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## ARTICLE I.

### PERSONAL ENGAGEMENT IN THE WORK OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

AN ADDRESS TO CANDIDATES FOR THE MINISTRY.

I ask your attention, my respected young brethren, to the subject of personal engagement in the work of Foreign Missions. I have no apology to offer, and I presume you have none to ask, for claiming your attention to a matter of such unquestionable importance. It may be taken for granted, that in taking the necessary steps for fitting yourselves for the work of the ministry, you have already settled the question of your call to this sacred office. It is to be hoped that, in adopting this conclusion, you were guided by the Holy Ghost; and that the only object you had then, and the only desire you have now, in seeking this office, is to honor your Redeemer in the salvation of your fellow-men.

The next question which will naturally occupy your thoughts, and especially of those of you who are approaching the close of your studies, is, where you are to exercise those ministerial functions for which you are now fitting

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yourselves. This inquiry, if prompted by right motives, and conducted in the proper way, brings you at once face to face with the question, whether you are to labor in your native land, or are to become Foreign Missionaries—this primary question having been settled, either way, others, of a subordinate nature, will present themselves for consideration, but with these we shall have nothing to do at present. Yet it is a matter of momentous importance to your happiness, your usefulness, and the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, that the main question be settled in accordance with the Divine will.

In the discussion of the subject before us, it is not our purpose to hold the balance between the claims of the home and the foreign fields, but to place the latter, the foreign work, in its true and proper position; and we wish it to be distinctly borne in mind, throughout all the remarks we shall offer, that constant reference is had to the existing difference in the actual condition of the two fields; in other words, that one is a Christian land, where the Gospel is habitually dispensed, and where all have some knowledge of the Christian salvation, whilst the other is wholly without the light of the Gospel, and where none have any knowledge of this salvation whatever.

Before proceeding to the main points of our discussion, it is necessary to notice one or two false assumptions that have connected themselves with the subject.

One of these relates to the order in which the different nations of the earth are to be evangelized. No question is raised in relation to the fact that all are to be brought to the knowledge of the Saviour. The Gospel, according to the Divine command, is to be preached in all the world, and to every creature, and through this means all the peoples, and kindreds, and tongues among men are to be brought under the dominion of the Lord Jesus. The field to be cultivated is the world—the whole world. But by what process, or according to what order, is this to be

brought about? According to the theory we have under consideration, our own country is to be thoroughly evangelized first; after that, those nations which stand next in the scale of civilization; and, last of all, the more degraded Pagan nations of the earth. The more popular form of the argument is, that our own countrymen must be converted before we can undertake any thing of importance for the rest of the world; and the reason alleged in support of this view is, that when our own country is thoroughly evangelized, and all her resources are consecrated to the Lord, we shall be enabled to prosecute the foreign work with a more vigorous and powerful arm. But the question arises, who authorized this particular mode of procedure? Not the Lord Jesus; for He commanded His Gospel to be preached in every nation, and to every creature, irrespective of any such plan. Not the Holy Ghost; for He has placed the seal of His approbation to the truth, wherever it has been proclaimed. Not the Apostles or primitive Christians; for they went every where, making known the unsearchable riches of Christ. Not the providence of God; for that, at the present moment, is laying open all the heathen nations of the earth to the influences of the Gospel. The theory betrays a human origin, and, on this account alone, ought to be regarded with distrust. Against it there lie two very serious objections. One of these is, that it presumes to understand the unrevealed purposes of Almighty God, and lays down a programme, if we may so speak, by which He is to proceed in the conversion of the nations to Himself. But who knows that it has been decided in the councils of Heaven that our own country is to be first among all the nations of the earth to be fully and completely evangelized? Who knows that this great favor may not be reserved for India, for China, or for poor, miserable, degraded Africa? Would it be any novelty in the economy of Divine grace, if the first should be last, or the last first? But an equally serious objection is, that it entirely misapprehends

the nature and functions of the Christian ministry. When we speak of evangelizing this or that nation, according to a certain order, it implies that the work of conversion belongs to men; whereas, it is peculiarly and exclusively the office of the Holy Ghost. Our work (and we can not keep this too distinctly before the mind) is to spread the knowledge of the truth among men, leaving it for the Holy Ghost to make it effectual to their salvation, and bring about the evangelization of the different nations, according to His own plan and order.

The other false assumption has reference to our relation to the work. It is a very common idea, especially among young men about to enter the ministry, that they are to labor in their native land, as a matter of course, unless they have some special call to go abroad. It is not easy to account for the prevalence of this idea, unless it be found in the fact that the great body, even of intelligent Christian men, have no proper appreciation of the claims of the Foreign Missionary cause. If any thing is to be taken for granted at all, the converse of this general proposition is, perhaps, nearer the truth. When we remember that the command of the Saviour, to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, remains, even to the present day, substantially unfulfilled; when we call to mind the fact that all in our own country, or very nearly all, have some knowledge of the Christian salvation, and would know what to do to be saved, if they were so disposed; and when we couple with this the still further fact, that the heathen are entirely without this knowledge, and would not know what to do, even if they felt the most intense desire to be saved, we can hardly see how any young man, possessing the necessary qualifications to be a Foreign Missionary, can reconcile it with his conscience to remain at home, without some plain indication of Providence that it is his duty to do so. The most natural course is to go where the principal work is to be done; where the necessities of poor human nature are the

greatest; and where the Saviour may be most signally honored, because requiring on the part of his followers greater hardships and self-denials.

OBSTACLES IN THE WAY OF ENGAGING IN THE FOREIGN MISSIONARY WORK.

Some of these are weighty and insurmountable, whilst others are erroneously regarded as such. We shall bring under review a few of the leading ones of either class, commencing with those that are not insuperable. Among these may be mentioned:

(1.) That the *want of a call* to this particular work is often alleged as a reason for not engaging in it. But why, it may be asked, is a more special call needed for the foreign than the home field? Both are included in the same great commission, and both are under the same divine supervision. The only difference in a call from these two fields is, that in one case it proceeds from the particular church or congregation where the individual is expected to labor, whilst in the other it must be presented through the agency appointed by the Church, in her collective capacity, to represent the heathen. Any undue stress laid upon a call coming directly from the people, is not only a slight to the authority of the Church, as expressed by her highest judicatory, but is an act of injustice to the heathen, inasmuch as it is out of the question for them to present a call on their own behalf. But, in either case, we ought to know that the call is in accordance with the Divine will. But how can this be ascertained? So far as the foreign work is concerned, we answer, in no other way than by reference to His will in relation to the evangelization of these nations; and His will can be inferred only from His word, His Spirit, and His providence. What, then, is the testimony of His word? "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Again: where has this

Gospel been preached among any of these nations, whether in the days of the Apostles or subsequently, that it has not been sealed upon the hearts of men by the Holy Ghost? Furthermore, has not the providence of God been specially active, for years past, in removing all the outward obstacles to the introduction of the Gospel among these nations? Here, then, is a call endorsed by the three-fold authority of God's word, Spirit, and providence. If you can not read your commission to become Foreign Missionaries in all this (provided you have the necessary qualifications for the work), I do not know where you are to go to get more explicit instructions.

(2.) *Personal preference* ought to have very little weight in settling a question of so much importance. When you made choice of the calling of the ministry, if you acted from right motives, and with an intelligent view of its duties and obligations, you made an entire surrender of yourselves to the service of the Lord Jesus, and you have not now any right to choose where you are to go, or what duties you are to perform, but you are to be governed by the calls and indications of His providence. The calling of a soldier furnishes an analogous case. When he enlists for the defence of his country, he places himself at the direction of his commanding officer, and obeys every command, and performs every duty assigned him, irrespective of his personal wishes, or of the dangers involved in the performance of that duty. So it should be with the Christian soldier. His only rule of conduct should be the will of his great Captain, and at His bidding he should be ready to go to the utmost ends of the earth, and even lay down his life, if that were required.

(3.) Nearly allied to this are the wishes and preferences of your personal friends and relatives. If they oppose your going on a Foreign Mission, from what you know to be honest and conscientious convictions of your want of adapt-  
edness to the work, their objections deserve your most

serious consideration. Your friends may have a more correct view of your character and adaptation to such an undertaking than you have yourselves, and their counsels, therefore, ought not to be slighted. If, on the other hand, you have reason to believe that their opposition arises mainly from a selfish unwillingness to part with you, or from a want of a proper appreciation of the claims of the Foreign Missionary cause, it ought to have no influence whatever upon your final decision. The Saviour admits of no rivalry with His claims. "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me." He that would be a sincere and consistent disciple, must take up his cross and follow Him through good and through evil report.

(4.) The want of *personal holiness* is frequently, but very improperly, assigned as a reason for not engaging in this work. No one can help feeling the sincerest respect for scruples of this kind, when they arise, as they often do, from a deep sense of personal unworthiness to engage in so holy a cause. But the same objection would lie against entering upon the work of the ministry at all. In neither case can we reasonably expect the blessing of God to attend our labors, unless we cultivate a spirit of personal piety, and He is as ready to grant us the necessary grace for the one as the other. The proper course, therefore, for one who feels his insufficiency is, not to turn away from the work, but to seek the grace necessary to render him an effective laborer; and there is no surer way, perhaps, of reaching this desired attainment, than by casting one's self upon the Lord Jesus, to go, if need be, to the remotest ends of the earth, relying solely upon His promised aid to help and sustain in every possible emergency.

(5.) The claims of patriotism do not exonerate us, as ministers of Jesus Christ, from going to the heathen. Those claims, we readily admit, especially in circumstances like

the present, are very strong; and in no case ought they to be treated lightly. Still, however, we must not forget that the claims of Christianity are paramount to those of patriotism. The Master to whom we profess fealty, and to whose services we have solemnly consecrated all our energies, includes within His realms the whole race of man, and the work He has expressly assigned His ministers is to proclaim throughout the whole of those realms the glad tidings of salvation. We are, therefore, as His chosen ministers, citizens of the world; and our business is not with any one nation or particular branch of the human family, but with the whole race of Adam.

(6.) It is not a sufficient reason for dismissing the claims of Foreign Missions, that you are regarded as having peculiar qualifications for distinguished usefulness at home. This is often said in relation to young men of more than ordinary gifts; and many, as we have had painful reason to know, have dismissed the subject from their minds on this ground alone. But this is a sad and grievous mistake, and can not be resisted with too much energy. Paul did not act on this principle. Henry Martin, Alexander Duff, and other modern Missionaries, of scarcely less note, had all the talents necessary to have occupied the first positions of influence in their native land; but they never thought of this, as a reason for turning their backs upon the heathen: nor is it probable that any of them would have done as much for the upbuilding of the Redeemer's kingdom, or have acquired the world-wide influence they did, if they had staid at home. Besides this, we know of no gifts or attainments that would render a young man especially acceptable and useful at home, that would not equally enhance his usefulness and acceptability abroad. Popular oratory, distinguished scholarship, refined manners, amiability of disposition, and whatever else would endear a young man to the heart of a civilized and Christian community, would render him no less acceptable and effective



as a Missionary among the heathen. Some of these nations give more attention to the cultivation of personal manners than we do ourselves; and, in relation to those that stand lowest in the scale of civilization, it is a great mistake to suppose that, because, they are without refinement themselves, that therefore they have no appreciation of it in others. No where in the world will you find closer observers of the manners, disposition, and general deportment of men, and no where have these things a more positive influence, than among these uncultivated races; and, surely, in the study of their customs, their habits, their superstitions, their systems of false religion, and especially their languages, there is scope enough for the exercise of the strongest intellects of the Church. So far, therefore, from admitting the claim of the home-field to a monopoly of the best talents of the Church, we hold that the foreign field has, to say the least, a just claim to a full and equal share.

(7.) The fact that you have received a call to the care of a church, or some other position of usefulness in your native country, even before your studies are completed, is no certain evidence that the call is from God, or that you are thereby exonerated from going to the heathen. You might have two of these calls on hand at the same time, and as it would be impossible for you to respond to both, it would be certain that one of them was not from God; and why might this not be the case with both? But if you are bound to examine every call that is presented to your consideration (and you undoubtedly are), are you not equally bound to consider those unuttered, but not less real calls, that are coming up to you from all parts of the heathen world? Is it nothing to you, that one hundred millions of perishing men in Africa virtually cry out, "Come over and help us?" Is there nothing to move your compassion or to call for your aid in that profound ignorance and untold misery that afflicts every portion of India,

China, Japan, and all the rest of the heathen world? Is there no voice in those special interpositions of Divine providence that are laying open all these nations to the influences of the Gospel? Has the command of the Saviour, that His Gospel should be preached to all these nations, lost its power and authority over the hearts of men?

REAL DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY OF ENGAGING IN THE FOREIGN MISSIONARY WORK.

But there are real hindrances in the way of entering upon this work, and we propose now to point out a few of the more weighty and serious of these.

(1.) We may have dependent friends and relatives, thrown upon us by the providence of God, whom we may not leave, even for the high and holy purpose of becoming Foreign Missionaries. Aged and infirm parents, who have no other dependence; a feeble and dependent brother or sister; children, who are dependent upon us for education and general training, and whom it might not be possible or desirable to take with us to a foreign land, belong to this class. These relationships are providential, and are not to be overlooked or disregarded. They are indications of God's will that we are not to take part in this great work, whatever may be our desires or qualifications in other respects.

(2.) We may be debarred, again, from taking part in this work by the want of health or constitutional vigor. Most of the countries to be evangelized have climates different from our own. Three-fourths of the heathen inhabitants of the earth are to be found in tropical regions. A change from a cold or temperate to a hot climate, is a severe trial to the soundest and most healthy constitutions; and, of course, must be much more so to a feeble one, especially where there is a predisposition to diseases peculiar to warm climates. Too much care, therefore, can not be exercised in relation to this matter. To send a young man

with a feeble or unsound constitution to labor in one of these trying climates, would not only be an unjustifiable waste of missionary money, but might do the young man himself irreparable injury. As the field of missionary labor is enlarged, however, we shall have brought within the range of our choice a much greater variety of climate; so that one who could not endure the heat of Africa, would do well in the plateau lands and mountain regions of New Grenada; and one who found the climate of India and Siam too relaxing, might enjoy a more bracing air in Northern China and Japan.

(3.) The want of capacity to acquire a foreign language, may be regarded as a serious, if not insuperable, difficulty in the way of engaging in this work. It is scarcely possible for any one to become an effective Missionary without acquiring the language of the people for whom he is to labor. The use of interpreters, except as a temporary expedient, is a most indirect and unsatisfactory mode of reaching the heart of any people. The only true index we can have to the character of a heathen community, and the only way by which any material influence can be brought to bear upon their conduct, is through the medium of their own language. It is of indispensable importance, therefore, to the Missionary, that he understand the language of the people among whom he is to live. The difficulties of acquiring these languages, however, are often exaggerated. There are but few young men of ordinary abilities who could not, with proper patience and perseverance, master almost any of these heathen languages. In all the range of our observation, we have never known but two individuals who, after proper effort, failed to accomplish the task. As a general rule, living languages are more easily acquired than those that are known as the dead languages; and those who have succeeded in acquiring a creditable knowledge of the latter, need have no serious fears about the former. Among the different heathen na-

tions there is as much variety in language as there is diversity in climate. The Chinese, the Japanese, and a few of the Indian dialects, are regarded as intrinsically difficult; whilst the Hindi, the Siamese, and most of the dialects of Africa, are comparatively easy. Reference can always be had to this in assigning to young men their fields of labor.

(4.) Having stated some of the more specific reasons for not entering upon the missionary work, we may now state, in a more general way, that where the convictions of an individual, that he ought to labor at home, are very strong and decided; where he is conscious of no shrinking from the perils and hardships of the missionary life, but would be willing, so far as he knows his own heart, to go any where at the bidding of his Saviour; and where these personal convictions are sustained by the hearty and spontaneous concurrence of views on the part of his friends, his teachers and his ecclesiastical advisers, we should regard all this as the voice of God, settling the question of his duty to remain at home. Due care ought to be exercised, however, in scrutinizing the motives of his own heart, as well as the reasons assigned by his advisers, for his remaining at home.

Now, in reviewing the reasons and arguments adduced on either side of the question before us, let it not be said that we have made the road to the foreign field so broad, and that to the home work so narrow, that we would promote the good of the one at the expense of the other. If this were really the case, our argument would not only be one-sided, but our plan, put in practical operation, would be injurious alike to the interests of religion at home and abroad. The Church at home is the source of the missionary spirit; and if the fountain be dried up, the streams must necessarily cease to flow. But this is not the legitimate result of the course we are advocating. On the contrary, we firmly believe that there is no way by which the Church can more effectually increase her strength and

power, than by proper efforts to make her influence felt in every direction. There is in the economy of Divine grace a scattering that increaseth, and a withholding that tendeth to poverty. The missionary spirit, rightly construed, is the very life of the Church; and where that prevails, there can scarcely be spiritual dearth. What the Church at home needs is, not so much the multiplication of her ministers—though she needs this, too—as the infusion into those she already has, and those about to enter her service, of the spirit of their divine Master. A given number of men, possessing the zeal of Paul, of Luther, of Wesley, or of Whitefield, would do far more to promote the piety of the Church, and secure the salvation of sinners, than any multiple of that number without their zeal. It even one-half of the members of each successive graduating class from our Seminaries should become Foreign Missionaries, instead of being an injury, we believe, under God, it would be the indirect cause of the richest blessing to all our churches. Who knows what influence it would not exert in stirring up her ministers to the proper standard of piety and zeal; in calling pious young men to the ministry, to take the place of those who go abroad; and in calling forth the energies of the Church at large? May this not be the very means that God has appointed for bringing the Church up to the true standard of piety? Does any one seriously believe that the Church will ever make shipwreck of the faith, or destroy her own life and power, by following too closely in the footsteps of her great Leader?

#### QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE MISSIONARY WORK.

Have I the qualifications to become a Foreign Missionary? This is a question that must necessarily occupy many of the thoughts of every young man who turns his attention to the subject of personal engagement in the work. It is an essential element in the question whether we are called by God to this work or not. Much that

might be said under this general head has been anticipated in the previous part of our remarks. What remains to be said might be included in one general statement, viz.: that those very traits of character, attainments in piety, knowledge and scholarship, that would render a man an effective minister at home, would make him no less so as a Foreign Missionary. There is no safer criterion, perhaps, by which to judge of a man's fitness for the Foreign Missionary work, than the estimate entertained of him by his friends, his associates in study, and his instructors. If they can render a united verdict in his favor, no stronger recommendation can reasonably be asked. If, on the other hand, he is wanting in any of the qualities already mentioned, and especially if any doubts are entertained about his usefulness at home, he ought not to be thought of as a Foreign Missionary. But we may, without unduly protracting our article, point out a few of the more obvious and important qualifications of the Missionary.

(1.) One of the first and most indispensable of these is, unreserved consecration to the service of the Lord Jesus. In directing his steps to the heathen world, he must not be governed by the impulses of romance, the love of adventure, or any motives of personal ambition, but by a simple desire to honor and obey his Redeemer. This ought to be the actuating motive in choosing the work in the first place, and the controlling, sustaining principle in all his future labors. He is to remember that the work has been authorized by the Lord Jesus, that His honor and glory are involved in carrying it on, and that He will assuredly sustain all those engaged in it, whatever trials, disappointments and temporary reverses He may allow them to encounter.

(2.) Habits of industry and study are indispensable to a successful Missionary. To acquire a foreign language, though it be comparatively easy, requires much study. Nor is less study necessary to understand the character of the people, their habits of thought and action, their super-

stitutions, their traditions, and their systems of false religion. These things are not patent to transient observation, but can be understood only after the closest investigation and scrutiny. But, more than all, the translation of God's word into these languages, which some of the Missionaries, at least, must undertake, is one of the most difficult and laborious tasks that can be laid on any man's shoulders.

(3.) A cheerful temperament and habit are of great importance to the Foreign Missionary. The circumstances of missionary life call for its daily exercise: so much so, that a man of a peevish, morose, or jealous disposition will sink down at once, and leave the work altogether, or will remain only to annoy his associates in labor. A cheerful disposition, therefore, can not be cultivated with too much diligence. The Missionary ought to be able to look at the bright side of every picture, and learn how to draw comfort and encouragement even in the most adverse dispensations of providence. He must be patient and persevering in his efforts to bring men to the knowledge of the Saviour; must know how to make allowance for the ignorance, the perverseness, and ingratitude of the heathen; must be able to check any uprising of fretfulness in his own bosom towards them, by remembering that if Christ can bear with them, he ought; and by remembering, also, how much more forbearance the Saviour has exercised towards himself, than he is called upon to exercise towards them. The Missionary is also to sustain himself by looking forward, by the eye of faith, to the fulfilment of all those rich promises made by the Saviour in relation to the latter day glory, when every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess to Him; when He shall see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied; when the heathen shall be given to Him for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession; and when all on earth, as in heaven, shall unite in ascribing honor, and power, and glory, and dominion, to Him that sitteth upon the throne.

## MOTIVES TO ENGAGE IN THIS GREAT WORK.

We proceed, in the last place, to glance at some of those motives that should impel young men to take a share in this great work. These, however, are so numerous, so weighty, and so varied withal, that it is difficult to determine which should be selected for more special consideration. We can do little more than glance at a few of the leading ones.

(1.) The opportunity it offers us to honor the Redeemer. This is the highest motive that can be presented to any Christian mind; and it is a matter of wonder that every Christian disciple does not earnestly desire to avail himself of it to show his attachment to his Saviour. There are other places and ways, it is true, by which He may be honored; and if He makes it our duty to stay at home, our services, if faithfully performed, will not be less acceptable. But going to a far-off heathen land, to spend one's life in complete isolation from all that the human heart usually counts dear, requires a measure of faith, self-denial, courage, and devotion to His cause, which must be more than ordinarily pleasing to the Saviour, and which can scarcely fail to impress the minds of men with the sincerity of His followers, and the power of that religion by which they are governed. And when it is remembered what the Saviour has done for us, what He is still doing, and what He has promised yet to do; when we remember what transporting hopes He has enkindled in the hearts of men, and what ample provision He has made for their salvation; when we remember what glorious results He has promised to bring about through the agency of the Church, even the subjugation of all the heathen nations of the earth to His dominion; and when we reflect how short is the term of human life, in which alone our agency can be employed in bringing about these glorious results, is it not surprising, amazing, that we do not all earnestly desire to have a share in



it? Is it not surprising that we need to be reminded of our duty at all? Is it not strange that I should now be using all the little powers of persuasion that God has given me, to induce you to engage in a work of which there is not an angel in heaven that would not count it an honor and a privilege to be a sharer?

(2.) Another motive is to be found in the example of Apostles and primitive Christians. If ever there was a set of men on earth who, it may be taken for granted, understood the mind of their Master, or the nature and extent of the work He gave them to perform, it was they. They commenced their labors, it is true, at Jerusalem. This was not only the most natural course, but it was in strict accordance with the command of their ascended Saviour. Some of these men, there is reason to believe, spent the whole of their lives in labors in their native land. But this was not the case with the majority of them, and especially with those whose lives and labors are more fully spread out in the word of God. These, according to the testimony of the Scriptures, went every where, proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ; and although we have in the Acts of the Apostles but an imperfect outline of their actual labors and journeyings, yet from this very source we learn that there was scarcely a village, town, or city in Palestine, Samaria, Asia Minor, Macedon, Greece, or Rome, that could not testify to the untiring zeal of these holy men. And in ages immediately following, as we know from reliable history, the Gospel was preached, and Christian churches were founded, in almost every portion of the earth that was accessible in that day. Now, did those holy men transcend their commission? Are not our duties and obligations co-extensive with theirs? Should we have less desire to honor the Redeemer? Are not the souls of our fellow-men as precious now as they were then?

(3.) The circumstances and necessities of our fellow-men all over the heathen world, furnish another powerful mo-

tive to stimulate our zeal. It is true, they have reduced themselves to the lowest depths of degradation by their own wilful rebellion against Jehovah. But have they less claim to our sympathy and compassion on this account? It is not for us to assume that there can be no salvation for the heathen, except through the medium of the Gospel. But so far as we have any knowledge on the subject, or any authority upon which to base our action, we are shut up to the conclusion that there can be no salvation for adult heathen without some knowledge of the Gospel. Is it not an established article in the creed of every evangelical denomination, and the utterance of every evangelical pulpit in the land, that there is and can be no salvation for mortal man, except through faith in the merits of a crucified Redeemer? But, in the language of God's word, "How 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?" No, let us be honest with ourselves, to our fellow-men, and to the great Head of the Church, and realize and confess that these millions of our fellow-men must go down to their graves and to the judgment seat unblessed, unless we impart to them in this world the light of the Gospel. And what will be their astonishment, aye! their overwhelming anguish, when they come to see in the clear light of eternity that they might have been saved!—that there was provided, from the foundation of the world, just such a Saviour as they sometimes felt they needed! What bitter reproaches may we not suppose they will utter against those of us who possessed that Gospel, and who ought and could, but did not, impart it to them!

(4.) The intervention of God's providence, within a few years past, in removing obstacles and laying open all the great heathen nations of the earth to the influences of the Gospel, furnishes another most weighty motive for entering

upon this work. For long centuries these nations have not only been dwelling in the deepest heathen gloom, but they have been, in a great measure, inaccessible to the Missionary. Why this was permitted is one of those mysteries of Divine providence which we may never be able fully to solve in this present world. But however deplorable may have been their condition in times past, a better and brighter day, we firmly believe, is now beginning to dawn upon them. There are at the present moment many unmistakeable signs that God's set time to favor these nations is drawing nigh. Actual experiment has shown that missionary labors may be carried on in Africa, notwithstanding the intensity of her torrid heat, the insalubrity of her climate, and the savage character of her people. Recent explorations have revealed all the secrets of her geography, her populations, and her abundant, but as yet undeveloped, resources; whilst the commerce of the civilized world is furnishing means of access to almost every portion of her benighted inhabitants. For many long centuries China, with her four hundred millions of immortal beings, seemed to have been surrounded with impassable walls, and there were no human means by which the light of the Gospel could be made to shine upon her benighted inhabitants. But, in the providence of God, all those walls have been thrown down, and the Gospel of Jesus Christ may now be proclaimed, without let or hindrance, throughout the whole of her vast dominions. Japan, for more than three centuries, was cut off from all intercourse with the Christian world by the severest legal enactments; and South America, for nearly an equal period, was almost as effectually barred from all evangelical influences by papal intolerance. But Japan has relaxed her austerity, and South America now stretches out a friendly hand to the Protestant Missionary. Now, what has brought about all these changes? Surely, naught but the providence of God. And is there no lan-

guage for us in these providences? Is not God thus saying to us, Go up and possess the land?

(6.) Another motive to excite our zeal is to be found in the fact that there is no risk, no uncertainty, in relation to the results of this great enterprise. In all human undertakings, there is of necessity great risk and uncertainty. If we spend our energies in the acquisition of wealth, we may fail altogether, or succeed only to learn how worthless and unsatisfying wealth is. We may earn the highest reputation among men that the human heart can possibly desire, and yet live to see that reputation withered and blasted in our own grasp. We may aid in laying the foundation of the best human government that can be conceived, and yet live to see that government crumble to atoms. But what we do for the upbuilding of the Redeemer's kingdom can not possibly fail. His is an everlasting kingdom, and must endure, though the heavens and the earth pass away. God has promised to His Son to give Him the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession; and His promises are yea and amen. When, therefore, we labor for the upbuilding and extension of His kingdom, we labor for what can not possibly fail; and though we may not know it fully here, we shall be able in the light of a better world to see that we have not labored in vain.

(7.) In the next and last place, let us draw an argument from the condition and circumstances of our southern Zion. As a Christian body, we have just launched upon a new and independent existence. We were brought to this measure, not so much as a matter of choice, as the result of an overruling providence. God, undoubtedly, had some great and special object in separating us from our northern brethren. What that object was, we already see in part, and will no doubt understand more fully hereafter. At the commencement of our career, every thing is as favorable as could be desired. Harmony and unanimity of views on

the part of those who were intrusted with the duty of arranging and completing the external organization of the church; the full confidence and hearty support of all the churches embraced in this organization; freedom, at the beginning, from many of the inconveniences and incumbrances that clogged our former ecclesiastical connexion; soundness in the faith on the part of our churches, and a very general appreciation of the solemn and responsible duties imposed upon us by the providence of God in this new relation, are favors for which we can not feel too thankful to the great Head of the Church. But if we would have this church of ours take a high and commanding position among her sister churches; if she would secure for herself a precious and enduring name on earth; and, above all, if she would endear herself to the heart of her great Head, she must devote her energies to the work of spreading the knowledge of the Gospel among all the nations of the earth. This is one of the two great ends of her being as a church. As a people, we have all the means, the facilities, and, I believe, the *heart*, to take a large share in this work; and the great question now is, will her sons and daughters become the willing and ready agents in carrying it on? This question is submitted to your prayerful consideration, and it is for you, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to answer it.

At the present moment we are in the midst of trials, such as most of us never expected to witness on earth; and such, we may humbly pray, as may not again visit our land. But are we to draw no practical lessons from these troublous scenes? Where has there ever been witnessed such sublimity of patriotism, such outpouring of wealth, such sacrifice of self and kindred, such readiness to forego every thing that is dear to the human heart, as have been shown in these Confederate States since the commencement of our present conflict? Do we not all feel that society has been stirred to its very lowest depths? Where is the mother

that has refused to give up her son, the sister her brother, or the wife her husband, for the defence of the country?

But why all this? It is simply to defend ourselves and our posterity from an impending human despotism. But there is a more terrible despotism than any with which we are threatened. It is that crushing, unresisted despotism that the arch-enemy of God and man has been exercising over the heathen nations of the earth for these many long centuries. For those who lie crushed beneath his iron tread, the Son of God has poured forth His blood, and commands us to go forth and preach deliverance to them. Shall we not emulate the zeal, the energy, and the indomitable perseverance of those who are battling for civil liberty? Shall we do nothing to free these millions of our fellow-men from the terrible bondage in which they are held? May we not hope to see the time when God's people will display as much zeal and earnestness in emancipating these millions from their spiritual thralldom, as is now displayed by our countrymen in warding off this threatened political despotism?