He pleases by her means. If He does not convert the numbers which the Church marks out as her desire, that is his matter. The Church dare not say, "Because the Lord has not honoured our mission, because it has not a great show of fruit, therefore we shall abandon it." Depend upon it, there is a reason for this want, or seeming want of success. Let the preacher do his duty, and he is unto God a sweet savour both in the lost and in the saved. God is well pleased with him if he is faithful: his work is done, his reward is sure,

whatever may be the number of sheaves which the Lord gives him to bring with him as the harvest of his toils.

God will surely save his flock, but He may keep some of the sheep in his hiding, lest the Church should boast of them. When God's people honour Him more in their mission work, and make it more their own, and when they are better prepared to see the work of his hand in every atom of saving result, He will doubtless show them more. But is there not among us still too much of that spirit which would boast of success, and say, Behold the success of our efforts, instead of, Behold what God hath wrought? And He withholds the occasion. He does not show us many mighty works, because of our unbelief, and because we are not high enough in our spirituality to give Him all the glory. May He prepare his Church, in order that He may prosper his cause among the heathen.

But there are right-minded Christians, who do look to God for success, and who give Him all the praise for what is done by their means. It is well that they should remember the laws of the kingdom's progress, and study its history, in order that they may know what to expect, and be able to see

what the Lord has done, lest they either vex Him by their impatience, or neglect to praise Him for the great things which He has wrought. The two laws most distinctly taught are these: First, That there must be a seed-sowing before there can be a sheaf-bringing; and second, That the kingdom begins small, and grows by degrees.

The seed-sowing includes all that is needed to bring the truth to the ears of men. This preparatory work is often difficult and tedious. In many cases the unwritten tongues of barbarous tribes have to be learned. In all cases, Divine truth has to be taught in tongues which cannot adequately express some important parts of it. A footing has to be gained, by which men who cannot be expected to know what disinterested kindness is, and who perhaps have never seen it, but the opposite, in those white men with whom they have come into contact, may place confidence in strangers who have neither the means to bribe nor the power to awe. We should think that the cases are extremely rare in which the heathen mind is made to grasp eternal things at once. The story of the cross sounds at first like a fable, if it even engages the attention, and really gets a hearing. The history of all missions bears out

the opinion we thus express. The rapid conquests of the gospel in the apostolic age confirm it; for the Jews, who were always first addressed, were a people prepared for hearing. The book of the Acts gives no account of missionary life among such tribes as the Africans or Polynesians of the present day. Neither does our opinion favour that of those who hold the necessity of a civilization preparatory to the gospel among modern barbarians. The gospel itself is its own best pioneer. This seed-sowing is a difficult work, but it must be done, and it requires time, and faith, and patience, and courage.

Glance now at some of the results. We point to negro churches in America and the West Indies, where, amid much that is imperfect, we see not a little genuine christianity. There are gold, silver, and precious stones which have stood, and will stand, the fire; and “ They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in the day that I make up my jewels.” We point to South Africa, where we find no less convincing proofs that men of Ethiopia have indeed been converted to Christ. We find the Hottentots substantially a christian race; that is, with a large proportion of professing christians, and a fair amount of social morality. We also

see Kafirs at the feet of the Saviour. But even on the ill-famed coast of Guinea, every christian mission from the Gambia to the Gaboon has some genuine fruit to show. The Wesleyan mission at Bathurst, on the Gambia, which has existed forty years, had in 1861 six hundred communicants, consisting of liberated Africans from all parts of the coast, and of those who are natives of that district. At Sierra Leone,* in Liberia, at Lagos, in Yoruba, at Cape Coast Castle, Old Calabar, the river Cameroons, the island of Corisco, and the Gaboon, there are some who seem to be converted to God. We have seen some die in the faith of Jesus Christ, after they had confessed Him before their fellow-countrymen. We see mind after mind breaking loose from the customs and superstitions of their ancestors, and, with some evidence of sincerity, uniting themselves to the followers of Christ. We see fixed attention to the preaching of the Word of God, and emotion speaking from the faces of the hearers, as that Word goes home to their hearts, and arouses their fears and their hopes.

* Some account of missionary labour in Sierra Leone will be found in a Memoir of the Rev. W. A. B. Johnson, published by Seeleys. 1852.

Your bird of passage, or your resident on the Coast, who has not kept himself pure from the vices of the heathen, may say that there is no truth in all this. Your trader is not always a godly man. He is not always even a moral man. He has been known to make light of the Word of God. He has been known, of set purpose, to use his influence to make the heathen reject that Word. And yet, forsooth, he is an authority on the subject of missionary success! When did the devil bear true witness about the brethren? These persons are unfit to judge what spiritual fruit is. They are not spiritual men. And, more than this, these false witnesses do not take any pains to know the facts. They do not attend mission-churches. They do not know the language of the tribes. They do not talk with them about Christianity, except in blasphemy and mockery. How should such witnesses be for a moment heard?

It is true that those who come to the faith of Christ are few in comparison with those who do not; but we think that they are enough to silence objectors, and to uphold the faith and courage of the Church of God. It will not do to say that they are mere exceptions, and prove the rule that the African race is hopelessly sunk, and unfit to be

raised. Nay, but rather are they the first fruits, giving promise sure of the full harvest. To what do we owe these? Is it not to the Spirit of God working by the gospel? And has not God the residue of the Spirit? If you see a stalk of wheat growing on a piece of untilled or fallow ground, you gather that thousands can grow there; and that, if only that soil be ploughed and sown, its fruit shall shake like Lebanon. If God has converted one negro, can he not convert a thousand? If he has converted a thousand, can he not convert ten thousand, yea, the whole of the Ethiopian race?

And will He not do so? Have we not a very sure word of prophecy, to which we should take heed, until the gospel day dawn in the earth's dark regions? Of Ethiopia—the black-faced family—it shall be said, this man was born there. Nothing better, nothing greater, nothing more comforting is said of Zion herself. The despised, degraded, peeled, and scattered Ethiopia, is written down in the list of Jehovah's favoured nations, from among whom he shall gather his children. This man shall be born there. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia shall Jehovah's suppliants, the daughters of his dispersed, bring his offering. Yea,

like a little child to its mother, shall Ethiopia soon stretch out her hands unto God. Read the precious oracles that abound in the Word of God, from the one which foretells that in Abraham's promised seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed, down to the great voices that shall be heard in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever." And in these enough will be seen to make us sure of harvest, even before the seed be sown; sure of victory, even before the battle be begun. We feel persuaded that Africa shall be made christian, because it forms one of the great divisions of the human family. As surely as Japheth shall be beautiful with salvation, and Jehovah shall be the God of Shem, so surely shall the curse be rolled off from Ham, and God's black child be made comely. We are sure of this, because, without it, the kingdom of Christ will not be complete. If what is, in an important sense, a third part of the race—the descendants of one of the three post-diluvian fathers—be left to Satan, how shall that which is written be fulfilled?

The ten millions of the Ethiopian race in the western hemisphere have, to a wonderful extent,

submitted to the Christian religion. Many of them have found it a comfort under their wrongs. Oh, how encouraging to the Church of God is it to see that a race sinned against by civilized, but not christian men, instead of vowing eternal hate to their oppressors, and counting the Christian religion an abomination because it is theirs, have so extensively yielded to its peaceful and loving sway, and learned from it to forgive their enemies! Surely such a race is not irreclaimably barbarous. Our own colonial history gives the lie to those who so flippantly assert this offensive lie. The love of Christ shall yet reach, and melt, and change, and rule the heart of Ethiopia. The Church must not be conformed to the inhumanity of the world. She must stamp on that commission which, in her Lord's name, and at the Spirit's command, she gives to all her missionaries, this motto:—"The lowest heathen is a man and brother," in spite of the world's scoff at the humility of her love. Let us remember the meeting of Jesus with the naked demoniac. He did not loathe the poor wretch. The more miserable the victim was, the greater glory did He get by curing him. And when Ethiopia, throughout her wide borders, shall have cast away her fetiches and all her childish and bloody

superstitions, and shall be seated at the feet of Jesus, beauteous with holiness, O, will not our King Messiah receive as much glory as when it shall be said, “Lo these from the land of Sinim!” Methinks He will rejoice more in Ethiopia than in those races which have higher pretensions. Could we conceive a christian heartless and thoughtless enough to scorn Africa on account of her degradation, we would tell him to go to his closet, and not leave it till he had obtained a spirit more like that of his Master.

The question, “Can these bones live?” really becomes this:—Has God appointed to his Son a kingdom? Is this kingdom to be world-wide? In the following section we shall have to deal with these points, and shall not here enter upon them. The Bible is full of the doctrine of the kingdom. The muse of prophecy opens her mouth with the key-note of a song the burden of which is “the kingdom;” the anthem rises and swells, till, at the close, we see that kingdom triumphant, the prince of this world trodden down into hell, to dwell there in eternal chains, and the Prince of Peace enthroned in glory, on the right hand of the Majesty of Heaven, the beloved King and Saviour of redeemed men, “out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.”

SECTION IV.

THE WORK WITH WHICH THE LORD HAS CHARGED HIS PEOPLE ON EARTH.

IN the third section, we have seen that the Lord both can and will add the heathen nations to his kingdom. We shall now consider the commission which he gave to his Church, the work which that commission puts into her hands, and the obligation which it lays on every believer to spread the gospel in the world.

In saving men from their sins Christ removes guilt, produces moral purity, and begets willing, yea, joyful obedience to all the Divine will. That believers, being justified, may be careful to maintain good works, that they may be holy and without blame before him in love, that they may be purified unto him a people of his own, thus being saved, at once, from the guilt, the defilement, and the rule of sin, is the great end of redemption, as it respects them personally. God's

end is not gained, but by making his people a willing people, willing to obey, willing to fight, willing to work. Jesus himself is, in this respect, a model for his followers ; and, like the refiner of silver, he sits over them, while they are in the crucible on the fire of trial, until he sees his own image clearly reflected from them. The manner in which he has chosen to bring his people to himself is wisely fitted for the end. As his kingdom in this world consists of subjects who are "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people ; that they should show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light," so he gives them a share in the work of extending the kingdom. In this they are required to work together with God. Now the part with which they are charged is vastly important : yea, if the assertion of the second section is true, viz., 'No salvation for the heathen without the gospel,' this part is unspeakably momentous, and the responsibility with which it clothes christians is appalling. Oh, Christians of every name and section, consider this matter. In a case of this kind, were it merely a question of health or of money, every man would act on the maxim that it is best to

err on the safe side, and to steer well clear of any risk of mistake or neglect. Is there in the world a christian that does not need to open his eyes far more widely to the question of the service which God's plan for setting up the kingdom of heaven in all the earth, and which Christ's command to spread the gospel of that kingdom, require at his hands ?

1. The work to which Christ commands the strength of his people, could not be more simply stated than it is in his own words : "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." "Teach, or disciple all nations." Baptize unto the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, those who through grace believe.

At present, many friends of missions, unthinkingly mix up other ends which are inferior with that which should be the one end of our enterprise. As if the dignity and advantage of that cause could be increased by putting among its aims something which our blessed Lord did not put there ! In other words, the interests of time and self are apt to claim that which is due to the kingdom of God and the spiritual interests of men. Some would have it that the science and commerce of maritime and manufacturing nations,

such as Britain, are objects at whose furtherance our missions ought to aim. The missionary should foster trade, and that, as is speciously argued, for the benefit of the people among whom he labours. He should aid in cultivating cotton. He should lead in the introduction of agriculture, and all useful trades. Science also puts in its claims. The missionary should turn his hand to the gathering and preserving of beasts, and birds, and fishes, and snakes, and beetles. And, withal, he must explore, and add to the domain of geography. Now, the missionary of christianity ought not to go to heathen lands for these purposes. The commission which his Lord gives him includes none of them. No one will, for a moment, imagine that we undervalue them. They are good of themselves, and the success of our enterprise will further them. Every naked barbarian who is led to cover his skin becomes a new customer of Liverpool and New York. In this way, missions will tell more and more in favour of our manufactures and commerce. At present, one yard of calico makes a dress for many an African female, and, perhaps, half a dozen for many boys and girls, while younger children of both sexes go stark naked. Two and a half yards form the full

dress of grown men over wide regions. Christianity requires its children to cover themselves decently; and, therefore, by promoting this decency, it will greatly and surely benefit trade. On this we need not enlarge. The gospel is the great, yea, the only instrument of a true civilization. When the heathen man becomes a christian, he ceases to be the selfish, brutish, earthly being that he was before. He follows new ways, and feels new wants. The 'gospel of the kingdom' furthers the interests of earth and time, when the Giver of the increase makes it fruitful: for the Divine bounty, which provides eternal salvation, cannot be niggard of that fulness of the earth which is the Lord's, and which is given to Christ for his Church's sake. Our own heaven-favoured country affords a fine instance of a gospel-prospered land. Missionaries, as educated, philanthropic, and public-spirited persons, cannot fail to take a deep interest in the elevation and prosperity of the people among whom they labour. He is a poor christian who does not wish to do good, to the bodies as well as the souls of men. "So soon as grace entereth into the heart, it frameth the heart to be in some measure public." But in so far as they make ends of these secondary

things, they fall below the top of their commission, and are not worthy to carry it.

In some places missionaries need to be explorers. But exploration by itself, or merely for the purpose of filling up a map, can never be their end or duty. The aim and motive of the Martyr of Erromanga, for instance, commend themselves to the christian conscience. He longed, with all the earnestness of an ardent piety, to pass the boundary of the reef of Raiatea, that he might carry the gospel to the island groups around. Mr. Moffat's visits to Mosilikatse, the chief of the Metabili, in order to introduce the Saviour's name to a new tribe, was just the kind of exploration that is expected of christian bishops among the heathen. Suppose a few of these sent to a tribe on the coast of Africa. It is plainly both their duty and wisdom, and the way to permanent success, to bend all their energies to the establishing of a church of Christ there. Their work among that tribe is not done, unless a church is gathered, fit to maintain the gospel among themselves, and to spread it around them. While they are working for this end, training for service those who believe, they should visit neighbouring tribes, and make known their own existence,

work, and aims. They should preach the gospel, and give out some notes of that pure language which God has promised to turn to all the tribes of the earth. They should repeat their visits, and widen their circle. Thus, the Lord may show them new centres, which, being occupied, would give access to other tribes; and they point out new spheres to the home churches, or introduce into them native workers, or some of them surrender their present stations into other hands, and take the advanced post. But in whatever manner, or at whatever rate of speed, this work is done, the tendency of a missionary agency, that is worthy of its name and trust, is ever inward, upward, forward. Now, this is the true missionary exploration. It may not make much noise in the world, but it sows seed unto eternal life. God may call a missionary to exploration of a more extensive kind. And far rather would we see one like Dr. Livingstone engaged in this work, than those whose chief end and aim are self, who have no moral earnestness, who are flip-pant and contemptuous in the pictures, or rather caricatures, which they give of the barbarians, their travels among whom become their capital for fame and place, and who have no feeling for

the moral and spiritual darkness of the tribes whom they visit. They may add to botany and some of the *ologies*, and help to fill up a map, but this is nearly all the good they do to any but themselves.

The interests of commerce may safely be left to the merchants. In many places, commerce has gone before missions. It has given the means of sustaining missionaries in regions which otherwise could not be so easily reached. Thus, in Divine providence, the commerce of a christian land is made to help the kingdom of Him to whom the earth and its fulness belong. And has not He made Britain and America great in ships for this end? Let our rich merchants beware of boasting that the arms of their own skill and enterprise have done all this. God has assuredly done it, in order, among other things, to provide means and afford facilities for the setting up of his kingdom. But it does not follow from this that the missionary is to be, in any sense, an auxiliary to the trader. The less the former meddles with trade, directly or indirectly, the better is the latter pleased. We, indeed, do pray that the day may come when our trading posts in heathen places shall be held by good men. Christians may well

pray that God would send out pious men to buy and sell, as well as to preach the gospel. Pious men, bred to commerce, willing to go abroad, were it only to keep the lewd and wicked from hindering the Saviour's cause in our mission spheres, would do what would make them happy in the eternal retrospect. The impurity, the violence, the selfishness, the dishonesty of traders from a christian country, and their active opposition to the work of the Most High God, are not more disgraceful to themselves, and do not more surely treasure up to themselves a fearful store of wrath, than they help to steel the heathen against the gospel.

There is a great amount of unconfessed unbelief as to the use and advantage of preaching the gospel to barbarous heathens. Many consider it to be a waste of toil, and energy, and wealth. They say that such heathens cannot understand gospel truth until they make some mental progress. Even among professors of religion, yea, among the true people of God, there are some who have little hope of the success of our enterprise ; and, truly, it does seem to be the foolishness of preaching. "Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord." What is more foolish or fruitless than to preach the word

of God, or any word whatever, to dry bones? Of what use is it to bid them hear? But this is just that foolishness of God that is wiser than men, and that weakness of God that is stronger than men. The wisdom of men says, Let commerce and the arts go before to break up the soil and prepare the heathen for receiving the gospel. The wisdom of God says, "Son of man, prophesy upon these bones." The Divine Word reveals the unseen and the spiritual—things of such surpassing interest and importance as make it a most fitting instrument for moving men. These unseen and eternal realities, when fully apprehended, as, by God's teaching, they may by the poorest human intellect, cannot fail to melt and change. Poor, half-witted Joseph, who heard Dr. Calamy preach that there is salvation for the chief of sinners, apprehended the very heart and soul of the gospel, when he reasoned thus with himself, as he trudged along:—"Christ Jesus, the God who made all things, came into the world to save sinners like Joseph; and this is true, for it is a faithful saying. And why may not poor Joseph be saved?" The Word of God is a lamp—a fire—a hammer—a sword fashioned and handled by the Holy Spirit. It is the seed by which God's children are born into his

family. All these are Scripture figures, and they teach us that this Word is fitted as an instrument, in the hand of the Spirit, to turn men "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God," to destroy man's enmity to God, and to bring him into a new world and a new life. On this it is not necessary to enlarge. We assure the people of God who have not had personal knowledge of heathens, that the gospel of Christ is as suited to men abroad as to men at home. There is no argument against its fitness as preached to barbarians, that may not be brought against it as preached to the civilized. At the same time, to obey the command and prophesy upon these bones, saying, "O ye dry bones, hear the word of Jehovah," requires the highest style of faith, that, namely, which asks no questions but this one—What does our Divine Master order us, his servants, to do? and then runs to do it, leaving the results in his hand, knowing that, as he is perfect wisdom and perfect prudence, he can send us on no bootless or vain emprise.

But the rock of our missionary strength lies in this, that the power of the Word of God is the power of God's own Spirit. When the gospel comes in the demonstration of the Spirit, it comes

with power, and the darkest become light, and the most stubborn become willingness itself. Even enlightened men fail to receive the gospel, or to realize and receive the Saviour and the life eternal that is in him, unless the Holy Ghost take the word into his hand, and come into the heart, and, by means of it, fill the soul with light. Is it not in this way that the polished and the learned are saved? Is it not thus also that the poor, the ignorant, and the vicious are converted? Who that considers himself a christian indeed, became one otherwise? That power which called cosmos out of chaos, and raised Jesus Christ from the dead, and set him at God's right hand, can also make any number of heathens living believers in Jesus. There can, indeed, be no spiritual breath in a human soul, unless God's breath breathe in it, but that breath can come with all the fulness and force of the winds of heaven, and put life into as many as he pleases. He that commanded the prophet to "say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God, Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon] these slain, that they may live,"—he also promises to put his Spirit into his people, and to give him to those that ask. Here, then, is our only encouragement while we carry the gospel into

the heathen wild. While we preach it to the bones, we expect the coming of the breath. If that come not, our preaching will be vain; when it comes, these slain shall live.

The great end of missions to the heathen is the setting up of the kingdom of God in the earth. In other words, it is the fulfilling of the conditions necessary for an answer to the prayer, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." The glory of God and of the Lamb is the end of our enterprise. That the Lord may see of the travail of his soul, do some of his people, at his command, go forth with the lamp of life into the dark places of the earth. This kingdom is set up by the renewing of souls. Every one who is born of the Spirit, who is saved by the washing of regeneration, becomes a subject of that kingdom, enjoys its safety, and shares in its honours. When the bulk of mankind shall become thus truly christian, and "the dominion and the kingdom under heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High," when this true fifth monarchy shall be established, then, and not till then, shall the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. God has appointed this result to be secured by the Holy

Spirit; and the sword which the Spirit uses is the "word of the truth of the gospel." And the agency by which God has appointed that gospel to be preached is that of saved sinners, who, themselves knowing it, speak because they believe. Jesus Christ did not commission angels to this work, as he might have done, but to his genuine friends, he says: "Go ye." It is, therefore, a settled point with us, first, That the kingdom for whose coming Christ has taught us to pray, is to be established through the preaching of the gospel of it. And, second, That it will not be set up otherwise. Depend upon it, since the King himself has made this arrangement, it is perfectly fitted to secure the end. The weapons of our warfare, although so different from those by which the kingdoms of this world are set up, are, nevertheless, mighty, because they are "mighty through God."

The work to which our Divine Master thus commands the strength of his Church, is as definite and comprehensible, yea, as rational and hopeful, as it is noble and godlike. To exalt Jesus to his rightful throne over all the tribes of men, to overturn all the idolatries and superstitions in the world, and to establish the kingdom of peace on

their ruins; in other words, to lead all the families of the earth to the obedience of the gospel, thus, at once, and by the same means, bringing glory to God in the highest, and doing the best good to men, is, surely, of all objects most worthy of the strength and riches of the Church of God. This enterprise is the cream of all benevolent enterprises; and those who do most to further it are the best friends of their fellow-men. What enterprise is to be named along with that in which incarnate God is the leader? It is an enterprise of conquest, and the victory is sure! Our warfare is with the devil and his works, to destroy him and them. Our weapons are not those of earth's bloody warfare. Our captain forbids even a staff; and the only arm he gives us is the salutation of peace the gospel of his love. And we are to go forth, whether into the irreligious homes of our own land, or into the wilds of Africa, with this one thing: "Hear ye this word of God!" And he who gives us this commission, gives us also the promise: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." He also promises that "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth." Thus beautifully are both the promise and its effects

expressed: "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses. One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel." It is said that water is the only thing needed to turn the great African Sahara into fruitfulness. Wherever it wells up through the soil, we see the green oasis amid surrounding wastes. And we know also that it needs only the Divine Spirit, to make the moral deserts of our world possess not merely their little islands of beauty, but, throughout their wide extent, to blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. Believers in the Word of God! Believe ye the truth of our great commission! Believe in the almightiness of the Divine Spirit! Believe in the existence of the Divine love! Believe in the suitableness of the gospel of Christ, as the instrument for setting up his kingdom.

Some christians read the prophecies of his coming as if they assured us of a premillennial advent.

And looking on the power of Satan's kingdom, and the slow progress of Christ's, they scarcely hope this shall be set up, and that overthrown, everywhere, by the present means. As our object is to call out the strength of the Lord's people to missions (at which the various denominations are still but playing), we shun dispute. We presume all agree that, before the expected and desired coming, the gospel has to be preached among all the nations. We dare not trifle with work plainly marked out, and commanded with all the authority of Him who is our Master. We are not required to convert the nations, but to "teach" them. Conversion is God's work. Ours is the sowing and watering of the seed. His is the giving of the increase. With our practical and most urgent object in view—that of summoning, in our blessed Master's name, far more of the sons and daughters of the Church to the help of the Lord against the mighty, and demanding far more of her silver and her gold, and of her fervent and effectual prayers—we feel that to discuss the question between premillennarians and others would be arrant trifling. God's purpose is not our rule of action. We must obey his command. Is there not vastly too much controversy, and vastly too little work? How

slowly would masons build a house, if they disputed as much about it as do the builders of God's house! Alas, that the dust and the din should be those of strife as to who knows best, rather than of earnest labour and generous sacrifice in order to have the temple soon and firmly built!

Were our missionary agencies to profess that one of their prime objects is the material development of uncivilized regions, they might thereby, to a greater extent, enlist the aid of some who do not feel the higher motives of the christian. But distant be the day when these agencies shall set before themselves such an object. The enterprise would likely end in disaster and defeat. The church, in doing her gospel work, must, as the individual with reference to himself, "seek first the kingdom of God." Depend upon it, that material advantages, such as the increase of commerce, the growth of industry, and all else that is good for time, will follow. In this, too, will it be seen that "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." Into the commission we must not put anything that the Lord himself has not put. The more spiritually-minded the missionary is the better. The necessary secular

work about a mission among heathens is always more than is desirable. More than is necessary should not be asked, and more should not be expected. While the Church confines herself to the preaching of the gospel, if philanthropists see that they can advance the temporal welfare of the heathen, and thus benefit trade, and are willing to face the necessary toil and sacrifice, under the impulse of their lower motive, their co-operation will be hailed, and they will get their reward. But the missionary must not be burdened, and he is foolish if he burden himself, with responsibilities which do not naturally arise out of his marching orders.

We are not afraid that these remarks will be either misread or misrepresented. A zealous missionary is ever ready to help the objects referred to. But we notice a tendency in some friends of missions in these days, to dwell upon secondary aims, and to attach undue importance to merely philanthropic influences, as having a great power to lead the heathen to receive the truth. Against this we warn christians, who know that the kingdom of Christ can be set up only in his own way. Let them guard against the secularization of missions. The messenger of the churches should be

sent out charged with nothing but to preach the Cross. He should receive no charge whatsoever beyond the ministry of the gospel. At the ordination of one of the earliest mission bands that went from this country, the venerable Dr. Waugh of London presented each of them with a Bible, and counselled them in these terms:—"If ever your arms weary, let it be in knocking at the doors of sinners for admission to the Lord; and if ever your tongues cleave to the roof of your mouths, let it be in telling the story of his love."

It is worthy of notice that the commission requires nothing beyond what man can do. "Preach!" "Teach!" "Be witnesses!" "Declare the tidings!" "Tell the news!" Jesus did not bid them, he bids not us, renew or convert, for that, as already said, is God's work. Men's converts can be only "wood, hay, stubble." God's converts are the "gold, silver, and jewels," whom he shall own as his, who shall stand the fire, and be purified, not destroyed by it. This is, no doubt, the creed of all evangelical churches, but it is not always the working faith of their members. The preacher must preach the gospel well, giving a full, correct, and orderly statement of its facts. For this, too, he needs help from above. Let him "preach the

word ; be instant in season, out of season ; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine." But he can do nothing more, beyond showing by a holy life that he himself believes what he speaks. Let there be as little as possible of what is wrong about him, as insincerity, imprudence, or want of earnestness. But with all this, and all this in the highest degree, the power must come from above, or no good results will follow. Sowing, watering, and reaping sum up the agent's work. All the intermediate unseen processes, which end in growth, fruitfulness, and maturity, are due to direct Divine power.

II. Such being the work, viz., to establish that kingdom which is not of, although in, this world, by preaching the good news respecting it, let each christian reader distinctly notice that this work is not finished, until *every creature* shall have heard the gospel. This could not be made clearer than it is in the simple words of the command itself. The doctrine of the second section being true, viz., 'No salvation for the heathen without the gospel,' how reasonable, how urgent is this view! If every creature is perishing for lack of the knowledge of God, what more natural than that the Lord should

have said, should still say, to his people, "Haste ye! preach the gospel to *every soul* of them."

We thus summon the reader's attention to the world-wide character of the Church's work. The scriptures teach that the kingdom of Christ shall have no limits but the world's ends; and as the preaching of the "glad tidings of that kingdom" is the way in which it is to be established everywhere, it is plain, from the nature of the case, not less than from the Lord's express command, that the gospel should be preached to *every creature*. O that by the perusal of these pages, and by his own God-directed meditations on the matters thus brought before him, the reader may be made to feel deeply that he is bound to go out of himself in self-denying efforts to scatter the seed of the gospel abroad on the face of the earth.

We shall endeavour briefly to set forth the scriptural grounds on which the kingdom of Christ, and the preaching of the gospel by the Church, are to be regarded as having a world-wide aspect.

1. The "Great Commission" first suggests itself to our thoughts. It came from the Lord's own lips. Every child knows and understands it. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." "Go ye and teach all nations,

baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." "Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Do not these words mark out the whole earth as the field? And do they not make it the duty of the Church of Jesus Christ to lay the map of the world on her table, to study the details of her campaign, to view the vast extent of work to be done, and of conquest to be achieved, and to confess that while there remains one creature to whom she has not preached the word of life, her work is unfinished? There is no kind of limit or exception to this commission, which warrants the Church to pass by any of the tribes of men, or allows her to put off the effort to evangelize them. Every creature needing the Saviour should be told about Him without delay. None of those distinctions which some make between one race and another, is even hinted at in the most distant manner. The despised negro is not excepted, nor the cannibal Fijian, nor even the

lowest Esquimaux. God "hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth." It would indeed be a shame were the followers of Christ to be conformed to the world's inhumanity. The sentiments cherished by many towards those who are called barbarians and savages, are most barbarous and savage, and show how fearfully alike all men are in their passions and affections. We do not say that the worst charges brought against heathens are untrue. We, who live among them, know how bad they are, and how barren of goodness ; and we do not wonder that the tender mercies of the selfish world are cruel to those who have so little to attract and so much to repel, and who have neither the skill, the courage, nor the power to hold their own against our aggressions. But, surely, we may appeal to those who profess to be like Jesus, and beseech them by his tenderness to put on bowels and mercies towards those whom the selfishness of civilized, but not christian, men dooms to extirpation, like the tiger and the wolf. Be ye like Jesus, who was the companion rather of publicans and sinners, than of proud pharisees, who despised, and hated, and doomed, and cursed those whom he took to his heart, and melted by his love ! Those

who think that God has as little regard, and as much dislike, to barbarians, as they have, do greatly err. His thoughts, in this respect, are vastly unlike theirs. They forget that the grace, wisdom, and power of God our Saviour are all the more magnified, the more sunken and worthless the objects of them are. When Ethiopia's children are brought into the kingdom, and become a christian race, and are freed from all that now renders them the world's scorn, what glory will it bring to Christ! Look at the saved and weeping Magdalene! Having been forgiven much, she loves much, and much she glorifies and gratifies her Saviour. It was she out of whom he cast the seven devils, whose name he first uttered at his grave's mouth, on that ever memorable first-day morning. Is it not to meet the world's contempt of Ham, that God has put him down on the list of His favoured nations? Shem and Japheth got their blessing through Noah's lips; Ham, his curse. But Ham's time comes, and his curse shall be rolled off: "Behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia: this man was born there." "Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands to God." Let us, we repeat, keep before us the map of the world, and so divide our forces as the best and soonest to

bring "the gospel of the kingdom" to the ears of every creature. This is manifestly our duty as commanded by our Lord himself.

2. While the Lord commands his people to preach the gospel of the kingdom, he also teaches us to pray that the kingdom may come. And see how the petitions run. "Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven." How is it done in heaven? Need we answer the question? Ye holy angels, and ye redeemed sinners, washed in the Lamb's blood, how do ye the will of the Father? When Jesus makes heaven the model for earth, need we say that the Holy Father, as he searches every heart in that holy place, sees nothing wrong? On earth none does good; in heaven none does wrong.

Seeing that Jesus bids his people pray for the setting up of his kingdom in the earth, in the conversion of men from sin to God, does it not follow that he intends to do all this? Should we have been taught thus to pray, were it for an object not embraced in the Divine purpose? In these simple petitions we have abundant foundation for our faith in the success of our foreign missionary enterprise. By putting these petitions at the beginning of this prayer, our Lord shewed what lay

nearest to his heart. Ah, Christians, does it lie nearest to ours? The farther it is from our hearts, the less like are we to him. We may learn from this prayer that the spreading of the gospel is the first duty of christians. Being in the kingdom ourselves, no object should so engage us as the bringing of others into it. Thus run the command and the prayer.

3. Look at this matter in the light of prophecy. This also shows that our blessed Lord intends no limit to his kingdom but the ends of the earth. It would be a delightful task to gather these predictions together: for the christian should dwell on them as the miser gloats over his gold. They should delight the believer more than a mass of jewels and pearls delights the vain heart. When we are speaking of unfulfilled prophecy, we should speak modestly, remembering that, in order to explain it all, and tell the exact how and when, we must be inspired prophets ourselves. Humbly studying these oracles, however, we shall find in them enough that is intelligible, and fitted to strengthen our faith, enliven our hope, elevate our motives, and quicken our desires for the fulfilment of the prayer, "Thy kingdom come."

We cannot be sure that when the knowledge of

the Lord is most widely extended, every human being will be a christian. But yet the Saviour's kingdom shall displace that of Satan. There may remain unbelievers at the time when the knowledge of Jehovah's glory shall fill the earth. But yet Jesus shall be owned in every land as King of hearts and Saviour of souls, and his dominion shall be acknowledged by every nation, if not by every individual. Blessed be God for this more sure word of prophecy, in which he tells us that these dry bones shall live, because he shall make them to live. Christians should often read and ponder the many and precious oracles that abound in the Word of God, from the time when it was foretold that in Abraham's promised seed, all the families of the earth should be blessed, down to the great voices in heaven, saying: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever." For in these we shall see enough to make us sure of harvest, even before we sow the seed, and of victory even before the battle is begun. In these we find a true rock of missionary strength: for if God will indeed put life into souls by his Word, then his people may labour along with him hopefully doing

their work, and leaving it to him to give the increase.

Look now at some of these oracles. The whole of the 2d Psalm foretells the vanity of the attempts made by earth and hell to hinder Messiah from becoming king of all the earth. "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Dominion over all men could not be more plainly promised to the Prince of Peace than in these words. This is promised to Him of whom Jehovah said: "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." Jehovah also said to David's Lord and Son:—"Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." And the same Spirit (1 Cor. xv. 25) repeats the promise: "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet." The 22d Psalm pictures Jesus in the midst of his sufferings on the cross. There does he scan the glorious future. "I will declare thy name unto my brethren. The kingdom is Jehovah's. A seed shall serve him. All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto Jehovah: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee." This oracle is as plain to be understood as it is sublime and godlike. The

whole race shall, at last, submit to Jesus as their king.

When we want a hymn in which to give words to our missionary aspirations, do we not almost instinctively turn to the 67th Psalm? "God be merciful unto us, and bless us, and cause his face to shine upon us. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him."

In the 72d Psalm, it is the greater than Solomon, of whose righteous reign we read. Who can fail to see the Lord our Saviour in that inspired burst of prophetic poetry and music? How could universal empire be more plainly foretold? "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him. All nations shall call him blessed. And the whole earth shall be filled with his glory." The Saviour's kingdom is here universal; its limits are the ends of the earth; its blessings righteousness and peace.

Says Messiah (Psalm xviii. 43): "Thou hast made me the head of the heathen: a people whom I have not known shall serve me." "The Lord will furnish all the gods of the earth; and men shall worship him, every one from his place, even all the isles of the heathen." (Zeph. ii. 11).

The latter part of the book of Isaiah is full of oracles concerning the future glory of the Saviour's church. That these oracles refer to the New Testament kingdom of God is unquestionable. The devout mind comes to this conclusion almost instinctively. The sufferings of Messiah open the way for the Spirit's forthcoming to set up that kingdom. "Behold my servant; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. I, Jehovah, will give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles." "I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth."* "For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited."† "So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his

* Is. xlii., xliii. 6.

† Is. liv.3.

glory from the rising of the sun.”* “And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see; all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee. Who are these? As a cloud they fly, and as the doves to their windows? Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far.”† “For thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream. It shall come that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory. And it shall come to pass, that from one new-moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord.”‡

In the 7th chapter of Daniel we have one of the wondrous visions with which that prophet was favoured—“I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of

* Is. lix. 19. † Is. lx. 3-5, 8, 9. ‡ Is. lxvi. 12, 18, 23.

heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him : his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." The scene is the ascension of the Lord Jesus, after finishing his work. We behold this King of Glory coming in, this victor from a fight on which the salvation of millions was staked, approaching the Father to receive the glory which his pain had purchased. Heaven's arches ring with his honoured name. Holy angels join their songs with those of sinners who had been saved in the centuries before his coming, through God's forbearance. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" In the 2d chapter of the epistle to the Philippians, we have an inspired comment on Daniel :—"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name : that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth ; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

But it is by means of his people that Jesus shall reign on the earth. "The saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Dan. vii. 18, 27.

These are a few of the Divine oracles which respect the kingdom of God, shewing it to be his intention to make that kingdom commensurate with the race of man on earth. Satan's kingdom has been universal, and is so still, with the exception of those who have been translated out of it into the kingdom of God's dear Son. And shall the kingdom of Christ be less extensive than that of his fallen foe? less than the one He came to overthrow? The devil offered all to him, if he would only take it as a gift from a lord superior. Nay, Satan, that was not the way. By dying he was to destroy thee and thy kingdom of death. He was not to receive the kingdoms of this world from thee as an over-lord, and on bended knee to pay thee homage for the gift. He came to bruise

thy head, and break thy arm, and deliver those whom his Father gave him, out of thy hands ; and, in spite of thee, give to them eternal life. Thy throne he was to hurl, and shall yet hurl, with thee into the blackness of darkness, and in this apostate world, ruined by thee, saved by him, shall he yet possess a throne of universal empire.

Thus shall King Jesus triumph gloriously. But his conquests shall widely differ from those of a Cæsar. He overcomes by changing the hearts of Satan's subjects. He shows them his hands and his feet, and they cry out, " My Lord and my God." His love melts them into friends ; and the more he shows it to them, the more power he gets over them, till, for his sake, they become willing to embrace the stake, and pant to be baptized with blood. What a triumph is this ! The annals of earthly wars show nothing like it. It is only like God ! The world subdued, from embittered and settled hate, by love, and grace, and light ! Who would not desire to see this kingdom spreading far and wide, its banners planted on every shore, and its armies penetrating into every land ? We cling to the hope, we live in the faith, that it shall be so : and our warrant is the sure promise of him who calls things that

are not as though they were, and speaks of his purposes as accomplished facts. We commend these oracles to the believing reader who reverences the word of the Lord, and we ask for them a frequent and devout perusal and study.

4. Further proofs of the fact that God means to make the Saviour's kingdom universal, are found in the actings of the apostles. These "Acts" show the sense in which they understood their Lord's commission. "Begin at Jerusalem," was the command—"Begin at Jerusalem, and preach the gospel to every creature." When the Holy Ghost was poured out, and both made the apostles understand their work, and fitted them for doing it, how did they act? They literally began at Jerusalem, and in defiance of deadly threats, in spite of magisterial prohibitions, at the peril of life, they testified of Jesus. In many cities of the Roman Empire there were Jewish communities, who were allowed by special decrees to worship the true God according to the Scriptures. They used to meet, on the Sabbath day, to pray, and to read and expound the law and the prophets. And thus, wherever the preachers of the gospel went, they found some to whom it could at once be preached, who were in a manner pre-

pared to understand it, and to see the force of the evidence for its truth. But to the most of these Jews the preaching of the cross was a stumbling-block.

The Lord forewarned the Jews that the kingdom of God should be taken from them, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And in the narrative of the first missionary tour (Acts xiii.) we see this carried into effect.

First of all the apostles, Peter was taught that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation the man who fears God, and works righteousness, is accepted of him. And his Jewish dislike of the Gentiles being thus removed, he, at the Spirit's command, opened to them the door of faith, in the house of Cornelius. But it is in the history of Paul that the world-wide aspect of the ancient oracles and of the great commission is most manifest. To Ananias the Lord said: "Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." And Paul himself declared before Agrippa that the Lord Jesus had sent him to the Gentiles. How then did he act? He began where the Lord had found him, and "shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at

Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God." The Holy Ghost sent Paul and Barnabas from Antioch in Syria on a missionary tour, in which they first addressed the Jews in foreign parts. But when these rejected the gospel, the apostles turned to the Gentiles, taking as their warrant the ancient oracle: "For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth."

The words of the apostle James, on an occasion which arose out of the prejudices of Jewish converts, also show how the world-wide aspect of the kingdom of heaven had been apprehended by his divinely enlightened mind: "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up, that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles,

upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things." (Acts xv. 14-17.)

And still, as the enterprise goes on, the mind of God becomes more clearly manifest. Paul and his fellow missionaries were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia. They were not suffered to go into Bithynia. And, at length, "a vision appeared unto Paul in the night : there stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us." In the principal cities of Asia Minor the gospel had been preached already, and churches had been formed, which were able both to edify themselves, and to sound out the gospel to those around. But beyond that narrow strait lay Europe all dark and dead, a portion of Satan's kingdom which Paul must go and claim for Christ. With eager steps this noble proto-missionary set out on his errand of mercy. He strove to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, so that it was fully heard from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum. Moved by gratitude, and constrained by love, glorying in the cross of Jesus Christ, and pitying his fellow sinners who are perishing, he counts himself a debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians ;

both to the wise and to the unwise. As the circle of light widens, a wider circumference of darkness lies around him. He longs to reach Rome, but only that, having comforted the saints there, and been refreshed, he may pass westward to Spain. His ambition to preach Christ is as high as his mission is extensive.

Thus did love to Jesus—love rendered intelligent by the Holy Ghost—interpret and obey the great commission. It saw how natural and how rational were that commission, and the order which it laid down. Begin at Jerusalem, at the foot of the cross, at the door of the tomb. Preach the gospel to Jerusalem sinners. But stop at no point short of the ends of the world. If we do as these first missionaries did, we shall be right. They left the Jew to hate, and the Greek to scoff. "Hinder us not. We have a great work to do. The king's business requireth haste." And the chief answer they gave to either scoffers or persecutors, was to go back from their prison to their preaching. These, Christians, are our exemplars, in whom we see a bright image of our Lord. They, Spirit-led, walked in the true path of gospel obedience; and only when we follow them, as they followed Christ, can we regard ourselves as

partakers of their precious faith, and heirs of their immortal crown. Is there a true christian, who, after an honest examination of this great question, can say that he does not believe this exposition of the Church's work and of the field of operation to be the true one ?

The cause we thus plead, therefore, is not merely a thing of philanthropy. A strong case might be made out on that ground alone. Christians ought to pity miserable men in the dark places of the earth. But it is not so much beside the wretched heathen, the rude and wicked creature, whom the devil, and long ages of the reign of darkness, have embruted and debased—it is not beside his dark death-bed, amid his beastly revels, or in his wretched hut, that we take our stand. But higher up, yea, beside the throne of our Lord and Master, and bid christians look at our enterprise as for his glory, as the carrying out of the very work which his death began, and which, steadily advancing in its path of light through the centuries of time, at length shall reach its consummation, when the multitude which no man can number shall stand around the throne and the Lamb, and swell the song : “ Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that

sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." We do not undervalue the philanthropic side of missions. Good-will to man was one of the motives that led God to give his Son. But if missions are mainly pled in the style of "Pity the poor heathen," their chief end is so far hidden, which is "Glory to God in the highest." And those who loathe the Saviour's cause are ever ready to sneer at the philanthropy which, weeping over distant misery, is unmoved by what is near. Much power over the christian conscience is also lost, by losing sight of this, that Christ's kingdom is destined to be world-wide, that he is worthy of it, and has a covenant right to it, and that to us, his people, he has given the blessed work of preaching the glad tidings of that kingdom, in order that the Divine Spirit may establish it everywhere. The Bosjesman wandering over the desolate karroo, and living on roots and carrion; the Erromangan, although his isle has been twice stained with the blood of the murdered missionary; the Negro, although he is black; the Brahmin and the Chinaman in their pride; the Esquimaux amid his snows and ice; the Patagonian on his inhospitable shore; the Tartar in his tent—all, all are men and brothers.

Each of them has a claim on every christian man and woman. For in all their ignorance, and sin, and misery, and dark despair, they have a *right* to hear the gospel. They are all now in the devil's kingdom; they shall yet be in Christ's. The time must come when, instead of the scattered tapers that now glimmer in the heathen gloom, at our mission stations, the whole earth shall be bathed in light from heaven. "For the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall fill the earth as the waters cover the sea." "From the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts."

The field of labour and conquest which is thus set before the Church of Jesus Christ, is as well marked out as it is extensive. That the whole human race ought to hear the gospel, and that the world's end is the limit of our labours in preaching it, is already in our creed. But something more is necessary. It must have its right place in our plans and practice. It is well to confess the obligation, but we must fulfil it. Rome had to train and mus-

ter her legions, and send them to the war, and she had to sustain and reinforce them, if she would either conquer the world, or her empire stand. The Church is bound likewise to see to it that she have an army of foreign service, and that it be both efficient and sufficient. There should be enough of men to do the work, and these should be the right men. It has been, and is still, too much the case, that the Lord's service abroad is thought less respectable than the same service amid the refinements, conveniences, comforts, and comparative ease of this christian land. Those who are reckoned the best men, and the best orators, the men with popular talents, the beautiful preachers, would once have been considered as thrown away upon barbarians. It is true that talents which make a man useful in one place, would not be so suitable in every other. But, surely, work like that which the evangelist among the heathen has to do, requires more than the meanest gifts. The Holy Ghost selected Paul and Barnabas for this work, and they were, perhaps, the ablest men in the church at Antioch. To preach saving truth in imperfect, scanty, and unchristened tongues, is not so easy that it should be given to the dregs of our preaching staff, and

to the weaker brethren whom the smallest village churches consider beneath their means and merits. The time when such ideas found acceptance has surely passed for ever. We trust that the Church will never be content to serve God in her foreign fields with that for which she has no other use, choosing the best for home service, and doling out the fag end for the distant work. This would be as if, were our foreign empire threatened with an imminent overthrow, we should keep our finest troops for home parade, and send our awkward squads to the post of glory and of danger. Of all christian labourers in the world, missionaries and their partners ought to be efficient, both as respects their natural capacities and their accomplishments. They should be genuinely pious. They also need mental power. They cannot dispense with mental culture. They should be adepts in the christian courtesies. It is of vast consequence that they should be, in a word, well gifted, and well trained, christian ladies and gentlemen.

And while looking to the efficiency of those whom she sends forth to the heathen, the Church should see to it that they are sufficient in number for the work. It is neither possible nor neces-

sary to plant all the world with European missionaries, as thickly as ministers are planted in this country. But as the most free, the most favoured, the most advanced, the most wealthy in men and means, and possessing the greatest facilities in a commerce which ploughs every sea, and visits every shore, the churches of Christ in Britain and America ought to hold themselves bound, with the help of evangelical churches on the continent, to plant the gospel in every land. Every centre ought to be occupied in such a way as to put things in train for speedily and efficiently filling earth with the light of heaven. The land already occupied should often be reviewed, and that to be possessed, often examined. The Church should keep the map of the world before her, and survey it as anxiously as a general studies the geography of the seat of war. And she ought so to count her forces, and so to divide and allocate them, as the soonest to overtake her world-wide work. There should be no partiality for particular regions and races, no crowding to fields that appear grand and imposing by their population or barbaric wealth, while fields less inviting, and peoples more barbarous, are comparatively neglected. India and China are sometimes spoken of as if they were the whole

heathen world, and should have the best men and the bulk of the Church's resources; while Ethiopia, although representing one-third of mankind, as being descended of one of the three fathers of the human race, is counted as less noble, and her claims as less urgent. This arises from narrowness of view. The great end of our enterprise, be it remembered, is to set up the Lord's throne in *every land*. There is no respect of persons with God. He does not despise the Negro, and honour the Brahmin. All men are in the same pit of ungodliness—all under sin, all exposed to wrath, all equally needing salvation. And, therefore, preach the gospel to every creature in all the world.

We sometimes hear a comparison of mission fields which we protest against with the deepest abhorrence and indignation. So many pounds have been spent here, and so many persons converted; so many pounds there, and so many converted. By simple division it is found that the conversion of a soul costs so much less here than there. This is the *cheapest* mission, therefore let christians contribute for it. Anything more unlike Christianity we never heard, or anything that shows a poorer apprehension of the Church's responsibility; or anything showing less of the

magnanimity of Christ ; or anything more offensive to our Divine Redeemer, who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor ; or anything more likely to incur his holy frown ; or anything, in a word, more exceedingly contemptible either in spirit or in policy. The means expended by the Church in furthering the Lord's work do not really belong to the Church. They are not her absolute property. The christian is not his own. His money is not his own. His time and his talents are not his own. All, all are Christ's, and he is Christ's steward. And, therefore, should one mission be more expensive than another, in the proportion of a thousand to one, we are not, on that account, at liberty to refuse, or even grudge the expenditure. If there be but the clear sense of obligation, and a noble and holy ambition to meet it to its height and fulness, and to sacrifice everything for the empire of our Lord, will he not put into the Church's hands all that is necessary, and, if he please, more than is necessary, for the cost of the enterprise ?

The rule of numerical proportion in the allocation of missionaries—so many heathens, so many labourers—is a very fallacious one, and must not be followed. The nature of the field, the state of

the people, and the facilities for bringing the truth before their minds, must be taken into account. For instance, one Dr. Judson can accomplish as much among a reading people, like the Burmese, as ten Judsons can overtake in Africa. He prepares his treatise, he translates the Scriptures, and having got them printed, he circulates them by thousands, and they are read far and wide. Thus the gospel is made known to many who do not see a teacher or hear his voice; and seed is sown of which God will give the increase. So it is in China: But it is very different in Africa. There is not one African dialect written, until the missionary write it, gathering it up, word by word, and phrase by phrase, from the mouths of untutored men. And then these Ethiopians have to be taught to read their own language, before books can be of use to them. Instruction by the living lip is the only means of reaching the tribes of Africa. The gospel does not sound far beyond the reach of the preacher's voice. Who does not see from this that Africa requires a far larger proportion of missionaries, and of able missionaries, too, of men who can learn unwritten tongues, or tongues but recently, and, as yet, imperfectly written, without the aid of moonshees and pundits,

and native scholars, and native literature? It is important that this should be kept in mind by the Church of Christ in the allocation of her labourers. Moreover, an island should be more easily brought under gospel instruction than a continent. The island community is circumscribed. Perhaps it has but one dialect—at least, it will have a common tongue. But the Ethiopian race is scattered over a large continent, and broken up into fragments, with a vast variety of dialects. In Sierra Leone “the late Bishop Vidal found upwards of one hundred and fifty distinct languages, besides dialects;” and “Mr. Koelle, in his ‘Polyglotta Africana,’ gives a list of words in more than one hundred of these.”* On all accounts, therefore, it is obvious that Africa should have a larger *proportion* of able missionaries than any other division of heathendom.

In arranging for the occupation of the whole world, there should be no sectarian jarring. Every section of the church should be counted as a regiment or division of the Lord's army. And, while these divisions should provoke one another to love and good works, woe be to those who are boasters

* Dictionary of the Efik Language, by the Rev. Hugh Goldie, Missionary from the United Presbyterian Church, Scotland, to Old Calabar, 1862. Introduction, p. iv.

or sectarian bigots. How well does the Lord instruct us! How well does he know the imperfection of our natures when he puts the humblest first! Verily, such are the likeliest, and no wonder if they get nearest, to himself! He sees that this spirit of humility, which takes the lowest room, and prefers the brethren, is necessary to that oneness among his people for which he so earnestly prayed, in order that the world might credit his Divine character and mission. Nothing, therefore, can be more unchristian than to carry sectarian jealousy into our mission fields, and more desire the glory of our denominations than the glory of our Lord. Such a spirit is the weakness of the Church. Nothing but confusion and disappointment can be its result and its reward. Judah vexing Ephraim, and Ephraim envying Judah, must be the easy prey of their common foe. The Philistines devour them at pleasure; and, which is worst, they grieve the Spirit of the Lord, in whose demonstration the gospel must come, in order to be believed by sinners.

III. Having a practical end in view, viz., to stir up christians to do Christ's work with new zeal, we assert that they, one and all, are bound to

do what each can. These are the workers to whom this world-wide work is committed.

Did the Lord's commission die with the eleven to whom it was first addressed? Have there been no persons on whom its obligation has rested since the last of the Apostles died? As well may one say that we are not bound to observe the Lord's Supper, because it was first enjoined on the eleven. Christ taught the Apostles all his will, that they might instruct other believers, and commit "the form of sound words," and all the rules of his house, into the hands of faithful men, who should be able to teach others also. The very terms and nature of the commission make it for ever binding; and the promise, "Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," puts this beyond a doubt. It is the will of Jesus, that his friends in every age shall carry on this first of enterprises, till it be fully accomplished, and the gospel preached to every creature. It is not a thing of choice with a believer whether he shall send or not send the lamp of life to the dark places of the earth. Every saved man and woman, by the very fact that he or she owns Jesus as Lord, has to do with this matter, as much as the missionary, who goes to grapple with heathenism in its native wilds. The whole

Church ought to be at once a missionary seminary to train agents, and a missionary society to send them forth. Christians are united in church fellowship, not merely for their own edification, but also that they may put forth the strength which is in union, for the extension of the Lord's empire. This was the very thing for which He prayed: "That they all may be one, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." This is further manifest from these words: "Ye are the light of the world; Let your light—my light reflected from you—shine before men." And, surely, that congregation which is liberal to itself, and niggardly to the Lord's public cause, has little of the true spirit of piety within it.

God could have established the kingdom without the service of his people at all. He might have saved men without the gospel, or the commission to preach it might have been given to others than believing men. As angels are interested students, so they would have been earnest and delighted preachers of the gospel, had they received the charge. It is not needful to show that God could have evangelized the world without the agency of either angels or men. Neither would it be profitable to dwell on what we may call the philosophy

of human instrumentality in the Divine plan. It can be shown that God's method is, of course, the very best for his purpose. The devout soul grants this with the same readiness and complacency as the intellect grasps an axiom of mathematics.

Let the reader, then, ponder the fact that *every* christian is charged with the spreading of the gospel. We are apt to lose the sense of our individual responsibility, by sinking ourselves in the crowd. The united gifts of many, however little each may give, make a large sum. We are flattered with the sound of it, and comparing it with what used to be given for the same purpose, we are pleased with our collective liberality. This feeling of satisfaction hides from us the true and solemn view of the case. The thing which each christian has to consider is, whether *he* is doing what he can. The Lord himself distinctly teaches us that our return in usury should be as the talents he intrusts to our stewardship. That we are mere stewards, and not independent owners of all that God has given us, is his too unwelcome doctrine on this point. The widow's all—her two mites—cast willingly and gratefully into God's treasury, formed a richer donation than the united gifts of the wealthy givers out of their abundance. If,

then, a christian withholds his hand from the cause of the kingdom, it matters little that his section of the Church is, on the whole, liberal. It is illiberal, nay dishonest, just up to the amount that any are able to give but which they withhold. We shall give an account of our stewardship, not in sections, but as individuals. And the neglect of duty in this momentous work, the filling of the whole earth with the glory of Jehovah, is a flagrant sin on the part of any professing christian. With every one who does nothing for missions, or who does it not from right motives, it should be an immediate and serious inquiry, whether his indifference and illiberality are not proof enough that he is still an unbeliever.

Why should *our* obligation be counted less weighty than that of the early christians? Why should neglect on our part be thought less guilty than on Paul's? Why should we think the scanty doings of the Church of to-day so great, when we hear that apostle? "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel." Do you, reader, if a saved sinner, owe less to God than Paul owed? If the love of God so constrained this believer, can you be one,

indeed, if you do not feel somewhat the constraint of the same love? The following statements deserve attention:—"Christians sustain to mankind at large, moral and benevolent relations, in which their faith must develop itself in efforts to save them. It is just as much the duty of each disciple to spread the gospel, as it was to embrace it. Our very conversion is a means to an end, and that end is the conversion of sinners at home and abroad. It follows, then, that the missionary enterprise is not a modern conception engrafted on the religion of Christ, but is as much one of the genuine forms and fruits of faith in Christ, as baptism, prayer, and brotherly love. Christ was the great model missionary; the apostles were missionaries; all the members of the early church were missionaries; the gospel itself is as diffusive as the light of heaven; and this spirit we must possess, or we are less than the least of all saints in more senses than one. You cannot define New Testament religion, without including as one of its essential elements the missionary spirit. Or look at the matter in another light. The whole heathen world is still unconverted. At home, tens of thousands are in the deepest ignorance, and are the slaves of the vilest sins. Christians have the

gospel, the only remedy for this appalling evil. The Church is the only agent in the universe for conveying the gospel to the unsaved, and converting them to Christ. Her opportunities for doing so are many and multiform. God has so arranged matters that we may stay at home, and yet reach and save these dark masses, as effectually as if they were at our doors. Now, can one be a christian without earnest cares, efforts, and self-denials, to save those perishing amid such circumstances as these? Is that man's religion more than a name, who looks on composedly, and sees souls sink down to perdition by thousands a day, without putting forth his hand to arrest the mighty ruin? No. It is high time that Christianity was better understood and acted out. The unbelief of men at home will never be overcome, till christians, in addition to their faith, abound in prayers and self-denying efforts to spread the empire of Christ. The most Christ-like man is he who, in addition to his personal holiness, goes out of himself in self-denying exertions to save a lost world. Never will christians bear a true witness for Christ and his religion, till they look like him on the dying world around them, and abandon themselves in zeal and activity for the diffusion of the gospel."*

* "Personal Piety," by C. T.

SECTION V.

OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED.

WE shall now notice some of the reasons which men give, to justify a want of interest in, and a refusal of efficient help to, the cause of the kingdom of Christ in foreign lands.

1. Some plead that they have nothing to spare. If this be true, they may keep their minds easy. Having only what God bestows, if he indeed gives them nothing for this work, they cannot be blamed for doing nothing. "Who goeth a warfare at any time at his own charges?" For if there be a willing mind it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not. But we believe that such a case must be extremely rare. What child of God must that be to whom he entrusts not even one talent? whom he allows not the privilege and honour of extending the kingdom of his Son? "It is more blessed to give than to receive." And yet there are some chris-

tians who receive not two mites to honour the Lord with! Strange that He should withhold from so many of his dear children this greater blessedness of giving! A kind and wise parent will give his child a little pocket-money, to foster his generosity and charity. But our Father in heaven, so wise, so good, gives nothing to a certain class of those who are called his people, except what they must spend upon themselves! In this there is surely something very suspicious. Are the consciences of such quite at ease? Does their heart not condemn them in the least? If they really have nothing to spare for that cause which God himself makes to depend for instrumentality on the liberal hearts of his willing people, their Father must see that, were he to intrust them with his portion, they would make it their own. In whatever way they look at this matter it wears a serious and alarming aspect to them. It cannot be shaken off. It clings to them, and follows them to the judgment-seat.

“I have nothing to spare,” is too truly, as an American writer says, “the plea of sordid reluctance.” It should make him who uses it, and all who seek his salvation, more anxious about his soul, than it need alarm us lest the Lord’s work

suffer from want of his aid. If any indeed have nothing to spare, if, in the providence of God, they are entirely indigent, yet, if their hearts are rightly affected towards the Lord and his kingdom, they will abound in prayer, and in personal service, according to their opportunities.

Our conviction is, that in so far as the people of God are truly willing to consecrate their service to him, He will give them means enough for building the spiritual temple, and for lengthening the cords and strengthening the stakes of Zion, till her seed shall possess the nations. Is it a matter of indifference to Jesus Christ whether all the kingdoms of the world become his or continue the devil's? Are not the silver and the gold all his? Has He not received all power in heaven and in earth, that He may bless the nations by bringing them under his own sway? Has He not taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come?" Has he not commanded us to preach the gospel to every creature? Has he not directed us to pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into his plenteous harvest? Are these things true? And can it be that God, of whom all things come, stints his Church of the means necessary for the cause of his glory? If the Church be stinted, it

can only be because her heart is not yet sufficiently enlarged and liberal, and because the Lord's portion is devoured, instead of being willingly returned into his treasury. Here is the withholding that tends to poverty. Would to God that christians pondered these things, and aspired to the blessing promised to the liberal soul!

2. Some are dissatisfied with the results of our missionary operations. They make it a thing of arithmetic, and judge of it as they do of any merely commercial speculation. So many pounds expended, so many converts. And because they consider the results insignificant, in their way of counting, they become disgusted and dispirited, and are disposed to give up the enterprise, or turn to some new field. These forget that neither men nor money can convert souls. That is God's work, a work in which he is sovereign. The Lord tells us that as in a field of grain some seeds produce thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold, so it is in the kingdom of God. The commission runs thus:— "Teach, preach." Paul plants, Apollos waters. But neither is the planter anything, nor the waterer, but God is all. He gives the increase. If the Lord has but one sheep in a heathen region, and to bring that one to the fold

costs the church many thousand pounds, who has any right or reason to complain, if the Lord has so ordered it? The preacher of the gospel among the heathen is the prophet speaking to the dry bones, and saying: "Hear the word of Jehovah." Motion, and form, and life, can come only with the divine power and breath. The missionary is bound to do his work faithfully. He must so bear himself among the heathen as to make them see that he himself believes. If, by ill-temper, or worldliness, or want of a humble, loving, forbearing, Christ-like spirit, he make himself repulsive to them, he will not be used to draw them to the Saviour, he will make them shut their ears to the word he preaches, and their hearts against the blessed religion which he so caricatures in his own temper and behaviour. Alas, then, for him and for them! For although the most Christ-like conduct on the part of missionaries, and the most able, correct, full, convincing, and interesting statements of the truth about Christ, will not bring sinners to him, without the power from on high, yet we have no reason to expect that an imperfect, unqualified, uninteresting, ill-tempered, or lukewarm missionary ministry will be made very fruitful. In this respect the Church of Christ as a

whole, each of her members, and her agents among the heathen, lie under a heavy responsibility. We are guilty of grievous sin, if our agency is not earnest, not sincere, not living, not self-denied, not equal to our ability, not the best that it can be. Let the complaining missionary contributor examine himself. Let those who stay at home take heed lest they be as blameworthy as the missionary. Their work is not done when they put the penny into the box, or give the shilling to the collector.

The want of success in our foreign operations, if that want be so great as some assert, which we doubt, is mainly due to the Church herself. Her unpreparedness hinders extensive, striking, and rapid progress. There is nothing in heathenism in any part of the world that the Great Spirit is unable to remove or renovate. But while God's people are so earthly, so little alive to their responsibilities, so destitute of genuine enthusiasm in the enterprise, so ready to take credit for their doings, and the results thereof, and so disposed to glorify the instrument, God will not give us to see great things. Men's unbelief often hindered Christ from doing his mighty works. All his great interpositions were made at such a time, and

in such a way, as that the excellency of the power was seen, and by every devout heart acknowledged, to be of him. The Church needs to be educated up to this. Let all her ministers open their eyes to it, and do their duty, that the whole counsel of God may be fully known by his people; that human impotence may be deeply felt, while human agency is seen to be needful, and ought to be of a high order; that there may be a humble, firm reliance on the Lord's arm, a readiness to see that every atom of spiritual fruit is due to the grace of the Holy Ghost, and a spirit of praise that will ascribe to him all the wisdom, and power, and honour, and glory, and blessing. When the Church puts her whole strength into the cause of her King, and proves his faithful witness to all the nations, like Christ finds it her meat and drink to do the will of her Father, and becomes so humbled and poor in spirit as to see that every degree of success is the work of Jehovah's hand, that he may be glorified, then may we see the kingdom coming with power in all the earth.

Instead, then, of any real or seeming barrenness of results being a reason either for the fickleness of churches in respect of their mission fields, or for drooping and giving up, or for carping at the

distant labourer who cannot tell of pentecostal effusions, it is a reason why churches, both pastors and people, should humble themselves for want of faith, zeal, liberality, and prayer. It is a reason why they should examine themselves as to the amount and manner of their service in the King's cause. It is a reason why they should be sure that there is something wrong about themselves and their doings ; and why they should do something more than hold missionary meetings, and gather missionary monies, and read missionary publications, and blame missionary agents. Let them even search out the Achan in the camp, who or which hinders the God of Israel from going up with their armies, and put it away. It may be found that this Achan lives in the home camp, rather than among the handful who fail to make the desired impression on the enemies' stronghold. Jehovah's instructions to Joshua contain truth for all times, and show that His people must be in good spiritual health, before He can be among them and prosper their enterprises. "Only be thou strong, and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded thee : turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest

prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth ; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein : for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.”

“Languid ministers, proud and prayerless members, will care little for missions. These persons have got nothing from heaven, and they cannot impart to others what they themselves do not possess. Such a church is like a mass of floating ice, cold in itself, benumbing to all around it, and melting and disappearing as it does so. But an active and devoted ministry, an humble, desiring, and praying people, must make a missionary church.”* With the following remarks of Dr. Somerville we also most heartily concur :—

“He was forcibly impressed with the thought that there was a most intimate connection between missionary success, and the state of the home church. Missionaries were messengers of the churches : they went to do the work of the home

* Rev. Dr. Somerville, Sermon at the Ordination of Rev. John Campbell, Missionary to Goshen, Jamaica. Grant and Taylor, 1846.

church. Now he was afraid that the home church had satisfied itself too much with the position of merely sending forth men and giving them support. He had been looking into the Scriptures closely of late, and he was prepared to make this statement, that there is not, in the Word of God, an intimation of very rapid success in the extension of the gospel, that is not preceded by an account of the revival of religion in the home church; and that, on the other hand, there is not, as far as he had been able to ascertain, a statement of the revival of the church of God, of the manifestation of his gracious presence, and of the outpouring of his Spirit, that is not succeeded by an account of the rapid extension of the gospel There were persons who said that the success of missions had been very limited and very small. Let those persons be told that they were themselves responsible for such comparatively small results; that the fault was their own, and not that of the missionaries; and that the missionaries were labouring nobly, zealously, and with great self-denial. Let the home church be told that, if they wanted to see a harvest, waving with holy grain, this would only be the result of an increased spirit of

prayer and vital godliness, manifested by the whole church."*

We are not prepared, however, to admit that the amount of sheaves gathered is small, in proportion to the labour expended in tilling heathen soils and sowing precious seed. It is not easy to collect all the facts that need to be put together, to show the substantial progress which the kingdom of Christ has made within these seventy years of modern missionary effort, in the properly heathen parts of the world. Those who think that progress insignificant, do not, we are persuaded, take the pains to know these facts. Could Haweis, and Waugh, and Bogue, and Fuller, and other large-hearted men, who were honoured to stir up the Church to this noblest of all crusades, see where we now are, they would wonder and praise, as we may believe they even now do in heaven, not being ignorant of how the cause of the Redeemer moves on earth.

(1.) Look at the advance of the missionary spirit in all sections of the Church itself, as compared with the beginning of the movement.

In the last century, so far was the duty to evangelize the world from being acknowledged by

* Report of Liverpool Missionary Conference.

the whole church, that, in 1783, the Bishop of St. Asaph declared in the House of Lords, that “the obligation said to be incumbent on christians to promote their faith throughout the world, had ceased with the supernatural gifts which attended the commission of the apostles.” And, in 1796, a minister said, in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland:—“To spread abroad the knowledge of the gospel among barbarous and heathen nations, seems to be highly preposterous, in as far as it anticipates, nay, it even reverses, the order of nature.” The aiding of missions by collections was thus characterized:—“For such improper conduct censure is too small a mark of disapprobation ; it would, I doubt not, be a legal subject of penal prosecution.” Nay, Dr. Hill himself said, “that missionary societies were highly dangerous in their tendency to the good order of society at large.” Mr. Boyle, an elder, afterwards Lord-president of the Court of Session, thought that the Assembly should give the overtures recommending such associations “their most serious disapprobation, and their immediate and most decisive opposition.”*

But the avowal of such opinions by grave

* Pictorial History of Scotland, II., 997.

church dignitaries and courts, does not prove the ignorance and insensibility of those times to the fact that the Church exists by her Lord's behest, mainly, that she may be a lamp-stand for the dark world, so much as the almost entire absence of any endeavours to do the work. Even in our day of active zeal, voices are sometimes lifted up in unbelieving and unthinking scorn of this enterprise, mainly, we believe, because such scorers look only at its philanthropic aspect. Did they remember that its aim is the establishment of the kingdom of God, they dare neither oppose, even by a jest or a scoff, nor withhold their personal and earnest service, without proving themselves to be utterly godless. In the 17th century, the church of Jesus Christ in these realms had to suffer her bloody baptism. It was with her, at that time, a battle for dear life, for very existence. Richard Baxter felt and wrote thus :—“ There is nothing in the world that lieth so heavily upon my heart, as the thought of the miserable nations of the earth. I cannot be affected so much with the calamities of my own relations, or the land of my nativity, as with the case of the heathen, Mahometan, and ignorant nations of the earth. No part of my prayer is so

deeply serious, as that for the conversion of the infidel and ungodly world." The godly Puritans of England, and Covenanters of Scotland, who braved death for Christ's kingly power over his own house, had they lived in these our times of peace, would have been most zealous in the enterprise which aims to exalt him among the nations. Those who held that "never one should think himself in the right exercise of true religion, that has not a zeal for God's public glory,"* would not have been lukewarm or supine in a cause which demands the Church's strength, and on which so momentous interests do hang. After those dark times had passed away, there followed a season during which there was little spiritual life in the churches of Scotland and England. It would be in vain to expect zeal for the diffusing of a gospel which was not valued by its own professors. The foreign missionary enterprise arose after the revival of the life and power of religion among British Christians. Few of our existing missionary institutions date before 1800. But where, at this day, is the evangelical church that is not engaged in missionary labour? At first, the en-

* Last speech of the Rev. Donald Cargill, executed at Edinburgh, July 27, 1680.

lightened and liberal-souled few in various sections, banded themselves together into one small regiment of foreign service. Now, each section of the Church aims at having its own separate mission; and the result is a vast increase of effort and of work. "Now the Church is settling down upon sound, substantial principles, and is acting more from a calm sense of obligation. Duty to the heathen is taking a deeper hold of the public mind." We trust that duty to Jesus Christ is also taking a firmer hold of the conscience of every christian. Christians have much to learn, and much to unlearn, as to their relations and responsibilities to the cause of the Redeemer's kingdom. We think that these are neither fully known, nor fully looked at, nor fully acknowledged; perhaps, in many quarters, they are not fully taught. But as compared with half a century back, we ought gratefully to admit that progress has been made; and may we not regard this as a pledge that our blessed Father in heaven—the Teacher of his children—will give us further knowledge, by fixing our minds more earnestly on the Bible doctrine of the kingdom, and making us to see it in his own light clearly?

Thankfully should we notice that the little

regiment has grown into an army, with its separate divisions, all aiming at one object, and all imbued with one sentiment of loyalty to our Divine king. Young colonial churches have recently entered the field, as the Presbyterians of Nova Scotia, one of whose agents, with his partner, was murdered last year, in the island of Erromanga.

If we look at the department of missionary literature—a literature which some despise, yet which God has blessed to kindle, and to fan the flame of zeal, liberality, and self-sacrifice in many christian hearts —“when the ‘Evangelical Magazine’ was started, a promise was given that *one page* monthly should be devoted to missionary intelligence.” At the present day, 300,000 copies of purely missionary periodicals are circulated, monthly or quarterly, in Great Britain alone, besides that missionary intelligence and discussions occur often in publications of a more general character.

In the end of that most interesting volume, containing the minutes of the Conference on Missions held at Liverpool, in 1860, there is given a list of Missionary Literature, comprising no fewer than 252 works in history, biography, &c., and these do not exhaust the whole.

And what pleasing evidence of progress have we in the present scale of giving for the cause of the Redeemer's kingdom, as compared with fifty years ago. At least, one section of the Church, has quadrupled its missionary gifts in fifteen years. No section is already perfect in liberality; but let us be thankful at the progress which some have made in this duty. We are far from seeing the full tide of christian generosity and the highest pitch of faithful stewardship. While there are individuals who emulate the large-heartedness of David in his preparations for the building of the temple, that largeness of soul is far from being the rule. Nay, that magnanimity itself is a Divine gift. "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee." Most heartily do we commend the following remarks:—"It appears from an article in the 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' that the missionary contributions of all Christendom amount to about L.600,000 a-year, excluding contributions made to Bible Societies. But even supposing that the amount were L.1,000,000, there are a hundred men in Christendom who ought to give every farthing of that amount, leaving the

missionary contributions of all the rest entirely out of the account. We are only now at the beginning of the work. When God sees the Church prepared for it, he will put more substance into her hands ; and, when she has more life, she will obtain more means for carrying on this work. The great want of the Church, indeed, is more life. And when she has more life, she will pray more, and make larger contributions." *

We also see progress in that now the Lord's work in heathen parts is more generally admitted to have a claim on the Church for the best men that can be found. This is not yet admitted or acted out as it should be, but it commands a wider assent than it once did. Far be it from us to underrate the men who have been employed in foreign missions during the past seventy years. We only wish to protest against the erroneous and pernicious notion, that men of inferior capacity, culture, and attainments, are good enough for the work of the kingdom in heathen regions ; against that selfishness in churches which claims the highest gifts for home service ; and against those low views of the public cause of God in preachers, which lead

* Report of Liverpool Conference, Rev. H. M. Macgill, p. 82.

them to fancy that it is a higher and more dignified style of service, to minister to a congregation in Britain, than to preach the gospel where Christ was never named.

And do we not see delightful progress in the number of accredited preachers of the gospel now employed in foreign missionary work? It is almost within the memory of some alive when the first labourers went out to the South Seas, to India, and to Africa. Many have died on the field, but every blank has been filled up, and the number has grown till, to-day, we count 1600 missionaries from Europe and America, "accompanied by more than 16,000 native ministers, religious catechists, scripture-readers, and schoolmasters, who are evangelizing their own fatherlands," and whose very existence is itself a blessed success.

In all these respects we see pleasing evidence that the missionary enterprise has advanced within the Church. But there is room for further improvement. This enterprise is still too much regarded as a modern idea engrafted on Christianity—a product of modern enlightenment—although it ought to be regarded as the end for which the Church exists in a visible and organised form in the heart of Satan's kingdom. It is still too much

regarded as a kind of philanthropic scheme which christians ought to further if they can, after having met every other claim with liberality and profusion, instead of being regarded as one of the very highest forms of service to God, as the means of realizing the thing which the Lord himself teaches his people first to pray for, "Thy kingdom come"—a service in which the most liberal soul will not be able to surpass its obligations, and in which its rewards will be sure and glorious.

The doctrine of the kingdom of Christ needs to be more fully and carefully taught to, and better apprehended by, christians, so that their missionary services shall be seen to be for the establishing of that kingdom everywhere. When to withhold sympathy and money from this service shall be accounted as indubitable a proof of gracelessness, as to be prayerless or profligate; when the Church generally shall feel, each christian feeling for himself, that unutterable guilt, and recreancy, and baseness are implied in a man's being indifferent to the Saviour's honour and kingdom, and that woe is unto us if we preach not the gospel, then will christians have right views on this question, and then shall we see greater sacrifices, enthusiasm, faith, and triumphs.

(2.) We also call attention to the amount of preparatory work accomplished in various parts of heathendom, as the results of the labours of half a century.

This of itself is almost a sufficient answer to the assertion that the fruits of our missionary operations are small. How many unwritten languages have been gathered from the lips of untutored men, and made the vehicles of Christ's evangel! Never has a negro tribe been found with a written language. At this day, about twenty West African dialects have been written by missionaries, and the most of these within the last twenty years; and in all of them there are portions of the Scriptures, as well as other works. Several South African tribes have complete versions of the Scriptures. The same is true of some Polynesian races. If we turn to Asia, we find that its many tongues have largely been baptized in the same manner. Within these sixty years, the Scriptures, in whole or in part, have been translated into more than 100 different languages. Only those who have personally engaged in this kind of service can know the vast amount of patient, plodding, earnest toil that has been expended in it. Unwritten tongues are invariably those of the more uncultured races,

who, therefore, cannot give intelligent aid to the missionary in his philological labours. They furnish the materials, but cannot suggest the laws of their languages, to facilitate the work.

In this accumulation of material the Church has the means of a far more extensive and satisfactory preaching of the gospel—the sword by which the Holy Ghost works that blessed and bloodless revolution, which shall cast down Satan's throne and set up the throne of Christ. And in the grace given to men of God to persevere in this work, and in their motive, and object, in achieving results so extensive, surely we have a pledge of final success. For only such a motive and such an aim could induce men to undergo the toil, and nerve them to face the difficulties, of the undertaking. Men can buy and sell without a knowledge of barbarian tongues, but, except in the tongues in which the hearers were born, the gospel cannot be preached so as to gain their attention, enlighten their understanding, and bring them to the faith and obedience of Jesus Christ.

(3.) How much work has been done among the young in schools! These form a very important and valuable part of the machinery of every evangelical mission. Hundreds of thousands have been

taught to read, and have had something good to read prepared for them. Probably, correct statistics of the amount of work done and of good accomplished in this department of missionary service, nowhere exist, but we consider both very great; and could the information be set before us, objectors would be silent.

(4.) One of the most encouraging results of modern missions is the number of native christian teachers who have been raised up. Facts on this point are both numerous, indubitable, and delightful. The Rev. Isaac Stubbins, from India, speaking of the Baptist Mission in Orissa, said:—“Between twenty and thirty native preachers had been raised up, and some of them had laboured with a zeal and an ardour scarcely equalled by any minister of our own land. Most of these had grown up in heathenism, had been converted in mature years, and had then become preachers of the gospel.”

Dr. Lockhart said of native Chinese preachers:—“To the eloquent declarations of gospel truth, made by some of them at Shanghai, he had listened with the greatest pleasure. They would carry on the work of the gospel throughout China,

much more extensively and efficiently than any Europeans could."

The Rev. Mr. Fairbrother said :—" In certain places native agency had accomplished wonders. By it a great number of the South Sea Islands had been won to the Church of the Redeemer ; and the same was true of Madagascar and the Karen Church."

Samuel Kayarnak, the first convert to Christianity in Greenland, " proved a marvellous evangelist among his countrymen."

The Rev. Dr O'Meara, a missionary among the North American Indians, spoke of a " cultivated and earnest native brother, who was looked up to by the people among whom he laboured, as much as was the European himself."

In connection with the American mission in Turkey there are about 300 native pastors and other labourers.

In the Samoan Islands, at almost every village there is a native agent ; in some instances, a pastor ; and all these are supported by the natives themselves.

The Liverpool Missionary Conference devoted a sitting to the consideration of this important branch of the subject ; and in their minute they thus

express the result:—"The Conference rejoice that the native agents have already, under the blessing of God, been made the instruments of great good. They rejoice and give thanks to God, that in many countries, in many spheres of missionary labour, converts raised up from among the heathen, have been found faithful pastors, eloquent preachers, self-denying evangelists, and that, in some cases, they have joyfully laid down their lives for Christ's cause. They reckon this fact as one of the most gratifying proofs of the success of the gospel in modern days."

It is reckoned that there are about 16,000 agents of this class in the various mission-fields, Polynesians, Negroes, Kafirs, Chinese, Hindoos, &c. They have been selected after trial and proof, having given evidence of piety; and many, if not all of them have been carefully trained. They are now teaching schools, preaching the gospel, and ruling churches. What a delightful and encouraging fact is this! How it should cheer the hearts, and increase the confidence, of God's people, and put to shame the ignorance, or the crookedness, that charges the cause of Christ with failure or small success!

(5.) In that interesting Report, already referred to,

the candid inquirer will find many delightful testimonies from all parts of the world, from the lips of missionaries of all sections of the Church, and of pious and intelligent lay brethren. The Rev. Joseph Mullens of Calcutta made the following pertinent remarks:—"Our modern missions are only sixty years old, and already we see the face of the wide world rapidly changing. I doubt if a single convert had been made before the year 1800. Dr. Carey had gone to India. A few of our brethren had sailed for the South Sea Islands. There were one or two in Africa, one or two in the West Indies, and the rest of the world was a blank. Our work began amidst the apathy of friends, and the loudest obloquy on the part of enemies."

And thus did Dr. Tidman speak of some of the blessed instances of success:—"In the islands of Polynesia more than a quarter of a million of human beings, cannibals and murderers, have been elevated not only to civilization, but, in some instances, to the highest forms of christian excellence. In India we have had specimens of christianity among the natives, lately, that may well make us ashamed. I want to know what we ought to have expected beyond the success which we

have had. If we send more men, the harvest will be greater."

The Conference in their minute say:—"In looking at the results of the christian missions carried on during the last sixty years, and at the high position which they have now attained, they record with adoring gratitude that, notwithstanding their own imperfections and shortcomings, the Lord has blessed them with great success."

Other brethren spoke in similar terms, and gave details from all quarters of heathendom. But not to be tedious, we give the following summary in the words of the Rev. J. B. Whiting of the Church of England Missionary Society:—"He did not like the word *failure*. He had endeavoured to acquire some information as to the amount of success with which God had blessed missionary efforts. He found that the Bible had been translated during the last sixty years into upwards of 100 languages. There were 100,000 professing christians in New Zealand; 100,000 in Burmah and Pegu; 112,000 protestant christians in India; 5000 or 6000 in Mesopotamia; 250,000 in Africa; 40,000 in Armenia; and 250,000 in the islands of the Pacific. There were christians in China, Madagascar, Mauritius, and many other parts of

the world. There were 200,000 or 300,000 Negroes under the care of christian pastors in the West Indies. There were more than a million and a quarter of living christians, who, but for the labours of missionaries, would all have remained idolaters. They must remember also the hundreds of thousands who were now sleeping in their graves round the mission churches; and how many had gone to their heavenly home from the far distant recesses of heathendom, who were never known to the missionaries, but who had learned from tracts, Bibles, and other means, of the salvation which is in Christ. The 1600 missionaries from Europe and America were now accompanied by more than 16,000 native ministers, religious catechists, scripture readers, and schoolmasters, who were evangelizing their own fatherlands."

When we with candour and care search out, and put together the fruits of these sixty years' labour, instead of murmuring, we ought to thank God and take courage; and ill-conditioned must he be who does not see in these results at once a cause of gratitude and self-abasement—gratitude that they are so great; abasement, because, through our means, they are not more—because by our little-mindedness, our illiberality, our divisions, our

want of high and worthy views of the enterprise, of faith in God, whose cause it is, and of mutual christian love, we have stood in the way of the revelation of his arm, and hindered distant peoples from seeing his salvation.

But although we had smaller results and fewer promises to encourage us, would our duty be the less imperative? Were missionaries never able to tell of converts, were they ever going out with the seed, and never permitted to bring home a sheaf, would that free us from the duty of preaching the gospel to every creature? Nay! The Lord's command lays upon his people an obligation that cannot be cancelled. Only fancy church members called to their account, saying to the Lord:—"The missionaries could not tell of Pentecostal success; they did not convert many of the heathen. We thought it was of no use to waste our money on these barbarians, and, therefore, we gave up the attempt to evangelize them." His reply would shut their mouths. Would to God that it would now stir all to zeal, as it may then strike some with terror:—"Did I not command you to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature?"

3. There are those who, as an offset to the

claims of Christ's cause abroad, plead the great numbers of heathenish persons in this christian land.

Large sums of money, they say, are given for the benefit of persons far off, while our countrymen, in equal or greater destitution, are passed by. The charity that goes abroad to earth's end for objects, and overlooks those so near, of our own kith and kin, must be spurious. It is often sneered at by persons who care little or nothing for the heathen either at home or abroad. With these we neither reason nor expostulate. But we are surprised that any christian man should take such narrow views of this great matter; and should wish the Church to slacken her efforts in behalf of the world at large, for a reason like this.

Were we to look at this matter from the merely philanthropic point of view, it would be easy to show that, as compared with the darkness and misery of hundreds of millions abroad, the condition of our lapsed hundreds of thousands at home is light and happiness. No one, not an idiot, can live in Britain without knowing that there is a thing called Christianity, which claims the attention of all. A man with eyes and ears sees and hears, on all sides, and from week to week, enough to make him eternally inexcusable,

if he live and die in ignorance. The gospel is so widely preached, that men would need to stop their ears, like the deaf adder, not to hear it. We, of course, neither palliate nor deny the ignorance and ungodliness of many in Britain. But such are wilfully ignorant. If they desired to know about the Saviour, there are daily opportunities, which can be multiplied to any extent. Does any candid christian man doubt that the condition of the worst at home is infinitely superior to that of the children of Ham, who, from the days of the flood, have been left to sink without a check, and who never heard the name of Jesus? Through their vast continent, except in the little missionary spheres, reigns the silence of death. No house of God stands, a silent preacher of his religion. No living teacher breaks the stillness with the joyful sound. No Bible exists, and no knowledge of its contents. It is an insult to our understandings to hint that the state of the lapsed masses at home is not infinitely superior to that of the heathen. The lines have fallen to the ungodly here in pleasant places of opportunity and privilege; the heathen inherit a parched wilderness. In this land there are thousands of gospel ministers, and hundreds of thousands of intelligent and well-

to-do christian men and women. A great amount of christian instruction among the home heathen can be, and is, overtaken by their gratuitous labours ; and more could be overtaken, if all who are called christians were loyal to Christ. We send abroad our regular troops to foreign wars, and the care of our homes and hearths is entrusted to our volunteers. So should it be in the wars of the Lord. The claims of the heathen abroad and of those at home may seem, but they only seem, to clash : they are not really antagonistic. Christ's people are bound to seek the salvation of both ; and they cannot neglect either, without incurring the guilt of the blood of souls, and the higher guilt of ingratitude and treachery to their Redeemer and King. Christians, if ye have the slightest spark of love or loyalty, ye will *send* the gospel to the heathen abroad, and *carry* it to those at your own doors !

But we are convinced that the very necessity of home missions, at this time of the day, has arisen partly from the neglect of Christ's public cause. An un-Christ-like Church has made thoughtless masses scorn Christianity herself. The self-seeking and the earthliness of the Church, her want of a proper appreciation of the high and most

honourable work put into her hands, and her want of a generous enthusiasm in carrying it on, is one great reason why she is not more powerful as a witness for Christ at home. Were we more Christ-like, we should be vastly more anxious to spread the gospel. The Church's messengers would be vastly more numerous, their feet on every mountain, publishing peace, and preaching the glad tidings of the kingdom. That same high spirit of devotion which would make her lay her sons and daughters, her silver and her gold, on the Lord's altar, for His world-wide work, would also be the means of awakening the lapsed home masses to the conviction that, as she is in earnest in her belief, so that which she believes is true. Had christians borne a truer witness, and shown a higher kind and style of piety, and done more for the setting up of the kingdom everywhere, there would have been less irreligion and infidelity in the cities and villages of Britain.

There is another way of answering this objection. If there is in a man the true spirit of foreign missions, depend upon it, in that very man lives the genuine spirit of home missions too. The spirit of both is one and the same, and that is love to Christ, zeal for Christ's glory, and

love, true love, to the souls of men. If a man is indifferent to the salvation of his own family and neighbourhood, his foreign mission zeal is not genuine. And if a man is callous to the claims of the cause of Christ in India, in Japan, in Africa, in Greenland, in France, in Tartary, or in Erromanga, who can give him credit for a sincere christian concern about the lapsed masses in Manchester, London, or Glasgow?

We hold it to be utterly impossible for an enlarged and pious soul, with even a spark of true love to Christ, to be otherwise than deeply interested in His public cause. Nay, it is but a poor type of piety that is liberal for congregational objects, the building of fine churches, and the extinction of congregational debt, and which is not eager to multiply in heathen lands the messengers of the blessed evangel of Jesus, that his kingdom may quickly come.

This will be put beyond all question, if we remember that mission work is not primarily philanthropic. There never should be any weighing of the comparative claims of the so-called home heathen and of the foreign. Christ's command settles this, and supplies a rule for all his people, at every time, and in every place: "Beginning *at*

Jerusalem, and *unto* the uttermost parts of the earth." And it was not: "Stay at Jerusalem till all the people there are converted." For Christ had sheep at Damascus, at Antioch, at Ephesus, at Athens, at Corinth, at Rome, in Spain, in Africa, in Scythia, in India, and in parts of Britain never reached by the Romans. And what frightful unfaithfulness is it in the highest of trusts, when christians keep to themselves that blood-bought salvation, intended for all the world, and commanded by Him who gave it to us, to be preached to every creature, or work but languidly for its world-wide extension, on the plea that this little angle of earth is not yet sufficiently good!

We christians of this day, sometimes wonder at the dulness and supineness of our forefathers, and at their neglect of the heathen. Surely our children will wonder no less at the smallness of our liberality, as compared with our means and facilities for spreading far and wide the Saviour's name, and at our want of zeal in a cause which so honours those to whose care and conduct it is entrusted.

It is simply a question of obedience to an indubitable command. We dare not say: "Lord, look at these lapsed masses in our Scotch and English

cities and towns ; we need the most and best of our men, and the most of our money for them. India, Africa, and other foreign places must wait till these our neighbours are instructed and converted. Charity begins at home." The Lord answers you, O narrow-minded, craven-spirited brothers : " Yes, begin at home, but haste to the uttermost ends of the earth. Carry the gospel to your neighbours, and send your substitutes abroad. Work one, work all. That Word is mine ; and you are mine, and my stewards. I want my gospel preached in every tongue of man. And you must do it wisely and well. Send forth enough of your best sons and daughters to prophesy on these bones ; and you, sitting here on your mountain-tops of privilege and comfort, aid them by your intense sympathy, your large liberality, and your prevailing prayers."

There is great reason to fear that, in most cases, those who use this and other objections, do so rather from lukewarmness and illiberality of spirit, than from any conviction of their cogency. And the poor worthless professor who grudges to the Lord a due portion of those talents which the Lord has entrusted to his stewardship, who counts his missionary gifts as lost money, and gives only

for form's or fashion's sake, not from a generous love to the cause of the kingdom, or a generous enthusiasm for its progress and triumph, had better remember that the Lord knows all about him and his ways and thoughts; and that, whether saint or sinner, he shall be rewarded according to his works. He should remember that God is not mocked; and that this is a withholding that tendeth to fearful poverty. Let him remember that God will find the means necessary to build his temple, but that this niggardly and un-Christ-like spirit is a peril and a curse to the man who has it. And none will be sorrier, than he himself at last will be, that he did not get it thawed.

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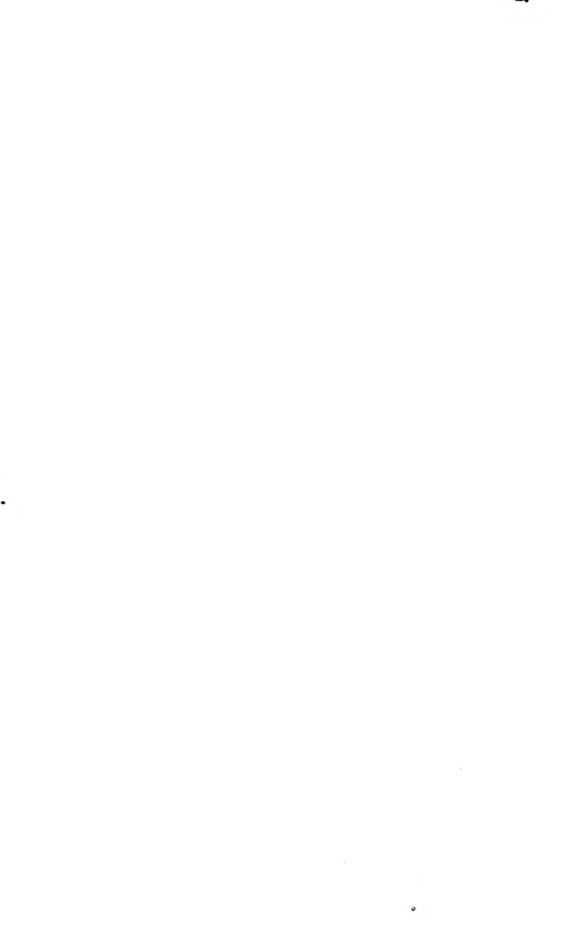
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