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A CALL TO PERSONAL LABOR AS A FOREIGN
MISSIONARY.

Wm. S. Plumer.

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MISSIONARY PAPER, NO. 19.

A CALL TO PERSONAL LABOR AS A FOREIGN
MISSIONARY.

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Affectionately and respectfully inscribed to his young brethren in the ministry, or in a course of training preparatory to the ministry.

I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.—Acts xxii, 21.

THE moral condition of nations, not evangelized, remains substantially the same that it was when the apostles began their stupendous labors. The very essence of every system of manners, morals, and religion, not evangelical, is corruption—gross, foul, deep, total corruption. We have some pictures of heathenism, drawn by the pencil of plenary inspiration, that are to the life, and never were, and never will be caricatures. The folly of heathen worship is matter of divine ridicule. Read the one hundred and fifteenth Psalm, and the fortieth and forty-fourth chapters of Isaiah, if you would learn the judgment of the Eternal, respecting heathenism.

The corruptions of heathenism on some points, it is a shame even to speak of. If the reader will have the kindness to read the first chapter of Paul's epistle to the Romans, the sixth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, together with the second, fourth, and fifth chapters of the epistle to the Ephesians, he will see what heathenism was in Martyr days. And what it once was, it still is. Were we to undertake a new delineation of hea-

thenism, we could not, in truth, add or remove a single feature, without injuring the graphic description given in the Scriptures referred to. Ignorance reigns in terror. Superstition has rivetted her massy iron chains, and bars, and bolts, on mighty men and nations. Perfect mummeries are preferred to intelligence or intelligible devotions. Horrid midnight orgies, and silly orisons, are celebrated with untiring zeal. The smoke of most abominable incense ascends from ten thousand altars. In every heathen nation are countless habitations of cruelty. And no heathen nation, ancient or modern, has ever had in its language a word that signified to their minds, what we mean by "*holiness*" or "*sanctification*," applied to the heart. And if they had not even the *name* of the thing, is it probable that they had the *thing* itself?

It was to a people thus base, and blind, and corrupt, that God said he would send Paul. "I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles." It is intended to use this portion of Scripture as a foundation for some remarks in reference to the subject of personal entrance on the work, of Foreign Missions. The subject is grand, and has a much closer connection with the duty of the church than has been generally supposed.

The first remark on this subject is, *That there are two great objects, neither of which may be lost sight of in christian effort, and by christian ministers.* The first regards the retaining of ground already gained—the maintenance of evangelical doctrine, discipline, and worship, in their purity and power, in all places where the gospel is now preached, and christian institutions are now planted. This is a matter of overwhelming importance. Could the church have maintained her cause and her purity in the east, from the days of Constantine until now, it can hardly admit of a doubt, that ere this, the *entire earth* would have been girded with the mantle of holy love. Instead of this, however, she has been wasted away to a ghastly skeleton. The poison of error kills her children so soon as they be born; and the sorcery of sin has maddened almost every head and heart in all those regions, where Christ suffered, and Paul preached, and Chrysostom thundered, and Athanasius resisted, and Augustine reasoned. So that, in a peculiar sense, the

church, in all those regions, must "do her first works." Hence, appears the importance of christian effort and a christian ministry *at home*.

The other great object to be kept in view is, the making of conquests to Jesus Christ, in the region and shadow of death; the unfolding, and planting in impregnable fortresses of holy love, and entire devotion, the banner of the great Captain of our salvation. This is, by far the greatest work, to the accomplishment of which the church is now called to make sacrifices, endure hardness, practise self-denial, and make full proof of her power with God and man. Hence appears the mighty importance of holy effort, and a scriptural ministry *abroad*.

In reference to a call to the work of the ministry in general, no remark is to be offered at this time. But it may neither be useless, nor unseasonable, briefly to discuss a few questions and matters connected with the subject of a call to become a foreign missionary. "I will send the far hence unto the Gentiles." The remarks offered will be chiefly and peculiarly adapted to ministers and candidates for the ministry of the gospel; although others may be involved in them also. For it is certainly true, that farmers, printers, mechanics of many kinds, teachers, male and female, physicians, &c., are required to the perfect organization, and especially, to the demanded enlargement of missionary enterprise. Let not then any individual settle it in his own mind, without candid inquiry, frequent reflection, and earnest prayer, that he is *not* required to bear a *direct* part in this great matter.

The first remark offered on this subject is, that every man is bound by most solemn, and perfectly indissoluble obligations, to inquire, not only what God will have him to do; but also, when, and how, and where he will have him to do it. He, who held the seven stars of the seven churches of Asia in his right hand, claims the right and asserts the prerogative now, as well as formerly, of saying where his people and ministers shall live, and labor, and die. He, who directed James to Jerusalem, John to Ephesus and Patmos, and Paul to the gentiles, still has the government on his shoulders, and cannot be pleased with any exhibition of self-will, either in the choice of a mode or field of labor.

Again: The basis of a call to preach the gospel among the heathen, must be a call to the work of the ministry in general. A man, therefore, having satisfied his mind, that he is called to the work of the gospel ministry, has a solid foundation for the inquiry now instituted. The converse of this statement is also true.

Furthermore: God, in his adorable providence, has so ordered missionary affairs, that a man must not wait for a voice from heaven, or an angel, or a synod, or a presbytery, or a council, or a missionary society, or even for a brother to present the matter to his mind, in order to bind him to a most solemn, honest, and thorough canvassing of the question, "Shall I go to the heathen?" Formerly ecclesiastical courts and councils designated missionaries; but now we have the voice of God only in his ordinary Providence and Spirit, saying: "Whom shall I send?" And personal love, and zeal, and devotion, must give the answer: "Here am I; send me." Whether the churches have done right in declining so extensively the practice of nominating brethren for a foreign field, need not now be determined. Perhaps, in this, there has been error. It might do good, great good, to adopt a late suggestion;* and have fifty pastors of Presbyterian churches, designated to the foreign department. Be this as it may, a man may not innocently wait for such designation as a requisite to a solemn consideration of the subject. It is worthy of notice, however, that even in days of infallible guidance, neither councils nor apostles seem to have exercised themselves much, in dividing the harvest field to the several reapers. The Great Head of the Church, even then, disposed of this business very much without human interference.

It is not superfluous to state that there is nothing supernatural, nay, not even any thing of religious romance in becoming a foreign missionary. There was a time when the halo surrounding the tomb of a Brainerd or a Martyn, or even the person of a foreign missionary, was peculiar and unusual. But of late, things are different. The time has nearly come, when intelligent Christians do not for a moment suppose that the spirit leading a man to Siam, or China, or Ceylon, or Greenland, or Patagonia, or Africa,

* The suggestion was made by the Editor of "The Presbyterian."

for Christ's sake, is any other than the spirit which leads a man to be a devoted servant of Christ in the hoary mountains, the retired valleys, or populous cities of his native land.

It is also not to be forgotten, that if there be in our habits, constitution, temperament, education, talents, gifts, graces or wishes, any thing peculiar, and leading us to prefer, or making us specially fit for any particular field, station, climate, language, people, or department of labor, we can be gratified or suited. And it ought to be matter of gratitude to all whom it may concern, that so intelligent, and in every way excellent advisers can be had in our own country, enabling one, even at home, to determine with tolerable accuracy, where he may compass the most good in his short life-time.

It is important to state that there is a very common error in the method of stating and considering the question of personal engagement in foreign missions. Men ordinarily say thus, "Why should I leave home, and country, and friends, to go abroad?" when they ought to say, "Why should I cling to home and country, and friends, when hundreds of millions of my race are ready to fall into an eternal hell, and have no one to point them to the Lamb of God?" This error betrays gross ignorance of the state and claims of the heathen world, or a disregard of those claims when known, or a cowardly selfishness, which shrinks from self-denial and duty, because not pleasant to flesh and blood.

Such being the posture of this business, this question now comes up fairly to our view. *Taking the foregoing statements as true, what constitutes a call to the labors and rewards of a foreign missionary?* Let us first attend to those points of discussion which relate to QUALIFICATIONS.

In the first place, much stress has often been laid upon the possession of a vigorous constitution and sound health, as a qualification for foreign labors. Without affecting to deny the value of a good constitution, and vigorous health, as great comforts and blessings in themselves, permission will nevertheless be demanded to state, that evidently undue importance has been attached to this item in reference to the ministry, both at home and abroad. If a man must endure languor, and buffet disease, and have

tossings to and fro until the dawning of the day, may he not expend his remaining energies in publishing the gospel, as well as in mercantile transactions, or in husbandry, or at the bar? And if he may do this in his native State, why may he not do it in Africa, in Burmah, in Ceylon, in the islands of the sea, or among the Indian tribes of North America? To shut our mouths on this subject, so far as they ought to be shut, God has raised up and put into the ministry such men as Timothy, who "had often infirmities," as Owen, who was willing to give all his learning for sound health, as Richard Baxter, who spoke and wrote as if already in his winding-sheet, as Thomas Scott, who prepared to preach by the use of an emetic on the day previous; as James P. Wilson, whose almost bloodless countenance, for years, gave proof of the disease that preyed upon the body. Indeed, reference might be made to an army of the honest and most successful of the soldiers of Jesus Christ, who have fought, and toiled, and died in the cause of redemption. And, as if for the very purpose of cutting short our excuses and cavillings, God raised up, and kept alive on heathen ground, in the midst of enormous sufferings, great labors, and eminent usefulness, a Brainerd and a Martyn, than whom no men have shone in the history of modern missions with greater lustre, nor perhaps shall shine, until the kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms of the Lord.

Besides, how does a man know but a change of climate and habit of living might restore to perfect soundness his present enfeebled body? If we go to the south of France for health, why not go to the Sandwich Islands, or Ceylon, for the same? Even extreme hardship has saved a sinking constitution, when nothing else would. But, says one, and he perhaps a minister of the Gospel—"A man *must* take care of his life, and must not endanger his health." Is this *true*? Does the *Bible* speak thus? Hear the word of the Lord. "I count not my life dear"—"I am willing to spend and be spent"—"I am willing, not only to be bound, but to die, if need be." "He that hateth not his life cannot be my disciple." "He that saves his life shall lose it." The Scriptures are full of sentiments very averse to the carnal reasonings of men. It is true, that if health has so far failed, as to destroy all reasonable hope that the man would be more

than a burden to the cause; then such an one ought to remain at home. Otherwise, health does not seem to be a point deserving such prominence in the consideration of this business. I shall not easily forget the words of a dear brother, destined to Africa, as he gave us, at his embarkation, the last cheerful farewell, and said, "*I am willing to be sick and to die for Jesus Christ.*" A little of the spirit that dictated this expression, would make great changes in our views, if hitherto we have been in error.

2. *Patience in enduring privation and want of a temporal kind, is another subject worthy of our attention.* Patience in any man, is a high virtue, and is, to its possessor, invaluable. Beyond doubt, the foreign missionary may need much patience, in enduring the want of almost all earthly comforts. At least, he ought to be ready for such exigencies—armed for the battle. But suppose, when a man is urged to weigh the matter of personal entrance on the work of foreign missions, he replies, and in truth too, "Oh, I am impatient of privation—I cannot bear burdens;" does this excuse him? Did not God command him to "learn to endure hardship." "No man that warreth, entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may *please him*, who hath chosen him to be a soldier." 2 Tim. ii, 4. If we are Christ's, one evidence of that fact is, that we please not ourselves. But again, if we have never learned, both how to abound, and how to suffer want, it is time that we had. We can never learn any sooner. Let us then put ourselves on a course of rigorous self-denial, court hardship as we can possibly bear it; learn to say, as St. Augustine, "Oh how sweet it is to deny ourselves these earthly sweets, how pleasant to forego these temporal pleasures; and, like Christ, be satisfied, if such be the will of God, not to have where to lay our heads, if we may but find our meat and drink in doing the works of him that sent us, and finish our course with joy." It is said, "practice makes perfect." A little more exercise in this point of godliness, would be of much service. And if we can subdue our impatience and aversion to suffering for Christ, then we shall be ready for any good work in any place. "Let patience have her perfect work."

Cheerfulness of mind, an habitual buoyancy of spirits, and an elevated frame of feeling, have often been mentioned as of great importance to the foreign missionary. It is undoubtedly true, that some persons, having great natural timidity, and tendency to despondency, and having gracious principles only, in a very feeble or languid state, are unfit for usefulness any where, until they shall learn to live nearer to God.

But the necessity of cheerfulness is rendered more prominent than it deserves to be, and withal, has misrepresentation often connected with it. In the first place, *natural cheerfulness* and *buoyancy* of soul is not the thing required. The cheerfulness, that can be relied on, is a divine quality. Read Isaiah xl, 29—31; and Zechariah xii, 8. The history of Jeremiah also furnishes sound instruction on this subject. He is appropriately styled the weeping prophet; he began his ministry in the fearfulness of youth; he lived in troublous times; he had great natural timidity; he was scorned by his countrymen; he was persecuted by strangers; he was a prisoner to the enemies of his country; he died in captivity; he was filled with sighs, and groans, and tears, and cries of woe. See Jeremiah ix, 1. and xv, 10. Yet it may be safely questioned, whether Elijah or Samuel would have equalled Jeremiah in usefulness, had they been placed in his stead. We have an example of usefulness also in one who was naturally, morbidly, and habitually despondent, shining with unusual holy splendor in the catalogue of modern missionaries. It is almost needless to say, that reference is had to David Brainerd, all of whose missionary life is spent in a manner much resembling that of Jeremiah. Is cheerfulness then necessary to usefulness? Nay, has not God forever settled this question by the declaration of the great proto-missionary, Paul, who says, "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart." Rom. ix 1, 2. Ought Paul to have waited until he could become merry of heart?

Finally, let a man be anointed with the oil of holy gladness, and, however much his natural spirits may give way, he will have acquired the divine art of "rejoicing in tribulation." It is hardly to be questioned, that the happiness of many in Christian lands would be augmented,

were they willing to go to the heathen. As they now are, worldliness, selfishness, tedium and ennui, are rotting their bones.

Some sound knowledge of human nature has often been mentioned, and very correctly too, as essential to usefulness at home or abroad. Other things being equal, it is undoubtedly true, that he who is the most perfect scholar in this department of nature will be the most useful. To present summarily all the truth on this branch of our subject, let it be remarked, that there are many posts in the foreign department of christian effort which do not require any more extended knowledge of men than an ordinary pastoral charge in this land. Again: He, who has good sense, and a pious heart, and is willing and able to understand and receive the Bible account of man, will soon learn all the great principles of human nature, and will readily acquire some skill in dealing with it. The Bible, above all books, gives just and deep views of human nature. Study the Bible and learn mankind. This thought may encourage us in the business, that human nature is the same in all countries, ages, and grades of society. Supreme selfishness governs all unrenewed men.

A capacity for acquiring, with some degree of facility, a knowledge of languages, is certainly desirable in all ministers of the gospel, yea is ordinarily needful to the workmen, who need not be ashamed. Yet it is painfully manifest, that there has been a remarkable disposition to give to this matter a weight which it does not deserve. Who ever heard of a man objecting to a residence in France, Italy, St. Petersburg, or Constantinople, because he had not a capacity for acquiring with ease a strange language? None. Let the hope of gain be raised high, let "the clink of mammon's box" be heard, and men will go any where; will, in defiance of physical dulness of mind, in a short time learn to speak fluently of gold, and silver, and trade. Just so ought it to be in the missionary cause. Besides: the most difficult languages have been already mastered; and the greatest difficulties in most languages have been overcome. Moreover, many of the languages, where missionaries are now wanted, are learned with great facility. Some missionaries have learned to preach in a heathen language in a single year;

and some in even a shorter time. So that, while it is true, the greater our capacity for any valuable acquisition, the better; yet the way is as open on the score of language, as a man of good sense and deep piety need desire it to be. Indeed, in some of the schools, as among the aborigines of America, the plain English itself is taught. So that there can be no insurmountable difficulty.

So much of a calculating mind, as can lay a judicious plan, and prosecute it for years, or for life; providing, at the same time, against sudden reverses and unexpected difficulties, is a desirable quality in any man, who would make his life and labors very useful in any place or manner. Of course, the foreign missionary would reap the full advantage of such a mind. But, then, let us consider that the importance and influence of this consideration can be modified almost indefinitely. If a man is to be at the head of an entire mission; is to go to places and people of a very peculiar character; or is in any way to be very delicately situated, or very highly responsible, then he ought to be a wise, calculating man. But it is an exceedingly small number of men who can be leaders, or unusually responsible, in affairs of church or state, at home or abroad. And the number of leaders in the missionary enterprise does not increase in proportion to the enlargement of operation.

This suggests the very important remark, that a willingness to obey, to be second, yea, to take the very lowest place assigned us by our brethren, is essential to our usefulness in a foreign station. Pride, ambition, self-conceit, self-will, and all kindred sentiments must be mortified, if we would be fully prepared for this work. No man can well command, who knows not how to obey; no man can well direct, who has not himself submitted to direction. Subordination, yea, even co-ordination, requires that lowliness reign in the heart and mind.

An ability or tact in adapting one's self to occasions, so as to be kept from fatal surprisals, is of great value to every minister, and in some foreign stations, incalculably so. Yet at many stations, things seem to have entered such a regular channel, and have assumed such a common-place character, that men of great resources would find but little demand for their vast versatility of powers. It is then on this subject, as it is in reference to the ministry at home, viz. that while there is at some places

scope for the exercise of the greatest powers and resources, there is also, at other places, room enough for talents and powers of slow action, and of rather tedious mediocrity.

Much has been said of the importance of ardent love to the cause of missions, as a qualification for the work. Doubtless, he, who does not ardently love the cause, will do it less disservice by remaining at home, than by going abroad. For the clearing of this matter, let a few things be said. First: love to the cause of missions is nothing but love to souls and to Jesus Christ, shown in a particular way. Of course, just in proportion as a man loves souls and the Savior, will he love the cause of missions. Then he, who loves not the cause of missions at all, loves not men or Christ at all; and he, who loves not the cause of missions ardently, loves not his race or the Redeemer ardently. Of course, he, who loves not the cause of missions ardently, is not fit to be a minister in any place or country. And the piety of any man is nothing worth, if it do not lead him to yearn with bowels of tender compassion towards the dying heathen. Besides: if you have not ardent love to the cause of missions, it is your crime, your sin, and not your excuse. Every man is verily guilty concerning his brethren—is truly condemned by the law of love, who does not earnestly pray and labor for the period to arrive, when “the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days.” Isaiah xxx, 26.

Great personal industry is a quality of indispensable requisition in a foreign missionary. If men will creep, and crawl, and lounge, and rust, and rot, let them stay at home; let them not go to bring odium and death on christian precepts in heathen countries, by an example of slothfulness. Sleepy dogs may as well be kept in the house as be put on the watch. Yea, it is unwise in the least to rely on their vigilance. It is better to have none, than such. Up to this day, it is true, that slothful habits, or even the lack of great personal industry have clothed their subjects with amazing guilt, and have brought a harvest of death on the souls of their hearers. None but the Infinite One can tell what hundreds of ministers, and thousands of their people are this day suffering in the world of woe, on account of this dreadful sin. And if industry be important at home, it is still more so, if possible, to

him who goes abroad. To be ever on the alert, watching for opportunities of usefulness, making every hour in the day advance the cause, is the only way to make a life eminently useful at home or abroad, but especially abroad. Well prepared as Henry Martyn himself was for foreign labors, even he lost the best opportunity of usefulness, which he had for months in India, and simply for want of giving good heed. Let no man comfort himself and sit down quietly, thinking himself not called to engage in foreign missions, because he has not industrious habits. If he have them not, he is guilty, and will continue guilty until he acquire them. Any *minister* without such habits is pre-eminently guilty, be his station and talents what they may.

It is also true, that no man ought to be sent by the church on a foreign mission, who feels an unconquerable unwillingness to go. And yet, this remark needs explanation. Jonah was called to go on a foreign mission, even to Nineveh, yet was he exceedingly unwilling to go. But God made him willing before He left off chastening him. The unwillingness referred to, is rather a hindrance to the church in sending us, than an evidence that we are not called. So of other disqualifications alluded to in this essay—they may often justly hinder the church from sending the person in whom they are found to the heathen, while they furnish him with no excuse for not going. By self-discipline, watchfulness, and grace, he ought to rid himself of them. No man is excusable for not possessing, in a good degree, every requisite moral qualification for the missionary work. Even a holy prophet once heard the solemn inquiry and reproof, "What dost thou here, Elijah?" 1 Kings xix, 9, 13. A man may feel an aversion to any plain duty, yet that aversion does not excuse, but rather condemn him. If the path of duty be otherwise plain, let it be our constant aim to be willing to be, to do, or to suffer any thing for Christ's sake, and that joyfully. The more willing the better.

It is of vast importance, that the whole church of God, but especially ministers, and most especially foreign missionaries, should cultivate strong faith in God, and in particular, a firm belief in all the promises respecting the final conversion of the world. It was

only "by faith Abraham went out, not knowing whither he went." Heb. xi, 8. It was only by faith that Paul "went to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that should befall him there, save that the Holy Ghost witnessed in every city, saying, that bonds and afflictions did abide him." Acts xx, 22, 23. A foreign missionary, without lively faith and hope in God, would be, even as to this world, in a worse state than a ship without helm or anchor. By a careful perusal of Scripture prophecy and promise, and by hearty prayer to God, the missionary must also settle it unwaveringly in his mind, that Jesus Christ shall have the heathen for his heritage, and every part of the earth for a possession. The Scriptures will also fully justify the firm belief, that the day of the Lord draweth nigh, and that the year of his redeemed is not far distant. A firm belief of this will mightily encourage and animate him. Without strong faith on these subjects, the foreign laborer will be but a reed shaken with the wind, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.

So much, on the score of qualification, it was our duty to state. Perhaps every important point has been noticed, so far as qualification for this work is to be added to qualification for the ministry in general. If we have not these qualities, or any of them in a sufficient degree, yet if we can and shall by any means acquire them, then our way is clear.

In ascertaining a call to the field of foreign labor, reference must undoubtedly be had to the leadings and actings of God's wonderful providence. These acts of Providence, in addition to those which lead us into the ministry, are very numerous. When favorable, they generally relate to the fact and manner of bringing the subject of missions before the mind; riddance from the duties and embarrassments created by the indispensable obligations of justice, faith, mercy, or filial piety, and provision for our maintenance, while in the field of foreign labor. These and kindred topics are the chief matters, which receive direction from God's providence; and, if there be no other acts of God's government of an opposing nature, His will may be esteemed to be clearly and conclusively expressed.

So much of the matter of a call to a foreign field, as relates to the direct agency of the Holy Spirit of God on

the heart, is, perhaps, of more difficult explication. It is enough, however, to state, that over and above the bestowment of qualities of mind and heart, necessary to constitute a call to the ministry in general, added to the qualities spoken of in this discourse, there is but little left for special notice. Yet we may not omit mentioning a frequent, and often involuntary drawing of the mind to the great subject of missions, the awakening of a lively interest in their success, the granting of the spirit of special prayer for their increase and prosperity, and the holding up to the eye of the mind some of the moral grandeur and captivating beauty of the work, so as to make it appear any thing else than "a dull and melancholy exile." For our comfort and the divine glory, however, let it be said, that "the meek God will guide in judgment," on this, as on all other matters; and that, "if any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not."

It is no more than duty requires to state, that persons have gone on foreign missions who were certainly never called to that work. As error, therefore, may be committed, let each one be cautious, and well count the cost, "lest, haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, this man began to build and was not able to finish." Luke xiv, 29, 30. It is necessary for the comfort of the honest inquirer, and for the glory of God, that it be distinctly stated, that perhaps all who have erred in going abroad, have been influenced by some wrong motive, or some want of reflection, as they themselves *might* have learned, if they had with sufficient care examined the whole matter. Let it also be distinctly stated, that there is alarming ground of fears, that many who are called to the foreign field, disobey the call, and remain at home. These fears are based upon several general views of things.

In the first place, all men, who have any spiritual discernment, do lament that piety is at a very low ebb, in the church and in the ministry, at our colleges and seminaries, and every where else. Now, this is the very state of things which we would expect to result from the detainure at home of some, yea, of many, who ought to go abroad. When piety is low, those fields of labor that are pleasant to the pride, or slothfulness, or voluptuousness,

or any other sinful quality of man, will be sought after; while those, demanding much self-denial, will be compelled to call long and loud before they will obtain a candid practical hearing.

Again: there are in the United States between four and five thousand educated, evangelical ministers. We have also a population not exceeding thirteen or fourteen millions of souls. Can it be supposed that God has called so many to labor here, and so few elsewhere, while manifestly, the door is set wide open in many countries for preaching the word of God, for distributing the Holy Scriptures and religious tracts, and for establishing schools for Christian instruction? Are not probabilities fearfully against the present state of things among us? We have here a well-educated minister for every three thousand souls, while the heathen, to whom we have inviting access, have scarcely a minister to every million of their population. What do these things mean?

Again: there is a fearful and amazing apathy among the churches and clergy of evangelical denominations. Why is this? May it not be because of the fact, that in so many remaining at home, we run contrary to the good pleasure of God, and he has paralyzed us? And now the American church may say—"From the uttermost parts of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous. But I said, my leanness, my leanness, wo unto me." Isaiah xxiv, 16. The army of Gideon must be reduced from thirty-two thousand to three hundred, before he can conquer. The body of Christ will not have sound health until it takes more exercise, and walks and does not faint, and runs and is not weary, and bears glad tidings of salvation over mountains and billows, to the ends of the earth.

There are many other signs as decisive as those just alluded to, awaking rational fears that many of us, who are at home, ought to be abroad. But enough has been said to justify the position taken.

And now, my brethren, let this subject come home with all its force. Whatever may be our conduct now, we shall be compelled to meet this matter fairly, and fully, at the bar of God. Open your ears, and hear the distant, though distinct and deafening cry, coming from six hundred millions of earth's population, as they are sinking to an eternal hell, and saying—"Oh! give us a book and

send us a teacher, that can tell us how our immortality may prove a blessing—our existence tolerable.”

Look up to the throne above, and see the Mediator of the new covenant, kindly, yet authoritatively, bowing to us, and saying, “By these hands, and these feet, and this side that did bleed, by all my bloody sweat in the garden, by all my grace in your personal salvation, by all my love and authority as head of the church, I command—I beseech you, that ye speedily ‘go into ALL the WORLD, and preach the Gospel to EVERY CREATURE.’” Can we, will we, dare we, let twenty millions, from unevangelized nations, go into eternity every year, without unparalleled efforts to save them from the burning lake? “Who will go for us?”

“Are there no ministers of the sanctuary, whose usefulness would be greatly increased by leaving their people and their country, and becoming missionaries to the heathen? How many, alas! are content with a limited sphere of labor, when kingdoms and empires lie in utter destitution. Energies are exhausted upon trifles, talents are buried, and men who might be exceedingly useful are voluntarily incarcerated. Those who are commanded “to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound,” must have their message first proclaimed to themselves. The missionary work demands the most exalted talent, and extensive learning; and consequently the arguments employed for remaining at home, are the very ones which render more imperative the duty of going abroad. It is true the work can accommodate itself to every order of talent and acquirement, and so can the highest stations in Christian lands; but the result in both cases will be alike. The duty of acquiring languages, translating, writing, instructing on all subjects, answering all questions, reasoning, devising facilities, managing events, in many cases practising medicine, and preaching to different classes, often in different languages, will soon convince those who make the trial, that none can be too well qualified for labors among the heathen. We speak not to discourage any, but to correct the opinions of some. None need despair of usefulness—all who feel constrained by the love of Christ should enlist in this service; but the last objection which ought to be conceived, is, that the minds of any are so vigorous and richly furnished, that the most difficult project of earth, opposed by all the forces of hell, is not sufficient to employ their powers.”

May He, “from whom all blessings flow,” pour down his Spirit upon us, anointing us afresh with an unction that shall abide, and enable us all joyfully to go where we are sent, and to run whither we are called, so that by any means we may “speed the flight of the angel, who has the everlasting Gospel to preach unto the nations.” Amen.