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SPEECHES AT HOME AND ABROAD *by Charles H. Spurgeon*

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SPEECHES

BY C. H. SPURGEON,

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

PREFACE.

IT may be necessary to explain that, while a number of friends were of opinion that the Christian public would appreciate a collection of Mr. Spurgeon's Speeches, Mr. Spurgeon himself is not responsible for the present publication, having neither suggested, nor had any hand in, the compilation of this volume. The pieces are in the main given as they originally appeared; in the majority of instances the author is made to speak in the first person; but this is not the case throughout. The reader will also find that the principal subjects are admirably reported, while some, which are more brief, have not been taken down with like care and fulness. The book as a whole, however, is worthy of careful study, and a very wide circle of readers will doubtless hail its appearance with keen satisfaction.

G. H. PIKE.

London,

September 10th, 1878.

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THE BIBLE. ^{fl}

The history of the Bible may be divided into certain epochs, and if I start without beginning at the beginning, I should say that the time of the Reformation was the period of the Bible's liberation. Like Paul and Silas, with its feet fast in the stocks, the Bible was singing sweetly the song of grace in the midst of the dark dungeons of the middle ages, when suddenly there was a great earthquake, and the bands of all thought, of all science, of all truth, were loosed, and then, like Paul and Silas, the Bible came forth to its glorious liberty. We have not now to contend for the liberty of circulating the Scriptures. That period is over. Then came — and that period still exists — the period of the multiplication of Scripture. The Bible, when it first came out into the world translated, in the fewness of its copies, I may compare to that first bright angel which heralded the advent of our Lord; but the multitudes that have been scattered by this Society I may liken to the mighty host which suddenly were with the angels praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill towards men." The period of the multiplication of Scripture is not over: it will continue, it must continue, as long as men multiply; and as long as there is poverty in the world, men will need to be supplied with cheap copies of the Word of God. But I do think it is time we entered more heartily into the third grand period of human history, the application of divine truth on a larger scale, laboring to bring it home to the masses, and to make them read as, well as to possess it, and to understand it as well as to regard it as the divine Word. I believe this is more what we want in this age than even controverting objections against it. For my part, I do not undertake the task of refuting objections, because I believe that the logical faculty in me is too small, and that if I were to talk against arithmetical objectors I should be like the boy who, in the churchyard, whistled to keep his courage up, and said, "Who's afraid?" I don't think that is my particular work, and I believe that ninety-nine out of every hundred Christians are not called for the defense of the Gospel against infidel objectors, so much as the pressing of that Gospel home to men's hearts, casting light upon the eyes that have been in darkness, that they may behold its glory and rejoice therein. To apply the Gospel seems to be absolutely necessary, through the help of God the Holy Spirit, that we may really know its fruits. There is a tale that when Scanderberg's sword was hung against the wall, one who

had heard of the trenchant deeds of valor done by the barbarous conqueror, said, as he looked on the sword, "I can see nothing in it." "No," said the man who showed it; "but if you could have seen the sinews of the brawny arm that was wont to wield it, you would have admired the sword and the arm. too."

Now, the Word of God is nothing but; a dead letter till the Spirit of God, with omnipotent arm, grasp it, and then it cuts to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And we want to cry out to-day, "Lord, if thine adversaries doubt whether this be thy sword, lay Thou hold upon its hilt, and cut them to their very quick, and make them know that there is a God in Israel still, and that there is still a God's Word." Merely to circulate the Bible will not prove its virtues. There is no virtue in the Bible any more than there is harm in a three-volume novel, if I do not read the one or the other. If they lie there on the shelf unread, the one will do me no good and the other no harm. Erasmus laughs at the idea of the man who attaches a benefit to the mere possession of the Bible. He likens him to one whom he calls Cyclops, who wears in his belt on this side a goodly bottle of sack, and on the other side a richly-ornamented copy of the Word of God, and says in his swaggering style, "In truth I am as good a saint as any." Erasmus tries to disprove this, in his witty way, and says, "Prithee serve thy sack bottle as thy Bible. There are many virtues in that bottle of sack; it warms you when you are cold; it gets your valor up when you are half afraid. But do not take it; never take the cork out of it, and then see what its virtues are." Of course our friend objects. He admires the bottle of sack, but he likes it better when the cork is out, and, most of all, when it is against his lips, and the stream is flowing merrily. "Aye," says Erasmus; "but what do you say to this Book?" He says, "It is tedious." But begin to read and study it. "Ah," he replies, "it is all dry matter that does not concern me." "Verily, then," adds the other, "I see thou art indeed a true disciple of the sack, but a false disciple

of the Book." There is much truth in that wit. If people carry their Bibles as Erasmus wished this man to carry his sack, they will get no good out of them. We may scatter Bibles by millions, and reduce the price, to twopence, or nothing, but we have done nothing but add to men's responsibility, unless we pray earnestly that God will lead men to study it, and by His Spirit bless it to their conversion, their edification, their sanctification in righteousness. I take it that, while this is necessary to show the true quality of the Bible, it is also necessary to show the true answer to

objectors. My metal is of such a kind, that I thank God when the adversaries of truth are loudest. A slumbering devil, is more to be feared than a roaring devil. Let the devil roar, he shall but wake us up from our slumbers and make us the more earnestly to contend for truth. Why were there no objections to the Bible twenty years ago from high. and eminent places? Because they were not necessary to Satan's ends. What was the Bible, then, to many of us who were slumbering, and even sound asleep — what was it but a harp that was getting out of tune because it was not played — a sword that was growing rusty because it was not used? And Satan said within himself, “As long as they do not handle these edged tools I will not; care to blunt them.” I am glad to think that the Church is being urged to activity, and I am reminded of the cynic, who, sooner than be still, would roll his tub about. Sooner than the Church should lie still, I would have her roll her Articles and doctrines about. Keep the Church still, permit its voice not to be heard crying in the wilderness, “Make straight, the way of the Lord,” and you are hindering its course and depriving it of all power to bless the world.

Then let us commend this plan of endeavoring to bring the Scriptures home to people's hearts. I do think that the best answer to objectors is the answer that David gave to his envious brethren when they said, “Because of thy pride and the naughtiness of thine heart, thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle.” Oh, beardless youth, so ruddy and fair of countenance, get thee back to thy sheep! But David has no answer. “Is there not a cause?” — is quite sufficient to reply. But in a little while you shall see David's answer, He came back carrying in his hand the head of the great monster, dripping with clots of gore, and as he holds it up, there is a triumphant refutation of the objection — Because of thy pride. Go you and evangelize London; scatter light in dark alleys; carry the Gospel to the South Seas and Africa, and make the whole world ring with it, and you need not stop to answer objections. This is the best logic — this is the noblest argument — the application of the Word — “the entrance of thy Word giveth light.” Pray God to bring the Word home to the heart and the conscience, and it shall give light. I may, therefore, with as much brevity as possible, just say that I think the Bible Society, while it continues its efforts to spread the Bible, will always do well to listen with earnestness to the advice, and look with great affection upon the efforts of those who wish to make it a Society for Bible reading and Bible understanding, as well as Bible distributing.

While we want collectors and auxiliaries, and all that, we do want more of the Bible-reading element — more Bible expounding to the people. It strikes me, that here in England we greatly need more Bible catechizing of the children of all classes. I was very much struck with the Scotch, how vastly superior their children are to our youngsters in the knowledge of the Scriptures. I sometimes take young men into my institution for the ministry whose education is very deficient, and I sometimes find these good, earnest young English brethren, though they have read the Scriptures, not thoroughly acquainted even with the historical parts and narratives, but often make sad blunders. Now though I have dealt with many Scotchmen, I never met with one who was not thoroughly acquainted with the narrative, and well instructed in the doctrine. I attribute that to the use of catechisms, and I think that if we could revive more and more the use of a good catechism, or the catechetical principle of bringing home, by question and answer, the doctrines and truths of Scripture to the lads of our villages, we should be doing a world of good. The way to secure the masses would be to secure them when young. I remember being greatly puzzled when I was a child. One of my earliest difficulties was, — not the source of the Nile; I had not got the length of that, — but a certain matter which was far more wonderful. On a shelf in my grandfather's parlour was a little vial, containing an apple just the size of the largest part of the bottle. Now, I had no business to touch anything on the mantelshelf; that was forbidden. But whenever I could get alone. I took a chair and got the vial down, and tried to find out how the apple could possibly have got down that small neck. I thought the vial must have had a false bottom, and I really wonder how it was that in my various essays I did not, in my zeal and scientific diligence, manage to break the bottle, and so get a sound thrashing. But it happened, quite accidentally, that this great; mystery of nature — one of the problems that I thought scarcely the wisest men of the East could solve — -became unravelled. One day, as I walked in the garden, it came to me that my grandmother had put a little apple inside the bottle while it was growing, and that; it grew there to its present size. And thus,

“Nature well known, no prodigy remained.”

I could not but think of that while standing here. We cannot get men under Biblical influence very readily after they are grown up; but if we can put them inside the bottle when they are little ones, I am sure we shall be following the analogy of nature. And we have quite a Scriptural precedent for it, for we find that Timothy knew the Scriptures from his youth up. I

am afraid that some distinct Sunday School teaching is not what it should be with regard to Bible teaching; and I should like all of us who have to teach others to look very much after this laboring for the good of young people. And, then, again, I think that the exposition of Scripture should become more and more a distinct feature in our congregations. It may possibly be, that, in some cases, the service will not allow a practice into which some of us have fallen, of always expounding the Lessons as we read them; but there might be extra services, of which that should be the main feature. There might be little Bible-reading parties, intended to break up difficult parts, and presided over by some brother who had the ability to study the chapter, and that would be exceedingly profitable. In Wycliff's days it was the classes that used to do so much good — classes that met and studied Scripture, and then dispersed, scattering abroad the knowledge they had gathered in that manner. It was these classes that brought on the Reformation; and I say it is thus that we must maintain the Reformation. We must get unintelligent knowledge of what God tells us in His Word, by studying therein, and then spreading abroad that same intelligent knowledge amongst others by expounding it.

Then, again, we must ourselves labor more and more to get into the spirit and soul of Scripture. My heart has often turned away in sadness when I have read my Bible without being profited thereby, as I am certain I have. For I hold that the mere reading of a chapter is nothing. "The letter killeth," we say of it; but it is when we get into the chapter, and when the chapter gets into us — when we not only gather the sense, but mark, learn, and inwardly digest the bread of life — then it is that we get the good out of it. I find commentaries very useful; but, after all, many a text that will not open to a commentary will open to prayer. Just as the stone-breakers go down on their knees to break the flints on a heap, I believe we often break up texts better on our knees than in any other position. When we draw near to God, feeling that Holy Scripture is His incarnate truth, and we want to get beyond the mere veil, — when we can have boldness to enter thus within the veil, — then Scripture becomes a real power to us, then it gives us a force which will make our efforts tell upon the world at large.

And we want, dear friends — and here I conclude — we want, if we would exercise more influence upon others, to cultivate in our own souls a greater deference and respect for the Word of God in all things. The habit of sometimes making jokes upon Scripture is a very bad one, and one greatly

to be avoided. I forget the exact words of quaint old Fuller, but I think he says, "If I want to wash my hands, can I find no other place than a Church font?" and I put it in my own words — If I want to play the fool, can I find no other vestments in which to make my motley than the words of God's own Scripture? Cheerfulness is to be cultivated, but that levity which takes the Word of God and prostitutes it to its own purpose is to be detested and abhorred as next akin to blasphemy. We must cultivate the highest reverence for God's Word, especially as to our obedience, to it. Perhaps the last thing the Bible will do for the Church is that after which many of us are sighing — it will establish the unity of the Church. When we shall all become reverent subjects of God, and obedient to God's will, as we find it in Scripture, we shall all come close to one another. All attempts to create unity apart from truth must fall to the ground, and let them. Unity of action for God's glory we can have even despite our minor differences, and I trust we shall ever have it; but to attempt to form a Church on any other basis than that of definite fixed principles must be an attempt to build a house upon the sand, and it must come down. First purity, and then unity; first truth, and then oneness. I would not sell a principle of God's Word for all the brotherly love under heaven, because I hold that brotherly love which will not let me keep my conscience clear is not such brotherly love as Christ inculcated in the Holy Scriptures. Firmness to truth there must be — aye, and to every particle of it — to everything that you have received of the Lord. Let us seek no union by throwing aside those truths which God has clearly revealed to us. The Bible is to be the great pacificator of all sects — the great hammer of all schismatics. The Bible is to be the end of all disunion. The Bible, when we shall be brought to read it with reverent eye, and receive it with meek and humble heart, bringing us to itself, shall, in the Spirit of God, bring us to one another. I would rather have a little discussion now and then as to the principles which divide us, and then, if we have dissented on any point without due grounds, let our dissent be ended. Oh! if we could get the Bible spirit, and say whatever I do not find here I will throw overboard — we should have a blessed unity established. And it is because that this unity is coming on, that Satan is very wroth. We shall live, some of us, to see the day when we shall be distinguished the whole world over for our unity. I think I see looming in the future the rising of the sun that shall scatter all the mists of our bigotry. Some of us shall live to behold that happy day. Already this very Meeting presents to us the blessed presage of it, but the consummation can never come, except we hold the Bible spread the Bible, and press the Bible home upon the

heart and conscience of everyone with whom we meet. May I beg of you — most of whom I have never seen before — this very day to try and teach something scriptural to somebody. Every day a line, and then what a poem will your life's psalm be! Every day a soul, and, oh, what soul-winners you will be! Every day a seed, and then what a harvest shall you have! Every day a star, and then what; a galaxy of glory shall glitter there! Every day a gem, and then what, a crown of honor shall you have to put upon the head of your Christ! Every day a note, and then what a song shall that be which shall roll from you, poor mortal, but God-inspired, God-helped men, up to the throne of the great One who sits above us all.

THE BIBLE. — II. ^{f2}

Mr. Spurgeon proposed the following Resolution: — “That the thanks of this meeting be given to the President and Vice-Presidents, for their continued patronage; — also to Joseph Hoare, Esq., the Treasurer, who is requested to continue his services. That grateful thanks be also presented to the officers, committees, and collectors of the various auxiliaries, branches, and associations throughout this country and the colonies; to whose untiring zeal and energy the Society is again indebted for so large an amount of free contributions during the past year, and to whom they would earnestly appeal for a continuance of their efficient and valuable services; and that the following gentlemen be the committee for the ensuing year, with power to fill up vacancies.”

MY Resolution is a capital illustration of gratitude, because it has in it a lively sense of favors to come, and speaks very prominently of those favors. I am glad to have to speak upon gratitude and a vote of thanks, because there is something so cheerful about that. I think, if I remember rightly, when I was last on this platform in connection with the Bible Society, you seemed so dreadfully dreary that day; it was not long after the famous attack of Colenso, and I did not sympathize with your dreariness at all. I believe that we have arrived at the “good old times” — the times were never so old as they are now — and I very much question whether they were ever one-half as good as they are now, and they are going on to be better, thank God, and that, I trust, by very great strides. My spirit would rather be indicated by a little story which occurred to me while Mr. Richardson was speaking, as happening to myself some three years ago. Sitting in the Colosseum at Rome with two or three friends, I said, “Is it not glorious to look at this old ruin and see how Christ has conquered here; for all these ruins tell what desolations he hath made in the earth, how He breaketh the bow and cutteth the spear in sunder?” So I said, “Let us have a hymn of praise,” and we sang the verse —

*“Jesu’s tremendous name
Puts all our foes to flight;
Jesus, the meek, the angry lamb,
A lion is in fight.”*

Up came two strangers, and said, “What is that you are singing? Let us join you.” One was an American and the other an English clergyman, and we sang together the next verse —

*“By all hell’s hosts withstood,
We all hell’s host o’erthrow;
And conquering them through Jesu’s blood,
We still to conquer go.”*

We shall mark our track by the ruined fortresses of our adversaries; they shalt only be remembered by the crumbling walls of the high places from which they defied us, which shall be a desolation, the habitation of the bittern and of the owl for ever and ever. I want to speak practically now. I think the time has gone for defending the Bible against anybody, whoever he may be — whether he happens to be a bishop, or to come from the opposite side. Wherever he may happen to come from, let him come! The Bible has been so often defended., and the defences are so admirable, that any more outworks would almost seem to be superfluous. I look upon the Bible now as the other day I did upon a little village church which I came. across in the middle of a wood — Oakwood Chapel, in Surrey — a church subjected to a great many slips of the soil, or inclemencies of weather., and therefore buttressed until there are about twice as many bricks in the buttresses as there are in the church. There seems to me to have been twice as much done in some ages in defending the Bible as in expounding it, but if the whole of our strength shall henceforth go to the exposition and spreading of it, we may leave it pretty much to defend itself. I do not know whether you see that lion — it is very distinctly before my eyes; a number of persons advance to attack him, while a host of us would defend the grand old monarch, the British Lion, with all our strength. Many suggestions are made and much advice is offered. This weapon is recommended, and the other. Pardon me if I offer a quiet suggestion. Open the door and let the lion out; he will take care of himself. Why, they are gone! He no sooner goes forth in his strength than his assailants flee. The way to meet infidelity is to spread the Bible. The answer to every objection against the Bible is the Bible. Meet any man who raises objections against it, and very rarely will you find that he has candidly studied it, and sought to understand it. It does sometimes occur, but even in such a man’s case I think, if he would read it again, and especially if he would ask the Author what the meaning of it is, and the Auther is still accessible, he would soon come to a knowledge of the Truth; at any rate, I shall not be likely to

convince him by argument. You have heard the story of the good clergyman who attended the Bampton Lectures — a very excellent course of lectures, no doubt — and thanked God that, after hearing them all, he still remained a Christian. After reading some of the defences of the Bible, it really is a grand thing to find one's self a Christian at all.

Spread the Bible, every one of you, and spread the Bible for this reason — that, first of all, *it will help to keep us all right* — I mean the different ministers here belonging to different Churches. It is an admirable law which forbids the adulteration of milk, and it is a capital plan to keep a lactometer. The Bible is every Christian's lactometer, by which he may see how much of adulteration there may be in the milk of the Word. I am never afraid of the Bible myself on Baptist grounds, and when any young person comes to me and says, "Can you recommend a work which sets forth your views of baptism?" I always say, "Yes, there is a little book which you may buy for 2d — the New Testament — a wonderful Baptist book" — in fact, I never give them any other. If they cannot see it there, well, then, I must love them all the same, if they love the Lord Jesus Christ. We all of us try to spread the Gospel and to preach Jesus Christ fully and freely; but we are something like those water-carriers in Venice who cry out, "Aqua! Aqua!" — and it is a very pleasant sound on a broiling summer's day. I thought once I would have a little water, and the water-merchant gave me a glassful for my half-penny. Alas! it tasted of the glass; I did not like it. A good deal of that which is served out as Gospel tastes of the glass; I am afraid few of us hand it out, quite pure. What a grand thing it is that the people can keep a fountain at home to which they can go and draw for themselves! When you give them the Bible there is no necessity for their drinking the Gospel with an Episcopalian twang, which is not very sweet to me — nor for their having the Dissenting twang, which is not very sweet to other people; they can just go and draw from the living fountain the pure Word of God; therefore spread it, for it will help to keep us all right. I cannot believe it of my countrymen that after all they will go sheer over to Popery. I am glad to see certain hopeful signs among those who have got to be very High Church indeed, that they love the souls of men and mean to preach the Gospel. I believe that is because the Bible is open, and, when it is open, men may go a long way in their tag-rags and ribbons and the like, but there is a spell upon them that will hold them in some measure to the Truth; there is a centripetal power which will not allow them, after all,

to rush right away into the dark regions beyond, which are said to be under the dominion of “his Holiness” the Pope.

Spread the Bible, dear friends, because *that will bring us together*. If anything will ever knit together the visible Church of God, it must be around Holy Scripture that we shall unite — certainly never anywhere else. I would rather say, I believe, the whole Church of Jesus Christ is and always has been one in the sense in which our Savior prayed it might be one; for I find myself incapable of believing that the petitions which He offered to his Father in that dread night in Gethsemane were unheard of God. I believe there is a deep, secret, essential, vital union between all the elect of God who have been quickened by the power of the Holy Spirit, and have been washed in the “fountain filled with blood.” Our differences of opinion upon some points are incidental to thoughtful humanity, and have their uses. I think we keep each other alive to truth, and we wake each other up — not always in the right spirit, perhaps, but our merciful God overrules it for the right. But if any man shall say of any other man beneath the stars that he sincerely loves Jesus Christ, and that I do not count him my brother, he lies in his throat. I am his brother, and there is my right hand. If I be one with Christ, it is no credit to me to say, “I will meet him on the platform of the Bible Society.” Why, I cannot help it. If my little finger, because it is more properly washed than the rest of the body — I am alluding now to the Baptists who are just that — if my little finger were to say, “I will have no communion with the rest of the body,” such a speech would be unworthy, and moreover could not be carried out. That well-washed finger can only get out of the body by death, and as long as it lives in the body it must commune with all the living members whether it will or no, because the vitality of the whole body necessarily causes a communion between all the members of the body. It must be so; we cannot help ourselves. You shall reach down from your shelves a book, and not know who wrote it, and find your heart warming and glowing towards the author, and when you look at the title-page you will say, “There, now! I believe that man spoke at the Liberation Society.” Or else, on the other hand, you will say, “That is the man that said these terrible things in favor of Church and State at the Church Defence Association.” Well, my dear friends, I think there is room enough in this great world, and plenty of room in a land of liberty for us to speak our own minds, and love each other just as well after we have done. I, for one, feel something like Robin Hood, who never received a man into his company till he had played him at

quarter-staff. Honest controversy affords us healthy exercise; besides, it tries the joints of our harness, and lets us know where our weak points may be. But if ever we are to meet — and God grant we may! — if ever in the onward movement of Providence Christians shall come more closely together, it must be through our all coming nearer and nearer to the great standard of Truth, which is the Word of God.

Dear friends, I would urge very especially that we all try to distribute the Scriptures just now because *a very large number of persons have been converted of late* — there can be no doubt about that — and they will want instruction, and no instruction will suit them but that which comes from the Book. I feel great confidence in the present religious movement, because everyone must admit that the Bible is to the front. One of the marks of the converts, if you see them outside the Opera House or the Agricultural Hall, is, that he or she is carrying a very unwieldy Bible of Bagster's best edition. I am afraid it may in some cases become a mere phylactery; but I am quite satisfied that the Bible is really brought to the front. The teaching given is Biblical exposition, and very much more of Scripture is given in those addresses than will ordinarily be found in our services. The spreading of the Bible may avert a great many evils. The danger of an excited time of revivals, is of course, fanaticism. Somebody said, "The fanatics of London were having a fine field-day just now." Now, there is a difference of opinion about that. In the services I have been at I have observed nothing like fanaticism. In fact, my lord, at one service that I attended I rather found fault that there was not enough heat in it. It happened to be a bitterly cold day and a very draughty place, and we did not seem to get into a thorough glow. Certainly we did not reach a red heat, and I prefer a white heat; I am rather a salamander. I have been at Primitive Methodist meetings, when the fire has burned indeed like coals of juniper; but on this occasion we did not come near it. I thought it was the coldness of heart of the people of London that would not let the fire burn as much as it might. Fanaticism I saw no traces of. I long for the day to come when the less friendly part of the newspaper press will call us fanatics. I should like to hear the critics hiss between their teeth, "You are fanatics and fools." I should think we were getting to be both warm and wise then, and getting something near the right point. It is an evil day when men speak too well of us; but when they talk of us disparagingly, it may be that we are having honor in the sight of God. There is no fear, however, of fanaticism ever

doing mischief if we keep the Bible always to the front; that will be the master of the fire, and the fire will be a good servant to us.

Above all, keep your Bibles multiplying *to arrest the progress of Popery*. That must be stopped! You have, perhaps, seen upon the Arch of Titus, in Rome, the seven-branched candlestick of the Temple. We are told that, after the triumph, that sacred lightbearer was lost in the Tiber. The Church of Rome has no love for the seven-branched candlestick; she has lost it. I am rather glad of the idea of purifying that muddy stream: perhaps they will find it by-and-by. I should not wonder that by God's blessing, by the help of Garibaldi, they may find out several little things that they have lost: and now that the Bible Society has a house in the Corso, the way to find out the true seven-branched golden candlestick, which is to illuminate the world, is straight before the eyes of the Romans. We have got the lamp; let us carry it. Do not find fault with the darkness — light the candle. Do not complain about there being error in the world — proclaim the Truth. And by what means can we better proclaim it than by scattering the Word of God on all hands? Dear friends, what are you doing towards scattering the Bible? Do you give it away? Somebody may say it is of very little use to give away Bibles and Testaments. That is a very great mistake. I have very seldom found it to be a labor in vain to give a present of a Testament. I was greatly astonished about a month ago. A cabman, drove me home, and when I paid him his fare he said, "It is a long time since I drove you last, sir!" "But," said I, "I do not recollect you!" "Well," he said, "I think it is fourteen years ago; but," he added, "perhaps you will know this Testament?" pulling one out of his pocket. "What!" I said, "did I give you that?" "Oh, yes!" he said, "and you spoke to me about my soul, and nobody had done that before, and I have never forgotten it." "What," said I, "haven't you worn it out?" "No," he said, "I would not wear it out; I have had it bound!" — and he had kept it very carefully indeed. It encourages one to give books when they are so valued. Sometimes people will not value a tract. I believe it is often the cheapest thing to give a better thing; that which costs you rather more will be more highly treasured, and "a Testament for twopence!" — who would not scatter such a thing broadcast? Should you be unable to give away the Book itself, quote the Scriptures often. A colporteur last Monday said there was a man in the habit of addressing him upon religious subjects when he was "half-seas over," as they call it. Whenever he had plenty of drink in him he came to the colporteur to talk about religion. This colporteur said, "He came and

knocked at my door, and I felt vexed that he should so often come to me in that condition, and I hurled four texts at his head out in the street with all my might." He quoted the four texts. They were very appropriate to the man's condition, and contained a full statement of the gospel of Jesus Christ. He said, "I do not know whether I did that man any good or not, but there was a woman next door, who had just opened her door to put two dirty children off her doorstep. She stood still, and heard all the four texts, and the Spirit of God carried them home to her heart and conscience ;" and he added, "I have been awakened at night many times, and glad to be awakened, by hearing her sing, whilst she lies dying upstairs in the room next to mine." I wish every person here who knows the power of the Scriptures on his own soul would incessantly be trying to spread the Word of God and to expound it.

Never associate the Bible with anything that is dull and unhappy in the minds of your children. I think one of the wickedest things in the world is to make a child learn a chapter for a punishment. Make the Bible a sweet dear book to your children; give them plenty of pictures, and try yourself to make pleasant pictures of the Bible by your conversation. A little boy once stood at his mother's side while she was reading to him. "Mother," he said, "would you let me go out and play for a quarter of an hour?" "What for, James?" said she. "Because then you will please read that; book to yourself, and then, when I come in in a quarter of an hour's time, I will listen so nicely if you will tell me what that book says." That is the thing; read the book yourself, and get the meaning of it; then talk it out again to the children; they will receive it so much better. We want subscribers to the Bible Society, but we want readers of the Bible and expounders of it far more, so that even the little ones may understand the law of the Lord. I wish this to go home to everyone here. There is something for all to do.

At my Orphanage, some time ago, while I was sitting on a seat watching the children at play, a little boy came and asked to sit beside me. I lifted him up, and then he said, "Now, Mr. Spurgeon, listen to me. Suppose there was a 'horphanage,' and there was a lot of little boys there, and suppose those little boys had all lost their fathers, and suppose once a month their mothers came, or their aunts, and brought them pennies and apples, and oranges, and nice things, and suppose there was a little boy that had not got no mother, no aunt, nor nobody to come to see him, don't you think somebody ought to give him sixpence? 'Cause, Mr. Spurgeon, that's me." Will you all apply descriptions in that fashion, by saying when there is

something to be done for Jesus, "That's me — there is something for me to do"? Let us determine that every house in London shall have a Bible at once. There is no harm if it had two. I believe there is a somebody in the world that God means to bless through you and nobody else. He has given to his dear Son power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as his Father gave him; and he has divided that power out among us, and given to some of us power over certain flesh, and others power over others. There are some who never will enter heaven through my preaching, but they will enter heaven perhaps from your private admonitions, or through the New Testament which you intend now to put in their way, and the gentle word which you mean to add to it. Beloved friends, look at the great city before you, which God is visiting! Assist in the visitation of this city, from house to house, all of you, and connect with it the trying to discover whether the Bible is in the house, and if it be not there, let every house in London be supplied with the Bible. I wish the Bible Society would join, if it could, with that visiting organizations, and determine that every house in London should have a Bible at once. Let us all help in doing the work of visiting the people and scattering the Word of God among them, and let this be our motive: — if we love the Lord Jesus Christ: there is an intimate connection between us and everything that has to do with him.

Years ago, when servants used to be servants, there was a certain lord who was greatly amused with the way in which his old body-servant always used to talk. They were down in the country, and a waggon stood at the door of the country seat, and his lordship said, "John, whose waggon is that?" "Oh," said he, "that is our's, my lord; it has brought some of our goods down from town." In a minute or two his lordship enquired, "John, what coach is that coming up the drive?" "Oh, my lord," said he, "that's our carriage." "But," added the master, "I see some children in it; are they *our* children, John?" "Oh, yes, my lord," he replied, "bless their hearts, they are our children, and I am going downstairs to bring them in!" and he went downstairs accordingly. Now, whenever we look upon poor lost sinners, and upon the gospel, which, alone can save them, let us say. "Oh, blessed Lord, these are ours, these are ours; we seek them because they belong to thee." It looks rather daring to call what is Christ's ours, but his lordship was not vexed with his servant for entering into such a unity of interests with him, and our Lord above will not; be aggrieved with us if we call the Bible *our* Bible, the gospel *our* gospel, the church *our* church, the people of God *our* people, the brotherhood of sinners *our* brothers, and the Savior

himself *our* Savior. Let us make the Bible Society *our* society, and labor to spread the Word of Life amongst our poor citizens all around us, in whom we have an interest, because Christ has an interest in them.

EARNESTNESS. ^{F3}

My brethren in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, partakers with us in the fellowship of his sufferings, you will suffer the word of exhortation from me this morning, I am sure, and may God the Holy Spirit make it quick and powerful to all our souls, that throughout the coming year we may serve our Master with both our hands, and with all our heart, having the whole man anointed by the Holy Ghost, and having it laid as a whole burnt-offering upon the altar of our God.

I think it right to say before coming to the topic of this morning, that I am sure the church of God loves you and has sympathy with you. I think I speak the feelings of all who know your office and its trials when, I say, in the name of the church of the living God, — we thank you and wish you God-speed. Little can we tell what London would have been without you. If there has been a great moral change pass over it, and I am sure there has, it is owing doubtless to the ministry, but equally as much to your untiring labors from house to house. I can scarcely dare to draw a picture of what London would have been if it had not been for the City Mission. I am quite sure that had it not been for this instrumentality our ministry would have been utterly powerless, in the darker parts at least, of those thickly populated lanes and alleys, where the voice of the minister cannot be heard. We thank you, brethren, for the wisdom which you have displayed. I am sure there must have been a great deal of holy prudence and of Divine loveliness of spirit in you, or else, composed as you are of all sections of Christians, it would have been impossible for you to have been held together. I feel it must be a very responsible office indeed to be an officer of this institution. I have none of the qualifications for such a work as that. I feel it so incumbent upon me to testify to everything that I believe, that although I can work heartily with all in Christ who differ from me, yet I think I should find it rather difficult to work side by side with those who would frequently have to contradict my opinions. You must be endowed, I think, with a large measure of Christian charity, and I think the officers must have received that wisdom for which our excellent brother just now intreated the Lord in prayer. May this wisdom, this love, and the zeal you have manifested continue and be increased. God send you in a seven-fold degree the unction of the Holy One. May you know all things, may you do

all things, and may you be all things to all men, that by any means you may win some. In the name of the church of the living God, which is the pillar and ground of the truth, I thank you who are laborers in this society for the good and excellent work which you have done for the Lord Jesus Christ. Perhaps it is but little of encouragement that the city missionary gets in his labor. It is not good for us often to have much encouragement. Our Master knows that we generally grow best when we are most pruned. He understands that the knife is one of the best instruments for making his vines fruitful. But I think, nevertheless, we ought to speak some words of holy encouragement to you who have been good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and who have not labored in vain.

But now I come to the topic of this morning. I have not taken a text, nor have I chosen any didactic subject. I knew to whom I should address myself, and have taken therefore a subject practical rather than doctrinal — EARNESTNESS — its absolute necessity in your office — the parts of the office in which it must be most apparent — what there is which would damp it — and some things which should tend to stimulate it.

First of all I refer to the absolute necessity of earnestness in your office. Dissenting as I do from many of the opinions of that great man of God, Mr. Richard Baxter, I cannot but consider him to be the model minister of Christ. As a preacher he had such earnestness that he has been styled the English Demosthenes. Better still he knew so well the terrors of the Lord that scarcely could Paul himself have persuaded men with greater earnestness than did Baxter. He knew what it was to have his knees knocking together while he preached to sinners of the wrath to come. Seldom did he go from his pulpit satisfied with his performances, but went to his knees to weep and bewail himself because he had not been more earnest with the souls of men. I do not marvel, however, at his earnestness in the pulpit, but what has made me consider him to be the very prince of preachers is the fact that he was equally earnest in the pastorate. Every house in Kidderminster was visited by Richard Baxter. There was not a child in the parish whom he had not catechized; there was not a backslider whom he had not warned; there was not a reprobate whom he had not addressed with solemn awe. The whole parish knew that Baxter considered himself to be the father of the flock. He did not only play the preacher in the pulpit, but the pastor in the parish. Now I scarce know by what stress of circumstances the minister's work in London has become divided. I say honestly from my inmost soul, I do not conceive myself to be guilty of any

dereliction of duty in the fact that I do take only one part of Baxter's work. It is utterly impossible that I should take the other. If I can preach twice in the day here, and there, and everywhere, as an evangelist, and if I can say that I exhaust myself and can do no more, I think I cannot plead guilty if another part of the office is left to others. Throughout London the pastorate, especially among the Dissenting churches, has to be left to you, the city missionaries. You take not Baxter's place in the pulpit, but you take his place in the houses. I hold him up to you as the very mirror and pattern of a missionary, — from house to house instructing, in the streets exhorting, under each roof teaching, personally laboring for the souls of men. But mark, if you were to ask for Baxter's plans of visitation you might when you read them over think them extremely ordinary, and having but little force in them. The power of Baxter lay, not in his method, but in his earnestness. There was such a fire in him that it all but consumed his bones. He was so passionate for the conversion of men that he was seldom in good health, and like a sword too sharp for its scabbard, his soul cut its way out of his body, and he died full of disease and pain. He would have done nothing, he would have been of no service to the church as, Richard Baxter, if it had not been for Richard Baxter's earnestness. His divinity might have been worthless; his preaching might have been a delusion; his visitation an imposture, if it had not been that his soul was in his work, and the whole man was wherever Baxter was. To you, I say, in your office earnestness is above all things necessary. In the ministry earnestness is of the first importance, and yet the duties of the ministry, to our shame let it be spoken, may be discharged without earnestness. There are men who can hold together a congregation by the force of oratory. There are some who can enchain the ear and fascinate the heart by polished periods and glowing sentences, while they themselves know that they do but play the actor's part, and speak to others what they have never felt themselves. Certainly a minister without earnestness is the most pitiable of objects, and yet he may have a measure of success. But to you this is impossible. You have no field for oratory; you have no opportunity for the exhibition of your powers of eloquence. Yours is downright hard work; there is nothing of beauty or of fascination in it, and without earnestness, what instrument is left to you? If you take away zeal from your heart, of what use are you? Might you not better lay down the name of the office than hold the title, if you do not fulfill it? If, on the other hand, you as missionaries had to be dispensers of the public alms, earnestness might not be so necessary. If you carried loaves in a basket on one arm, and if you carried in the other hand a well-

loaded purse, the people would hail and welcome you, whether you were earnest or not. It would but very little signify what fire of love there was in your heart; they would be content with the loaves and the fishes, and your wishes might be right well fulfilled. But since you are entirely divorced from opportunities of doing good by this means, since this is not your mission, I ask you, how can you hope the people will receive good at your hands if your hearts be cold towards them and indifferent to your holy cause? In other offices something may be done, while the heart is cold; nothing, I grant you, that is acceptable to God, but yet a something which looks like success; but in your case there can be nothing at all unless the whole soul be saturated through and through with the sacred oil, and then all set a-blazing as though it were one lamp of light and fire.

Let me ask you now, what can you do when you go abroad into the street, and rap at the first door, and enter it? What excuse have you for entering into an Englishman's house, unless you go there in earnest? You have no right to enter his house as a matter of office. Your office of City Missionary no more entitles you to enter that man's house than the office of a tradesman, or any other public office. Your only warrant is this, that you feel you have a call from God to tell the inhabitants of that house to escape from the wrath to come; but if you have not earnestness there is a clear proof that you have not God's warrant for entering there. What are you but an intruder into a house, where you certainly will not be required a second time? If you are not in earnest, what will they say? "This man has undertaken to call and see me, and I will undertake that he shall not." If, however, you be in earnest you may reasonably hope that the person may say, — "However little I may value that man's visits, yet that man will call to see me, and he will be unhappy if I do not let him; so I had better listen to him and let him call again." I say that your office is an intrusion upon the privacy of an Englishman if you do not carry earnestness into it; and if you have not this to excuse you, your office will very soon become contemptible in the eyes of those whom you visit.

You, my dear friends, as missionaries, need earnestness, moreover, because how is it possible that you shall render your account to the church unless you really do serve it with all your might? There always lies upon you and me what some of the ungodly consider an odium; they look upon us as being paid servants of the church. We are, and we think it no dishonor. The church does not pay us what our services are worth. Especially in your case is this true. Doubtless, the church would do so if she found that the

means were ready to her hands, and she ought to do so if it were within her power: but, inasmuch as we are paid servants of the church, unless we be in earnest we take money which we have no right to take. I say that my yearly income is robbery to the church unless I serve it with my whole soul: and so is yours; if you do not put your whole heart into your work you have eaten bread for nought; you have taken money for services which you have not rendered. The church does not support you and me that we may be images to look at, but that we may be servants to labor. We are not maintained by the Christian church that we may go through a mere routine, but that we may give our body, soul, and strength to our Master's service, the better being enabled to do *so* by being kept from the cares of this life. How, I say, then, shall you render your account to the church unless you be in earnest?

But, above all, what account shall you and I render to our God at the last if we go about our work listlessly and carelessly? How shall we stand at the judgment-bar? How shall we bear to hear it said, "I sent you to perishing sinners, and you sought not to save them. I sent you in the name of Him that bled, and you had no eyes to weep. I bade you testify in my name, and as though you felt the terrors of the Lord to persuade men, but you did not persuade them; you missed opportunities of doing good; you passed by seasons when the heart was impressible; and when you might have driven home the truth; and there they are in hell! — the thousands of your district — and there they are, weeping and wailing, and gnashing their teeth — the sinners that were in the streets, and lanes, and houses where you were called to visit." What shall you and I say in that day? What will the unfaithful minister dare to say? Will not his knees begin to shake through the tremors of an unutterable fear? Will not a double hell, a hell multiplied in proportion to the number of souls who, by his instrumentality were damned, seize upon his soul at once? Oh! better for us that we had never been born, that a double mill-stone were about our necks, and that we were cast into the midst of the sea, than that we should be ministers and missionaries for Christ, and yet not throw our hearts into the work. I implore and beseech you — and in so doing I lift up my heart to God, that what I ask you to do I may be enabled to do myself — "What your hand findeth to do, do it with all your might, and what God gives you to do, do it as a man would do it who knew he should die when it is done. Live each day as though that day were the end of living here, and be prepared to die when each visitation shall be over, as though the patting off of your coat at

night should be but the signal for the putting on of your shroud, so, surely shall you live to purpose, and God, even our God, shall bless us; God shall bless us, and that right early.”

But now permit me to turn to the second part of my subject, upon which I have somewhat trenched already. There are parts of your office which must claim earnestness at your hands. I have already alluded to one, namely, that of house-to-house visitation. Now let me repeat it, — your visitation from house to house is an unwarrantable intrusion, unless you have a mission from God to enter the house. The warrant of heaven allows me to go anywhere; as the sheriff with Her Majesty’s warrant shall enter any house, so may we, with the warrant of the King of kings. But that warrant you have not, and you will not have the impudence to think that you have it, unless you are in earnest for the winning of souls to Christ. Now, I suppose that every missionary here would give the same answer to a question I am about to put, What is the object of your life? I do not suppose that anyone here would give another answer than this one, “The object of my life is to win souls.” I do not think, brethren, you would say, “My object is to get people to go where their souls may be won, by asking them to attend the house of God.” I think you would not say, “My object is to get children to attend the Sabbath-school.” All that would be true; these are incidental objects, and very important things indeed. But you would say, “No; my direct and special end in living is the immediate conversion of the souls under my charge.” You have not reached to the dignity of your position unless you can say that. I have often thought of Sabbath-school teachers; indeed, there are very many of them who say that they are teaching in the school that they may prepare the children’s minds for the ministry. I believe the object of all *true* Sabbath-school teaching is the immediate conversion of the children’s souls, as children. And so with you; you are not to say, “I am to lift these people to another stage.” No, your object is in the hand of God the Holy Ghost; and may God, of his own Divine sovereignty, send down that rich anointing upon you; your object is that now these souls may be converted to God, and converted to God BY YOU. I say it solemnly, though it may be a hard point, that unless souls are converted by you, you have lived in vain; unless you personally are, in the hand of God, the instrument of bringing souls to Christ you have not answered the end of your being, much less of your office. It will be in vain for me to say, “Ah! but I induced such an one to attend the house of prayer and he was converted.” Very well, and you did well; but you did not that which your

soul ought to strive and long for. I can understand a City Missionary who has had but very few spiritual children; I can understand his laboring for a time in vain; but I cannot understand either minister or missionary being happy while he is not blessed. I can comprehend my preaching, and yet God's withholding the dew of heaven from it! but I could not comprehend myself to be anything less or better than a monster if I could preach and be content and happy unless souls were saved under my preaching. May God seal our mouths in eternal silence sooner than let us preach and be content while souls are being damned. I should look upon it as being all but a type of apostasy, a very proof of reprobation, if my heart, as a minister, did not yearn for souls, and travail in birth till Christ be formed in them.

Now, since I believe this is your object, what can you do without earnestness? You may do without Latin and Greek, you may do without learning, you may do without ten thousand things, but you cannot win souls without earnestness. God has blessed many a fool to the salvation of souls, but he never blessed a cold-hearted man. The Lord uses strange instruments. I have known sinners converted to God by members of my congregation, instrumentally — men who could not speak a single sentence grammatically — men, who, I am sure, would misquote Scripture at such a wretched rate that I should be frightened to listen to them; yet I have seen genuine conversions under them. But I never did see many genuine conversions under any man, however great his ability, or however apparently great his industry, unless he was full of life and fire. We do want light; but, more than all, we want fire. We want to be like John the Baptist, who was a burning as well as a shining light. You must burn your way through this world; there is no other way to get on. If ever you are to do good for Christ, it must be by carrying sword and fire before you; the sword of the Spirit, and the fiery energy of his divine influences. Without these two things you may bear the name, but you will never rightly fulfill the office of a missionary and minister for Christ.

But, my dear friends, there is another point in which earnestness is especially needed by you, and that will be in your own private prayers. The Mission cannot prescribe how many hours you should spend in prayer; but how many hours do you spend in prayer? We may not suggest how long you should, but I think we may each ask ourselves, How long during the past year did I spend on my knees? It would be a very singular jotting for us all if we were to keep a memorandum, and put down how long each day we were at prayer. My brethren, we should be startled to see what an

immeasurably little time we spend on our knees! The Lord doth not reprove us this day for lack of preachings, and teachings, and visitings, but he reproveth us because we have brought him no sweet cane of honey; we have not filled him with the fire of our sacrifices in private. I do feel every day that the power of a minister must be on his knees. I know of a truth that, when I have been backward in supplication, I may have prepared my sermon as carefully as possible, I have always been powerless in the delivery of it. I can bear my testimony, as a constant preacher of Christ's gospel, that it is prayer that makes men strong. And it must be so with you. If you go to your work without prayer, I pity ye, brethren, I pity ye: but if you can come back from your work without prayer, I can not only pity, but upbraid. Shall I see sin in its naked deformity, and not pray for God not to cleanse it? Shall I be called every day to walk in the midst of the thick Egyptian darkness of this city, and not cry to the Sun of Righteousness to arise? Can I stand by the bedside of the dying and offer a prayer there, and not come home to pray for that dying man? If I can, oh! search me, good Lord, for it may be that, after all, I am but a hypocrite, and thy truth is not in me. You who see the evil, you who come in positive contact with it, I cannot imagine you ever being of any service if that contact with evil does not drive you to your knees; and if you lose earnestness there, if you cease to be much in your closet, you had better resign your office; I am sure you had. Every day you hold it you add sin to sin; and every hour you continue in it you do but aggravate your iniquity, and grieve the Holy Spirit. Take heed, lest he utterly leave you to go to your work alone, and then what will you do?

And then, again, my dear friends, you particularly need earnestness, I am sure, in your cottage meetings. The mission has a fiction that you are not allowed to preach. You all do preach, every one of you. You do not take a text, a single text, but you expound the Scriptures; and it is a distinction without a perceivable difference, so far as I can observe. But your teaching or preaching differs, from that of the ministry in this respect — we can command the crowded audience, and it is but honest to say there is a kind of excitement given to the speaker when the room is well filled, and especially when it is capacious. I have heard some say they believed they could very easily preach, if they had but three thousand to listen to them. I only wish they would try it; they might find that, while there are some advantages, there are, on the other hand, some few disadvantages. I would not, however, over-estimate these. But when you have a cottage-meeting,

and there are four, or five, or six — three of them babies — crying, I cannot conceive of your getting on unless you are downright in earnest. Imagine that you have twenty, and out of those twenty the major part are persons who are utterly unconcerned — men who have been induced by their wives to come in and listen to you, and who sit all the while as if they wished they were out of it, and could be at the public-house. You speak, you read the Scriptures, you tell an anecdote, you look round, and wish that that man in the corner would but look as if he were at all interested, but he won't; you rack your brains to think of something else. Excellent practice for you, most holy practice for you; but again you see there is but little perceivable effect produced. Now, my dear brethren, if you are not right alive in this matter, if you have not, in short, the determination that you will discharge your conscience, you will go home the most miserable of men, because you lack, I say, that enthusiasm of the great assembly; you lack the afflatus of publicity; and if you are not filled with the Holy Ghost, and with fire from on high, you must be wretched in your office, and, I am certain, you must be unsuccessful in it. If you be really earnest, I can conceive that those men who have not listened to the Word before are the best hearers in the world. They are like men whose eyes are just opened, and they see the stars, and how great is their surprise! These are not gospel-hardened sinners that you have; they are not men that have had the gospel drummed into their ears till they have become deaf by its influence; but there they are, and as they see you earnest they do not criticise your style, and they pull not your words to pieces; but, seeing that you mean what you say, they give you an earnest hearing, and God will bless you. He *must* bless you. He never did make a man in earnest to win souls in such a way as this, without intending that the souls should be won, and be really brought to Christ.

But yet I must repeat again, in all these things in which you, as missionaries, are engaged, I can see no hope whatever for you unless you be terribly in earnest; unless as if life and death, as if eternity and judgment, were before your eyes, you were ready to live and die for the winning of souls. You can write your journal, and make it look very respectable, and yet do no good. You may fulfill your visits, just as an animated corpse might go round to the doors; the more visits the more sins to you in such a case as that. You may stand and be commended by the officers of the Society; using all discernment, they may not be able to detect the lack that is in you. But, oh! my brethren, you cannot be accepted of your God, and

this is where you and I must stand. It is little to us to be accepted of men; it is little to us to be thought industrious or earnest; the great matter is to be so, and to have those witnesses in our conscience, that in all sincerity, as in the sight of God, we have served the Lord Christ, and endeavored to bring his lost sheep to his fold.

Well now, I purpose to spend a few minutes longer in marking those things which are hindrances and drawbacks to your earnestness. One of the first is habit. "Habit!" say you — "can holy and religious habits ever become antagonistic to zeal?" Yes, my experience teaches me so. I frequently catch myself, when reading the Scriptures for my own private devotion, looking at the verses to see what sort of texts they will make; and I must confess that when in private prayer, pleading my own case before God, I find a very strong influence which would carry me off at a tangent to pray as a minister rather than as a man. One of the sternest difficulties of my Christian experience is to keep my own vineyard watered while basted with watering the vineyards of others. Now, I do not know whether you have ever felt it, but, when you first went out as a young missionary, was there not something solemn and awful, about the first time you went your round? Do you not remember how you prayed *that* morning? I should not wonder but that you rose early that morning to have some special time in prayer. Well, you did not succeed to your satisfaction, perhaps, the first time. Do you recollect that hallowed uneasiness which you felt — that sacred tribulation within — because you could not do as you would? Brothers, do you feel that now? Why do you not? There is certainly as good ground for it. The fact is, that, such creatures are we, the good ground has helped to strangle the good thing, and we shall have continually to struggle against this, or else what shall we come to be, after all, but as the blind horse going round and round the mill-wheel, and may God deliver us from that! I would go to the next sermon that I shall preach with as holy a trembling, with as entire a dependence upon the Spirit's help, as I did when as a lad or child of sixteen I stood up to address an assembly. But I do feel that it is difficult to keep there. One begins to think, "Well, I have done it so many times, I shall not break down now." The very thoughts do not really cross the mind, or if they cross it, they flit so swiftly that you do not perceive them, yet they leave their impression. One comes to perform every religious duty as an automaton. Unless we look very carefully to ourselves, we get like a machine wound up, and we are something like the toys which sometimes our children have, which only need a certain quantity of sand at

the top, and they run on until they run down. Now, above all things, we must struggle and strive against this. I hate ministerialism, but I always find it creeping upon me. One gets inside a pulpit, and begins to feel that you are not as other men are. Now I like, if I can, to preach as a sinner to sinners; as one saved by grace to tell the love which Christ had towards me, the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints. Now, I do not doubt that as soon as ever you get out your little book to take with you — as soon as ever that is in your hands — you feel like a missionary, and not like a sinner saved by grace. But, I pray you, do not feel like a missionary; feel like a sinner who has been washed with the precious blood. You will never do good if you go to your work *ex officio* ; you must go to it *ex anima* ; — not because of your office, but because of your soul being in it; because your heart yearns towards sinners, because you must have them saved. Strive not against the habits — they are good — but against that evil tendency which, somehow or other, Satan, who is exceeding crafty, manages to cast over our very best habits.

Some of you have perhaps to contend with another great damper to your zeal, namely, your being yoked with cold-hearted persons in your labor. I can conceive it must be a very heavy drawback to a missionary to have for his district superintendent a person who does not go forward with him heartily in Christ's work. Let us not suppose that there are many such, but there must, be some such. If when you think you see an opening for a ragged-school, when you see that such and such an agency might excellently be undertaken and with the greatest possible hope of success, — if then cold water be thrown at once upon, it, I can conceive that you feel in your heart an exceeding heaviness, and you go to your knees, wishing before God that you could meet with some one who would run as swiftly as you would wish to run, and help you as you would desire to be helped. I am afraid that I am myself guilty in this respect sometimes. I have great pleasure in having associated with myself one or two excellent missionaries. I dare say I do not always give them so cordial a shake of the hand as they might wish, or quite so sweet a smile, but I think they know that that is generally forgetfulness; it is not a want of heart with them in their work. If I had an assembly of ministers here who were the superintendents, I would say to them, "Always give the missionary a kind word; and if you cannot go with him in all his plans, yet, at any rate, go as far as ever you can." You have, too, in your district, no doubt, to come into contact with Christian people who sneer at you; who think that your

office is an innovation, or who, if they have got over the old anachronism, still think that you intrude, possibly, or that you do too much. Now, my dear brethren you are not children, you are not boys, and you are not to be put back by anything of that sort, I am sure, if you have to serve God. You do not expect to serve Christ earnestly without meeting with rebuffs, do you? You will be bitterly mistaken if you do. Let me assure you that in Christ's church any man who is more earnest than his fellows will at the first meet with greater opposition from the church than from the world. Let him, however, but persevere; let him bear that holy trial and ordeal which God has ordained in order that he may be qualified to take his seat among the heroes of the Christian church; let him but persevere, and then the church will be his best friend. So will you find it; if there be any Christians who do chide you and hold you back — if you do but persevere, these very men will be your best helpers. You have but to overcome their timidity, or their caution, and their prudence; you cannot overcome it by despising it; you cannot overcome it by ridiculing it — but by stern yet sacred perseverance. You shall lead even the most timid of the Lord's soldiers to feel that where some can go on with victory they must dare to follow, that the blessing of God may be shared by them as it is with you. We wish for you the heartiest co-operation of all the ministers of Christ; and I pray that all of us who are called to be district superintendents over any districts may have your most earnest prayers, that we may be your helpers, and not your hinderers in the work.

No doubt there is one other thing which more than any of these will tend to quench your zeal, and that is, an apparent want of success. You have set your heart, perhaps, on the conversion of such-and-such a person. You think he is laid to your heart. You do all that is within your power, and that man becomes more hardened than before. There is a lane where you wish to throw a little light, but it seems the people are determined you shall not come in, and shut the door in your face. You invent a great many little plans to get in; you put a tract through the keyhole, or something of that sort, yet you cannot succeed. All your efforts are in vain; like waves that dash upon a rock, they are broken into spray and return again upon you. Ah! and let; me say now — I am not speaking to men, I trust, merely, but to Christian men, — Oh! shall you and I ever be discouraged and give up our work because we see no immediate success? We will be troubled if we see it not, but we will not be discouraged. My brethren, how long; did Jesus Christ woo us before he won our hearts? How many times, in the

ministry, did he knock at our door before that door was opened? And if it be now opened to his coming, what was it but his mighty grace that made an entrance into that heart which was close shut up, like Jericho, against him? If, then, we have tried the patience of the King of kings, if we have grieved the Spirit, it is a very simple matter if our patience should be tried, and if we should be grieved. Then let us think, the longer we shall be in struggling after a soul, the more precious it will be to us when we shall, at last obtain it. The more we shall have to tug and toil to get this jewel out of the mine the more gloriously shall it glitter in our crown when Christ the Judge shall come and honor his people with himself. Come, let not these things put us back; but rather let us hear the voice of God saying to us whenever we meet with peculiar difficulty — “Here is a case, Christian, for redoubled zeal. Here is a high mountain, and there is a need that thou shouldst be industrious in climbing it.” Is there a stream? Then thou must with lusty arms stem the forceful current. The more difficulties, the more need that we should put the whole man into the work. Instead of being an argument against earnestness, it should be the very sternest plea for it. I have now preached the Gospel seven years in London; and I was compelled to say the other Sunday, I was something like Jacob, who served seven years for Rachel, but obtained Leah instead. Now, you will perhaps find out the same. I meant by that, that there were some of my congregation whom I had hoped would be saved, — I had always looked upon them as being seals to my ministry by and by; but seven years of earnest entreaty, and they are not saved, though the Lord has given me full many others in the stead thereof. Well, it may be so with you. Just where you thought your instrumentality would fail, it will be most successful; and, probably, a man whom you gave up as hopeless, will be the person who shall fulfill the desire of your heart and cause you to trust the power of the Gospel, seeing that it has power to save such a one as he was.

I fear lest I weary you, and therefore I would close by giving you some encouragements to your zeal. There are reasons why our zeal and earnestness should become more than ever it was. Scarcely need I mention them, except it be to recapitulate, and stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance.

Brethren, we must be earnest, because we are ourselves so greatly in debt to the rich, free, and sovereign grace of God. Let us recollect this morning that first hour when our sins were forgiven. It is fresh and vivid upon some of our memories. We remember when the burden fell from off our backs;

when we saw the wounds of Christ, and knew ourselves to be his. Oh, that blessed morning! — that blessed morning! What preachers we should have made if we could have been put into a pulpit there and then! What household visitors should we have been if we could have been sent at that very moment to go and tell to a family what Christ had done for us! And then, brethren, we were only in debt to Christ for one item; and now, the bill is so long we cannot measure it. And do we love him less now than we did then? When he had only healed our iniquity we loved him; and now that he has been pleased not only to heal our diseases, but to satisfy our mouth with good things, so that our youth has been renewed like the eagle's, shall we love him less? I say, God forbid! And yet I query, brethren, whether any of us go to our work now as we should have done if this were the first day of our conversion. Come, I say now, recall the place where you were; think of the hole of the pit and the miry clay. Think also of where you are. Put your foot down upon the Rock of Ages now, and feel that you are safe in Christ. Look at your covering now, — arrayed in his righteousness. Look at your sustentation now, — fed with the bread from heaven, and made to eat of the body and blood of Christ. Think of your end, and of that which has been provided for you, — the mansions of the blessed in the land, of rest hereafter. And will not these things make you feel that you are drowned debtors to Christ — over head and ears in debt to him? Oh, what do we not owe thee, Jesu, — what do we not owe thee! If we could give our bodies to be burned; if this flesh could be eaten of dogs and rent piecemeal from the bones, 'twere small sacrifice for thee. And, could we give up heaven for thee; if we could be kept out of it for ages to preach, and teach, and suffer for thee, we might well be content, and think it two heavens to lose heaven for awhile if we might but the better show our love for thee. If there be a man among you who is not in debt to Christ, this plea can have no power with you. If there be one among you who is not washed in his blood; if there be one among you who will be saved by his own merits, or by his own strength, you have no call to be in earnest; there is no need that you should give your heart to Christ. But such a man there is not; therefore spend and be spent each one of you: and may the Lord accept the sacrifice, through Christ, the great High Priest!

As a further reason let me say, brethren, how earnest we ought to be, because, except we are in earnest, our souls can never be in sympathy with the soul of Christ. I see him new standing on the hill. He looks down upon the city; he marks the gilded roof of the temple, and the streets, and he

weeps. He foresees the total destruction of that city, “beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth.” In vision he marks her streets crimsoned with gore, and her temple already in flames; and what does he say? Does he harden his heart; by some ideas of divine sovereignty? Does he stand there callous and dry-eyed, feeling that this is predestinated and must be, and that therefore he need not weep? No. We believe that Christ knew the destiny of Jerusalem, but he wept over it too. Down from his eyes the torrents ran; down his cheeks they scalded furrows for themselves: but at last he bursts out in passionate grief, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not?” Now, if your heart does not feel like that, it is not in harmony with Christ’s. There must be the same weepings, the same longings, the same yearnings, or else we have not had fellowship with Christ in the great end and aim of his incarnation — the salvation of the souls of men. Tell me not of your communings in your closets; tell me not of your raptures and your ecstasies, when your soul has been like the chariots of Amminadib. These things are blessed if they are coupled with the other; but, unless you have fellowship with Christ in labor, fellowship with him in perseverance, fellowship in suffering, I care not for your ecstasies or your reveries; they are hollow and deceitful things. If you have worked with Christ, and dwelt with Christ, then I do not marvel that sometimes you feed with him who feedeth among the lilies, and that in choice moments you can say, “His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me,” Oh, let the Crucified One stand before each one of us this morning! I think I see him, and he looks at me and says, “I gave my blood to save sinners; wilt thou not give thy life too?” And if I feel faint and weary, methinks he puts his hand upon me and he says “Son of man, I have set thee to speak unto this multitude, for I have much people in this city; be strong and fear not; by my wounds I charge thee, be thou faithful unto death.” By the wounds of Jesus, I charge you, brethren; “by his agony and bloody sweat, by his cross and passion, by his precious death and burial, by his glorious resurrection and ascension,” — in his name I charge you, be ye faithful unto death, and ye shall inherit the crown of life.

What other reasons shall I need to give? We must now draw to our close, but we must give just this one: Fellow-laborers for Christ, let us renew our zeal this morning, when we think of our noble comrades. It is often useful to us to read some good biography. When I read Wesley’s “Journal,” or

Whitefield's "Life," I always find there is an influence attending the reading, like the reading of the Scriptures themselves. I mean, not so divine, but yet invigorating — perhaps to a less degree, but yet invigorating to my spirit. Think of some who were in your ranks, whom God has blessed and rendered honorable. The City Mission does not lack its heroes. I take it that when the Church shall sing of "the noble army of martyrs," and "the goodly fellowship of the apostles," there will have to be put into her song yet a hymn of praise for that glorious company of missionaries who have ascended to God, and who praise him before the throne. I do think that *you*, with your toils — sometimes with your poverty, but ye are rich, — with your various rebuffs and persevering toil for souls, with your midnight watchings, with your frequent labors, — I think that *you* are worthy to stand in the front rank of the army of Christ. But you think not so of yourselves. You are willing to be the servant of servants, that you may thus by your Master be honored and blessed. I charge you, by the names of those saints of God who have suffered in Christ's holy cause, by all the men and women who in devotedness have given up their whole substance and their whole time to Christ, be ye worthy of this glorious cause. Runners, open your eyes, and look at the glorious assembly that surrounds you. See ye not the cloud of witnesses? Play the man, if ever ye were men, play the man before such spectators. When such spirits look on, who will not run? "Lay aside every weight, and run with patience the race that is set before you, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith." If at the old Olympic and Isthmian games men thought they must strain every nerve and muscle, because Greece looked on, what shall we say to you, when the world looks on, and the church looks on, and hell looks on, and heaven looks on? By all these, the spectators of your warfare, fight, fight lawfully, and win the crown, through the grace of your Lord Jesus Christ.

That crown is the last argument for zeal. I could not help weeping while we sang that hymn just now about our glorious appearance before God. Oh, there may be some missionaries here to-day to whom a message which I gave last night to my congregation may be applicable, "This year thou shalt eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan." There are some among us here this morning who in all probability will not be here this day twelvemonths. Well, I think we might contend which it should be. 'Twere a sweet boon, 'twere a blessed benison of heaven, to be allowed to take the reward so soon. It will be so with some of us. There, now, do not trouble yourselves

so much about the sickness in your families; you will not have to see that sickness many months, for you will be where “the inhabitant is never sick.” Come, now, be not desponding, because you have not seen all you could wish. Your Master shall say to you this year, “Come up higher; come up higher!”

*“The way may be rough, but it cannot be long,
So smooth it with hope, and cheer it with song.”*

Some of you, too, my brethren, are fathers in Christ; you are veterans in this army. Well, you perhaps may hope that your race shall be the sooner run. God cheer you at the last, yea, and cheer you now, by that splendid prospect of eternal bliss which lies before the servant of Christ. And is it true, and can it be possible, that I shall be near and like my God? And shall this head ever wear a crown? Shall I ever be fellow with the angels, and co-worshipper with cherubim and seraphim? Jesus, Master, shall I see thee face to face, and lie emparadised in thy bosom? Then God forbid that I should ever think of these light afflictions which are but for a moment. Save me, Lord, save me, from ever degrading my spirit by being bowed by these temporary trials, these momentary difficulties, when an eternal heaven, and a bliss unspeakable is my reward. Come, brethren, it is but a narrow stream, a river, — ford it, Canaan lies beyond. Think not that you have many difficulties; when you set them side by side with what you are to win, there are no difficulties whatever. I say, there is no battle and no fighting, when I think of the splendor of the victory, for when we shall ride with Christ; triumphant through heaven’s streets, we shall forget the scars of battle and the garment rolled in blood; and I think, then, instead of wishing that we had had fewer difficulties and fewer trials, we shall, if it were lawful, even wish that we had lived a more arduous life of toil, that we had suffered more, that we might be glorified with Christ, and feel that we were really glorified with him, when we were called to stand side by side and foot to foot with him, and have fellowship with his sufferings and his labors.

The blessing of the Lord God, the God of Israel, rest on you my brethren. The Lord anoint you this day with fresh oil. Ye remind me of the sitting of the apostles. Come, thou mighty, rushing wind, and fill this house! Ye cloven tongues of fire, descend and rest upon us! With that tongue of fire, and that divine breath of life in you, may you and I, and each of us, go out this day and all our days to labor for Christ, plucking sinners out of the

midst of the fire, and so honoring the name of him whose love is our joy, whose presence is our comfort, and whose breast shall be our heaven. God bless you, for Jesus' sake!

PRAYER AND FAITH. ^{F4}

I HAVE had extreme difficulty in trying to arrive at an answer to the question, What would be a suitable subject on which to speak to you? for there are a thousand topics, each one of which presses itself upon our attention; but it struck me that as this day, and the services of this week, celebrate a year of prayer, I had better speak about the results of prayer. I feel certain that the more real our religion becomes, the more common-sense it becomes, the better for us. It strikes me that a great many persons are earnest in business, while they play at religion, look at religion as if it were a matter in the realm of imagination, a very proper thing indeed, but nothing in it, to be attended to out of deference to certain reasons; but still not a matter of real, downright, everyday necessity. Hence prayer is not always regarded as it should be, even by Christian people, as a real business transaction with God, and a matter-of-fact dealing with the Most High. The theory has been broached of late, indeed, that the only use of prayer is to ourselves, to benefit our frame of mind, and the like. That does not appear to have occurred to the old saints, for in the Psalms David seems to be clamorous with God to be heard and to have an answer, and he cries over and over again, "Hear me speedily." It does not seem to have occurred to the royal psalmist that when he had uttered such-and-such words, and they had had an effect upon his mind, the whole result of prayer had been realized, and that there he ought to leave it. No; in the morning he directed his prayer unto God, and as he shot the arrow into heaven he looked up to see whether it struck the target, and he did not come away satisfied, unless something had been really done.

Now, allow me to say to any man of the world here who may hold that theory about prayer, that there are some of us as sane as you are, and we hope as honest, who do solemnly affirm to you that we dare no more doubt the efficacy of prayer than our own existence, because it is not fifty nor it hundred times that God has heard us — no, nor a thousand; but we are in the habit of prayer, and in the habit of obtaining answers to prayer. Prayer is not to us a thing of the morning, and the evening, and the middle of the day alone; it is the very atmosphere we live in, and to receive answers to prayer is far more common to us than to eat our daily bread. If anybody were to deny to us the virtue of bread for the sustenance of the body we should hardly keep our temper in trying to reason with them; we should

think that they had lost their reason; and when anybody says to us that there is no efficacy in prayer, we feel something like the same spirit stirring in our souls as if we could not argue about it, it was so common. No sun? Man, look up at it. No air? Breathe it. No bread? Eat it. And our only reply that we can sometimes give to any who doubt it is, Try prayer yourselves; and until, with a humble heart, you have gone to your Maker, and asked for mercies at his hand, according to his own promise, and he has refused you, you have not made the experiment in the philosophy, and have no reason to say anything about it. All you can say is, you have never seen it succeed because you have never tried it; but let those who have tried it, and who acknowledge it does succeed, have some credence. If they have none, it will make small matter to them, they will go on just the same, the matter will be to you. But still, here has been a year of prayer — here, in Lombard-street, down some back corner, because if it were held publicly it would annoy some people — and has there been any result from it?

We are bound to ask the question, Have there been results to your prayers, dear friends? Let it be confessed here that there are a great many prayers that lead to no results, because they are not prayers to which results are promised; they are not prayers, indeed, at all in the sight of the Most High. The repetition of the best words is not prayer. Prayer is bringing God's promise to mind, and pleading it with him. That is the essence of prayer. To use a very homely simile, the throne of grace is the bank, and prayer takes the promise, like a cheque, and lays it down upon the counter, and comes away with the cash. It gets what God has promised to give. Now, there are some prayers that do not succeed, because there is no promise quoted in them. Many prayers are very defective from the want of a promise. I may ask God what I will, but I am bound to tell him, "Thou hast promised this." or "Thou hast promised that." That is putting the cheque down on the table, and I can go away. I know I pray very differently from some people. I cannot pray by the half-hour together very well, my thoughts begin to wander; but when I get God's promise I go and put it down before him, and I know he will give it me, and I expect to get it. It seems to me for fellows to go loafing in a bank for the half-hour together, without presenting the cheque, would not show much confidence in the banker. You need not think, therefore, that prayer will be a thing of a few minutes, and soon over. No; because you will have another promise, and another, and another, and another, to come back again within a moment.

Prayer does not consist in saying a great many good things to God, who knows them all beforehand. It consists in challenging his veracity, and, in the name of Jesus, saying, "Oh! God, thou hast said thou wilt do this or that; now, do it." Oh! that God's promises were more current among Christians than they are. There are persons in this room whose name, if put to a piece of paper, will make that piece of paper pass through this city just as easily as sterling gold; yet. "Tell it; not in Gath, publish it not in Askelon," I have even heard God's people sometimes say they have found it hard to believe. Oh! terrible insult to the Almighty God. It is not hard to believe my fellow-man, after years of probity and integrity; I would trust my life with him; and I cannot trust my God? When prayers do not succeed it is a want of faith at the bottom of it, a want of realization that God has given the promise, and that God's promise must and shall stand true. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but no promise of our God shall fail. Do we not often miss an answer to prayer, because we do as a person who went into a bank with a perfectly good cheque, and then laid it on the table and went away. Of course, if he had been in his senses he would have waited till the money had been handed out; or if it was not payable at sight he would have gone at the proper time for it. Do we do so in our prayers? Do you ask God for something, and then next morning say, "Is it come?" You know the childish story, not childish in itself, but it is of a child who, when the people met for prayer for rain, took an umbrella with her because she thought she should get wet going home. I have asked something of God: he has promised it. Will he give it? God forbid the question for a moment. He has bound himself to it, and unless he can change or lie he must be faithful to the promise which his children plead. Many of your cheques are to order, and the bearer must put his name on the back; and I believe God's promises are mostly to order, and we do not put our name on the back; we do not believe God means it. When thou prayest deliberately put thy name down and say, "My God, I do believe this promise, and need it to be fulfilled, and I am asking it under the conditions thou hast laid down; namely, through Jesus Christ, and for thy glory — canst thou run back from thy word?"

Now, if there have been such pleadings as these the answers to prayer will most assuredly come. God will hear and answer prayer. It has been said, "But will prayer alter the purposes of God? No, and there is no necessity that it should, because our prayers are the reflection of the decrees of God. What God wills to do he moves his people to pray he should do, and

prayer and predestination run side by side with each other. "But do you think he will reverse the laws of nature?" No. Of old he did. He was like some master of an engine, who, when something is to be done, stops it and reverses the action. Well, with all deference to the Most High, it was a glorious mode of procedure, and astonished mankind, but there was something rough about it; it was a stopping of his usual course. Nowadays God works miracles without miracles. He lets the machine go on just as it was going on, and yet the prayers of his people are just as much answered as if he had stopped the action of the entire machine and reversed it. We do believe and rejoice in miracles greater than miracles, because they do not involve the suspension of a single, solitary law of nature; yet the purposes of God and the prayers of his people are accomplished.

The prayer offered this year has been for the success of the church, and the church has not succeeded. There is a lamentable fact before us. There are breakings out here and there of the revival spirit, and there are patches where the rain has descended, and there is good fruit produced; but, for the most part, I am afraid the most sanguine cannot claim 1873 as a year of anything like average success, certainly not of remarkable prosperity. Have the prayers, then, been heard? Well, you must remember that prayer is not everything, and that prayer is heard under certain conditions; and if we fail of certain conditions, then we cannot expect that the answer will come. For instance, a child at school was known to pray God that she might know her lessons better, and then she never studied them at all. We all see the absurdity of that. So sometimes we pray God to convert sinners, and we never speak to them, never show our anxiety by personal address. We cannot expect God to hear a prayer which, in fact, is only the skeleton of a prayer without life, for had it been a living prayer it must have been attended with corresponding action. Do you think that the church of God has put forth action corresponding to her nominal prayer? Has it been so everywhere? We are not to judge, except that we will each one judge himself. Is it not a fact that most churches have been taken up very much with their own prosperity, and have not had large-hearted regard to the prosperity of all the church of Jesus Christ? And may not the Lord be grieved with us for our selfishness in that respect? Are there not a great many divisions among us, which must be the result of error somewhere or other? Is there not an adherence to our old ways instead of going to Scripture, and each of us trying to do what the Lord bids us, in the Lord's own way? Is it not possible also that in some churches the action of good

people has been repressed? Priestcraft survives long after the name is given up. There is a horror sometimes at a brother attempting to win souls unless called "reverend gentleman." I have great reverence for "reverend gentlemen;" but I have very great reverence also for all that serve the Lord, whether they are revered by men or not; and if we put any of God's servants back, or despise their agency, may not that hamper God's work?

Further, do not you think, many of you great men in business, that your Christianity does not occupy the right position with regard to your business? The Christian in the early days was first a Christian, secondly a farmer, a fisherman, or anything else. Nowadays is it not always that So-and-So is first of all a banker or a merchant, and then he is a Christian? But it is a long way down. His religion is an off-hand farm, which he carries on very much by means of a bailiff; but he does not live on the premises and work. That is the main thing. It seems to me that if a man is a Christian, Christianity ought to eat him right up. It ought to go right through him, and he should be known to be first and foremost a Christian man. Let him be all the rest on an equality with his fellow-men, and I think he may even be superior to them in business tact and capacity. I believe that religion will even sharpen his intellect, and that often communion with God in prayer will give him that calm frame of mind which will enable him to do his business all the better. But the first thing with a saved man is to glorify God, and if you are in a position where that cannot be the first thing, it is a question whether that is the position you should occupy. "For me to live is Christ," is to be the word of every saved man, not of the apostle only. But suppose that is not the fact. Is it any wonder that we do not see prayer answered? It does not appear to be a prayer from the heart, because it is not sustained by corresponding action. Oh, if we desire the glory of God, let us live to that glory. Vain is it to talk to God in prayer unless we do that. What sacrifices these early Christians made! Their prayers were true, because they sacrificed everything for Christ's sake. Where is the self-sacrifice of the early days? Here is a great army of us interesting one another, amusing one another, pleasing one another, perhaps edifying one another; and there is the great world outside, with only here and there a straggling missionary preaching the gospel "Oh! but what society can send us out?" I bless God for all societies; but the world will never be converted by societies. The time must come when the Spirit will go forth through the entire mass of us, and we shall feel that we must win the world for Christ. The great movement in the time of the Crusades was not because one or

two went forth to fight the Saracens. But when Peter the Hermit preached the Crusade, the enthusiastic throughout the whole of the western nations went. "*Deus vult*" was the cry; and so men gave up their trades and everything for the Quixotic conquests of the Holy Land. There is no Quixotism about winning souls for Christ. That is the real thing worth living for. And shall we never see the church of God so fall of the divine power that Christian men and women, by the mass, will bring their substance, and say, "Here it is; we are going to give that and ourselves towards the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ"? "That is fanaticism," somebody will say. The Lord God Almighty send us that fanaticism to the full, because then when we go to pray, "Thy kingdom come," God will say to us, "You mean it. I can see that you are laying yourself out for it;" and then will come the answer, and the triumph of Christ throughout the nations. Do you think it too much to expect that the mass of Christians should do this? If we meet with a man who says, "I am for Christ, and mean to spread the Word of God in the regions beyond," we hold up our hands and say, "What a wonder of self-sacrifice!" Why, in the Romish Church there are hundreds and thousands of men and women who devote all their life and property to what they call a religious life; and, with all their mistakes, shall their religion breed an enthusiasm of which ours is incapable? Can it possibly be that error, as we regard it, shall make men lead lives of zeal for Christ? And yet we who say we have the very truth of God in our hearts give a miserable proportion of our income to the cause of Christ — a little spare hour of an evening, when perhaps it serves the turn of our amusement, and that is all. It cannot go up to God as real prayer unless the action shall back it up.

I fear I transgress the time, but there may be some person here, perhaps, who says, "This is all to Christian people; have you not a word to say to me? I desire, to be saved." My dear friend, whenever any man desires to be saved he may rest assured he has not got the start of his God. "When he was yet a great way off his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell upon his neck." If you desire God he desires you. If there is only a spark of desire in your heart towards him there is a whole furnace of love in his heart towards you; and the way to be saved is not a difficult one; it is one that may be accomplished here while you are sitting on that seat. Whosoever believeth in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved. To believe is to trust — just to trust my soul with him. It is to do what people do with their money at the banker's. They take it and leave it there, and are quite

satisfied it is all right. So you should go and leave your souls in the hands of Christ, and say —

*“I know that safe with him remains,
Protected by his power,
What I’ve committed to his hands,
Till the decisive hour.”*

I heard a young gentleman use a pretty simile the other Sunday, in speaking to a number of children, He said when he was in the Highlands he met with several gates where he had to pay a penny or something else to go through; and when he came to one gate he put his hand into his pocket, to pay but a little girl ran in front, and locked the gate. “You have not got to pay anything,” she said, “but you have to say, ‘Please allow me to go through here,’ and you shall go through.” “Well,” he said, “I did not deliberate; I said it.” The proprietor wished to reserve his right of way; that was all. Now, you have nothing to pay to God. Christ is the door. All you have to say is, “Please let me go through.” That is all. Only let it be God’s will, acknowledge that you have no right to it, but ask for it, and you shall receive it; for in this case, “he that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” Oh, I think, young men, if I had not Christ to be my Savior at this present moment I should not like to close my eyes in sleep until I had him, for the joy and peace it gives you to know that you are resting in Christ is something not to be equalled, certainly not to be surpassed. All the wealth and treasure of the world cannot give such joy. “And is that all that a man does in order to be saved? Does he simply trust in Jesus?” Yes, that is all. “But are there no good works?” After he is saved there will be abundance of good works, and there will be this excellency about them, that they will not be performed with a view to self-salvation, and consequently will not be selfish, but will be performed out of gratitude and love for mercy received, and they will have an element which is always acceptable with our heavenly Father. Believe thou first and work afterwards. Get thou life in Christ by simply casting thyself at his feet, and then go forth, and for the love of him give up thyself and all thou hast that thou mayest bring others into the same blessed state of reconciliation and joy. God bless you, beloved, in your prayer, for Christ’s sake.

HOME MISSIONS. ^{F5}

MODERATOR, Brethren, and Fathers in Christ — I have, first of all, by your permission, a message to deliver to you from the church of which I have the happiness to be the pastor. Knowing that I should have the honor of speaking to you, they begged me unanimously to bring to you their cordial Christian salutations, not merely because of our being one, as we are, in Christ Jesus, but because they regard you as being a strong, living, and powerful testimony to the supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ in his church. Many of them recollect your struggles — your noble struggles and heroic sacrifices — and they rejoice to see that all these have been abundantly rewarded, and that you are now a church free as the air, and deserving to wear the name by which you call yourselves the Free Church of Scotland. There are, moreover, certain doctrines dear to you which we enjoy with a peculiar zest; and while we are called, notwithstanding difference in doctrinal sentiments, to receive into the embrace of Christian charity all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, our souls may, I think in all sincerity, give an extra hug to those who hold those grand truths which are precious — equally precious — to us both. Though we have not been called to maintain those truths as you have been, by trials peculiar to your church polity, we have had to maintain the same distinctly Calvinistic truth by struggles which have rooted and grounded us in it. We are glad when we see our brethren more numerous than ourselves across the Border giving forth a louder sound — not, I hope, a clearer sound — than we do on the grand doctrines of salvation by sovereign grace. May you prosper in your upholding of the old banner for many, many years to come; and may God be with you and bless you.

I am glad to be here, and the only regret I have is that I have shortened the speeches of the brethren who addressed you, and who are more adapted by experience to speak to you upon your own Home Missions than I am. The significant circumstance is, that I am here as a Baptist. You have seen the shepherd gather the sheep from the hills — gather them into one flock, just when the storm was; coming on. Here, I think, the Shepherd of Israel is gathering us together, for doubtless a storm is lowering. We may hear his voice calling “Come ye closer together, and confess yourselves to be one flock, for the time of tempest is near.” The Captain seems to say, “Close your ranks, my soldiers: let every man draw nearer to his bother man;” and

if some of you do not belong to the same regiment,, still let all strive as brethren to get close together, and nearer yet to the common standard. I can remember, some years ago, when I was in Scotland, in coming hither we came to a certain water which divided the two countries. We passed it so rapidly that it scarce made any difference at all. I hope that our different views upon baptism may be no more a formidable barrier to communion. I have gone from Scotland to England in former years, and when we passed the boundary my luggage was a little rudely shaken before I entered England. My countrymen were afraid of my taking with me a more fiery spirit; than I should be allowed to carry. I have never had my bags shaken in coming this way; you were not afraid of my bringing among you the water in which I take delight. I can now go back, and hope, without being overhauled for it, to take with me some of your strong spirit. I need not explain that I do not mean whisky, but some of your stern, strong spirit of orthodoxy and firmness which I think infinitely better. And now that I am here, I have to offer to those who have come to listen this double apology, that what I wanted to say has been already said to a great extent, and what I may yet say may be tinged by southern ideas gathered from my own experience, so that they may not seem suitable to be carried out by brethren here; but there are certain broad principles upon which I am sure we shall be agreed.

Home Mission-work, or, rather, Church-work — What is the object of it? I shall not find many dissentients when I say that the great object of it is to testify the gospel of the grace of God to every creature, in order to the bringing out and perfecting of the chosen. There is a general, and a special, object. We are to go abroad and cast the net into all waters, that we may bring out as many as God may be pleased to call. We assert that we intend, as Christian warriors, to take the whole world by storm for the Lord Jesus. We lay no limit to our ambition. It is a universal monarchy which we are endeavoring to establish. We do not believe that a single foot of ground among the mountains, however high or barren, is left for Satan's undisputed range; we do not believe that any wynd, however narrow or dark, is meant to be a den for the Prince of Darkness. Not a single patch of the world's field is to be left waste. We are to seek to gain every family to Christ, and every soul in the family, making all men know that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. We shall be at one, then, in holding that the great end and aim of Home Missions is to testify the gospel to every soul, that thereby eternal purposes may be accomplished. We should

take into consideration constantly the immense value of one single soul. It was Richard Knill, a blessed missionary of the cross, who said that, if there were only one person in the whole world unconverted, and if that person lived in the wilds of Siberia, and if every Christian minister, and every private believer in the world

must make a pilgrimage to that spot before that soul were brought to Christ, the labor would be well expended if that one soul were so saved. This is putting the truth in a striking way, but putting it in a way in which every one of us will concur. And so we must not leave any one of these neglected families that exist amongst us, but every one of them must be made to hear the blessed story of the gospel. Let us never rest until we have achieved that. I wish also that you should be reminded of the singular hopefulness of the hopeless class. If we will go down into the moral wildernesses, earnestly seeking fruit for Jesus, it is wonderful what rich clusters we shall find. When divers plunge down deep into the sea, they bring up glistening pearls; and such certainly are the rewards of the churches that toil earnestly in mission work. Their reward will be infinitely greater than their toil — their joy will be as that of a woman who forgetteth the pain of her travail for joy that a man is born into the world. The church often finds its strength amongst the poor, its peers and nobles amongst those who were the slaves of Satan. We have a rough old English proverb, that reclaimed poachers make the best gamekeepers. And certainly such reclaimed sinners often make the best instruments in the hands of God for the salvation of others. These men, if they have been ringleaders in the devil's service, will know best how to deal with those who are still held in bondage by him. Mr. Layard, I have no doubt, started with delight when he first brought to light the Assyrian marbles — when he first uncovered the head of the colossal bull; what a higher joy and excitement, dear friends, it must be when we find immortal souls not only saved themselves from the terrible state in which they were sunk, but also becoming the instruments of introducing others into the family of grace. If you do not win for Jesus what are called the lower ranks, your work will fall to the ground. I believe I am historically right in saying that wherever the Reformation was carried on only, or mainly, by the nobility, it did not succeed. You hear much of Anne of Bohemia, but you do not hear of the peasant people of that country largely taking part in the work of the Reformation; and where is the gospel in Bohemia now? The Spanish nobles also took the most active part in the work in Spain, and though there were

noble martyrs among them, the lower class did not take part in the work; and where is it now? But in the Reformation in Scotland, under John Knox, it was not only the lords of the congregation, but some of the peasants were the first to draw their blood to sign the Covenant, and the work then begun stands now. You have in the midst of you still John Knox's house, and the house, though not now in an aristocratic neighborhood, would not be on that account, I daresay, objectionable to honest old John. He would be as glad to preach the gospel to the dwellers there as to those in your new town. The spiritual interests of those on that side of the town would be as clear to him as the spiritual interests of those in the highest, circles in the land.

You must, dear friends, see that the subjection to this kingdom of Christ is entire; you are marching like warriors, and must not leave a single fort behind unconquered. We have little to fear in front. We have turned the battle, and are trampling down the foe; but we must protect our rear. We profess to be united in a glorious cause, but if any turn traitors to it, they will find adherents among the unconquered ones — those you have left behind unconverted; those who do not know the truth in the love of it. Those who once get Christ into their hearts will not part with him; by the grace of God they shall be kept unto the end, but these dark places of the earth, especially the dark places in higher circles, will become the den of the wild asses of infidelity, and the haunt of the dragons of heresy. The necessities of this age demand you to push your missionary operations with the greatest; possible diligence. When the pestilence breaks out it is in those streets that are narrow and uncleansed, and the pest of false doctrine will certainly break out where Christian teaching has been neglected, I care not whether in high circles or low. Our churches south of the Tweed had need to be up in arms against popery. I could hardly imagine that you need fear its coming hither. When I walked through the ruins of your abbeys I fancied the nests had been so effectually pulled down that the birds could not come back again; and if they be built again, if you do not pull them down in a literal sense, you will down with them in a sense far from metaphorical, even though it be spiritual. But there may be danger; popery is ready armed at all points, and spreading its agencies in all quarters, and if you do not oppose it by the sound teaching of the gospel, you will find it gaining upon you. If *you* do not care for the poor of the flock, they will care for them; if *you* grow careless and fold your hands, you will find that the bishop of Hades never sleeps. He is a ploughman that ploughs to the

end of the field, and never rests until he has ploughed it again and again, and sowed and reaped his deadly harvest. Be in earnest. But there seems to be something worse than popery not honest enough to come fairly forward for us to do battle with it. Would it assume a shape, we should manage to overcome it. It twists and winds itself round about; it insinuates doubts; it does not profess to hold these doubts; it propounds new theories, merely as if for diversion's sake, or in the cause of liberty; it is a bigot for charity; it hates your bigots, it would burn your bigots; it would hang your bigots. Your only chance, I say, of meeting latitudinarian laxity is to remain firm by the gospel of Christ Jesus. There is an argument used by Mr. Gladstone in his speech when he proposed a reduction of the national debt which I venture to yoke into the service. He said for the benefit of posterity. Well, may posterity get much benefit out of that portion of the national debt which we are about to discharge. But posterity ought to be considered, for if somebody had considered posterity in the ages of the Reformation, and taken a little more of the gospel into those valleys in your Highland where Romanism prevails, you would have had the benefit of it now. No doubt it was more difficult to travel there than to those other places where the gospel was carried; but if that additional trouble had been taken, you would not have been troubled with popery there now. And so in the case of your wynds and similar places. If more effort had been spent upon them in days gone by, you would have been saved the mischief which these threaten to you. In regard, then, to all these, you have always to remember the saying of the apostle, "Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." I cannot ask the Moderator to put this to the house, whether it be accepted that we must regard it as our home mission work to testify the grace of God to every creature, in order that we bring out and strengthen all the chosen ones of God; but if we can actually carry it out, there will be joy on earth, and glory in the highest.

But now that we have said what the objects of home mission work should be, — *Who are the missionaries?* Pardon me if I say that I will suppose myself rather speaking to my juniors than to you. The first of home missionaries must be the ministers of the church. It will be of no service to us to talk to our hearers and tell them what they ought to do, unless, first and foremost, we do it ourselves. The commander who shall sheathe his sword and say to his soldiers, "On, my brave lads, on," will never take the stronghold; but he who cries "Come on," and carries the flag ahead of his men, is the man who will win the day. We must do all we expect our

people to do, and a great deal more. The age in which men are to be led on by mere official dignity is over. I fear you misjudge what I mean. I am sure it is over here. The age of officialism is over all the world over. The Christian church, and the world too, gives the dignity not; merely to the office but to the man who deserves it; and if there were no other proof, there is one here (turning to the Moderator's chair). I could find in Scotland half-a-dozen ministers — I am not very uncharitable in saying that, I think — who might wear your robes, who would command very minute respect, and who, if they were to address the Assembly, would be very gifted in that style of oratory which I have heard as belonging to some one who was said to have a great gift of dispersion. If I find myself in any difficulty in what I say, will you all relieve me by putting a good construction upon it; for I must venture into the deep again. The year in which a professor commands the respect of his class merely because he is a professor is not the year 1866. The respect is obtained by his learning and ability, and not by his position. And, in like manner, the day in which a minister commands the respect, by the mere fact of his being a minister, has gone; he will only get it by being fit to be a minister and giving full proof of his ministry. Some will try it; but we cannot go into our pulpits and stand there and say to our hearers, you ought to listen to us and do what we bid you, and we will give you no other reason than our official position. No; we must say. I ask you to be liberal, for I am liberal as far as I can. We ask you to be prayerful, and we endeavor to be prayerful; we ask you to consider your own souls, and you will see every Sabbath how we value them. We ask you to value the souls of others, and we will show you our concern for them. We must see to it that, as Christian ministers, we in everything go first in holy work. Richard Baxter says, "If there be any minister who finds the ministry to be an easy position, God forbid that I should stand in his place at the day of judgment." If you are doing the work of a minister of Christ, you will agree with me that of all toils none is like ours, for we work in our sleep, we dream about our work, and we do indeed find it our meat: and our drink, our joy and delight, yet sometimes our burden, the burden of the Lord crushing us to the dust. If a man can play with the ministry he had better be away from it; if he can find he has any spare strength after he has done his ministerial work, he has mistaken his calling. The working of your Home Missions must depend very much on the pulpit. I was sitting over there yesterday when this house seemed to shake with a terrible sound. I soon perceived what it was when all the brethren pulled out their watches to see if they corresponded to the hour-

gun. Now, I thought to myself, this is how I should like to preach; I would like to startle all my hearers into seeing whether they are right in the matters which concern their souls. But how can I do that? The electric wire brings down the force by which the gun is fired. The sun gives the time of day, and soon, you get it flashing along the wire. Union to the everlasting Sun of Righteousness will enable us to deliver ourselves with a force more startling, and our hearers will soon learn, not only where we are, but where they are themselves. How necessary is it that we should be right, for how many hundreds set not their watches but their lives by what we have told them on Sunday. And, in addition to being right, how necessary is it that we should speak with force, so that those who do not want to hear may be made to hear. I would like to speak so that none might misunderstand me, even if they wished to do so. We shall never get the people as a mass above the minister, for water does not run uphill. The Sabbath must be the market-day of the week to our people; but what if the stalls be empty? If we want our people to be home missionaries, we must preach a fullness of doctrine. Some preachers are always whipping people up to doing their duty. A farmer, referring to one of that sort, said, "I wish my parson would do as I do with my horses, put the whip in the manger." Now, nothing will make a man work like sound Calvinistic theology. Tell a man he is saved by grace, and relieved of the work of saving himself, and he will set about trying to bring others to salvation; while if you give a man muddled views of doctrine, he is always troubling himself about that, and has no time and no heart to go abroad doing good.

Not only is fullness of doctrine requisite, but a warm way of putting it. I heard a remark made yesterday about warm dinners on Sabbath, which I dare say are very terrible things. I am well content with cold meat; but cold divinity on Sundays, or any days, is dreadful. Always let us have the doctrines of grace served up thoroughly hot and warm. There are sleepy people in our congregations. That is sometimes their own fault, for they go to sleep before we begin to preach. There is an old story of a minister who recommended an old lady to use snuff in church, and she suggested to him that it would be better to put the snuff into the sermon. I would recommend a little snuff in the sermons, a lively and warm way of presenting the truth before the hearer's mind. Sermons should be as much as possible simple in style. You would not have a man say that "Deity is my pastor, I shall not be afflicted with deprivation," but — "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." You don't like the Psalms put into any shape

so well as your good old rugged metre. Though there may be prettier ways of putting the gospel, the plain, old, rugged way will take the ear, and be the readiest way to the heart. Earnestness is also essential. You may simulate earnestness of spirit, but your hearers will soon find it out. A sermon which is not earnest in itself can't be made so by action, by stamping or thumping. You must speak from a warm heart, or your word will not come warm to the hearts of the people. What a blessed home-mission spirit would be in all the churches if the Lord gave us much of that heavenliness of spirit which has characterized some few in the church rather than the many — not so much power of diction as heavenliness; such as we find in Rutherford, and, in modern times, in Mr. M'Cheyne: fulness of Christ, so that the preacher's lips drop with fatness. That man may not always state his doctrine so logically as some, or lavish forth such riches of illustration, but he preaches the gospel, and not *about* the gospel; not what men say of Christ, but what Christ is, and is doing now, and what he can be to perishing sinners and rejoicing saints — he preaches the fulness of the Lord Jesus Christ. It strikes me that a ministry somewhat like this is quite sure to elicit an earnest home-mission spirit.

I fear that sometimes our preparatory studies for the ministry injure our earnestness. I saw in Melrose Abbey a stone, under which is said to lie the heart of Robert Bruce. I am afraid that it might be written on the floors of some of our universities, "Here lies the heart of such-and-such a student." That is a poor education which fills the head, but leaves the heart empty. Let us have learning by all means; you cannot have too much of it if it be of the right sort, but let the heart be also engaged. I am afraid that when reading the Bible in our studies we are often the victims of a temptation, for we read it officially as ministers, thinking of texts, and how to divide them. Before the Lord I have had to clothe my soul in sackcloth about that sin: but when I read the Bible, or come to the people as a poor sinner saved by grace like others it is then that I feel true power. Oh, that dreadful getting into ministerialism, which is so much the mischief of us; and oh, to be priests and kings to God in a nobler style than wearing the mitre or putting on the crown.

I apologise for having said so much about those who are the leaders of Home Mission efforts. Now, about other persons who are also to carry it on — all the members of the church. It has been the forgetfulness of this truth which has been the origin of something I heard alluded to just now, only I sometimes make a mistake, and, say the Davenport Brothers instead

of the Plymouth Brothers. There is something to do with tying knots in both cases, and slipping out of them. I believe if we keep our churches awake we have no great evil to fear from them, for their proposals are too wild. If all should be mouth, as they propose, what is the result? — a vacuum. Their plan of having no minister to instruct them, but each instructing the other, reminds me of the Irish school when it had no schoolmaster, about which one of the scholars said,. “None of us know nothing, and we all teach one another.” The Christian church should be like a beehive, into which every bee should be bringing honey. The drones are ejected from the hive, and there should be no drones in the church. All church members should be doing something, and doing something at all times for the Savior. All can do something — at least at the prayer-meeting. That is the top and the bottom of the success of all true success — the prayer-meeting. I have heard it said that if there were prayer in Edinburgh in proportion to the preaching, there would be much more done. I don’t know whether that is the case, but if it be so, I say, dear brethren, amend in this respect. What can you do without prayer? Oh, it is but little worth preaching unless it is backed up with strong pleadings with God. Go into a cotton mill; see all its departments in operation; walk along the rooms; wander out by that door, and in the outside you may see an ugly shed, with a black looking machine making black smoke that is spoiling the blue sky. In that engine-house is the motive power. Preaching, Sabbath-school teaching, missionary and other agencies, are like the spindles, but the prayer-meetings — the despised shed outside — must supply the motive power, and give the real energy which works the concern. There was once a complaint made against a certain minister that he did not edify his congregation. His answer was, “It is not likely that I can edify you now, for I have lost my prayer-book.” His congregation did not know that he used a prayer-book, and they were somewhat indignant. “My prayer-book,” he said, “I had in your hearts, but I have lost; it; you don’t pray for me now; and there is little hope of any service from my labor if you are not supporting me at home, at the family altar, and at the prayer-meeting!” In this way, then, you must hold up the hands of your pastors.

Then there is another thing, that is, the collection. But some one tells me that this is a dry subject. Is it so? Let us take the apostle Paul, and appeal to his judgments on the subject. In that chapter which is so frequently read at funerals, which speaks of the resurrection, the apostle worked himself up to such a glorious splendor of eloquence, if I may use the expression, that

he wanted something to finish with. He had got up to this — “Therefore be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord”; and then what next? What was the pinnacle of that work? It was this — “Now, concerning the collection for the saints. That is the climax of his eloquence. I take it that, when a man is made spiritual, he wants to do something for Christ; and those spiritual people who, when they get a degree of eminence, say, “Ah, this is a pleasant land to sit in; I can sit and sing, and never work,” are falsely spiritual. True elevation of soul is the consecration of spirit, soul, and body to the cause of the Great Redeemer. What odd notions people have of joining the church. Many a young man joins a rifle corps. There he is! When he joins the church, where is he? We have the distinguished honor of having the names of many young gentlemen on our books. But where are they? What are they doing? They think it enough that they have joined the church; and they don’t think that anything more is required. When they join a literary institute, or anything of that kind, they do so for the purpose of doing something, and obtaining an advantage from it; and I say to such young men, “Do you believe the Christian church to be a farce? If you do so, we could even dispense with your names; if you do not believe the Christian church is a farce, then show that you don’t by working so far as you can in the cause of Christ.” But we hear some say, “I could do nothing, though I were to try it, for Home Mission work.” Well, I would reply, “I would not have liked to say that of you. There is not a nettle in the corner of the churchyard without its virtues; there is not a spider in the world but has its web to spin; and there is no man in the world but has something to do for the cause of Christ, which nobody else can do but himself. I don’t think it is possible for you to be powerless. Can’t you speak to some one? Can’t you do something in your own place as a member of the church?” “Oh, but,” he says, “if I did attempt it, I should break down.” “Well,” I say, “suppose you did, would it not be a blessing?” At a prayer-meeting I have heard a brother pray so long that I have thought it would be a mighty deal better if he did break down. After he had prayed for full half-an-hour, I have heard him ask God “to forgive his shortcomings “; and I have thought that, of all prayers, that was the one he had least need to offer. But when another has come to a stand because expressions had failed him — although emotion had not — there has been more prayer elicited by his stopping than by many and many an hour of mere religious talking to God. There is an American story told — and as I see an American yonder [pointing to the center of the hall] — I shall repeat it, for I believe it to be true, a story that is told of an American blacksmith.

There lived in a certain village a blacksmith, who was a hard hitter in more senses than one. Many had tried to bring him to a knowledge of the truth. He always, however, mastered them in controversy; and when he found them not able to beat him, he proceeded to make fun of them. Ministers, elders, deacons, and other Christian friends had tried him, but all were alike unsuccessful. But at length there was one man who, having heard this, took the case in hand, and prayed earnestly for the blacksmith day and night. On one occasion, being moved by the Spirit, he prayed for him all the afternoon; he continued praying for him the whole night; and in the morning he resolved to go and speak to the blacksmith. He mounted his horse for this purpose, and as he rode along he thought of this remark and the other, as being a proper thing to say; and at last he got a few good things strung together, which he determined to bring before the mind of the blacksmith. When he rode up to the outside of the smithy, out came the blacksmith. "Well, well, sir, said he in a gruff voice, "what do you want here?" and at once the harsh tones in which the question was addressed to him made the elder lose the thread of his discourse. After a pause, however, he burst into tears, and said to the blacksmith, "I wanted to speak to you about your soul, but I can't. What I was to say to you seems all to have gone away, but I pray for you day and night; I prayed for you all last night, and I never shall be happy till your soul has been saved." When he said that — and it was with a great effort he said it — he again mounted his horse, and away he rode on his homeward journey, thinking to himself, Well, that is always the way with me; I do more harm than good, What a mess I have made of that; they will all be speaking of this at the liquor-bars, and saying that the elder has made a fool of himself. But the case was not so. The blacksmith went into his smithy; he hit the iron, but he did not hit it straight. Something came into his eye, and he tried to wipe it out. The tear came again, for something had touched his heart. He could stand it no longer, but threw down his hammer, and went into the room where his wife was preparing the breakfast. She said, "You are looking ill." "Yes," he replied, "and I feel that." "What is the matter with you?" asked his wife; and he answered, "Elder B — - has been here to see me and talk to me about my soul." "Oh, but you don't care for him," said his wife, "you can answer anything that he can say." "Yes," said the blacksmith, "that is it — if he had argued I could have answered him; but he stood there crying like a child! He could not bear to think I should be lost. He said he had prayed for me all night, and if he cared thus for my soul, it is time that I cared for it too." Within a few weeks it was the great privilege of this church officer

to pass the communion cup to this blacksmith and his wife. Go on, then, and break down; and God grant that your break down may be so blessed. That gives me a convenient place to pause, and, if I have not wearied you, I will go on a little further.

I meant to have taken a third point. I have already shown what the object of the Home Mission work should be, and who should engage in it. Now I desire, by your permission, to submit a few practical hints as to how he should carry out his work. I lay down as a theory, that the Christian church should be able to do everything spiritual in the education of its members. I would have it to be such a machinery that, from the time an infant is received into the infant-school, it need not go away from that church for any Christian privilege; and that, from the lowest to the highest point of grace, it may, by the blessing of the Holy Spirit, receive all through the church organization. Now, what is to be done with our young people? Of course, you all have Sabbath-schools. I don't know your distinction between congregational and other Sabbath-schools; for we are afraid of schools that are not congregational. There is a disposition on the part of some to set up Sabbath-schools on their own account, not connected with any particular church, so that the children are not taken to a place of worship at all, and grow up unattached to the church of the parents. It is well to keep them in contact with divine service as much as possible. When a very young child I used much to admire, on my grandmother's mantelpiece, a venerable apple in a bottle. Now, this apple was a good deal bigger than the neck of the bottle, and I was very anxious to know how it had got in. I was strictly cautioned not to meddle, but one afternoon I got a chair, and, at the risk of burning my pinafore, I mounted and took it down. The source of the Nile was but a trifle to this great affair — how the apple could get into a bottle whose neck was so much too small to admit it. I thought it had a false bottom, and feared every minute that it would fall off and lead me into trouble. I failed at the time in discovering the great secret. The next summer time came, and in the garden I observed that my grandmother had put a little apple into a phial, in which it grew till it quite filled it, when she snapped it off. Now, how are we to get people to attend the means of grace after they have grown up? It is rather difficult by your Home Mission operations. It would be well to bring them under religious organization early in life, and to get them into the bottle then. I think that every church should have its own Sabbath-school, and that the pastor should be president of it, the elders should be the managers, and, as much

as possible, the teachers should be members of that church; of course there will occasionally be exceptions in this latter respect.

But we have a difficulty about Sunday-schools in England — not about the Sunday-school proper, but when Master John begins to feel his whiskers coming through he doesn't like to go to the Sunday-school, and the girls are also too fine ladies to go any longer. What is to be done? I think that there must be different kinds of organization. We have at the Tabernacle — excuse my referring to it here — one class conducted by one of the elders for the sons of the elders and deacons themselves; and during this year — blessed be God for it — while we had a large addition of members at the beginning of the year, we had one or more from every deacon's family, who made a fair and good profession, giving every sign of genuine conversion, as far as we could judge. Thus we have classes for the officers' children, and for those who are sometimes called the upper classes. There must be two or three lads' classes, and let the teacher be a good, genial soul, who laughs more often than he cries, for boys don't like a miserable teacher: more flies are caught by honey than by vinegar. With a good, cheerful man to manage a young men's class, it may be made useful in many ways. Under suitable oversight, youths' prayer-meetings will do good service. The other day I saw a little girl of eleven years of age. "Annie," said I, "are you a follower of the Lord Jesus?" "Yes, sir, I trust I am," was the reply. I asked, "What makes you think so?" "Because I trust Christ." "When did you first come to Jesus?" "I think it: was the night of the mothers' meeting. Cecilia spoke to me that night, and said that some of the girls were going to meet to pray for their fathers and mothers. They don't go to a place of worship often, and now that they are going to tea, and Mr. Spurgeon is to speak to them, let's meet and pray for them. I said to Cecilia, 'I can't pray, you know — I ain't saved myself.' 'Oh, never mind, you come along with us.' I went to the meeting, but I could not pray, though I wanted father to be saved. I could not pray, because I was not saved myself, but they explained to me what I didn't know before. They explained 'substitution,' you know." I was so pleased to hear that word substitution come out of the girl's mouth! Now, here are these young creatures praying for their parents; and I say that, if we have the means of getting boys and girls to interest themselves in the things of God, it would be a fine thing for the church, and it will be a good thing for the land's future history.

We have a sort of catechetical seminary connected with our church, in which we teach a little book that is known by you all, your Shorter Catechism with Proofs, in which, of course, I have made a slight alteration in regard to baptism. Now, the fashion across the border is to laugh at this book, and say it is out of date, and so on. Well, I should like to see someone write a better summary of Scripture doctrine. Until somebody gives us a better book, we'll stick to it. It seems to me that a minister, in preaching, could not find a better means of stating Scripture doctrine than in the words of the Shorter Catechism. Perhaps the learning of it right through by heart, alone and unexplained, is too great a task, but with numerous illustrations it would be pleasant enough. Why does somebody not give us a large volume of anecdotes on every one of the questions in the Shorter Catechism? It would be a pleasant way for fathers and mothers to teach their children. We must not change the bread, but we must crumble it down — we must crumble it down from loaves into morsels. We must keep by the Shorter Catechism and illustrate it. To show how useful a book it is — and I do not mention this to flatter anyone, but as a mere matter of fact — when I am sitting in my chair in the College, with a hundred young men around me, and any question is to be asked about the Scriptures, I frequently say, “Now, none of you Scotchmen answer, — I know that you know it; but let the Englishmen. answer.” I know that the Scotchmen can answer the questions, because they have been through the Shorter Catechism. I know that they have, as a rule, a wider and more thorough knowledge of the Scriptures than the mass of my own countrymen, and I believe this is greatly due to the practice of family worship and the use of this Assembly's Catechism.

Female agency must not be forgotten. We have a class, in connection with the church, that is presided over by a sister, such a woman as I have scarcely ever met with, who has about eight hundred females under her charge. She throws herself thoroughly into the work; and last year that class yielded more than a hundred members to our church; to our College funds also they contributed about £200; for we make it a point that all, even the boys, shall contribute something as well as learn something. We have started a little plan of what we call “pleasant parties.” Sometimes a friend invites a few children to his house to talk of good things. They come, they sing, pray, and talk about Jesus. They have some nice stories; some lively hymns are sung; and I think on this plan you will readily get the children to come back again. Above all things, get hold of the children.

Their song is the sweetest of all. Never overlook the children. With regard to the other part of our church, — namely, the sisters, I hope we shall never hear them preach. Their lecturing is sometimes quite delightful; their preaching, I think, would be quite otherwise. But for the sisters of the church, what work there, is among their own sex! I suppose you have mothers' meetings. These must not degenerate into mere talk; they must be real prayer meetings. I need not mention the Dorcas meetings or Bible women.

Then, the adults. We should employ all the adult members some way or other. I always ask my own congregation to preach Christ in the pews. Get hold of the people who come there and tell them about Christ. I know people are a little starched up about the matter sometimes — a little mahogany comes between them and their fellows, but in the church there should be cordiality — the feeling that a man may venture to speak to his neighbor; to say, at least, "How did you enjoy t:he sermon?" to start the conversation, and detain him for a little while. Somebody asked me how I got my congregation. I never got it at all. I did not think it my business to do so, but only to preach the gospel. Why, my congregation got my congregation. I had eighty, or scarcely a hundred., when I preached first. The next time I had two hundred — every one who had heard me was saying to his neighbor, "You must go and hear this young man." Next meeting we had four hundred, and in six weeks eight hundred. That was the way in which my people got my congregation. Now, my people are admitted by tickets. That does very well. A member can give his ticket to another person, and say, "I will stand in the aisle," or "I will go in with the crowd." Some persons, you know, will not go if they can get in easily, but they will go if you tell them that they cannot get in without a ticket. That is the way in which congregations ought to bring a congregation about a minister. A minister preaches all the better if he has a large congregation. It was once said by a gentleman that; the forming of a congregation was like the beating up of game, the minister being the sportsman. "But," he said, "there are some of our ministers that can't shoot." But I really think I could shoot a partridge if I fired into the middle of a. covey, and I might not do so if there were only one or two.

Now, once more. In the congregation there will be always some young men who are gifted; and I don't know whether I should speak to the point here or not, but it seems to me to be essential to look to the ministry, and if you miss this you may miss a very important point. Now, every one should

pray more for ministers to begin with. When Christ ascended up on high, he received gifts for men, and those gifts were men: for he gave some apostles — you know the passage. It is a part of Christ's resurrection and ascended life to give ministers to you; when we look to the cross for salvation we should look to the ascended Savior for a further supply of ministers. Many and many a prayer meeting I have been at where I have never heard the students prayed for, and many others where no petition was sent up that God would send laborers into his vineyard. That is a prayer that Christ said we ought to pray. If you want ministers, pray for them. They are to be got for the asking. They are not to be got by schemes of collegiate education. These will fit them for preaching when you've got them. The next thing is, who is to find the minister? That was an excellent plan among the Vaudois, for every teacher to educate one other pastor, so that there was a young man associated with an older brother — one of nimbler foot, who could reach the more inaccessible points, and help him over the craggy rocks, so that the church there never lacked for men. Without making a scheme, without making an overture to the general assembly, it will be perfectly right for you to say, I intend to look out from among my own people the likeliest and most spiritually minded and gifted young man, and I will put things in his way that may induce him to turn his attention to preaching the gospel. You will talk to him about the holy joys which come to the true servant of the Lord, and as soon as you see that he has some desire for it, you will encourage him to go forward. I spoke to a Baptist brother the other day, who said to me this — “ You do a world of mischief — you encourage lots of young fellows to come forward to the ministry. Whenever I meet those who have an itch for preaching, I get them by the throat and throttle them directly.” Well, I confess that I do love young men, and would encourage them to enter the service of the church of Christ, and if I do encourage one who is not fit for the ministry, it is my mistake, and yet it seems to me, if I assisted another who is made useful, I had almost condoned my offense. I would rather encourage a man than keep him back, and if ministers would try and do the same, they will find it an excellent way of finding students for the church. The more the student is kept in Christian life, and the more he is made to feel that as a student his spiritual life is quickened by constant service for Christ, the better, and the more will the church be blessed. You will never forget the day of the Disruption. It seems to come over you as a day of special remembrance, and the fathers of the Disruption, many of whose hoary heads are still among us, will always be had in honor; but are you sure that

you will raise up such another race of men unless you pray continually that God would send you as staunch and as generous men, who not only know the truth, but can suffer for it, and will not be carried away by every wind of doctrine, but who wilt stand firm as a bulwark against many rising heresies, and stand there until the Lord himself shall come?

The outlying masses are to be got at by all the agencies so well taken up in your excellent report. There are several reasons why many of us Christians must be more earnest in this work of home evangelization. No church can possibly be happy when it ceases to be aggressive. No church can possibly be united when it ceases to progress. The question has been asked, if a cannon ball in full career should suddenly be stopped in space without striking any obstruction, what would be the result? It is said, and I suppose it is known to be a fact, that it would fall into infinitesimally small particles at once, its force of motion overcoming the force of cohesion. Now, if that should happen to the Free Church — now so happily united that you have no right hand and no left in this house, and in that sense I suppose you know not your right hand from your left — (may your right hand and your left always know what they are doing) — and if you could be stopped in your aggressive action, the result would be you would split up into innumerable parties. Your unity must cease. Such a thing cannot be. What became of the manna when it was not eaten? No church can stay where it is. If a church does not advance, it must recede. That was a grand saying of Napoleon's, though applied to a very questionable thing — “Conquest has made me what I am, and conquest must maintain me.” Conquest has made the Free Church, and every Christian church; conquest has maintained them; conquest may stop the war, but you cease from victory, and the banner is trailed in the street at once. Every boy in the street knows that his hoop falls when it does not run; and every one of us knows that our spiritual life will stop when it ceases to go onward. No church is worthy of the name of a church that does not make aggression. O, that word church. I almost wish we had another for it, because it has become perverted. In England it means a heap of bricks and a spire, and many people attach no other meaning to it. There was a church that fell on Paul's neck. It could scarcely be one of that sort. Some think we mean the clergy by the term; but no church is worthy of the name that is not making advances upon the kingdom of evil. You may call it so, but it is only a barren title. It is not really a church that is not making advances, but it is a nuisance. Some of you, brethren, if dead, might cause far less inconvenience than some of us

who are more portly — as a lean, thin, starving church, which has learned to pick up the crumbs under the king's table, will not make such an offensive nuisance in the land as the church that has sat at the table of the king and learned to live upon nobler fare. If it die, the nuisance it would cause would be intolerable. "Bury my dead out of my sight" would be the command, not only of Abraham, but of God himself. If the salt has lost its seasoning, wherewith shall it be salted? If you would be useful and prosperous as Christians, you must work for Christ.

We have all the strongest reasons for working in the churches while we can. Oh, that we could all live in, the light of our last hour. The old scholars, as we read sometimes, put their candles in a strange candlestick — in a death's head, where it was held in that memorial of mortality. It might serve for a very beneficial purpose. What will money do for us when we lie at the gate of death? What will fame or learning do? What reward can we have but souls we have won for Christ? They cannot pave the way to heaven, but they can be goodly company on the road. When the judgment comes, when we rise from our graves, in what light shall we then look upon our lives? Oh, sirs, some even of our recreations may not bear to be thought of. Certainly, if we have been unfaithful in our ministry — if, as rich men, we have held to our wealth instead of following the mind of God — if we have lived contrary to his mind and will the light of the day of judgment will reveal these things to us. Another General Assembly, more general than this, and larger far, will then be held, and you and I shall there appear. Let us then live earnestly, live fast, live hard, live thoroughly, live prayerfully, live like Christ, for no other sort of life will bear inspection in that last great day. There is another argument. Our Savior has said — "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." I beseech you, men and brethren, fathers and sisters in Christ, work hard for him. If he stood here, and asked you to help him, your purse-strings would be loosened, because your hearts would be loosened by his glorious presence. But I need not say that spiritual minds do not need eyes to see Jesus. In your loving hearts you hear him speak to you. "If ye love me, keep my commandments; and one of my commandments is, 'Go ye into the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.' If ye love me, you will reply by obeying; if you do not love me, you will not help and obey." There is a story told by a gifted authoress, with which I shall conclude. It is this: — A certain merchant had been waited upon during the day by some one for a subscription for a society. He replied, as some merchants do, "I cannot, for

I have so many calls.” At night, when he got home, and his wife and family had retired to rest, he drew a chair in front of the fire and sat down, and as he sat looking into the fire he thought thus: — I refused that good man a subscription to-day. I have refused subscriptions before, and told the people I had so many calls. There was a time when I gave more than I do now. The reason was, because I built this new house. The other house was very good. still, my wife thought it was not quite the thing. We went to the new house, had to get new furniture, and then got into a new circle. The girls want more for dress, and the boys want more. My expenses have risen, and I am afraid I am entrenching upon what I have been giving to the cause of God. He is then supposed to fall asleep; whether he did so or not I am not here to say, but as he sat by the fire in came a stranger, a singularly mild and majestic-looking man. He came up to the merchant and said to him presenting a paper, “I am come asking a subscription for Foreign Missions.” He asked it very tenderly, and the merchant, with a good deal of hesitancy, said, “Really you must excuse me, I cannot, I have so many calls.” The stranger looked very sad. There was no anger in his face, but there seemed great grief. He took out another paper, and said, “You do not give anything to foreign missions; will you give something toward home evangelization? There are many heathens at home.” The merchant again said, “I can’t afford it; besides, I think there is more said about home heathenism than is necessary.” “Well,” said the stranger, who seemed to look more sad than ever, “there is the Bible Society; will you give something to it?” He was a little vexed, and said, “I really do not like to be pressed in this way, I can’t give.” The stranger looked sadder than ever, but in a moment seemed to change, and there stood before the merchant one like unto the Son of man. And he said to him — “Five years ago your little child lay sick, near unto death. You went upstairs into your chamber. Your heart was bowed down with bitterness, and you prayed that that dear one might live, your soul being bound up in the life of that child. Who raised your darling to life, and spared her to your house?” The merchant covered his face with his hands. “Ten years ago,” said the same soft, tender voice, “you lay upon what seemed to be your dying bed. Your affairs were then in a bad state, and if you died you left your children penniless. You turned your face to the wall, and prayed that you might be spared until, at least, you might leave your children something. Who heard your bitter cry, and raised you up?” The merchant was more confused than ever. “Fifteen years ago, in a certain chamber, you knelt, a broken-hearted sinner, with a weight of sin on your conscience and soul. Filled with bitterness, you cried

for mercy. Who came to you and said, 'I have blotted out your sins like a cloud, and like a thick cloud your iniquities,' and opened his heart to wash you from your iniquities?" There was no reply except a sob. "If thou wilt never ask anything of me again I will never ask anything of thee. Thou shalt not be troubled with my many calls if I am not troubled with thine." The merchant fell on his face before the stranger, "My God, my Lord, forgive me, and take all that I have." And lo! it was a dream, — but not a dream, for his life was changed thereby. May you and I have such a vision, and henceforth live unto Christ as those who are alive from the dead.

CHRISTIAN WORK. ^{F6}

I WAS requested to address this meeting upon the subject of Christian work, and I will now, without further apologies or salutations, proceed at once to what I have to say. Is it not God's chief end in the conversion of sinners, and in the sanctification of his people, to promote his own glory by making each converted man and woman his instrument for enlarging his kingdom? Not for ourselves alone does he give us grace. The design of our heavenly Father in all his gracious work for us, and in us, is, that we should become willingly his servants here, and in perfection his servants for ever above. Should we not all of us press forward beyond the winning of personal security, to the desire that, by our influence, example, and labors, others may be turned from sin unto righteousness, and so be plucked as brands from the burning? Every young convert should be in training to be a soldier of Christ. As the young Hannibal was brought by his father to the altar of his country, and there sworn to life-long hatred of Rome, so should we be, from the hour of our spiritual birth, the sworn enemies of sin, the enlisted warriors of the cross; to fight on for Jesus till life's latest hour, when we shall be "more than conquerors through him that hath loved us." The Spartan mother, as soon as her child was born, looked upon her babe as having in it the possibilities of a hero; and the whole training of the Lacedemonians aimed solely at producing good soldiers, who would honor the race from which they sprung. So should we look upon every young convert as a recruit; not merely as one who has been himself saved, but as having within his new-born nature the possibilities of a good soldier of Jesus Christ. The great object of our church teaching should be to educate efficient workers — workers filled with holy ardour, strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

There are some six words which I wish to fix on your memories this morning as catch-words.

Of these, the first is, UNIVERSALITY. There should be universality in the labors of the Christian Church. All our members should be at work, with no exceptions, unless it be such as extreme sickness or disability. I was taken aback the other day when I heard a minister of large experience, who has been for many years a pastor of a very useful church, say that; he did not think that more than five per cent of the members of our churches were

actually serving God by direct Christian effort. I began to enquire among my brethren, and although I challenge the statement as applying to the church of which I am the pastor, I have reason to believe that it is sadly near the truth as to many churches; for while a large number of workers would be reckoned up in our statistics, it would be found that the same persons are filling several posts of service, and so are counted several times over. Those who work in one direction are usually the first to occupy yet another part of the field; but a still larger proportion were doing nothing beyond paying their subscriptions, listening to the preaching of the gospel, and, I hope, behaving themselves with moral decency. It is really a very degrading state of things, if such is largely the case. I do not know how it is with the United Presbyterians — whether most are at work among you or not: I can hardly, however, be so sanguine in my charity as to conclude that you are altogether, in your membership, entirely quickened to Christian diligence. Yet all must be aroused if we are to see great progress made by the church of God. My esteemed brother, who is a very apostle of Christ, Mr. Oncken of Hamburg, in forming Baptist churches in Germany, lays down as one of the first questions to be asked of a person applying for membership, “What will you do in the service of Jesus Christ?” Perhaps the candidate says, “I can do nothing,” and in that case the pastor replies, “I cannot receive you; we can have no drones in this hive.” Or perhaps the candidate will reply, “What do you think I can do?” and the pastor will say, “Something you must do; you can only become a member of this church by engaging in some Christian service. I would almost carry it so far as to say, Unless you are laid aside by illness, you must continue to do something, or be excommunicated *ipso facto* by your doing nothing?” That might be too extreme a rule; but the spirit of it is right. If it were a generally understood regulation that one of the conditions of church membership was service, we might see our churches rising to a far higher degree of zeal for God than they have ever yet attained.

We know by experience that the idle part of the church is that in which sin has strongest hold. If a farmer should leave one part of his farm uncultivated, it would be a hot-bed for weeds, and the garlic, the nettle, and the thistle would from that center spread all over his estate. The unworking part of the church, like the mixed multitude that came out of Egypt, falls a lusting, and brings mischief upon the whole of Israel. In the human body, if a bone should become dead it becomes the origin and seat of disease. If any gland in the entire system should cease to produce its

proper secretion, it begins at once to do mischief by gathering together or producing some foul prurient matter. Even thus, in the church, if you are not serving God, you are hindering his cause; if you are not contributing to the progress of the Redeemer's kingdom, you are a drag upon its wheels. All Christians must take their share of holy labor. Sometimes, as the President of a College, I have letters sent to me asking for ministers, in something like these terms: — "Dear sir, — Our chapel is very empty; our last minister was a very excellent man but an unpopular preacher — (I may say by way of parenthesis that I suppose he was one of those men who would make good martyrs, so dry that they would burn well) — and our congregation is very small; can you kindly send us a minister who will fill the chapel?" On one occasion I replied that I had not a minister large enough to fill a chapel. Of course there came an explanation that they did not expect him to fill it corporeally, but to fill it by bringing others to listen to him, and retaining them as seat-holders. Then I wrote, and to gain this opportunity my first joke was perpetrated, reminding the friends that it was quite enough for a pastor to fill the pulpit well, and that the filling of the pews depended very much upon the zeal, the earnestness, and the diligence of those with whom he commenced his ministry; if they would support him by their earnest cooperation the meeting-house would soon be full.

I remember when I came first to London preaching to eighty or ninety in a large chapel, but my little congregation thought well of me, and induced others to come and fill the place. I always impute my early success to my warm-hearted people, for they were so earnest and enthusiastic in their loving appreciation of "the young man from the country," that they were never tired of sounding his praises. If you, any of you, are mourning over empty pews in your places of worship, I would urge you to praise up your minister. There can be no difficulty in discovering some points in which your pastor excels; dwell upon these excellencies and not upon his failures. Talk of the spiritual benefit which you derive from his sermons, and thus you will induce the people to come and listen to him, and at the same time you will do him good, for the full house will warm him up and make him a better preacher, and you yourself will enjoy him the more because you have thought and spoken kindly of him. I have already said, those who are doing no good are the very ones who are creating mischief. Have you ever observed that exceedingly acute critics are usually wise enough to write no works of their own? Judges of other men's works find the occupation of the judgment-seat so great a tax upon their energies that they attempt

nothing on their own account. Mr. Gough used to tell a story of a brave man and admirable critic in Russia, who on one occasion was visited by a bear. Now, there was a ladder which led up to the room on the roof, and the aforesaid hero climbed it nimbly, and for fear the bear should come after him he took up the ladder, and left his wife with Bruin below. His wife, who must have been his “better half,” seized a broom, and began to belabour the beast right heartily, while her heroic lord and master looked on from above, and gave her his opinion as to her proceedings in some such terms as these: “Hit him harder, Betty.” “More over the nose, Betty.” “Try the other end of the broom, Betty,” and so on in the most judicious manner. Surely his spouse might have said, “Good man, you had better come down and fight the bear yourself.” Those who are doing nothing are sure to be great in discovering flaws in the modes and manners of those who bear the burden and heat of the day. Surely they would be much more nobly occupied, and usefully occupied, if they would show us our faults by doing better themselves.

The next word after “universality,” this morning, shall be PUNCTUALITY. That is not quite the word I mean. I mean this, that if ever the church of God shall throughout all its parts be awakened to serve the Lord wisely, it will seize present opportunities; it will be earnest to discharge its mission now, at this present moment. In reading the Gospel according to Mark, many of you must have observed that one peculiar idiom of that evangelist is the frequent use of the word “straightway.” He constantly says of our Lord “straightway.” “Straightway” he did so-and-so. It has been thought that Mark’s is the gospel in which Jesus is peculiarly described as a servant; and, if so, it is significant that “immediateness,” “straightwayness,” should be the very attributes of him who took upon himself the form of a servant. To serve God *now*, to serve God *at once*, to serve God *here*, and *on the spot immediately* — this is the true way to serve him. But to wait for opportunitie — to be pausing to cross the river when the stream is lower — to be expecting to begin reaping when the sun is not quite so sultry, and the shadows lengthen into soft eventide — all that is to throw away precious time and to miss opportunities.

A Primitive Methodist brother I heard speaking the other day said that there were some Christians who were always waiting for something to turn up to help their churches to prosper; but his opinion was that the best thing the church could do was to turn it up itself. So there are many who have a peculiar theory of how, when, and where they could lay out their talents to

advantage; if they would abandon that theory, and believe that *now* is the best time for service, that here is the best sphere, and that; just the very thing that is nearest hand is the best thing to do, they would be nearer the mark. Solomon said, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." He does not say, "open your eyes." There is scarcely need, in such a world as this, to hunt far for work; just put out your hand, and something to do lies near. Whatever you put your hands to do, do it with all your might. In cities like Edinburgh and Glasgow there is so much work to do that the Master's harvest would be scarcely gathered though everyone were to labor. Go to the nearest point that offers itself, go to thine own family, go to thine own children, go to thine own house, and there begin to serve God; for if you idly wait service for a favorable season, that favorable season may never come. I like to hear of our young people serving Christ. I do not mean that young men should be set to preach before they have anything to say — that would never do; but there is something in church work that everybody may do. We had a discussion some time ago among certain ministers, as to whether we should wait till our people were advanced in the divine life before giving them work to do for Christ. I gave forth my opinion in some such terms as these; — "Throw the young ones into the water, and they will learn to swim for themselves. Do not hope to teach them swimming on dry land." Give them work to teach them to work. I am very much pleased that no one here ever saw me on a horse's back. You may laugh, but I assure you it would be a vision of a very fleeting character. I have not tried to mount a horse for some time; but when I have done so there is such an attraction between my body and the earth that I either fall over the tail, or over the head, or on one side. Now, I find great fault with my educators for this. They ought to have taught me to ride, though it had but been a donkey, when I was young. I fear I shall never learn now. So there are some Christians who find it hard to begin to labor for Jesus, because they have formed no industrious habits. They have been so long a while doing nothing that they cannot now bestir themselves. Let us ministers see to it, then, that those who are lately brought into our ranks have suitable employment at once. And as for us who are young beginners, let our consecration be as complete as it possibly can be *now*. There are our honored fathers to look up to; but let us not suppose that we cannot reach their point until we reach their grey hairs. Rather let us try to be devoted to God while our hair is of the raven's hue, even now doing the work of God with diligence, that perchance we may even exceed those

who have gone before. “*Now, now, Now,*” is the word which Christian men need to have sounded in their ears.

My next note shall be DETERMINATION. Our church members need to be determined that souls shall be saved. I should like to feel with regard to anyone who comes under my influence, “If that man is not saved it shall be no fault of mine. I will throw it at last upon God, and leave it with him; but the responsibility, as far as it ever was mine, shall not be mine any longer.” There are many men who make money, but I do not think that, as a rule, men make money without being *determined* to make it. Ready cash does not come knocking at the door for admittance. I do not suppose your windows are often broken by eager guineas hastening to find a lodgment in your purses. Such things happen, but not ordinarily; down in the south, at least, guineas are very shy, and are not easily trapped. Men must give up many comforts to achieve the purpose of amassing wealth. So it is with soul-winning. It must become a passion with us to win souls. You must be willing to resign anything that you may be the instrument in the hand of God in bringing souls to Jesus Christ. No man, I think, will be the constant means of saving souls by accident. It may occur, but not often. A man must resolve upon it, must cry after it, must be ready to die for it; and then it is, when he cannot live without conversions, that he shall see them. We need just such a determination as one had of whom I read the other day. He called upon a dying man in his parish, who was careless, godless, and irreligious; a very surly, disrespectful message was sent down stairs, that he did not want any parsons. The minister called the next day, but was repulsed in the same way. He called again and again, and as he called the messages altered somewhat, but it was not till the twenty-first time of calling that he was admitted to tell the gospel message. Yet that soul was won to Christ. I am afraid there are not many of us who would have persevered in calling to the twenty-first time; but yet, speaking after the manner of men, how would that soul have been converted had the minister stopped calling at the tenth, or even the twentieth, time? We must resolve that we will find our way, by God’s grace, into men’s hearts — that they shall hear us by some means, that we will intrude the gospel even though it is not desired. It is not for us to stand upon dainty customs or forms of etiquette; but to resolve that by this, by that, by any, or by all means, men shall know the gospel of Christ.

This determination often cuts a way for itself. It even becomes its own Providence. There is a dear child at this moment near, or perhaps in heaven

— a little girl of nine years of age, who has made a profession of faith in Christ, and whose life has adorned it in a very eminent manner. She is in consumption, and she sent last Thursday a message to the prayer-meeting, just this little note — “A young believer, nine years of age, anxiously asks the church to pray for her father, who is an infidel, that he may be converted to God.” The prayer was offered, and last Friday her pastor visited her, and as he sat by her bed the little child said to him, “Oh, sir, there is one thing that makes me feel very happy.” “What is that, my dear?” “I have often tried to get my father to come and hear you preach, because it was so blessed to my soul, that I think if I could get him there perhaps God might save his soul, too, but he won’t come; but, you know, sir, when you bury me he must come to the funeral, and then won’t you say a good word to him over the grave; and I know you will tell him that his little girl died happy, in the hope that her dying would perhaps save her father’s soul.” I was so pleased to hear those words, to think that such a thought should make a dying child happy — happy at the thought of dying, because she hoped that at last it would reach her father’s soul. Yes; and we should be willing to die, die a hundred times over, if thereby we might save one soul from going to the pit. That eminent servant of God, Mr. Richard Knill, used to say that if there were only one unconverted soul left in the world, and he were residing in the wilds of Siberia; and if, in the purposes of God, it was ordained that he could not be converted except by all the millions of Christians then living on the face of the earth, all going to him one by one to plead with him, it would be worth while for the church to send all its members one by one to labor with that one soul, that it might be turned to God. And so assuredly it would. Let us be fired with holy determination that we will win souls — that if we cannot win them one way, we will try another, Ministers must be determined that not a dark close, not a narrow lane, shall be left unvisited; that not a single fortress of the Evil One, although he may dare to call it impregnable, shall be left unassailed. If we cannot climb over the wall we will tunnel under it, that by some means or other the banner of Christ shall wave over every castle of the enemy.

But I go on to another word, and that is ENTHUSIASM. That word is a noble one. Would God that it were fully possessed, in its strongest meaning, by all the members of our churches. You may, perhaps, have read the life of Audubon, the celebrated American naturalist. He spent the major part of his life in preparing a very valuable work on the birds of America. He tracked these birds into their remotest haunts, painted, them from

nature, lived in the cane brakes, swamps, and prairies — even among the red men, exposed to all kinds of dangers — and all simply to become a complete ornithologist. When he was in Paris, collecting subscriptions for his new work, his diary was full of wretchedness — there was nothing in Paris for him; and the only bright dream that he had was when he, saw the stock pigeons building their nests in the garden of the Tuileries. The broad streets, the magnificent palaces, the pictures of the Louvre, these were all nothing to him — the stock pigeons everything. He came to London, and he was equally dull there. Not a single incident shows a comfortable frame of mind, till he sees one day a flock of wild geese passing over the city. He wrote in London a paper on birds; and he says, “While I am writing I think I hear the rustle of the wings of pigeons in the backwoods of America.” The man’s soul was full of birds, nothing but birds; and of course he became a great naturalist. He lived, and he was willing to die, for birds. We need to muster a band of ministers who live only for Christ, and desire nothing but opportunities for promoting his glory — opportunities for spreading his truth, opportunities for winning by power those whom Jesus has redeemed by his precious blood. Men of one idea — these are they that shall do exploits in the camps of Israel. We need red-hot men, white-hot men — men who glow with intense heat; men whom you cannot approach without feeling that your heart is growing warmer; men who burn their way in all positions straight on to the desired work; men like thunderbolts flung from Jehovah’s hand, crashing through every opposing thing, till they have reached the target they have aimed at ; men impelled by Omnipotence. It will be a great day for the church when the members of all our churches arrive at such a glorious state of heat as that.

You may depend upon it, that enthusiasm is a liberal education for a Christian; I mean, nothing makes a man so quicksighted and intelligent in the service of God as enthusiasm. This incident came under my notice a few weeks ago: — Two of our members, working men, one of whom has been a famous runner, and won many running-matches, are accustomed, as they say, to hunt in couples for souls. One of their forms of labor is for one to go on one side of the street, and one on the other, on a Sunday morning, in those parts of London where Sabbath trading is carried on to the greatest extent. One Sabbath morning one of them was giving a tract to a person as the other was crossing over to join him, to communicate with him on some subject. The man who received the tract was crossing the road, and, as the second friend passed him, he heard him say with oaths,

“What is the use of giving me these tracts? I shall be in hell in an hour” He said to his fellow-laborer, on reaching him, “Did you hear what that man said?” “No, I did not notice.” “He appeared very wild, and talked of being in hell in an hour; he is either insane, or he is about to commit suicide.” “Do you think so? we will be after him. They followed him, and the first one on coming up to the man, said to him, “What did you say when you got that tract?” “That’s no concern of yours — mind your own business,” was the reply. “Yes, it is our business, for, if I am right, you said that you should be in hell in an hour.” “Yes, I did say so; this world is worse than hell, and I’ll be out of it in an hour.” “No you shan’t; I mean to stick by you.” “What do you mean?” “I mean that I won’t go away from you for an hour, go where you may.” The poor creature succumbed, and the godly friends took him into a coffee-shop, and gave him a good cup of coffee and a breakfast. The man felt less like suicide after that. Mark you, a good breakfast is a fine foundation for a poor starving wretch to hear the gospel upon. Our friends laugh, but it is a matter of plain fact. What is the use of the best gospel sermon when a man is starving? The poor man had tasted nothing for three days, and had walked the streets all night. Hence his despair, and hence an unfitness for sermons. These friends wisely felt that they must first feed his body, and then they brought him into the Tabernacle with them. After the sermon was over their poor patient looked a little more hopeful, and the soul-doctors thought it best to repeat the douse of solid nutriment. They took him to a house where they were accustomed to dine, in a humble way, and he shared their meal. He was in a class in the afternoon, and in the evening they brought him again to the Tabernacle, and it pleased God to touch that poor man’s heart, and bring him to a knowledge of himself and his Savior. Then he began to be communicative, and it appeared that he had left his wife for four or five months, and had been living a life of dissipation, sin, and poverty. He gave the name and address of his wife, in the north of England; she was written to; his fare was paid home, and, after he had gone back, a letter came from his wife, saying that she had been a member of the Wesleyan Methodists, and had been always praying for her husband, who had been an awful reprobate, and had at last run away from home. Then she thought it was all over with him; but God had designs of love, and now he had become a Christian, had joined the church with her, and had sat at the Lord’s table with her. She did not know what to say, her heart was so full of gratitude to God. Now, if my two friends had not been so enthusiastic, they would never have heard what the man said when he got the tract, or, if they had

heard it, they would have passed it by without notice; but enthusiasm clears the ears, and these, men, who had become enthusiastic for Christ, heard sharply, and acted promptly, and the best results followed. I pray God that we may have that enthusiasm.

I do not say, as some have it, enthusiasm without knowledge. The more knowledge, prudence, and wisdom a man has the better, and then he needs only enthusiasm to set it all alight. I happened once to be at a very interesting meeting, where there was a very learned divine speaking, whose speech was very weighty. I thought it heavy. It was very good, only I noticed that our friends showed an inclination to go to sleep. After this speech there followed a brother of my acquaintance of a warmer soul. He spoke with demonstration — he stamped, gesticulated, and, I must add, bawled — he spoke with such power that he even broke a chair. I kept drawing back my seat as chairman, for I felt myself in imminent peril; but the friends in the galleries cheered him, as well as the people down below. Everybody was awake; but I had not the remotest idea what it was all about. I tried to see his drift; I felt I was wicked in not seeing it. I felt very excited, but why and wherefore this deponent sayeth not. I wished I could have combined these two speakers, and put into the one who had so much information a little of the fire of my second friend; while number two would have been the better of something more solid to burn than the wood, hay, and stubble which had blazed before us. We must have enthusiasm, but it must be combined with solid information, faith, and prayer.

I will pass from that word to another which I wish to notice, because I think there is much to be got out of it in connection with serving God, and that is ORIGINALITY. You know we find in the world that whatever seems to be perfect; at one time is, ten years afterwards, left behind. It was once a grand thing to go bowling along with a four-horse coach, at the pace of ten miles an hour or more; but nobody cares about that now, because we can go by express train fifty miles an hour. The world is full of inventions; men all over the country are racking their brains to find out fresh things, eclipsing old systems and plans in every department of science and handicraft. Now, ought we not to have invention as to modes of work in the Christian church? “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way.” Here is originality and inventiveness in sin. Should we not, when we are brought back to the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, every one have his own way of holy work? The plan too, much admired by Christian pople is all alike, as steel pens are made at

Birmingham by the gross; but is that God's plan? I believe our Creator meant us to have angles and individualities. I cannot believe that the Lord wished the trees of his own right hand planting to be clipped into one shape, after the manner of the Dutch; but he intended us, like the monarchs of the forest, by our variety to exhibit his creating skill. Variety is the rule of beauty, and variety in Christian work is the rule of usefulness. John Pounds was an inventor when he struck out ragged schools; Raikes was an inventor when he thought out Sunday schools; Mrs. Ranyard was an inventor when she found the missing link in her Bible women, and others deserve the same title. We now look at the bows and arrows of our forefathers as only fit for museums, for our modern fire-arms have put them into the shade, and we are still fighting the devil in very much the same conventional and worn-out forms of evangelization as our forefathers did. We hardly dare to hope for Armstrong guns and Enfield rifles in grace. We have such a tendency to get tied up and hampered by rules and regulations that it is difficult to gain the victory over Satan. The best rule for a Christian soldier is to do for God that which a sanctified heart prompts him to do. I am much of the opinion of the soldier who, being brought before the Duke of Wellington and a committee of the House of Lords, on being asked if he had to fight the battle of Waterloo over again how he would like to be dressed, said, "Please your lordship, I should like to be in my shirt sleeves." And depend upon it the freest dress is the right costume of war. There is nothing like the shirt sleeves for hard gospel work. Away with that high stock and the stiff coat, in which you find it difficult to fight when you come to close contact with the enemy. You must dispense with pipeclay and bright buttons when it comes to blood, fire, and vapor of smoke. Very many of the gewgaws of ministerialism — they are not much better — ought to be thrown away.

Speaking of originality, I will give you a living instance of it that came under my own notice. A man came to join the church, and we wished to know how his conversion to God came about. We were very well satisfied with his experimental statements and his doctrinal knowledge, and we inquired, "How were you converted to God?" He replied, "In a very odd way." He was a man employed to drive a van, and he told us his story as follows: "I never went to a place of worship, and I do not think anybody ever said to me a word about God or Christ. I was driving over London-bridge, when suddenly a man jumped up and climbed into the back of my cart. I took my whip to lash him off, but he said, 'Hold hard, mate, I've got

a message for you.' This was a very curious thing to me, and I said, 'What is it?' 'I will tell you, but I may as well sit in front' And the man did so. Then I asked him, 'What is your message?' 'It is a message from God to your soul.' I cursed and swore at him; but that made no difference to him. He said, 'You are the very man I was after. I knew you were a swearing man, for that first attracted my attention to you, and I am sure my message is for you.' I said to him then, 'What have you to say? Come, cut it short.' Well, he said, he did cut it short. He told me what would become of my soul if I died a swearer, and he told me of the world to come. He told me that there was a Savior, and that if I trusted him I should be saved. Before he left me he made me promise to hear Mr. Spurgeon. So I promised, and as I always boasted that I kept my word, I went to hear him, though I was precious sorry that I had promised to do so. I never got up so early on a Sunday morning before, but lay in bed till late. When the man saw me at the gate he took me in and gave me his seat and stood himself all the service, which I thought was very kind. After the sermon, he asked, me, "Did you like it?" I replied, 'I did not like it; that's not a thing I care about. I don't believe in religion.' 'Ah, but you will,' the man said; and he and I parted company at the gate, and I hoped I should never see him again. I did not see him again for some weeks, when I was walking down Blackfriars-road and saw him coming along. I turned a corner and began to run to avoid him, but I heard somebody running after me, and I took another turn, but he came up to me and said, 'Well, mate, how are you?' 'All right.' 'Are you going on any better?' I did not give much answer. He told me that he had made up his mind that I should be a Christian one day, and that he never meant to let me alone. I believe he would have come into my house with me, but as my wife and I were fond of drink, there was little furniture in it. I did not wish him to come in and see my miserable room, so to get rid of him I proposed to go and hear Mr. Spurgeon on the next Sunday. I kept my promise, and now I do not need anybody to induce me to go to the Tabernacle. I have been here six months, and I have got four of our men to come down to hear the gospel with me."

When I heard that story I felt very much ashamed of myself, not that I had not climbed up the back of a cart, but that I had not been as earnest as that working man, and therefore had not gone after souls in out-of-the-way places as he had done. I know that we should make Scotland a troublesome place for the ungodly to live in if all were in earnest to win souls to Christ — we should make it a most uncomfortable thing for

sinner to go to hell. I wish Christians would so bring forth Jesus Christ at odd corners that the sinners must see him..

I used to put the application at the end of my sermon. That is a good rule; but as I found sinners rather sleepy at the close, I generally now, after a piece of doctrine for the building up of the saints, let fly at sinners when they are not expecting it. The shot takes them unawares. Oh that we ministers in houses, workshops, and streets would introduce as it were, by side winds, a good word concerning our Lord and Master! We should be sure to do that if our hearths were fully awake. I notice there is a very remarkable thing in the last year's Report of your foreign missions which I do not understand, and I hope that the learned doctors of divinity around me will illuminate me upon it. It speaks about the tendency of missionaries to try not only to make men Christians, but to denationalise them by making them Scotch Presbyterian Christians; and the remark is made that some of your Jamaica students imitate those who labor among them in the Lord so as even to get "the Scotch theological cough." Now, what is that? Will any learned divine indulge me with a specimen of a "Scotch theological cough"? If any successful preacher has a peculiarity, that is the first thing that his disciples will imitate. One day I went to a village to preach, and I hope I preached a moderately decent sermon. As I came out I heard two women criticising my sermon. Now, I had a student at that time who is now an excellent preacher, and he had preached at this village before me. I heard one woman say to the other, "I liked him very well, but he ought not to imitate Mr. M_____ so much," meaning my student. Well, I went back, and urged my young brethren not to ruin my character by laying me under the suspicion of copying them. The servile habit of mere imitation will grow upon Christians till it becomes an injury to them, whereas striking out a new path of usefulness would be the means of bringing to the Christian churches classes that have not been touched. If you want to find fields for conversion, where you can get a large percentage for your spiritual care, don't work among those who have had the gospel for years. If we could get at those who attend no place of worship, I believe larger results would follow our labors than among those who have heard us long, and out of whom nearly all the elect of God have been drawn and converted. Let our originality lead us into new spheres, and to commence new churches. Let us labor in places where the name of Christ is not known, and we may expect the grandest success.

There is one other word I wish to speak upon, and that is the word EXCELLENCE. We must aim at excellence in all we do. We want to inculcate more upon one another, that if we serve Jesus Christ we ought to serve him with our best. The notion is that, if we stand in the street and speak of Jesus Christ, people in the street shall be converted. No; whether we preach well or not is known as well by those in the streets as by those within doors. I ought to do for my Lord and Master the very best I can. Every time I serve him I ought to feel that I have prayed over and wept over what I say — that it comes out of my very soul, and is a part of myself. If that is not so I am giving to him a lame sacrifice, and a service which I should not have presented to my fellow-men; and how can I expect it to be accepted? Let us be all at it, and always at it, but also let us throw our whole soul into what we do. Let us serve him with might and energy, and then he will make bare his arm..

Above all, we must work for God with confident faith in him. “We have not because we ask not.” We have not success because we have not faith. A young brother said to me once, “I have preached in the streets, and I have seen no converts.” I said to him, “Do you expect people to be converted every time you preach?” He replied, very humbly, “No, sir.” When I said, “That is the reason you do not succeed, because you do not expect to do so. According to your faith so be it unto you.” If you have faith in Christ, and in the Holy Spirit, you will see signs following. If you preach, hoping that you will have success, possibly you will get a success; but if you preach, knowing that the Word cannot return void, and believing that you are wielding an omnipotent influence, and that God, the Holy Ghost, is with you, you will not have long to wait before your faith shall be rewarded. Oh, for more prayer, and more faith. Oh, for more power with men for God, because we have more power with God for men. Were the doctrines we preach to fill our souls, heart, and mind, till we become saturated with them, then would our preaching, teaching, and working be with power — then would the hundredfold harvest be granted *us*. I shall be thankful if at this time I stir up one brother to serve God; I shall be more thankful still, if I lead any young man to say, “I will go abroad as a missionary “; and if another shall say, “I cannot preach, but I will work in the Sabbath-school.” Oh! if I could stand at the door, and put the badge of Christ’s service on everyone that loves him, as you go out, and say to everyone who is now indolent, “Why stand ye here all the day idle? Go

work this day in my vineyard.” I wish that were possible. I must leave that with God, and God grant that your church may prosper.

I feel bound to say a word on another subject before I close. There has been a paper distributed among the members of the Free Church Assembly, purporting to set forth my views upon *the Union question*. I must say a word on that. I should not have spoken, for it is not my province to meddle in your affairs. I take that liberty to set myself right. I would not have obtruded my remarks, but I am compelled. Now, the words printed are mine, but I never meant them to be applied as they are. Two persons travelling in Calabria were awakened in the morning by hearing their host say to his wife, “I think we shall have to kill them both.” But the good landlord, though he used these very words, never intended them to be so interpreted by the travelers, who overheard them as to put them in a deadly fright. When the simple soul thus spoke he was thinking of chickens for the breakfast. It was the travelers’ mistake which made his words seem murderous. Now, when I gave forth these utterances, which are thought to be worthy of circulation, I certainly was no more thinking of the Presbyterians than the good host was thinking of cutting the throats of the travelers. The flock of chickens I was dealing with were of a very different breed altogether. I am sorry to confess that when I am preaching in London my range of thought is very much confined to my congregation, and to the people round about me; and as I am not favored with all the minutes of your Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods, and Assemblies, I am in a deplorably ignorant condition as to your internal disagreements or squabbles. That may be very much to my loss, but my brains are not capacious enough to be exercised with all that is doing by all the churches in Christendom. Therefore, what was said was not meant by me to apply to this great Union question, so important to you in Scotland.

But it may be said that my remarks may legitimately bear an application beyond my original intention. Very well, if the cap fits any of you, let those who think so put it on. I said, and still say, that if any churches under heaven require to give up fundamental principles before they can unite, they have no business to unite. If any church thinks it would be false to its own testimony if it joined another church, let it stand alone till doomsday. Our principles are much too dear to be tampered with on the pretext of promoting unity; and, moreover, there could be no lasting unity if that were done. In my sermon, so kindly quoted, I speak of the folly of uniting the Goldsmiths’ Company with the Clothworkers’ Company; but this is not a

case, as far as I understand it, answering to that description. :Even with the aid of a powerful microscope, I can see no difference between the Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church. I am a Southern, not versed in the minutiae of your statutes and rules, but standing at that distance, I do not know the one from the other. Your standards, your worship, your preaching, are they not the same? Therefore, it seems to me that it is not the ease of a Goldsmiths' Company and a Clothworkers' Company, but it is the ease of two Goldsmiths' Companies who, if they find it for their mutual benefit to amalgamate, had better do so as soon as they can conveniently.

The only difference I have heard of between you seems, to my unenlightened English intellect, of this kind. The children of Israel, if they had come out of Egypt in two bands instead of all at once, might have been in the same difficulty, and have had in the wilderness to solve the Union question. Suppose that those who came out of Egypt first, having been longer in freedom, had become fully convinced that it was altogether intolerable for God's Israel to be under the yoke of Pharaoh, and therefore declared that on no consideration would they ever return: no, not even if the Egyptians should pile leeks and onions all round their tents, and allow them to choose their own taskmasters, and allot them thousands of bricks from the royal kilns to build manses withal. No, they would never go back to Pharaoh at any price. Now, the second band that came out of Egypt some time after, and came out bravely too, were fully agreed that the yoke of the late Pharaoh, and even of his successor, could not be endured; but they did not know whether, in the dispensation of Providence, it might not, under certain circumstances, be right to obey Pharaoh and enjoy the land of Goshen, with its pasture lands, and especially with its garlic and onions. Did not Jacob go down into Egypt and all his household? These last emancipated ones therefore held, as a theory, and nothing more, that if Joseph, or some one like him, should ever become king of Egypt, although they had no hope or belief that such a case for a moment ever would happen, and they dared not expect the youngest Israelite would ever live to see that; but if Joseph ever did become king of Egypt, they held that it might be right, in some kind of modified way or other, under certain conditions, arrangements, and regulations, for the whole of the tribes to go back to Goshen. Now, these two different corn-panics were of one race, they spoke one tongue, they had the same great leader, and served the same God, but they could not journey together because of this most

important difficulty. I believe the cases are exactly parallel. My recommendation is that the two companies join together till Joseph comes, and then separate, but not till then. Having said this much, I again apologize for intruding any opinions of mine upon a case which the shrewd sense, and deep piety, of Scotland will surely be able ere long to bring to a happy end.

HOME EVANGELIZATION. ^{F7}

MY dear friends — (a voice: Get into the pulpit) — it would take me a long time to get into the pulpit, and I am sure you will all be able to hear me if I stay where I am. I cannot understand why you did not have the Tabernacle to hold your meeting in. It is too late to go there now, but we shall be very glad to welcome you another year. The chapel is so full that there is another meeting to be held in the schoolroom, and I must try to scatter you a little. There are some of the brethren quite equal to the task of scattering you. I have known many men who have great gifts in that way, and who did not preach long in a place before their hearers became thinned out, and I am going to try. I will be as dull, and prosy as I can be. If I am, it is just what I should have been, whatever might have been the state of the meeting. I did not expect such a meeting as this. I came to speak a few practical words to you to-night. I have got to that advanced age — you don't know how old I am inside — that I like sermons better than speeches. When I do make speeches I have got beyond the poetical. I greatly admired that piece of poetry read by our friend Mr. Wilson about some rippling rills. I always admire that sort of thing, but I can't do it myself, and if I can't I won't.

But, my friends, these village churches and these churches in small towns must be supported. Till I heard that report I thought you were supporting them more largely than I find you are. It is not for me to spur you on in this matter, but for so large and wealthy a body you are hardly keeping up your mission work as you might. I take into account that your county unions do the work; but still, I think in your consciences you must say, "We have not kept up the mission work at the rate at which it should have been kept up." The village causes must be sustained, for their work is of vast importance, and the village pastors are the honor and glory of our churches. There are men laboring as ministers in out-of-the-way places, at miserably low salaries — many of them under £100 a year. Yes, it is a shame that men should have to do such work at that salary; it is a shame that they do not have more; but it is no shame that men can be found who are willing to work for that salary. It is the honor and glory of the church that she herself finds men who will undertake such a charge, and that our village churches are not without pastors, although the salaries those pastors get are not equal to the wages paid to artizans. By all means, I say, let the salaries of

the village pastors be increased. I always was of opinion that everybody's salary ought to be increased all round. I by no means exempt myself from the general rule. Being a Particular Baptist, I like to see general rules particularly applied. Instead of saying this is a dishonor to the church, I say it is an honor to the church that she has men who are willing to spend and be spent, and to work for such small pay; and instead of feeling humble I feel glad that the Lord of the church gives enough of Christian zeal and self sacrifice to his church to redeem her from the charge that she is mercenary, and that the ministers labor for hire.

Another reason why the village pastors should be supported in their work is, I look among the village Christians as being among the most valuable men we have. Here in London we go too fast; we live too fast altogether. For instance, I asked my friend Mr. Paxton Hood what time it was just before we came to the meeting, and he looked at his watch and said it was eight o'clock; but I found it was not so late, and that his watch was too fast. And this is only a specimen of many ministers. We work too much and have too much to do. There is not enough time given us to think, and our opinions are not always the wisest to follow; we have not sufficient time to digest them, and bring them out properly. The old Puritan! what a thinker he was. His range of subjects might have been limited, but what he knew he *did* know! and hence it is that the works of the Puritan period constitute the golden age of theological literature. I think our country Christians have more of the thoughtful and meditative element in them than we have in town. It is needful, for us that such men should be with us to season us and keep us right. I like the good old country deacons. I always find deacons; the best men I ever met with. If ever there is a cause to be arbitrated, if half-a-dozen men were picked to do it, they would be the deacons; and on the whole they would be the best for the work. I like to see these good country brethren come up to our town meetings; they give an air of solidity to the whole concern, not merely by the bulk of their persons, but also by the solidity of their opinions. Those gentlemen here in London who want to be on very good terms with the State Church will find very little sympathy from our friends in the country. A bear in a cage is a very fine animal to look at, but when he is unloosed few would care to accept his invitation to "meet me by moonlight alone." We often hear in London soft cooing voices about brotherly charity; but our brethren in the country have to bear the lash, and contend with the State Church in its worst aspects. Our country churches make the very backbone of dissent, and their

members hold sternly and strongly to the truth. We ought also to support and strengthen our village churches, because they furnish us with some of their best recruits. There is a constant influx of young men who come up from the country and increase the numbers and power of the London churches. How much of that is due to the obscure pastor in the country village! These young people are of course taken away from the churches in the country, and it is no small thing that the country sends London so many godly men. If they were, on the contrary, ungodly, London would be much worse than it is. When I consider the number of country churches depleted every year, I am not surprised to hear of a great increase in London churches. We hear a good deal about the increase of church members in America. Why, about one-third of all the increase at the Tabernacle goes to America. We are continually feeding their churches by the growth of population derived from this country. The town churches obtain a goodly proportion of their increase from their country brethren just in the same way. Keep up, therefore, I say, your country churches. They are the feeders of our town congregations, and keep us well supplied with good and useful members. Many a merchant here in London, who is a pillar and ornament to the church with which he is connected, began his religious life at a country chapel, and but for his early intercourse with the pastor there, he would not have now been what he is.

Faults are sometimes pointed out to us in connection with our work in the villages, and there is something to be said for the objections which are urged in regard to it. We should look at our failings, and work away heartily until we have taken the edge from the arguments of our opponents. I fear it is the fact that it would be very difficult to supply the gospel to every village in England if the State Church is abolished, Part of the difficulty lies in the independent policy of the Baptists and Independents. Independency is not perfect; depend upon it there is a screw loose somewhere, there is something wanting. The Free Church of Scotland has managed to support ministers in the villages, and to support them well. I am not here to speak on behalf of Presbyterianism to-night, but whatever may be its faults, somehow or other it does that which our own system fails to do. It ought to be a matter of very serious thought with us, how, without violation of what we hold to be scriptural principles, we can in some way supply this very evident lack. I hope we are not such sticklers for our system that we cannot see where it does not work. We must have common-sense in these matters. A little common-sense is a fine thing for

any man, and sixpennyworth of it is useful to any minister. The laity and the deacons always have enough of that — *they say so*.

Between us all — ministers and deacons — we must see that there is something lacking in our system, with respect to the payment of our village pastors. How is that lack to be supplied? The grouping of churches together is an admirable system, and the more it can be arranged the better; I should like to see a number of our ministers pluralists, and attending to two or three churches. A man works better when he has a bigger lot of people to look after. I confess I never had the ability to manage a small church. They are like those canoes on the Thames, — you must not sit that way, or the other, or do this thing or that thing, lest you should be upset. I happen to have a church like a big steamboat, and whether I walk here or there my weight will not upset it, If a big fellow thinks himself to be somebody, his importance vanishes when he joins a big church like mine. Brother ministers have said, “This man will be a troublesome member of your church; you must watch him.” I say, “No, he won’t; nobody ever troubles me, because I don’t let them.” These fellows only want something to do; they have too much energy to be unemployed. I set them to work, and they are no longer troublesome; if that does not cure them, I give them still more work to do. These men who are so troublesome have too much energy for small places, and want to be put where their powers can have scope, and then they would have less time to fret over little things. The churches must call out their laymen and set them on to preach, as the Wesleyans do in their Plan; this would make the cause flourish. I ought not to come here to make suggestions, but I turn these things over in my mind. I want to see the Church of God in England spread by some means, by any means, and have the country evangelized somehow, anyhow.

I believe our village churches want more open-air preaching. The next best thing to the grace of God is oxygen. Preachers cannot preach and people cannot hear half so well in close, crowded places. I recommend you to try and find out who it was that once did a lot of damage to the windows of Park-street chapel. The attention of the deacons had been frequently called to the fact that the windows would not open, and at last there was a great noise, for it was found that somebody had gone round — it was evidently done by design — and broken the windows. I wanted the deacons to offer £5 reward for the offender, and if they had done so I intended to have got it, but they never offered it.. A little ventilation would be extremely useful to us here, and so it would to congregations everywhere. Many a man

would come to hear the gospel on a village green who will not go to hear it in a village chapel; and many would thus hear, for the first time, the glorious news of salvation through Christ. The Wesleys and George Whitefield did a mighty work for God through preaching in the open air. In the winter every place ought to be used as well as chapels. I recollect my grandfather, who, I am sorry to say, like you, was an Independent, and I remember Piper's Barn where he used to preach. I got up on the mow and listened to him. He always went to preach there just as they had thrashed out.

Everybody came to hear him. We want to preach the gospel everywhere through England, not only in unconsecrated chapels, but in consecrated barns — consecrated by fresh air and devotion, the best sort of consecration. Ears would hear, and hearts would be touched.

We must encourage all the brethren in the country to preach the gospel with great simplicity. I am persuaded that a large proportion of the sermons that are preached are not understood by the people. I have at home all the volumes of *The Pulpit*, and I was reading some of them this morning. Of course, you will consider that is where I get all my sermons from. I am happy to say there are very few sermons which I should like to preach. They are altogether too fine, and not plain enough for people to comprehend — too grand altogether; the meaning might have been put in about half the space if the words had been Saxon words, instead of Latin ones. The people don't know what we mean. We come forward with the language of the class-room when they want the language of the shop, the market, the language of their own village. There must be a setting forth of the gospel to suit all hearers. For the educated there must be culture, that is wanted; for the uneducated, that superior culture which has learned to make the gospel, plain to plain people — to check oneself from getting into the jargon of learning, and thus to speak in a language which shall reach the people's hearts!

Though I trust we shall never get to be political as Dissenters, I hope as Dissenters we shall always have the sympathies of the people. I heard a representative of the agricultural laborers say, the other day, that if we did not mind we should lose the laborers. I am sorry he made that threat. I would not go across the street to do anything to win either a laborer or a lord in that way. If they suppose that our political views and sentiments are to be regulated by our desire to win them for our denominations they are

very much mistaken. If they choose to come, they may come — if they want the gospel, they may come; but if they suppose we wish them to change for our gain, they are in error. I am a member of the Liberation Society, not because I believe the liberation of the Church of England would be of the slightest benefit to us as Dissenters — probably the whole of the gain would be on the side of the Church of England. If I thought I went into that selfishly to aggrandize my own sect I would scorn myself. If the thing is right it will stand on its own footing; if not it will fall. Still, our sympathies as a body are with the working people; and with regard to the agricultural laborers, I do desire to see their whole status and position changed from what it has been for many years. I believe the spread of religion amongst the laborers will elevate them, and teach them that a greater wage means more work for it, greater thrift — though I do not know how that can be with those who have to keep ten children on thirteen shillings a week; but they must have all the thrift they can. The men who carry the gospel to these laborers must be men of their order — men who know them, and can talk intelligently to them. Above all things, all of us must show condescension — that oleaginous kind of religion which is “dearing,” and giving a little sugar to everybody; which lives in the seventh heaven, but will “stoop” to the people. There is not a man on earth that can stoop; there is no such a thing as stooping for such poor worms as we. If we have riches or ability, we are so much the more in debt to God’s infinite goodness. Every Christian man should be to us as a brother. We ought to feel that we are going *up*, not coming *down*, when we tell the poor men and women the story of the cross and, try to bring them to it. May our country brethren feel this. May God send them comfort and blessing. They should be the objects of our sympathy, for few know the discomforts which attend the work in the country. They should be remembered by us when we pray, and it would cheer them up and help them to labor on. I am sure Mr. Wilson will cheer them, for he is one of the most genial of men; and as for Mr. Morley, he cheers everybody up.

I hope the funds of the society will tend to encourage the brethren in the country. How much good has been done by a little timely sympathy and help! My grandfather — of whom I have spoken before — was a very poor minister, and kept a cow, which was a great help in the support of his children — he had ten of them — and the cow took the “staggers” and died. “What will you do now?” said my grandmother. “I cannot tell what we shall do now,” said he, “but I know what God will do, God will provide

for us. We must have milk for the children.” The next morning there came £20 to him. He had never made application to the fund for the relief of ministers; but on that day there was £5 left when they had divided the money, and one said, “There is poor Mr. Spurgeon down in Essex, suppose we send it to him?” The chairman, a Mr. Morley of his day said, “We had better make it £10, and I’ll give £5.” Another £5 was offered by another member, if a like amount could be raised to make it up to £20, which was done. They knew nothing about my grandfather’s cow; but God did, you see, and there was the new cow for him. And those gentlemen in London were not aware of the importance of the service which they had rendered. Some of them, in heaven since then, may have met my grandfather, and he has perhaps told them all about the cow. I don’t see why not. Perhaps one of the joys of heaven will be to find out what good, unknown by us on earth, has resulted from what we have done here. Why should it not be mentioned by the saints in heaven when it was mentioned by the Master on earth? I earnestly entreat you to help the agents of this society by giving towards their support.

THE TOLLER, FAMILY. ^{F8}

I am racist happy to be here on this occasion to celebrate the long pastorate of my dear and venerated friend. There is so much involved in being fifty-five years in the same place, so much that does honor to the man, so much that brings glory to God. Think how the Lord has sustained him, how he has given him fresh matter to keep up the interest, how he has guided him in the direction of such a church as this, how his Spirit must have been with him, sustaining and blessing him in a thousand ways! We shall never know how much we owe to the grace of God. I suppose it will be one of the occupations of eternity to make discoveries of the amazing grace which God has bestowed upon us at times when perhaps we scarcely knew what was being done, how he has steered us away from the rocks, and guided us both by storm and calm into the desired haven. To God be all the glory.

I sat on Monday last by the bedside of one of my old members. I went to comfort her, for I heard she was ill; but, instead of comforting her, she set about comforting me, so that I went away rejoicing. She began in this way, "My dear pastor, I shall never be able to tell to any soul what I owe to you, both personally and relatively." I said, "Now, do not talk about that." She replied, "I will, for my former pastor, Joseph Irons, once preached a sermon upon the words, 'King Solomon shall have a thousand, but they that keep the vineyard shall have two hundred,' and that dear man of God said, 'Give God the glory, give Solomon his thousand, but let his ministers who are keepers of the vineyard have their two hundred. Give them all the encouragement you can.' Now (said she), that sermon did me good. I used to be afraid to cheer ministers and tell them what God had done by them, for fear that they should be proud; but from that sermon I learned that it was God's business to keep them humble, and my business to encourage them." Now, I must give God the thousand — blessed be his name! — ten thousand; but I should like to give my friend Toller his two hundred. I am sure he is not an ordinary man. No man of ordinary character could have remained for so many years in this place.

I do not think there was much intelligence in the people that originally chose him for a minister, nor in those that kept him, because I was going to say any fool can see he is a fine fellow. I am a very simple, natural sort of

being, and I took to my dear friend Toller the first time I saw him. Whether he took to me or not; I cannot tell you. [Mr. Toller: "Yes."] Well, he looked very much as if he did. Even dumb animals know kind people somehow, and though I am not dumb, I have the same feeling that they have, and I took to him directly. There is something about the man that attracts and nothing at all that repels, He is the positive, not the negative pole. I have had the pleasure of knowing some ministerial brethren who have had great gifts of dispersion. Only place them in a chapel that was as full as this, and they would secure admirable ventilation. Everybody would be able to have a seat, and perhaps, a whole pew to himself. Those brethren have the negative, or the repelling, quality very prominent. My dear friend does not seem to have anything of that kind; he has that disposition of kindness and love which attracts and retains.

But that is not all. Ira man keeps a congregation together long, he must have given them some food. When I was in Venice I saw the pigeons coming into the square at St. Mark's in great numbers just about the time when the clock strikes two. I did not know anything about their habits, but I felt certain that they were going to be fed, or they would not come in such numbers. When I see people coming together for fifty years I am morally certain that they must have been fed, or they would not have continued to come. Have any of you tried what it is to keep up fresh matter, good matter, substantial gospel truth, and yet give it freshness for a year? Well, take fifty times that number of years, and think what it must be. It is certainly a great feat, because the subjects that we have to handle are not so very numerous. True, there is a wonderful power of freshness about them of themselves, yet it is a feat to continue constantly to preach the same gospel to the same people, and yet to interest them; and interested I believe you feel. Your pews do not help your minister, I am certain, except that they prevent your going to sleep, for their backs are uncomfortably straight. Perhaps they were made so with that idea, and it raises my notion of Mr. Toller's ministry to think that you have been able for fifty years to sit with your backs as upright as that. More of you would have gone to sleep, perhaps, if you had been more comfortable. My dear brother must have given you good matter to have kept you so long together.

When riding in Yorkshire a long time ago, and speaking to a good man in the carriage, he told me that he was a member of a certain church there. I said, "How are you getting on?" "Oh," said he, "our parson is a mooff." I said, "What is a mooff?" He said, "Well, there is one of our deacons who

has a mill. One Sunday, when the people were going to chapel, they saw the mill was going, and so they said, ‘Hulloa! here is a Baptist deacon’s mill going on Sunday.’ However, it appeared that they had not turned the water off; so that the wheel was going round, and it went click clack, click clack, but, bless you, it was not doing anything. ‘Well, that is just like our parson; he goes round ‘click, clack,’ but there is nothing at all in it.” Then I understood for the first time what a “mooff” must be. People won’t continue for fifty years going to hear a muff, or, if they do, they must be muffs themselves.

I bless God for our dear friend, Mr. Toller, that during fifty years he has been enabled to feed his people, and so to behave among them that there has not been any sort of division. He says he has not had any personal encounter with anybody. Well, you must be excellent people to have lived in all this peace and quietness and happiness for so many years. I think something must be said for a congregation that has put up with anybody for fifty-five years. It must have been a good people, Mr. Toller, and you say they are. My predecessor, Dr. Rippon, used to say that he had in his church some of the best people in England, and some of the worst. Well, that is just my experience; I have got some of the best people in England — put that down in capital letters, then add in small letters small ruby type — some of the worst. Now, Mr. Toller fortunately seems not to have had many of the worst, but to have had some of the best people in England.

Dear friends, I say it in all seriousness, that a minister is very much in the hands of God what the people make him. I feel certain that there is many a man who is discouraged by unkindness, who might, if he had been in a warmer, happier atmosphere, have become very useful in the cause of God. I get letters from churches wanting a young man to fill a chapel. I remember replying to one such application that I had not a man that was half large enough. How could I send them a man big enough to fill a chapel? Many asked me what I meant by it, and I said I had a notion that it was the duty of the, congregation to fill the chapel — that the minister could not possibly do it; but if they wanted a man around whom a congregation might gather that would fill the chapel, and if they meant filling it, I could find them a young man who would try and do his best to help them, but I always discouraged the notion that it was the minister’s duty to fill the chapel.

My dear friends, if you, in years to come, have a young man amongst you, do not say to yourselves, "He is not what old Mr. Toller was." Do you expect to get a man like Mr. Toller? If you do, you will be mistaken. How can you expect a young fellow just starting to have all the knowledge and experience of a man that has been many years in the service? The proper thing to say is, "We will think kindly of him, we will speak kindly about him, we will do all we can to encourage him, and to get him a congregation." If that were done, I have no doubt that many a chapel that is half empty now would soon be filled. Come to the chapel yourself, and tell your friends and acquaintances. Pick out the good bits of what the minister says, and tell your friends. Get your cousin to come, get your friend to come, and soon the house will be filled. A minister is, like other men, very subject to depression if things do not go quite right, and a cheerful word, oh, how it will help him! Did you never hear the story about the fireman in Gray's-inn-road? Two years ago there was a fire there, and a fire-escape was put up to the windows. It was a little too short, so that the fireman could scarcely get at one of the windows, and he was about to leave a poor woman to die, for he felt that he could not save her. However, the people said, "Let us give him a cheer," and they shouted "Hurrah!" Then he thought he must do it, and he managed to rescue the old woman, and brought her safely down. "Ah," said he, "if they had not given me that cheer I never should have dared to do it, for it was such a desperate thing." Every now and then a minister has something to do which seems a little beyond his power. Do you pray for him first, and then give him a cheer afterwards. That will stir his soul, and he will be sure, under God's blessing, to accomplish what he had set his heart upon.

What a blessing it is to you at Kettering to be kept together all these years! Fall out whenever you find that it will be for the glory of God to do so, but do not do it till then. Keep close together. What a blessing unity is! Without unity what would be the best of preaching, and the best of organizations? Be as one man, heart and soul together, for many years to come, as you have been during all these years that are past.

I had a long talk with Mr. Toller this morning to get out of him all I could, and I asked him whether the people here were as liberal as they should be, and I think he said "yes." I do not know whether he meant they were as liberal as they should be, but he said they were very liberal. You have always had that character. It is so with my own people. I sometimes tell them that I began early milking them, and they have got so much into the

habit of it that they would feel uncomfortable if I left it off. My people are, in the habit of giving and supporting the cause of God liberally, and those who do so would be uncomfortable if there were not something to give to. It is such a relief to them to feel that, in some little way, they can make a return to God to prove their gratitude. I believe the collection is the grandest part of any service; the apostle Paul thought so. You remember the grand chapter about the resurrection, where he finishes up by saying “O death, where is thy sting?” and so on. “Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Having got wound up to that pitch, he cannot say anything more than, “Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.” Then he seems to have felt, “Having got so far, having built up this temple all but the last stone, where am I to get it from?” Then he goes on to say, “Now concerning the collection, brethren?” That, you know, is the next verse. Oh, you say, but it is in the next chapter. Yes; but there are no chapters in the original, no chapters in the Inspired Word; they are merely divided as a matter of convenience, and so the phrase follows straight on. You smile, but there is a great deal in it, for when a person’s religion does not affect his pocket it is no religion at all. A man that says that he loves the Lord, and all that, and yet gives nothing to the cause of God, is a hypocrite. That poor, paltry money is often one of the best tests and gauges of the real spirituality of a man’s mind; therefore, I felt glad and thanked God when Mr. Toller said, “Yes, our friends have not lacked in that respect. They have given liberally of their substance to the cause of God, and still continue to do so.”

Now, dear friends, how can we celebrate this jubilee? You say, “We have had a sermon, we are going to have a meeting, and we are going to make a presentation.” The best, celebration I can suggest would be for every Christian to give himself more unreservedly to God, for every member of this congregation, who is still unconverted, immediately to seek salvation, so that you may be able to put down the date, and say, “Yes, I know when I found the Lord; it was at Mr. Toller’s jubilee.” Happy day! That would be a blessed celebration — why should it not be so? Jesus Christ is always ready, it is we that are unready. The “fountain filled with blood” is always open, but we are not willing to come. If we are, willing to come, we may come; if we really desire to be saved, there is salvation. We have but to lay hold on what God so freely gives. But I must not go beyond my time, as I have to be elsewhere, and others are waiting. God bless you, friends! I am most happy to be with you.

LOVE IN ACTION. ^{F9}

It was moved, "That the best thanks of the assembly be respectfully offered to the President for his eminently practical and kindly address."

I HAVE to second this resolution by the order of the committee, whom I obey at once, I suppose on the ground that while my patriarchal brother Aldis represents the older folks, who are glad to see the middle-aged men in such power, I represent the very young people, who look up to our middle-aged brother, Mr. Maclaren, with not less love, but with far greater awe; for I am persuaded that Brother Aldis and Dr. Brock are incapable of that silent admiration and intense wonder which we all have as we look on while the angel has wrought so wondrously this day. I have peculiar delight in seconding this resolution, because if I have a faculty at all it lies in rather a practical direction.

I fear I am rather worldly. I calculate very much a man's love to Christ by the quantity of money he is willing to give in proportion to what he has got, and up to the present moment I have never found a test that is more available, It generally comes to the correct thing in the long run, for I find that the great talker and even the wonderful gusher does not last nearly as long as the person who gives the two mites that make a farthing, being all her living. The love of God often makes a man give half his income and be very imprudent. The money matter somehow puts metal into grace, and makes it last all the longer. I am sure that from the address we have heard a great deal of mischief will come. I told Mr. Maclaren that if I had to speak I should endeavor to pull him to pieces. Mischief will come in this way. The endowed churches will say, "We always told you so; this is the result of your voluntary principle"; and they will begin at once to deal out very severe reflections upon us. Well, for my part, I have arrived at that period of life in which wisdom is at its prime — between forty and fifty. Brethren are rising up to that period, and declining afterwards, so I have heard, and the point I have reached about all criticism is utter and entire indifference to it, except to endeavor to pick anything practical out of it; I believe that anything that is true ought to be said, whatever result may come out of it, and that if we were, to throw ourselves open to an adversary by the avowal of a fault, it would frequently be the wisest thing to do, though it may not;

look like it. Policy might say, “Conceal that”; but it would be to conceal a source of evil. The better thing is to drag it out, give your adversary all the advantage he can possibly get by it, and then, having cleared yourselves of the evil, the preponderating advantage will soon be on your side.

For my part, I glorify and bless the Lord, not that any brother of mine serving the Lord should be poor, but that there are so many hundreds among you who can be poor, and poor cheerfully, for our Lord Jesus Christ’s sake; and although at the present moment some colleges cannot find men, I am besieged, I am pestered, bored almost to death, by the hundreds of young men eager to push themselves into this very Baptist ministry, which is so poorly paid, not looking for pelf, because their ministry is of another kind. If all the salaries could be increased, and we thereby induced one solitary mercenary brother to become a Baptist minister for the sake of gain, the increase would be a terrible loss. But it cannot be said that we have done so. There is no lie beneath God’s heaven so astounding as that we ministers preach for what we can get. There is not a man among us who gets a large salary but who is worth ten times and fifty times as much, and might have twenty ways of earning it, which we could take tomorrow. Some of us can say that we should be better off without our church than with it, notwithstanding that they give liberally to us. We have taken care to be more liberal to them than they have been to us — from the man with the largest income to him with the smallest — and I may say for us all, at the day of judgment it shall be revealed, that with simplicity of heart and singleness of purpose, we have given ourselves up to this work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and we defy all inspection of this matter, as we are prepared to meet the eye of God at the last. So far, there has been great good come out of evil, for it is not a little thing to be able to say that without fear of contradiction.

At the same time we must do something to increase the salaries of these brethren. I do not know how it may be done; I know how it can be left undone — it is by leaving it to the Baptist Union. I am, myself, a part and parcel of *it*. I do not know whether I am a committee-man or not, for I do not think it has anything to do that requires a committee. I asked Mr. Maclaren if his duties had been very severe, and he said he had delivered one address, and was going to deliver another, It is the most impracticable body beneath the moon, and I myself am part of it: therefore I bear the censure. But it is time we were not so. Here is this Augmentation Aid Society. Well, if you will take it up, and work it, let it go on. In the name

of everything that is good, it ought to have been yours years ago; but if you are going to lie on the baby, to overlid and smother it, pray leave the children alone. Why, I have more confidence in my friends, Charles Williams and Charles Leonard, than in the whole lot of us together, including Mr. Leonard and Mr. Williams; for, somehow, things do get done by one or two brethren who are called to the work, and are wonderfully left undone by a whole company of brethren, all earnest., but none particularly called to lead the way. This Augmentation Fund has increased its income this year., and reached £2,640, and has helped one hundred and thirty-one brethren, adding £20 to their incomes, which has been a great blessing. But the singular thing is, that while one hundred and thirty-one have been helped, only one hundred and thirty-one have applied, so that nobody has been refused, and there must be a large number of you who do not know that any such help is to be had; otherwise I think that probably you would have applied. I do not know if possibly you would have subscribed, and increased the funds had you known of them, but it is possible you might have come forward and shared them. That at least seems pretty clear to me, judging your minds by my own. The society has done indirectly a very great service, for years ago the incomes of the brethren helped amounted on an average to £75 or £76. At this present moment the average stipend of the assisted ministers comes to £87, which, with the £20, makes up £107, so that there has been an improvement of some £12 or £14 each all round of those helped, apart from the help the society has given.

We want to create a public opinion upon this matter. Mr. Maclaren has created it this morning, I believe. There are some members of our churches who pay more to black their shoes than to support their ministers. I am certain there are many farmers that pay more for their license to shoot than they ever subscribed per annum to listen to the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is really to me scandalous that we should have to subscribe to this society, since in some cases there is no necessity whatever that the pastor should receive any aid from a society. The system of pew rents is not, I think, likely to be abandoned, but it has been the death of us on account of fixing a shilling a quarter — a shilling a quarter. Two sermons every Sabbath-day — give them the week-days in; a halfpenny a sermon. Brethren, I am astonished at you that your sermons are not worth more than that. I do not hear you, but those people who do should be able to appreciate you, and show what the value of your discourses must be. On the other hand, if

these brethren are incorrect, and I should hope they must be, then I have to turn round upon the friends who hear you, and say it is outrageously unjust, and that is putting it on the lowest scale. It certainly is unkind and unchristianlike; still, there are a number of churches that cannot do more. I do know some that are doing their utmost, and God be thanked for it: I delight to see the little churches. I differ from Mr. Maclaren as to their being a source of weakness. I have formed a great lot of little churches, and mean to form a great many more — not in villages, but in London, because they grow. As many slips as ever we put in the ground all seem to strike. In the large towns, Manchester, Liverpool, and elsewhere, we might increase indefinitely, and be better represented. We must all set to work, and build a chapel in Manchester every year. That is one of the things to begin with. We ought to try and build two every year in London. We are building one. The fact is, we are poor. There can be no doubt about that, and therefore we must use all our means judiciously and well, and help those that are the poorest among the poor. In Turk's Island, I am told, all the white population go to church: the brown people, men of color, go to the Wesleyans, but the very black are all Baptists. What is true of Turk's Island, I think, is very largely true of this other small island in which we live. We do get a large number of poor people. This is not to our dishonor, but to our glory. We delight to gather in the poorest of the poor and preach the gospel to them. That is by no means such a weakness as should make us despair. So long as we have got the truth and the Spirit of God with us we are not afraid. But being poor as we are, we must do all we can, and put all the ability God has entrusted to us in the monetary line for his service.

While we, as a denomination, are poor, the Baptists in England, I believe, who are not true to their name, are the richest people in the world. I believe the best Wesleyans, certainly the best Congregationalists, very many of the best Church of England people, and all the best Plymouth Brethren, have been baptized. We simply stand out. The others, for reasons best known to themselves, slink every man to his tent in the rear, and escape some of the reproach that we have to bear. Baptists that; are members of respectable churches, I do not respect you, having left your brethren and deserted your colors for the sake of being respectable. We are not respectable at all because we put baptism out of the font into the right place. A man says, "I do not like to be called a Baptist;" "Sir, there is no Baptist that wants you to be; he does not feel so proud of you, or think it

any honor to have his name coupled with yours.” The oldest name of all is John the Baptist, who existed, as our Welsh friend said, a long time before there was any Wesleyan, or anything of the sort; and we speak with no bated breath when we stand right out for the sake of the vindication of a rite, as it is called, but which rite draws with it one-third part of the stars of heaven, for the view you take of that rite affects your view of almost every other truth. A gentleman once told me he did not care twopence for baptism. The reply is; “Why don’t you give up the twopenny thing, and have a view of it; which it would be worth while caring for, and which you would maintain?” Brethren, I have heard of some of your misfortunes since I have been here, as well as some of your joys, and I thought nobody would be able to say at Plymouth, you had been better fed than taught. I only hope that today you will be half as well fed as you have been taught.

STRANGE SCENES. F10

MR. SPURGEON explained that he was not in a condition of mind in which he could produce what could fairly be called a lecture. His brain had produced no end of matter for many months past, so that he was now jaded, and unless he got rest he feared he should be giving them very poor material indeed. He did not think he could give them anything very fresh, and after some sleepless nights thinking over a subject, he had hit upon that of "Strange Scenes," because he thought there was room then to talk: about anything. He hoped he might, however, advance what would be useful. Did not some of them (he asked in commencing) think this world a very flat piece of business? There was not much excitement, or anything fresh or new. The Roman Emperor offered a great reward to any man who could discover a new pleasure. Many tried, but few won even part of the reward. And they knew what it was which made some people's lives so flat, dull, and on such a dead level; the secret in most cases was that they had no aim in life, and that they really were not living unto God, and seeking to serve him. If they wanted adventures they need not go to the Arctic Regions, or to the interior of Africa, amongst uncivilized tribes. If they wanted pleasures, they need not seek those which were laborious and wearisome of the world; let them get to work for God amongst the poor and needy, the depraved and fallen, and they would find plenty of adventure and freshness, and it would put spices into their lives which otherwise they would never get. He alluded to the story told by Rogers, the poet, of a certain nobleman who, having grown sick of the world's pleasures after spending his life in them, contemplated suicide; but just as he was about to jump into the river his attention was directed by the cry of a little boy for bread. He followed the boy, and being able to alleviate the distress of his home, he determined upon finding pleasures in other than his usual spheres. In the service of God there was always adventure new and fresh. A still life is unuseful and selfish. There is many a bright and sparkling life running clear as a limpid stream hastening on its course. Thus it is.

There also comes before the worker odd things, which some people call shocking. He did not know if such people slept in kid gloves, but he should think they did when the preacher was rather long in his discourse. Some people could not do anything unless in a very dignified manner. In the case

of the child's Noah's ark, they could put the wooden figures in a row, and make dram walk as they ought; but if they had the animals alive they would find the task more difficult. So it is very easy in idle life, and in fashionable Christianity, and profession of religion, to do everything with propriety; but when getting into real life, things are not always proper. In the congregation, for instance, when everybody was supposed to be, listening, a baby cried, which was, of course, highly improper; but they did not mind it at all on account of the parents. But in actual life there are these odd things too. He would allude to some of them. It did not matter how dignified a man was, there were times when he had it taken out of him. See the judge sitting on the bench, with his wig on. What a wonder of nature and grace was he! It was enough to suppress and repel one's pride to be obliged to look up to one so bewigged. Conceive the judge, in the middle of an assize, suddenly jumping up on the top of the bench, and shouting, "Fetch the javelin man; here's a dog which has bit my leg!" How it brings down the judge from those supreme heavens in which judges dwell! So sometimes a real thing will bite one in the service of Christ, and he must lay aside his dignity, or the dignity will make the scene most ludicrous. Perhaps they might think an earnest worker for Christ looked as ridiculous as the judge, but it could not be helped; they could not keep the dogs out.

Strange scenes have been seen on the face of the earth amongst those who worked for Christ — strange through the heroism of those who were the chief actors in them. Arnold, for instance, standing in the square opposite St. Peter's preaching the gospel, and denouncing the Pope, was a strange scene. Luther nailing his theses on the church door, setting forth the fact that the Pope had not power to grant souls' indulgences for money; and including what he called his "forty particulars." What a hubbub there was when Luther thus drove four nails in the Pope's coffin, and wrote that manifesto over the door which never could be pulled down in time or eternity. He had drawn up the sluices, and let the great flood of truth in upon the world. Stranger still when the Pope issued a great parchment bull, cursing him from head to foot in the most splendid and respectable manner. His power, by-the-by, lay in being master of a college. He fetched the Popish books and burnt them, for he (Mr. Spurgeon) was pleased to say they burnt very nicely. As a consequence of Luther's daring, we have our liberties. Thank God for the man who won us these liberties. Equally brave and, to his (Mr. Spurgeon's) mind, equally glorious, was the scene when the greatest man who ever lived, excepting, perhaps, the apostle Paul — he

meant John Calvin — protested against the libertines partaking of the sacred elements when they live such scandalous lives. John Knox, too, was a grand man, who although poor and emaciated in form when he appeared in the pulpit, burnt and blazed in his utterances when his soul got warm. It was also a strange scene when in spite of the threatening of Cromwell's soldiers, when holding a pistol to his head, the clergyman at St. Andrew's, Holborn, persisted in worshipping God according to the form in which he believed.

Strange scene, too, was that when Mr. Milburn, described as "the blind man eloquent," protested in such faithful words against the profane and blasphemous language of the members of the American Congress whom he met on board ship, and as a result got appointed their own chaplain. Such scenes caused by the heroism of the persons in the center, were well worthy of their remembrance. Secondly, some scenes had been very strange, because of the singular places in which they occurred. What strange people had preached in the open air, and in what strange places; and how he wished open-air preaching would become far more prominent in all sorts of places which could be used for the proclamation of the truth. Strange, scenes in the life of Wycliffe: then also were the plays when the Puritans did such grand work in London — when the plague drove the gentlemen away, the Puritans came, who were not afraid to die in their work. He (Mr. Spurgeon) had preached in strange places. He had preached at Ringwood, in a forest where the trees formed a tabernacle finer than any cathedral he had ever seen; and now the trees were cut down, £60 from their value had been sent; him for the Orphanage.

Sometimes in working for God strange scenes occurred, because of incidents connected therewith. It must have been a strange scene when Father Taylor, of San Francisco, in burying without help a gambler who had fallen dead, addressed over the actual corpse his comrades in sin. That was a strange scene when, feeling uneasy under a certain Lancashire clergyman's sermon upon the words "Weighed in the balances and found wanting," one farmer after another went out, and the clergyman said to them, "Well, well, go out as soon as you are weighed." Strange scene, too, when Mr. Binney, at the Weigh House Chapel, to rebuke a gentleman who in the middle of the sermon took out his watch, said, "What is the clock, sir?" A strange scene, too, in that American place of worship, when the preacher, having preached some three hours, and a hungry sinner on retiring being told by the preacher he should soon be through, answered,

“Go on, sir, I’m only going home to dinner and shall be back before you are through.” Strange scenes had also happened from the modes adopted by the speakers.

Mr. Spurgeon illustrated this part of his subject in his own way, and quoted some amusing methods used by eccentric men for advancing the evangelizing work in which they were engaged. Amongst these illustrations was one in his own experience in Wales, where having gone on (as he said) the usual promise of rest, they got him to a Welsh meeting, and as they couldn’t get rid of the congregation on account of the impression produced, he preached several sermons until midnight, amid the most stirring scenes, that evening’s services resulting in the conversion of a large number of men who afterwards lost their lives in the Risca colliery explosion.

Several lantern views, specially prepared, followed the delivery of the lecture, in illustration of the chief scenes referred to — one of a continental cathedral, in which he said he had preached for the only time in his life in a gown, “because he couldn’t have preached at all had he not worn it, and he felt like a man running in a sack.” Mr. Spurgeon having thanked those present for their interest in, and support of, the College, the proceedings came to a conclusion.

THE CHURCH'S WORK. F11

I DID not observe, till our chairman told me so, that I was put down on the bill to give an evangelical address. I suppose I may interpret that rather widely, and not feel myself confined to addressing the unconverted, for, surely, that is an evangelical address in which one stirs up God's people to evangelize. That is the point that I have had before my mind as the main object of this evening. At the same time I shall have a word to the unconverted also.

Brethren of the London Baptist Association, and, indeed, brethren in Christ of any and every name, one of the main objects for which there is a church of God upon earth is the ingathering of his elect — the salvation of sinners. He might have taken every one of his saints home to heaven the moment they believed. They would certainly have committed less sin. They would have needed less of the Shepherd's care. They would the sooner be in heaven, swelling the everlasting song. The main object, I should think, of detaining the saints in this undesirable country — in this region of their banishment — must be that they may be a seed in the earth, and may bring others to the Lord Jesus Christ, and that so the eternal purpose of love may perpetually be, fulfilled. It seems to me that a church that does not see this is missing its great end and object. I do not think that, as Baptists, we always did see this. There were some who thought that a staunch Baptist existed for the maintenance of an ordinance. Well, it is well to maintain the ordinances, and God forbid that we should break one of the least of his commandments, and teach men so, and so be least in the kingdom; but, after all, it is not the main object of the existence of a church — to stand upon its orthodoxy, and to refuse communion with other churches in order to maintain that orthodoxy, and to feel that it has done its best when it has borne its testimony, although, probably, it bears its testimony pinned on its breast while it sleeps. Many a church has done that. It has never waked up — never aroused itself to serve the Lord in its generation; but, in its sleep, it has borne its testimony, and felt that it has done well, or it has sought the edification of two or three dozen down in Zoar — all saints, and all saints of the first water — all “sound” — as sound as could be, but with no sound going forth to the ends of the earth from them as to the good news of the salvation of souls. Are not we —

*A little garden walked around,
Chosen and made peculiar ground;
A little spot, enclosed by grace,
Out of the world's wild wilderness?*

And when we have sung that song, have we not sung enough and may we not go home and thank God that we are within the consecrated enclosure? That used to be the notion a great many years gone by. I hope that now, while we love to be enclosed, to be the garden of the Lord, and delight to invite him to come into his garden and eat his pleasant fruits, and while we do seek the edification one another — and God forbid that we should ever think that to be a secondary thing — we yet feel that we are to be edified on purpose that we may be a spiritual house in which the living God may dwell, and from which the life and power may go forth. We now feel that we want to be fed in order that we may work; for, “If any man will not work, neither let him eat,” should be a spiritual as well as a moral rule. We feel that now we want to hold the truth on purpose that, with that truth, we may rescue those who are under the thralldom of error. Still, I would to God that our churches felt even now more deeply than they do that the main object of the existence of a church at all is its conversion of sinners. If that be taken for granted, it will give a tone to all church work. The minister will preach with that view. Then the Sunday-school teachers will begin to teach with that view — not for teaching’s sake and instruction’s sake, though the teaching and the instruction are certainly very valuable, but with the design that the children’s souls should be there and then saved; that, as children, they should be converted to God while yet they are in the classes. Then those that distributed tracts and preached in the streets and took cottage meetings would be looking always towards this — that sinners may be impressed, convicted, and converted, and they would aim at that. And even the mere temporal work of the church, such as the deacons may have to discharge, would still be done with an eye to that, and although to seek the salvation of sinners may not seem to come under the serving of tables, yet let me tell you that there is a way of serving tables that will effectually prevent the conversion of sinners, as many a minister has known to his cost. And there is another way of attending to those temporalities of the church. They may be attended to in such a style that God himself deigns to make use even of them in the conversion of sinners. We must have the whole strength of the church brought to this point. The church must be sharpened up like a wedge, to one thin edge, and then driven with all her force, as with a mighty beetle, till we split asunder the

timber that lies before us. She must have sinners saved somehow — anyhow. “If by any means we may save some,” must be the very motto of each Christian church.

How is it to be done? Well, brethren, you know — for you have been told so often; that divine power alone can convert a soul; that this business is quite out of our hands — that spiritual life can only be communicated by a miracle — a miracle wrought by the Holy Ghost — that to see and feel their ruin is not given to the ungodly except as a work of grace. We may throw the light on their eyeballs, but we cannot make them see. We may set a loving Christ before them, but we cannot place Christ in their hearts. Unless God the Holy Ghost shall do it, it shall be altogether undone. What then? Why, then it is clear that we must abundantly and continually pray that the Holy Spirit may rest upon us. He will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. The Holy Spirit is never backward to work, but all the history of the church goes to show that, in seasons of the greatest operation of the Holy Spirit, there has generally preceded a time of mighty, intense, and earnest prayer.

Oh, then, to begin with, brethren and beloved, if we are to have souls saved we must pray: we must pray: we must pray. And prayer must be in all our homes. I trust that you do not live in the neglect of family prayer. How that ordinance ought to be maintained! It is the very strength of Protestantism, and the nurse of piety. Houses without family prayer cannot expect to see godly children. Where that is left out I little wonder if it should be said that the children of dissenters forsake the faith of their fathers. I think they never do so where that faith is riveted by morning and evening prayer. And on your knees alone, brother, there you must pray. But specially there should be the prayer of the church, as a church meeting for that object. Invite the congregation to join. But still the special and set meeting for prayer should be studiously maintained. I regret when I hear of some of you that cannot have a lecture and a prayer meeting. Two services a week are too many for you — not for your minister always, but for your tried constitutions. You know, the bricklayers, and carpenters, and working people that come to the Tabernacle can very well manage two services. Indeed, I think they would like a service every night in the week. They most of them have to earn their livings, but you, ladies and gentlemen, that live a little way out of town, are too tired with your day’s work, which, I hear, consists of going at ten in the morning and coming home at five. It is so very wearisome that you cannot be expected to have a lecture and a

prayer meeting. I am sorry for your sickness, and I trust that you may speedily recover, for there can be no real blessing, depend upon it, where the prayer-meeting is put into a secondary position. I feel certain of it, that the prayer-meeting must be maintained in its strength; and if so be some brethren must not preach when they are asked to pray; some brethren must not always say the same thing; some brethren must not be so long; some brethren must not be so cold and so slow. Oh, for real prayer-meetings in which they do pray! I believe that the people are sure to come to them when there is life kept up in the prayer-meeting. May God grant that this point may be attended to rightly and earnestly, and that you may see that though it may be the work of the Spirit of God to convert sinners, you must pray to him that the conversion may be done.

Well, then, if you again ask, "What are we to do?" I reply that, after you have prayed, you are now committed to the work. If a man prays God to give a harvest, he must go and plough and sow. If a man prays God, "O Lord, speed my business tomorrow," he must take down the shutters, must he not? Yes, and he must have his wits about him on the other side of the counter, to try and do as much business as he can, for if he just sits on the top of the counter, cross-legged, and tells the customers that he does not want them, we shall not believe in his prayer, shall we? And yet, I think, I have known some people do very much that way. They pray God to save sinners, but they never lift hand or foot to do anything in it. No, they are rather inclined to think that there must be too many sinners saved; and if they heard that there were five hundred persons converted under a sermon, they would say, "Ah, dear me! Yes, I suppose they were Methodists, weren't they?" They would be sure to set it down to that, and then they would begin to say that there were a great many who professed to be converted, but who never were, the truth being that such people do not believe in many persons being converted. If there are two or three — oh, that is very likely the Lord's hand. If there is anything little done, that is the Lord. Hear that! But if there are five hundred, then it cannot be the Lord. They do not expect him to do any great things. They worship a little God. Brethren, the magnitude of a thing rather commends it to me, and I seem to feel, "Surely the Lord is in this place," when I hear of multitudes being converted to Christ, for that seems to be after the Lord's own order, who doeth great marvels in the midst of the sons of men.

Now, if sinners are to be converted through us, let us use, at any rate, all our common sense. Some people have not much common sense, but let

them use the little they have, and it will strike them at once, and if there is anything about the place of worship that prevents people coming in — if anything there is about the order of service, or the time of service, or the method of service, which is likely to prevent attention, or likely to cause discomfort, — if the pews are all straight up in the back, so that a poor soul sits doing penance, and cannot listen — all such little things, which after all, are great things, should be seen at once. I used to think that surely it did not matter what shape the place was, or anything of the kind, but now I am of opinion that a person is more likely to be converted if he can breathe than he is if he is being stifled, and that a person is more likely to be converted if he can attend than he is if everybody drops an umbrella down as so many have done tonight. Down goes an umbrella, perhaps, in the middle of a sentence, or somebody comes up the aisle in a pair of pattens, as they do in the country villages, and the attention is taken off. I would give the gospel a fair chance, I think; and I should like some Christian people, who are worshipping in that nasty little dingy old hole, down in a corner, which nobody can see or find, to ask whether they are going to work about God's business with anything like the common sense with which they go about their own work? I will tell you what some are like. They are like the nigger who went to hear a sermon, and he heard that we ought to give God a tenth. So Zachary said that then he would enclose ten acres of land, and he would give the Lord one acre, and he would sow the Lord some potatoes, maize, and so on. So Zachy did; but after he had done it he did not seem to feel very contented with it; and you must know that the rascal never hoed the Lord's potatoes, and he never saw the Lord's maize at all; and so, when anybody rode by they wondered, to see nine parts of the field very carefully kept in order and the other part with nothing at all done on it. "That is the Lord's part," said Zachy, Well now there are many people like that; all their business is done with great skill and forethought. They throw their soul into it; but this little business about the little chapel that they attend — the business of taking care of God's minister and God's work — ah, that is the Lord's potatoes, and Zachy does not hoe them. I want you to hoe the lord's potatoes. I want God's work to be done with all your thoughtfulness and care, for if not, I am persuaded we cannot expect that sinners will be converted to God. If sinners are to be converted, then the next thing is that we must mind the conditions under which the Holy Spirit is generally found to work. What are they?

Well, you shall find, brethren, that the Holy Spirit does not bless that church where holiness is not regarded. Our grand old forefathers were very sound on this point — of very stern morals and holiness; but I am afraid that there is a good deal of laxity in some of our churches; and (take my word for it for the moment, but observe afterwards for yourselves) those churches which begin to relax — those churches in which the members commonly go to the amusements of the world, if there be such churches, are churches in which there cannot be conversions. There will be unholy members, but if they are tolerated, if sin is winked at because a man is a leading man., if the church lowers its standard of obedience to the divine will, the preacher may preach his heart out, but he cannot expect conversions. Achan is in the camp. The goodly Babylonish garment and the wedge of gold — the accursed things — are hidden away in the tent, and ye may march to battle, O ye sons of Israel, but ye shall come back defeated while this is the case. Oh! purge your churches then diligently. Ye officers of the church, do your duty in this respect, for the Lord will not go forth with your armies as long as unholiness is with you. We find that the Spirit of God works also where there is unity. That mild and gentle dove forsakes the troubled waters of strife, and he is found where men love each other with a pure heart fervently. It is no use for you to go in for the conversion of sinners when you hold such a church-meeting as you held last week. I do not know whom this may refer to, but I dare say it does refer to somebody here. Some of our church-meetings—in remote parts of the country let us say — would be a disgrace to the Hottentots. I speak very mildly when I say that. I do not believe that the devil would hold such a church-meeting as I have known of. Do you look astonished at my saying that. I never heard, of the devils quarrelling yet at all. Whenever the synagogue of Satan meets, it meets with wonderful unanimity. His kingdom is not divided against itself, and hence it has wondrous power: and we had better learn from the Philistines a little. Let us sharpen our axe and our coulter on their grindstone, and learn even from the devil that if we are to have power at all we must be one. Get together, brethren. If I may address any members of churches that have little variances — if your family has inherited a little, difference from another family, and your cousin was offended with somebody else's cousin, go and shake hands and end all that. If you are going to serve the Lord you must love each other first. It does not look as if there was any relation between this matter and the conversion of sinners, but there is a very close one, for God will not bless disunited churches. And then, again, we find that God blesses churches

where the members are all alive. Dear, dear me! There are some churches that have become part living and part dead. Some members are very earnest, others of them are very *not* earnest. Some of them are consecrated; others are, if not altogether unconsecrated, yet apparently so as to any outward acts. I believe the Lord blesses a church when all round them begin to consecrate themselves, their time, their talents, their money to the Lord. I have often received help for various causes, in this place, from persons whom I never thought to have had so much money; but they have devoted so much of their takings in some way to the cause of God, and brought it in a lump sum, which even astonished themselves. And I have thought to myself, "There is not only the good which this money may do, but it is an indication of the apostolic spirit still in the church, when men and women, both rich and poor, are willing to lay their goods at the feet of God's servants, that they may be used for his cause." When a church gets into that condition we shall soon have sinners converted. A consecrated church means a converted congregation before long.

But to my point still more clearly. If we wish sinners to be converted, what must be done? Well, ministers are to preach sermons that are likely to convert sinners; and there are plenty of sermons that could not convert sinners any more than snowballs could heat ovens. I have heard such, and I have read such. I would not be converted by such sermons if I were the sinner. Nay, I could not be. I should feel that the man was showing himself off magnificently; but what there is to convert a sinner in mere rhetoric and oratory I know not. Brethren, we must give up our grand style: more, we must give up our deep thoughts. We must often give up our wonderful openings up of marvellous mysteries; and we must go to these sinners, and have them saved somehow; and we must talk to them about such commonplace things as sin, and death, and judgment, and hell, and heaven, and Christ, and his blood. Yes, the blood. We must have that, and out with it, and disgust the hypocrites till they go their way; for they that are disgusted with the blood of Jesus Christ are not of the sort that are ever likely to find salvation, and certainly they have not yet received it. We must hammer away at these: we must keep to these commonplace things, and make every sermon at least to have some part of it in which we distinctly aim at the conversion of sinners. Well, then, after that we must get them to be converted. Ministers should take frequent opportunities of allowing people to come and see them. They should desire to see them, and expect to see them. Why, I know of some chapels where a person under concern

of soul would not know how to get at the minister at all. I have heard of one of whom his people said that he was incomprehensible on a Sunday, and invisible all the week. We ought to be understood when we preach, and we ought to so place ourselves that, if a sinner is under impression, we invite him to come and speak with us, or with some other Christian person, who will help him. My own conviction is, that in some congregations there are numbers of persons ready to declare what God is; doing in their souls, and who want a little help, but they do not get it. Now, if we want sinners to be converted we must be looking after them in that way. But oh, brethren, do not leave these things to the minister. Too much of that is done, and it is a sort of Protestant-Romanism to leave so much to ministers. It is the church — the church as a whole — that God will bless in the conversion of souls when it is really awakened.

And I should like to ask whether all the believers here present are distinctly at work for Jesus Christ? If you are, keep to the work you are at: do not run away from it. Some people are always catching at new ways of doing a thing, and neglecting the old-fashioned ways; but the old-fashioned ways, take them for all in all, having borne the test of time, have proved themselves to be among the most fruitful. Keep to your Sunday-school teaching, and your street preaching, and your tract distributing, and your visiting, and all such good things, and do them ten times better than ever you have done, and look out for the conversion of souls in them.

At the same time I wish that our churches did very much more than they do by way of special effort. I do not know when I ever felt more of the blessing of God than I did in preaching in Cannon-street Hotel, the other afternoon, to the stockbrokers. My dear friend, Mr. Mead, at Peek and Frean's, gave me an opportunity of addressing his staff of clerks one afternoon. I did so, and I have received a letter which I shall greatly prize, and I mean to preserve it. It is a letter signed by all of them, and thanking me for having come there to preach. And the other night we had here a meeting of coal-heavers, with some soldiers mixed with them, and also some hard-working men of different classes — some four or five hundred people. We gave them some good, substantial meat to eat, and got them in by that means; and then how they listened! Some of them said that they would not have, minded listening for another hour or so — they were so willing to hear. And yet we put the gospel pretty straight to them. Well, I do not think that the Lord expects people to hear the gospel on empty stomachs. I think he likes to see us doing what he used to do. He likes to

see them fed; and whether we feed them first, or preach the gospel to them first, they begin to believe in us; and perhaps, after believing in us, they may afterwards believe in the gospel. I wish that every person here, employing a number of men and women, would make an opportunity, perhaps once or twice a year, to get them together to hear a sermon or an address. There are many good men who would be willing enough to speak to them, and who are, looking out for opportunities, but do not know where to get them. Do you think that you Christian people use sufficiently the rooms which you have got? We had a great expense in hiring a room here, and a room there; but there is my very excellent friend living in a house at £300 a-year rent; and that drawing room — dear me! what a fine room it is! But how often have you used it? About twice a-year, and the rest of the year it is yours for killing the minister. When he calls he is shown into that cold, horrid room, and he does not know what to do with himself; he wishes they would let him go down into the kitchen, and sit by the fire. But no — the drawing room — that is the room for killing people: it is the murder room, and it gives people rheumatism, and all sorts of things. I cannot make out what they have such rooms for: but the proper way of using your rooms is to hold Bible-classes and prayer-meetings in them. My friend, Mrs. Brown, the wife of Mr. Hugh Stowell Brown, uses the drawing-room, and every room they have got, for classes and meetings on Sunday. We have to build school-rooms, and all that, and you do not use your own rooms at all. Some of you might have a hundred or two in your houses without any expense, except, perhaps, that you might have to roll up your carpet. Well, never mind about that. It will have so much the less wear, I dare say. There are all sorts of things to be done if people wish to bring souls to Christ. They should use sometimes one thing, and sometimes another. I can see an old friend of mine in this Tabernacle: I shall not point him out. I think he has brought to me this last year four souls that have been added to the church. He goes and walks about Hyde-park, for he has not very much to do, and he gets people into conversation, and gets civil to them, and then he tells them he can get them into the Tabernacle, and he brings them into his seat, for he pays for four or five seats on purpose, he does not bring them here, and then show them into somebody else's seat, mark you. For many years this dear friend has had great reward in getting hold of people, and bringing them to hear the Word, and then finding them converted. But. some of us are so very bashful that we do not like to intrude; I wish that some of our natural modesty could be communicated to other people. I recollect that when I

first came to London as a boy, to go to school at Maidstone, I went to some coach yard or other, where there was a coach to go to Maidstone and when I was sitting in the coach ready to go, there was a chap selling knives with twenty-five blades, or something like that. He put one in at the coach window, and stuck it right before my face to know whether I would buy it. Why did he want to intrude on me like that? He had no business to poke a twenty-five bladed knife into my eye. But, you know, he had never studied that kind of modesty which some of us have. If he had kept that twenty-five bladed knife in his pocket, and gently said, "If there should be a person in the coach who would like to look at a knife with twenty-five blades, I have got one somewhere in my pocket," he would not have sold one in a century. But he opened the blades, and he knew that the knife was a piece of goods which would be wonderfully fascinating to a boy going to school, and he picked me out for a customer. I wish you would have some sort of feeling like this, "I want Jesus Christ; received by these poor souls, and I am not going to accost them in such a mild way that I shall certainly be repulsed; but I will bring Christ before them, if necessary even in an odd way — a way that shall startle them — sooner than suffer them to go without knowing him." Now, I meant to say a lot more about these things, but my time is gone, except a few minutes, in which I want to address those of you who are not yet converted to God.

"How am I to be saved? What is the way by which I can be saved, and saved now?" A friend writes me the other day to thank me for having on one occasion finished a sermon with a little prayer, in which I asked that those who sought the Savior might join in. He said, "There are some so utterly ignorant of the way of salvation that they want the very words put into their mouths." I remembered how the Lord said, "Take with you words, and come unto me, and say" — and how he taught the sinner exactly what to say. I do not think that we can ever put the gospel too simply, beloved friends, or repeat its generous story too often. Well, soul, if thou sayest, "What am I to do?" thou hast this to do — to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and be baptized, for "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. He that believeth not shall be damned." It often occurs that friends come to me after service, and ask me to pray for them. I was telling the friends here on Sunday night how I served one lady, who may probably be present now. She had come twice to speak to me about her soul, and I said to her, on the second occasion, "I have told you plainly the way of salvation, namely, that you are to trust your soul in his hands, and commit

yourself to him, resting in the blood of his atonement. Have you done that?" She said, "No, and asked whether I would pray for her. I said, "No," — distinctly not. She looked at me with astonishment, and she said, "Will you not pray for me?" "No," I said, "I have nothing for which to pray for you. I have set the way of salvation so plainly before you that if you will not have it you will be lost, and if you will have it you will be saved now. I have nothing further to say to you, but in God's name to set before you life or death." Still she said, "Do pray for me!" "No," I said, "would you have me ask God to save you without your believing? Oh, you deserve to be damned if you will not believe — doubly so. Would you have me ask God to shape his gospel so as to let you in as an exception? I do not see why he should. His plan of salvation is so simple that you must come to it; and if you won't come to it, I am not going to ask God anything, for I do not see anything that is wanted from him. I ask you this — 'Will you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?'" I put it very plainly, and I was rather surprised, I must confess, when the sister said, very deliberately, "If it be so, then, that salvation will come to me by believing, I do believe what the Scripture says concerning Christ; and, moreover, I feel that I can trust myself with him, because he is God, and he has offered a sufficient sacrifice; and I do trust myself with him," said she, "just now; and I feel such a strange peace stealing over me at this very moment. I *have* trusted, him. I am certain that I am saved!" And in a moment she said to me: "Good evening, sir; there are other people waiting to see you," and away she went, like a common-sense woman as she was.

Why will ye die? Why will ye die? Oh, why should it be so hard for men to be willing to find their own good — to be willing to be saved from their misery? Why, you can give gold away by the sackful, and everybody wants it. You have but to take a handful of coppers and fling them from the window, and the streets will be full of people. But when this, which is better than gold or jewels, is freely presented among men, they tread it under foot as swine tread pearls. Well, if you will do this, I pray the Master have pity and bear long with you; but, as surely as you live, it will come to close and terrible terms between you and God one day, for they that will not bend must break, and he that will not willingly stoop shall come down in tremendous ruin. Reject not the Christ who saveth. Do not despise to your souls. Oh, blessed and eternal Spirit, work in men that simple childlike faith which brings them to the Savior! Amen.

LABOURERS TOGETHER WITH GOD. F12

I AM always sorry when you cheer me at the commencement, because you little know how you will be disappointed. Our esteemed friend Mr. Statham has been leading us in the right tone, and I hope that a right spirit is pervading the meeting. If you will read the Report I think you will be greatly pleased with it. It is not only full of interesting matter, but it is exceedingly well written. I cannot say that I am a general admirer of Reports. I usually find, when I cannot sleep at night, that a Report is one of the best things I can take. But this Report lacks the soporific element altogether, and there are many admirable sentences in it worth quoting. I shall quote one or two, perhaps, before I have done, as I could not say anything so good myself. The spirit of gratitude which Mr. Statham says was the key-note of our resolution I hope reigns, supreme in the hearts of all who have done anything for the society; but I earnestly hope that you who have not done anything will not feel much personal gratitude, but rather feel a little shame at not having had a share in that for which the rest have a right to be grateful.

We will begin by being honest, and every man who has contributed his mite will now bless and magnify the Lord that there has been a somewhat larger harvest. If we have not sown one single grain of *it*, perhaps it were better that repentance should take the place of a spirit of gratitude, and that reformation should follow, and that we should begin at once to do something for the Master. Yet, even with you, there may be gratitude that others have done the work if you have not. So we will altogether join in praising, and blessing, and magnifying the Lord that somewhat better has been done this year than last year, and that God has smiled upon our work. I am grateful for the success of which the Report speaks.

It is a great blessing to have success. Of course we all know — at least, all those who have empty chapels know — that large congregations are no criterion of success. Large numbers of persons added to a church are no evidence of the divine blessing whatever; in fact, there may be a greater blessing resting upon empty pews than upon a full house, and if a church decreases sensibly from year to year, that may be only a proof of the high

faithfulness of the man who would not condescend to a theology so popular and so vulgar that it draws the multitude. You know how the thing is done. Now I, who do not sympathize with that, nevertheless say that I am thankful for success; but I feel in my heart a deeper gratitude to God for permission to work for him. I could bow at his feet and bless his name if he would only let me be a little ant, and live at his feet, if he only would not crush me, and let me live there, and carry grains of sand for him throughout eternity. It seems to me to be one of the highest gifts of his grace to be permitted to take any share whatever in his grand enterprise of the salvation of the sons of men, and I invite you to be grateful tonight that God smiles on our success, and even if there had not been any success, I should invite you to be grateful that he permits you to serve him.

I think we lack one evidence of the perfect reconciliation of our souls to God, until we get to do something for him. I have pictured to my mind sometimes the younger son coming home to his father, and his father falling on his neck and kissing him, and making that great festival with music and dancing. But I can imagine the father, when the market-day came round, sending the elder son to market to sell the corn and the fat beasts, and the younger son being kept at home, and I can suppose the father saying to himself, "I don't know; I love my younger son, but I can't trust him; I don't think it right to put him in any position of responsibility as yet." And I can suppose that might go on for weeks and months, the younger son being always kept at home, occupied upon such duties as might be allotted to him, but never being allowed to do anything that required trust, and at last the feeling came in his heart: "My father, I have no doubt, has gone as far in forgiveness as he can, but he has not forgotten, and I can see that my elder brother is always sent where there is any responsibility and trust, and my father cannot trust me yet." I think he would feel it in his inmost soul. And it would only be at last when his father would entrust him with some treasure, some family heirloom, or send him out upon some important work, that he would say: "At length I have the child's place again, I have got back fully into my father's heart, and now I am as dear to him as my eldest brother." Paul seemed to feel something of that kind when he thanked God that he had put him in trust with the Gospel. It was the grandest trust that could be given, and he trusted such a sinner as Saul of Tarsus with it, and he thanked God, saying: "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

It becomes a token of complete reconciliation when the Lord allows us to get to work for him in that department which is the dearest to his heart, which he accounts as the apple of his eye, for which, in fact, the Savior shed his blood. Moreover, I do not see how our sense of oneness to Christ could ever have been perfected if we had not been permitted to work for Christ. If he had been pleased to save us by his precious blood, and then leave us with nothing to do, we should have had fellowship with Christ up to a certain point, but (I speak from experience) there is no fellowship with Christ that seems to me to be so vivid, so real to the soul, as when you get to try and win a soul for him. Oh, when you come to battle, with that soul's difficulties, to weep for that soul's hardness; when you come to set the arguments of divine mercy before it, and find yourself foiled when you are in a very agony of spirit, and feel that you could die sooner than that soul should perish; then you get to read the heart of him whose flowing tears, and bloody sweat, and dying wounds showed you how much he loved poor fallen mankind. You must have something of this, sort to do. The church wants mission work to lift her up to a proper elevation, in which she may begin to know the great heart of Christ in the right sense, and to understand something of him who came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost.

I felt, when coming here, that I would give anything to get off the task, because I felt utterly incompetent to deliver a missionary speech. Mr. Smith, from Delhi, can give you such a speech, because he can tell you what he has seen and what God has done by him. Our dear friend Mr. Statham has given us such a speech, with the right tone in it; but I question whether any man ever spoke in a tone equal to the weight of this wondrous object — missions, the work of evangelizing the world. Ah, ye orators! if this were a fit; theme for you, you might expend yourselves there. All human eloquence and forcible speech might quail before such a mighty subject. I shall not attempt to measure it, but will say a few words to you on the privilege which God has granted to us in allowing us to be co-workers with him in the gathering out of his elect from among mankind, and in the ultimate conquest of the entire world for Christ.

I believe to this moment in the ultimate winning of the whole world for Christ. I cannot go in for that theory of the ship breaking, up out there and cannot be saved, and that we have to snatch a few off the wreck. It is a most pleasant theory, because it allows one to sleep at night, and not be troubled about men's souls. I like nothing that makes me feel easy about

my fellow-creatures' souls. I always denounce as error that which operates upon my spirit to make me less concerned about the immediate salvation of my fellow-men. It is a high privilege that God has given us to be associated with him in this work. In the creation he made the world alone; yet when he put the man into the garden, he bade him dress and keep it; there was a little fellowship between man and his Maker in creation — not much. Then came redemption, and in the payment of that wondrous price by which we were redeemed, we could have no communion; he must pay it all who has (blessed be his name!) paid it all. But then in the application of that redemption there is an opportunity given us to have fellowship with Jesus. In the telling out of the good news, and in being the instrument under God of impressing men's hearts, the Holy Spirit working through us, we are enabled to have most extraordinary communion with Christ, much closer fellowship with Christ than some have ever yet attributed to human agency. It is a very wonderful thing that Paul should speak of those who were begotten of him, and yet in another place should say he travaileth, in birth for them; as if, taking the two sides of parentage, he became in all respects the spiritual parent of men's souls. It is marvellous to me how much God can use us poor creatures, and how wonderfully he deigns to put the treasure into the earthen vessel, so that if you want the treasure you must have the earthen vessel too.

Now, this enterprise of winning the world for Christ is looked upon by some with a degree of dread, if not of unbelief, because it is so stupendous. Oh, sir, it is to me the very charm of the thing. If our Lord had said, "My children, purchased with my blood, I will give you some little tasks, some easy work to do," why, manhood had never been lifted up as now it is. The world, with all its millions to be made to bow before Emmanuel's feet through the agency of the church of God! — the idea is marvellous. Lord, what is man that thou art so mindful of him as to entrust him with such a work as this? or the son of man that thou dost so visit him? Truly, thou hast made him lower than the angels; but thou hast in this thing, as well as in many others, in association with thy dear Son, crowned him with glory and honor. A small conflict! It would seem as if God had not trusted us with his great heart. But a stupendous work like this — a work which involves eternity — a work which takes in countless multitudes of men throughout the ages — to entrust us with this is a wondrous reincarnation of himself in his church, and a living over again in his people the life of soul-winning. I think if Christ had said, "My dear

children, I trust you with England; go and evangelise it; take the British Islands, all of them," I hope by this time we should have been at his feet with many tears, and saying, "Lord, let us try France; there are some people across in Brittany very like the Welsh. Lord, include them." And I think after a while some bold brother would have said, "Gracious Master, let us try all the Latin races; enlarge our commission, let us go to them." And if our brother Wall had succeeded in Rome, and other missionaries elsewhere, there would be some saying, "Let us pray God that, as India belongs to Great Britain, we may go thither." We should always have been asking to have our commission extended, I think, if we loved him well; and as we do love him well (O that we loved him better!) let us be glad that the commission is so great; let us go at the work in his name with all the strength that we have, and all the strength that he is prepared to give us. "But the odds are so deadly," says somebody; superstition is so strong; the wisdom of men stands out so against the gospel, especially in India; what can we do? Would you like the battle to be less mighty than it is? Where is your chivalry then? I think God is acting with us something like the English king when his son was fighting with the French. He felt that he was hardly driven, and he sent a messenger to his father to ask for succor. "No," said the king, "*he* is doing very well, and I won't mar the victory by sending more help; let him fight it out." Good Lord! I would not have the battle of my life made less stern than it is. Give me more strength. That is a far better alternative. We do not want the skeptics to be less wise. The Lord make us to use better "the foolishness of preaching." We do not want the superstition of mankind, as far as we are concerned, to be less fierce and strong than it is; nay, but let us have greater courage in the blessed gospel, and hold up more light to scare these bats and owls away. A thing that might be easily done would not show so much of the divine condescending truthfulness in us. "But behold," he seems to say, "*I* will give them this great, this stern, this impossible task to do, and I will be with them even to the end of the world, and they shall win the victory, and great shall be the glory which they shall bring to my name." Let the odds, then, stand as they are, and the difficulties be as stupendous as they are.

"But oh," says one, "the weary time! Here we have been nearly nineteen centuries trying to convert the world." No, you have not. There were years in which missionary work was carried on, but there was a long dark night in which nothing was done and everything was undone, and Romanism was getting darker and blacker, and clouding the light instead of spreading it. It

is eighty-five years — is it not? — since missionary enterprise began. And then, in the first years, how little it was. We have not been long at it. Your Report says, “Our Lord has put to a divinely generous use the small efforts of his church.” I am sure that is true. It is little that has been done — very little. And don’t talk about time — what are eighty-five years? Little more than one man’s lifetime. For such a work we must not begin to talk about length of years. “But where is the promise of his coming?” say you. It is where it always was, where the faithful rejoice in it; but they are not everlastingly quoting it in impatience to complain of him, or as an argument to desist from work or to become unbelieving. He will come time enough; but for my part I will rejoice if he comes now; I will rejoice, if I live to see it, if he does not come for ten thousand years, because one likes to know that Christ gives to his church now a long trust, a long fight, and a long work to do. We shall be in heaven very, very soon (would God that all in this hall might be translated to the skies!), and one would like in heaven to have something to recollect of what was done here below; and if one could have fifty years of service crowded full of work for Christ, one might praise the Lord for that, and think over the incidents with grateful adoration for ever. The church must have some history as well as her history written yonder in a blaze of light for her greatest honor; and the greatest honor she can do her Master comes from the history written in blood, and the history written in toil and sweat, by her missionaries among the sons of men.

Somebody has complained of the great expense. Nay, my friends, but this must not be. For who is he that will complain save only one, who said, “Wherefore is this waste? This ointment might have been given to the poor”? If the Lord Jesus had given us an enterprise which might be safely carried out without any sacrifice, at the expenditure of a few pence per annum — which seems to me to be the notion that some Christian men have of missions — we might go on our knees and say, “Lord, give us something to do that will take up more of our money; Lord, we have no room for the alabaster boxes now; we cannot find thee here to break them on thy head and pour out the sacred nard; we cannot find out what to do.” Here you see, in infinite condescending trustfulness, Christ has given us work to do which will take up all the money we have got. As much as we can possibly bring can be profitably used in this work of extension of the Master’s kingdom. And so let it be. We ought to be glad of it, and thank him for having given us such a work as this. Oh, what a grand scale is that

on which God hath made all things that have to do with Christ's redemption! Sir, I believe in immortal souls; and I believe in redemption from death and hell, and a redemption to heaven and eternal glory. I believe that interests that will never know an end hang upon the preaching of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; therefore I thank God that in a work so wonderful as to be nothing less than divine, a work which will want all the ages fully to develop it, he has been pleased to associate such poor creatures as we are, who, though we are poor, are next akin to Deity himself; for between us and God there standeth but that One who is God, and, blessed be his name, he is man too! He has lifted up his redeemed people, and now, having made them sons, he bids them do the Son's work, go forth for the conversion, of the multitude whom he hath redeemed with his precious blood. Oh that we could rise to the magnitude of the scale in which God works, and begin to feel that —

*Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands our soul, our life, our all.*

I will not keep you much longer. I should like to express my intense satisfaction with the missionaries of this society. I feel grateful to know that the missionaries rise to a sense of the responsibility that God has laid upon them. It has been in my way to meet with a good many lately, and to have correspondence with some more; and I can mention, too, as our dear friend Mr. Statham said, some missionaries' wives that are worth their weight in gold. There is a work doing in Calcutta that shall make the name of my dear sister Mrs. Rouse famous among women.. I bless the Lord that there is a divine, earnest spirit amongst our missionaries, who (if not all yet, such as I know) are the very men that ought to be sent out, and they will, God helping them, do their work right gloriously. But the society wants more men, and I have been running my eye over all the young men here especially, thinking whether I should say to them, "In the name of God, thus saith the Lord, out of the thick darkness wherein he dwelleth, whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I pray that the seraphim may touch with the live coal from off the altar some lip here, that some heart here may leap up to the lip and say, "Here am I, send me." I hope there are many such. I dream of Carey still hammering at the last; I dream of the village schoolmaster still willing to go forth and teach the heathen. I dream of boys sitting at the chimney-corner, who shall hear of what God is doing, and as they grow up shall become Marshmans and Knibbs. I pray God it may be so. Pray for men, brethren; a man is more precious than the

gold of Ophir — a man who stands out with consecrated spirit. O God, if we had such men! A few more fresh ones, how they might stir us all up to do more than we have ever dreamed of for the cause of Christ.

Well, but we want more money, too. Yes, and you have got it. God has trusted his church with money to a wonderful extent. I am persuaded that we must rise to a higher style of giving before the Lord will ever bless the nations, through us, to any great extent. Was not that well said by Mr. Statham, that our luxuries cost us more than our Lord? Will you think of that, some of you? Will you try to see if it is not true? Put down any one of your luxuries. Luxuries? Why, there are, some whose stockings cost them more in a year than they ever give to Christ. More is spent on one's neck or foot, more sometimes on one's little finger, than is given in the year for Christ. Some of those diamond rings ought to go into the plate tonight. And there are plenty of other things we might do for Christ. I hear a brother sometimes say he gives his tithe; and what wonderful sums people would give, if they gave their tithes punctually and regularly for Christ! But I hope there are some of us who would never come down to a tithe, or to a half, who would not dare to go to our beds if we had not given more than half of what God had given to us. A tithe may be heavy to a man of one estate, but to another man it would be but a trifle to give away half of what he has. The first consideration of a Christian man ought to be, "How much can I do for Christ?" He has paid his way, of course; but, that being done, he says to himself, "I must cut down everything but my Lord. If I belong to him, and all that I have, for him I must live." "Ah," you say, "yours is Utopian talk." I know it is for some of you, but it is not for some who, having tasted and tried it, do confess that the more they give the more they have; and, better still, they do not glory in having more, since it only brings more responsibility; but it gives them joy and peace to be able to consecrate their substance to their Lord. The heathen are perishing! Are you going to accumulate money? The heathen are perishing! they are sinking into hell! You believe in no higher hope by which they will come out of it; you believe they are lost forever, at least, most of you; and shall the little account of Consols be added to, or souls be saved? Shall you look out for accumulating a fortune, getting your name in a corner of *The Illustrated London News* as having died worth so much? or shall souls be saved, or, at least, shall your part of the work of consecration be done towards the work of their salvation? Let each man answer for himself, not tonight, but in the quiet of his soul before the living God.

And, dear friends, we must get up to a higher style in praying about missions. I know some men can get anything they like in prayer. Oh, for some five hundred Elijahs, each one upon his Carmel, crying unto God! and we should soon have the clouds bursting with showers. Prayer! Yes, that was the right way to begin moving that debt — to pray about it. Oh, for more prayer — more constant, incessant mention of the mission cause in prayer! and then the blessing will be sure to come. Some mention was made of the sovereignty of God, and the way in which it crippled some of our forefathers. I believe in the sovereignty of God to the very full, and in predestination. I believe God appoints us to work with all our hearts for him. I believe in the sovereignty that gives to any one of us the opportunity of doing all we can. But you know in the old days those very good people that were so very sound, though they defended the faith and held the fort, storming the fort did not occur to them. They were like a certain pew that I saw in a parish church the other day — very high, quite shut out, and spikes all over the top — so that no irregular sinner should come in. Now, we have got out of that system. We have taken the spikes down; the doors will open, and we invite others in. Well, that is a right spirit. God grant that we may keep on with it! not giving up precious truth, but having with it a noble spirit for the glory of Christ. I meet with some few still who are very firm and staunch, and very strong, who do not go with any very active effort; and they are like a tree that I saw in the New Forest some time ago — an iron beech. You could not possibly cut it. There are some few such, but it is a pity to waste knives and axes upon them. The thing is to go on to some that can be molded and moved, and I would say to such, “Dear friends, you sometimes say, ‘ Will the heathen be saved if we do not send the missionaries?’” I will ask you another question, “Will you be saved if you do not send out any missionaries?” — because I have very dreadful doubts about whether you will. Do not smile. The man that does nothing for his Master, will he be saved? The man that never cares about the perishing heathen, is he saved? Is he like Christ? If he be not like Christ, and have not the spirit of Christ then he is none of his. “Well,” says a young man, “I have been arguing with myself whether I should go.” I will tell you another thing to argue. Take it for granted that you ought to go unless you can prove that you should not. Every Christian man is bound to give himself to the Master’s work in that department which most needs him, and that is foreign missions, unless he can prove to his own satisfaction that he ought not, and that he has not the gift. I wish that could be learned by our men. You want a call to the ministry. I believe that is

right, but those who can speak well ought rather to try and show that they are not bound to preach, and if they can show that they are excused; but they ought to go through that process first. You are bound, brother, unless you can show that God in his providence has utterly prevented you.

The other night I started up in such a fright. I dreamed that my heart had stopped, and that the sweat was on my brow. I had my watch on the table just by the side of me, and it was very singular that the watch had stopped just at that very minute. I suppose my ear missed the tick, and had invented the dream that my heart had stopped. Ah, I wish that some Christian, whenever he feels that works of piety are not being carried on by him, would start up in a fright, and say, "Ah, is my heart stopped? After all, am I a Christian or not?" "By their fruits ye shall know them"; that is, other people. Don't you think you ought to know yourself very much that way? When you are doing no more for Christ, ought you not to question whether you love him? When I was at Mentone, I heard that the land, before the English came there, used to be valued by the number of olive trees on it. That is the way to value yourselves, to value the church — by productiveness. Do you produce anything for Christ? I was startled when I came through Marseilles, and they were putting a fire in my chamber one day for my rheumatism, I saw the man putting something in the fireplace, and I asked him to let me look at it. It was what I thought — vine branches. If a vine branch bear no fruit it is good for nothing. You cannot make it into the smallest useful article. Shall a man even hang a pot upon the fire thereby? It is good for nothing but to be burned if it be not fruitful. A fruitless merchant, or a fruitless professor of science, may have some sort of use; but a fruitless Christian is good for nothing. "Men gather them, and they are cast into the fire, and they are burned."

I began with the privilege of working for Christ; I close with the necessity of working for Christ. If you do not bear fruit to him, are you his disciples at all? Can you prove that you belong to him? Salvation is not of works, but salvation produces works, and such works as those which show themselves in our missionary operations. I speak as unto wise men. Judge ye what I say. By the dying myriad's I do beseech you, arise to work with Christ for their salvation. By his blood and wounds, which brought you from your own destruction, cease not both to pray and to labor, until the hymn with which my predecessor finished shall be heard all over the world:

*“Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run.”*

DISESTABLISHMENT. ^{F13}

Let me say at the outset that I dissent somewhat from the hope which some of you entertain as to the disestablishment and disendowment of the Church at a very early period. I hope it may come; I should be glad to see it come this evening; but I am afraid lest you should be very sanguine, and then be disappointed. I thought some time ago that some of us were coming up, like Blucher, just at the end of Waterloo, only to see the running away of the foe; but it has not been so these last twenty years, and I am inclined, to think that it will want a great many years yet. I will tell you why. Did you ever try to whistle all the mites out of a fat Stilton cheese? Did you ever sit still and wait until that consummation had arrived? I think there is great hopefulness in the Church itself of disestablishment coming, only the friends whom we trust get just up to the point, and then they draw back. When it comes to the parting with temporalities, they

*Linger shivering on the brink,
And fear to launch away.*

I quite agree with Mr. Antliff's remark that there are many of the best men among the clergy of the Church of England. I know it to my satisfaction and joy. I met one of them not long ago, and I said to him, "You know I have been walking through your garden." He replied, "I am sure you are very welcome look in at any time." I then said, "As I walked along your garden, do you know what I thought of? I wondered how you would like to be disestablished and disendowed." "My dear brother," said he, "that has often crossed my mind." I said, "It may, perhaps, be as well that it should, because you will probably come to it." "That may be," he said; "and I sometimes put it to my conscience whether I should, like those men of God in Scotland at the Disruption, come out and leave everything for the truth's sake." "Well" I said, "what decision did you come to?" He replied, "Well, I thought that by the grace of God I could do that, much as I love the old rectory and grounds." So I said, "Why don't you, then?" "Now," he said, "that was unkind of you. No one is more glad to see you than I am; but you do say some things that ought really not to be said, preventing brotherly feeling." "Well, my dear sir," I said, "but why don't you?" He replied, "If ever there should arise in the Church of England an error which might constrain a follower of Christ to leave it, I hope I shall be one."

“Well,” I said, “if there is no error already there which should constrain you to leave it, be of good comfort, there never will be.” So I saw him no more, but I went on my way. I am afraid that neither party will come up to the mark.

Although my whole heart and sympathy are with the evangelical clergy of the Church of England, yet certain]y as to courage I have more hope of the High Church. But I have not any hope of them either, for they may write tracts and books about “the Crown Rights of Jesus,” and the necessity of liberty for the Church, but still I am afraid that when it comes to the leaving altogether of the Land of Goshen and coming clean out of Egypt, the leeks and the garlic and the onions and the cucumbers had been: so long enjoyed that they will be loth to part with them. I hope the matter will come to an end, because this fighting is no joy to us who have taken the question up. I am supposed to be naturally of a bitter or acid disposition, to be narrow and bigoted, and so on. I have read it, brethren, and it is a great benefit to a man to see himself as others see him. Yet, so far as I know, I never struck a blow against the Church of England in any shape or form, whatever its errors might be, without feeling my arm somewhat the weaker, because of the many good, excellent men there are in that Church. Years ago I said I could almost wish that there were none such, and that the Church might get worse and worse. I thought it was rather complimentary language, but it has been bandied all round the three kingdoms, and people have said, “See what a bigoted man this is! he wishes that the Church may grow worse and worse;” to which I have replied in a great many cases that I have never wished any such thing, because I never wish for impossibilities. If I were diabolical enough to wish to see the Church in a sorrowful, unhappy, and ungracious plight, I could never wish to see it reduced to what the Established Church is now. I sorrow over it and feel no joy in my heart. We have taken up this matter, many of us, though we are not “sensible dissenters,” though I am afraid we are “political dissenters” — we have taken this up as a matter of religion. At least, I have for one. It is a thing I pray about. It is to me, as much a fundamental doctrine of my faith as almost any you could mention, that the Church of Christ is Christ’s Church, and not the State’s Church, and that she has rights and privileges which are not to be sold and bartered for any amount of gold or patronage.

We wish to see the Church separated from the State for these reasons. First, we hold that the establishment of one peculiar form of Christianity,

and the leaving out of other Christians, is a clear wrong and injustice. We feel that, if we were the patronized sect, we should find it difficult with the light we possess to defend our position. We should be half ashamed to meet our episcopal brethren who were unendowed if we Baptists and Congregationalists were endowed; we should always feel as if we owed them an apology, and we should say to them, "We cannot help it; somehow or other we have got to be endowed; pray forgive us and bear with us, for ours is an anomalous position; we feel that we are doing an injustice to you, and we are sorry for it." That is how we should feel; and because our denominations are inferior in number, taken one by one, to the Church of England, I think it all the more unjust. There is an island of the Turks out yonder in the sea which contains a certain number of white persons who all go to church, a number of brown persons who are all Wesleyans, and a larger number of black persons who are all Baptists. As far as my observation goes, it is very much the same thing here. The white people, the very respectable ones, go to church; the next grade, to the Wesleyans; and the very black people belong to the Baptists. Now, it would seem to me to be an injustice that there should be an endowment in Turk's Island for the support of the religion of the whites, who are those who have the most money, and, therefore, could support their own religion, while the black man and the brown man receive nothing from the national treasury. If you endow any people, let the weaker brethren have it. Surely, if there were any justice in it there would be a kind of chivalry about the matter; but for a sect that numbers nearly all the lords and the great people of the land to come to the treasury to take gold out of it — ah! where can be the justice of this?

And because we do not want our nation to go on perpetrating what is certainly a grievous bodily wrong — the denial of religious equality to us all — therefore we must lift up our voices. If we were quietly to endure it, we should be accomplices in the wrong; we must speak and continue to speak until that wrong is redressed. The union of the Church with the State causes, before all the world, a misrepresentation of what the Church is. It always must be so. I dare say the Church of England is as fair a representation of the Church of Christ as could very well be produced under the circumstances. But look at its membership. Who are members of the Church? I am one. We are all members of it. I have been informed that I am a non-attending member, an outside member. All Englishmen are said to be members of the National Church, and they are treated as such. Did

Christ ever mean to set forth to the world that his Church really was everybody born within a certain district? I had thought there were some hedges for his fields; that there was a sort of division between his spiritual kingdoms and the kingdoms of this world. But where is discipline? Is discipline possible? Let it be attempted. It has been attempted bravely here and there, if not wisely; but it cannot be carried out. How can it be? You are brought and made members of Christ, children of God, while you are yet unconscious of it. You take those solemn vows upon yourselves at certain periods, and you are all of you, whatever your character may be, members of this great National Church. I say that is a misrepresentation altogether of the church of Christ. To me one of the most sorrowful things is, that in this Church Jesus Christ is practically dethroned. First, by name; for who — it is no fault of hers, God bless her! — who is the head of the English Church? Who is declared to be so?

Then to whom do we refer if we want to know whether this practice is right or not? What is the statute book of the Church? Is it the Bible? No, sirs; it is a book that was made by human, uninspired hands. Ay, and above that, is the Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland, made up of a great many sorts of people, “all honorable men.” It seems to me that to ask Parliament what I am to do, if I am Christ’s servant, is to be disloyal at once to my Lord. He has given me his statute book, and if I do not understand it I must seek his enlightening spirit by prayer. But to go down to the House of Commons to ask those gentlemen about it! I would ask them about a great many things, but certainly not about religion. I am afraid if I were to begin to test them about it I should find them signally failing. A gentleman once called upon me here to know how it was that I could give my vote to a certain member of Parliament, who was unorthodox in his doctrinal sentiments? I did not answer him, but I simply called down my tube, and said, “Bring me up the Westminster Assembly’s Catechism!” It was brought up, and I gravely began to question the man upon the doctrine of election. He knew nothing about it; he seemed all at sea. Then I asked him what he was. I think he said he was a lawyer. I said, “Well, I should never employ you as a lawyer, because you are not sound on the doctrine of election.” He did not see the relation between the two things, and I said, “Neither do I see any relation between the orthodoxy of a man and his becoming a member of Parliament.” Why, if all members of Parliament were Charnocks, and Owens, and the greatest divines that ever lived, it would be treason against Christ for the Church to go and submit

her laws to them. "One is your Master, even Christ," says the Church. I am a very High Churchman, indeed, in that respect. I am sorry for a man that he should ever bring his conscience down to submit to the dictate of the State about a thing which concerns Christ. I should not like to be in such a position that I could not pray to God without a petticoat of some particular kind, and some men cannot unless it is of a certain color one day and a different color the next. Well, dear souls, are they to go to Parliament to know all about it? Of course they must, as long as they take the parliamentary money. I pray God that the little finger of the State, which has been heavy upon them, may become thicker than a man's loins to them. I should like to see them feel the bitter oppression, for they will never come out of Egypt until the tale of their bricks shall be doubled, and until the straw is withheld. Happy shall be the day for them when they dare to come out with this upon their banner: — Christ alone is our Master, and the Word of God is our great law book. Or, if they do not take this as their motto, at any rate let them feel that Christ's church cannot be cut, and carved, and molded by a Parliament that has not the understanding to do it, and was never meant to do it. It can manage some things very well, especially when it is a Liberal government; but as to our souls, I would not trust the Liberal government with them any more than I would a Conservative government. The Church must be free, and Christ must be her sole Master, cost what it may, in England, Scotland, and everywhere else.

I, for one, hope that this question will soon be settled, because the present state of things unites men who ought to be separated. It is very sad, to my mind, to see how some of our evangelical brethren are toned down. They will speak out admirably sometimes, and some of them do now; but the tone is gradually declining towards a compromise, I fear, and things will gradually get worse and worse. Now, what communion has Christ, after all, with Belial; or an Evangelical with a Ritualist? Can there be any? I cannot see it; there ought to be none, and I pray to God that the two may be sundered from each other, but I do not think they ever will be so long as there are common slices of bread and butter to be eaten. That one common table brings them all together, otherwise they would divide at once, and the sooner the division takes place the better for the interests of truth and righteousness. We have now amongst us an immorality of language which, for one, I deprecate, and to the last degree mourn over. Men talk the language of a certain book, and one reads it one way, and another another;

yet they say they all believe, *ex animo*, a book which no man ever did believe, or ever can believe, or ever will believe, because it is self-contradictory. It has in it noble points and grievous faults, yet persons with views differing as the poles, all say that they believe that one book. I say it is teaching the nation to trifle with words, and to trifle with truth. I hope we have got some of the blood of the martyrs about us now, and that we would not subscribe to a lie, though life depended upon it; or chaffer with words, or make language mean other than it should, though the rack and the prison should await us. I hope there are some such left: but if there be, they have not been produced or educated by the process which enables men to say that they do not believe in baptismal regeneration; and yet the words, "In my baptism, wherein I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven," are still part of the statute book which they subscribe. I said something about that once, and I won't say any more. I am not penitent yet, but I am sorry for the present state of things, and hope it will come to an end, because it seems to me the present union of Church and State separates those who ought to be united. We should preach the gospel in this church, and in that church. Wesleyans, Congregationalists, Methodists, Baptists — are we not all one? And notwithstanding that hard battle, which will grow warmer still, there is enough love left among some of our dear Episcopalian brethren to love, some of us, though we handle them very roughly; and we love them none the less, but all the more, because we speak out in this matter. Once let this thing be decided, and you will see the brethren congregate as brethren; you will see those who are not of us go each to his own place, as things ought to be.

Some time ago I was surprised when the rector of a certain parish, where I happened to be, came and asked me if I would preach in the evening for him. He said, "I am sorry you cannot preach in the church, but, happily, our large school-room is just across the yard; I will read prayers in the church, and you can preach in the school-room." I was perfectly satisfied, because it was the best thing he could do under the circumstances. But why should it be so? We are all brethren if we love the Lord; and if they will not come and meet us here on such a platform as this, and address such an assembly as this about the vital interests of the soul, yet I hope the day will come when there will be such an intercommunication and exchange of Christian courtesy, such real working together, that the separation will not continue any longer. But that cannot be until the Church

is divided from the State; and in the interests of brotherly love, which are very dear to Christ — for he said, “By this Shall all men know that ye are my disciples, that ye have love one to another” — I trust that this matter will soon come to an end.

I have for a good many years been a little amused at ecclesiastical law; it is such a curious sort of thing. I know the bishops and clergy of the Church of England have been acting in a very dreadful manner for years, without knowing it. They have made speeches at Exeter Hall, some of them have preached there, and it is a remarkable thing that none of them have died in consequence. Yet, though I never published it before, let me tell you I registered Exeter Hall in the Bishops Court as a dissenting place of worship, and it is so now for aught I know. It is an awful thing, and I have been obliged to keep it to myself. I sat lately on the platform of the Bible Society, and I saw the Archbishop of Canterbury and one or two other bishops, and I thought they little knew within what unhallowed precincts they then were. I hope now that they know it, and find that they have survived it, they may be encouraged to feel that, after all, places are not so dreadfully injured by the presence of Nonconformists; and I trust: they may come to see that Nonconformists will not pollute burial-grounds either. I wish that Burials Bill could be got rid of, and come to an end. If I had been able to advise the Church of England, I think I should have effectually “dished” Mr. Carvell Williams and the Liberation Society. I should have proposed that — “Albeit we do not feel that we can yield your claim to the parish graveyard, yet, inasmuch as this question touches some of the tenderest feelings of our fellow Christians, we desire, of our own free will, to give our consent to their being buried in the churchyard.” Then you would not have had much to fight about; you would have got what you asked for; and yet the principle would not have been touched. But they are not wise enough to think of anything that is a rational compromise. We cannot have better allies than our enemies. I am certain they do our work better than we should do it.

All things considered, I do not know that a greater blessing could have happened to the Liberation Society than for the Liberal Government to be turned out and the Tories to get in. And may the Liberals keep out till they know their own friends. A member of Parliament said to me when he was canvassing, “I found no canvassers take my case up heartily except the Nonconformists.” I said, “Of course; we have got a principle that is dear to us as life itself, for which we shall never cease to plead, and if a man will

come forward upon it we will back him up.” There are numbers of Liberals that never will be returned unless they speak out straight and say, “Though I may lose some supporters, I will go in heartily with you.” May they keep in the cold until they learn that the helots that have followed at their heels, who really have won their victories, mean to be free themselves.

I conclude by saying that we shall be glad to see this matter fully carried out, because it is making us all accomplices in the present journey of England towards Rome. I am sorry that any church should go Romewards; but if it do go, it is no business of mine. I am not responsible if I faithfully preach the gospel. But this is my church, and your church; this is the National Church; it represents us; it does our religion; it makes us godly; as you all are aware, we should be a godless nation without it — it is performing the religious functions of the nation, regarding it as if it were an individual, and this is what it is doing — it is bringing back a yoke which our fathers would not bear, and which they dread to shake off. Roman Catholicism has made comparatively few converts by teaching of its own; cardinals, priests, monks, sisters of mercy, have been a dead failure; but the English Church has been the great missionary for the Church of Rome. It has smoothed the way, and paved it, and helped those along it who never else would have trodden it. Now, if the Church of England chooses to do this, let it do it, but not in your name, nor in mine. If it chooses to turn its churches into conservatories, or into music-halls, if it erects its joss-houses, and defiles this land with its idolatries, so let it do, but not in your name, nor in mine, for our souls loathe priestcraft; and to put me in fetters and imprison me is but an external wrong to my physical frame; but to say of these crucifixes and things, “These be thy gods, O Israel,” and to fix upon all of us this infamy, that this shall be our religion — why, sirs, it is a piece of oppression such as old Rome, in the worst days of her tyranny, never put upon her conquered subjects.

Be watchful and vigilant, and pray about this matter. If it does not come for years, recollect God may have great purposes in the delay. I sometimes think that some of you rich Dissenters would not always be for Liberal measures if you had got this carried — that you would some of you become Conservatives. Though I do not want the Conservative party to get you, I do know that when you begin to grow a little rich your natural tendency is that way. You are kept to do justice for others by suffering injustice yourselves. There is nothing that makes you so quick to see the wrongs of any other class as having to endure some wrong yourself. It may

be that you have to be kept out of your natural right for a time, until you have done a little more for others who have their wrongs also to complain of. But the time shall come, and some of us will live to see it; and then I should not wonder if there is a meeting held in this place, in which a number of clergymen will be upon the platform, and will say, "We are exceedingly grateful to you, brethren, we thought you our enemies, but you were our best friends; we thought that you were going to kill us, but you were only breaking our chains. We fancied when you wanted to get us out of Goshen that you would take us into the wilderness and destroy us, but now we see that you helped us on towards the promised land, flowing with milk and honey." As sure as I live, I hope to shake hands with a great number of my Episcopal brethren over this question, and to say, "Well, wasn't it a good fight after all? You defended your position as well as you could; it was rather naughty of you to give Mr. Williams the eggs and the cayenne-pepper; we never did that to you, except that, in a metaphorical sense, we did cayenne-pepper you; but did we not do you essential service?" and one after another will say, "Yes, and we are very grateful to our dear brothers, Dale and Rogers, whom we thought to be dreadful fellows, awful Radicals, agitators, and stirrers up of sedition; but now we see it is all right. We have been so happy in our liberty, so glad to have got rid of our chains; and now we salute you who helped to set us free." 'Twere a consummation devoutly to be wished! It is coming on!

WORK IN LONDON. ^{F14}

One of the first things they had to do, if they would increase in London — and he thought they ought to — was to see that there was the work to be done, and they were “the boys to do it.” Let them believe in the work to be done, and get forever rid of that intolerable nonsense often entertained — the idea that if anybody came within a mile of them they were opposed. They should believe that in ten years’ time they would be ten times their present number, and then establish three or four chapels in districts where now there was only one. It was really disgusting that any brother should be frightened about another chapel coming within a mile of him in such a city as London. They might go and put up a whole street of them around the Tabernacle, if they liked.

The next idea of which they must get rid was that in order to preserve their own strength they must not have surrounding stations. As if the heart could afford to store its own blood without dying. Send it out; let them deplete themselves and grow strong, believing in the infinite God being with them, so that all the streams running out would make more room for the infinite God to pour in. In giving out they would increase and multiply. They must get rid of the notion that they did not get on because there was someone else too near them. The reason must rather be that they themselves had nothing in them, or were in their wrong places and ought to get out. In spite of such statements, while they had fighting they could not help the people who were ill. They must take them to the hospitals. He meant by God’s help to do his share in the work, and intended to take every room he could hire, whoever it might affect, and he accordingly then gave notice of his determination to send men to those rooms when taken to preach the gospel, for they would not have respect to such insane ideas that there was not room for all amidst so vast a population. A great number of the deacons who attend public worship regularly ought never to listen to preaching, but ought to preach themselves. There was a great amount of such idle talent in the Churches, and such men ought to be turned out neck-and-crop, and made to preach. He sometimes thought of such friends, and wondered how God Almighty could have patience with them sitting to hear him preach when they might preach as well if they tried, only they could not get them at it.

He urged the great need for cultivating the speaking power of the young, and said that every church should give good opportunities to its young men, not for fine, deep speeches, but for the winning of souls. Now, as to getting hold of artisans, he thought he had a fair proportion of all sorts of people in the world in his congregation, excepting the nobility, whom God had given up. It was the hardest thing in all the world for God to make a nobleman into a Baptist, and it was a rare thing to happen. It would be a rare fine thing to appoint Dr. Landels to go and evangelize that class of society. The artisans would come; but still there was the great fact that they were not got at in many populous parts of London. They might make a practical test by selecting the best men they knew, not for mere talent or oratory, but the best for getting at the people, with sword in hand, going down to the people; and saying to such men, "Now you have to build a chapel in a certain district." He thought they had forty places of worship built in London, mainly by the young men of the Pastors' College, and what could be done by them could be done by others. He said to his young men, "You go down to so-and-so, and never show yourselves again until you have established a chapel. Hang on by your hands, and then by your teeth, and then by your eyebrows. I will find money to keep you in bread-and-cheese. You have to establish a self-supporting cause, and do not come back till you have done it." There were at Bermondsey, for instance, thousands of people who never attended a place of worship at all, and there a tent had been erected and services held. It did not strike the people to go to a place of worship. They did not understand some of the preachers enough; they did not talk Saxon enough. Let them do so, and knock the people straight down with Christian experience, so that when they saw the preacher's joy and peace in believing, they might say there was something in it after all. They could get to all London if they were alive.

One more word. They must keep their ministers right. Some of their ministers were half starved. They could not win souls for fretting about the children's socks, and troubling about how to pay the rent. A minister could not give his soul to preaching in such circumstances, and, if he could, God would say, "I will never bless that church who treat a man like that — one who is my servant; and while having luxuries themselves they cannot find him in necessaries." A friend had said he did not believe God would save souls by the ministry of a man getting less than £150 a year. He did not believe that, but he believed in the philosophy at the bottom of it. A minister ought to be willing to suffer poverty to win souls if necessary, but

the church should not permit him so to suffer. He wished no ministers had the excuse for being dull in preaching because the cupboard was empty. In conclusion he exhorted the deacons and elders to more active exertions in the service of the church. Let all the ministers preach better, more plainly, more intensely, and encourage their young men to be at it. Would that all the servants of God were prophets. If they wanted to be a king, let them try and make everybody else a king too.

EARNEST STUDENTS ^{f15}

IN the morning there was a large attendance of students connected with the Baptist College and the Congregational Institute at the College in Stokes Croft, to hear an address from Mr. Spurgeon, who offered a brief prayer, after which he said he did not think he could spare the time to make anything like a lecture; but was asked to say a few words to them. They ought to be eight, as the Scriptural “few” was eight, but he would throw out, one after another, a few observations on the one subject, “Securities of success.”

They all went in to succeed as Christian ministers, and in what way could they hope to secure success? He would begin by saying, let them be sure they were called to the ministry, because if not they would not have success in it. If any brother found he was more fit to be the editor of a newspaper, to keep a grocer’s shop, or be, a farmer, or a swell, let him retire and take his proper position. No one ought to take the office of a minister upon him unless he felt a call which he could not resist that he ought to give himself up for the spread of the Redeemer’s kingdom, and watch over the souls of men. When any one asked him, “*Shall* I be a minister?” he always replied, “Don’t, if you can help it.” No one should undertake the office unless, impelled by an irresistible impulse; it would be infinitely better even for a man who had spent a year or two at study to go back than to try to work himself up to what he could never reach, because he was never meant for it. If one wanted to succeed he would say, go in for a high ideal, have a high notion of what a minister ought to be. He questioned if, with the highest ideal before them, they would come up to the notion of what a minister ought to be. The Savior himself, and nothing less than he, must serve as a true model among the sons of men. If they choose a model of inferior powers or second rate success, they would be but second class; but the largest knowledge, the most fully developed intellect, the best powers of utterance, let them go in and get these.

He knew there were certain young men well versed in The Baptist Handbook and The Congregational Year Book, and they had a knowledge of all the places vacant, and felt they only wanted to be introduced, and people would be impressed with their superior abilities, and they would at once vault into the saddle. The Baptist Handbook was no doubt an

interesting and accurate volume, but if gentlemen would only study the Scriptures in the time devoted to these books it would be better. The best thing was to prepare oneself for the position instead of looking out for one. If they prepared for the position, the position would come to them; whereas if a man sought for the position first, he would have to subside into the lowest seats of the synagogue, if he got a seat at all. Let them qualify themselves for the best positions in the body to which they belonged. At present if a small church was vacant, they could get twenty ministers for it; but he knew of large churches who had been waiting for men year after year. Dr. Gotch might have a few wonderful jewels hid away in that college, but they did not find them lying about like nuggets were once said to be found in some parts of Australia. They wanted far superior brethren than they had now; men who would say they would try to be more learned even than Dr. Gotch. That was a little job for them to begin with; but at all events they should make their standard high. The brother who went in to be successful must try for something above what he hoped to attain; he must not go in for a little thing. Let them seek above all high spiritual attainments, lie had watched a large number of men, and he thought he found men with great spiritual force succeeded better than any others. He had seen brethren with large ministerial capacity that dazzled for a time, but their ministry was not really edifying, and they did not build up churches that lasted, and after a while they saw them somewhere else displaying their fireworks. He found men with very small mental capacity indeed, so fond of the Word of God, so conversant with it, so loving in the midst of the people, and above all so devout and Christlike, that they remained for years in the same place, and really built up churches at last. They must have recollections of such, old Father So-and-so, of whom everyone spoke with reverence. They had heard it said of him, “*Well, he won’t set the Thames on fire.*” But, happily, the Thames did not require setting on fire. They heard that this man had been forty years in the same place, and when they came to inquire why he was held in such reverent affection, they found it was through what he did years ago. Few men could be great oratorically; but all God’s people could be great in grace. Let them go to the rear rank if they had little grace; but if they must be in the front rank they must have more grace, or else it would be a cruel shame that the church should allow them to expose themselves to such dangers as those in front were exposed to. If they were not strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, their ministry would be a failure, let them do what they might.

At the same time let them not despise the lower qualification; and every brother at college should try to overcome his moral and mental defects. Some of them had a very quick temper; little pots soon hot, boiling over. Some of them could not stand a little criticism in class from their fellows, and when they were criticized they were unable to endure it without wincing. They said they would pay it off at the first opportunity, which was honest, perhaps, as they ought to owe no man anything; but sometimes in paying back they might be malicious. Petulance and levity were sins with some of them; some of them could not prevent levity, they could not help looking at the comic side of things, but they should not let that run into frivolity. Under the influence of college associations they ought to get patience to overcome the petulance which had ruined many men. Moral defects all had, except a “perfect” brother. One he knew who was absolutely perfect; but he was also hump-backed, and he used to wonder how it was God put such a perfect soul into such an imperfect body. Then there were mental defects. During the late high wind there were few houses that did not lose a slate. They were also exposed to adverse winds, and when there was a large piece off one of their roofs they put the man into a lunatic asylum, but there was not one who had not a slate off, except Dr. Gotch. He honored and revered all presidents of every kind, whether belonging to his college or not. One advantage of the college training was to get the stripped part of their roof repaired. They might have a peculiar utterance from the country, they might have a beautiful bucolic pronunciation. Their brethren would indicate to them where their mistakes lay, but they must never feel aggrieved and vexed when laughed at; as it was much better to be laughed at there than to be ridiculed afterwards outside; and much more would be got from anything said by students, if they honestly criticized, than from tutors — unless it were Dr. Gotch. One of his tutors said that students knew more about each other than the professor knew, and at his college it was generally found that they adopted some very accurate *sobriquet*, which was descriptive to the last degree, so that they did not require to hang the students’ portraits on the college walls to remember them in after years. He believed it was a good thing to pass through the sieve of college training, to find what their moral and mental defects might be, as they desired to succeed, and were willing to pass through the painful process of criticism.

In after life let them try every proper method to endeavor and succeed. He meant by succeeding, winning men to the love of Christ, bringing souls to

Jesus that they might be converted, built up in the Christian churches, and that these Christian churches might carry on operations to the same end, widening the Redeemer's kingdom. They were not going to be held in by any of the ordinary routine rules that had so often strangled the energies and efforts of young brethren. The first rule at college fifty years ago was, "Be proper"; a very excellent rule, which he never practiced himself, but he commended it to young men. It used not to matter whether anything came of their propriety. There was the minister who had to be carried to church in a bandbox with a sprig of lavender, and behaved in the most proper way in the house of God. He did not recommend that; if he could save a soul by impropriety he would go in for it; if they could save the soul with black kid gloves, let them put their gloves on: but it was not likely they would by such fopperies and niceties get at the bulk of the working and upper classes; and it was better to go in for something which was likely to strike them, and reach their hearts, rather than suffer the generation to pass away godless and careless in sin. A man who was eccentric for the sake of eccentricity, and adopted fresh methods because they were fresh, was a fool; but a man who, because he could not get people down to his little chapel in a court, would hire a hall or a theater, or have a service at an outrageous time of the night or day, saying he *would* do something to wake up the inert mass; they *should* hear the gospel — was a man likely to succeed. If he wanted to slay a lion and a bear, if there was a legitimate way of doing it, he would go in for it; but if there were illegitimate means he would adopt them, so that he had the lion and the bear.

Further, if a man wanted to succeed he must take care he always felt what he preached. He thought a brother could not help speaking well who felt intensely the fire within; it was pretty sure to display itself in the sparks of utterance that fell without. It must be an awful tiling for a brother to preach what he did not believe: but the number of ministers who did not believe anything in particular seemed to be on the increase. They were like the *showman*. — "Which is Wellington, and which is Blucher?" "*Whichever* you please, my little dears; you pays your money and you takes your choice." "*We* can serve you with anything from modern Calvinism to Socinianism, and if you want it we can serve you with a little Deism, or even Atheism, which we keep in the back of our store." And so they proceeded from light into the darkness. Years ago the philosophical principle had spread among the General Baptists till the churches could not bear it any longer, and they had the New Connection. The gentlemen

retained the chapels, like the cuckoo kept the hedge-sparrow's nest, and many of those chapels might now be seen deserted, with the grass growing in front. The New Connection rallied and revived, and had become a respectable body. Now, the philosophers were trying to repeat in the Congregational body that experiment, and it would go on till there was a row; and if there was to be a row, the sooner the *better*, as they were not going again to lose all the property belonging to men who had convictions, for the sake of men who had not convictions enough to make a mouse-trap, much less to build a chapel, but who stood in pulpits which they knew had been constructed for the defense of truths which they often held up to ridicule. Although they heard of the wonderful power of those advanced thinkers he did not know any one of them he would care to controvert. They thought they were clever, but if they hobnobbed with them they would find they were nobodies. Some of them tried, intellectually, to stand on their heads. Let them show him *a man*, and they would contend with him; they could show on their side champions of deep, profound learning, and never cried them up as great men. But these philosophers had half a man, who, perhaps, because he happened to be a professor, they put forward like Goliath of Gath, whereas one stone thrown by a little David would bring down the lot of these big, bombast swells. One would think from a distance they were great lions, but if you got to know them they were ridiculous mice; yet they made more fuss over their heretical inventions than they themselves did over orthodoxy. He would like them to try negative theology in the Sunday-school, and in the back slums, to see how many converts they would make. There was nothing in what they taught, it was bosh. Those on the other side, however, must preach their doctrines because they could not help it. A man might say after preaching some time, "Really, my heart is not in it, I do not really subscribe to this need." Then let him honestly get away from it, go back to his tallow-chandling, or other respectable position; but to continue preaching that which they do not believe was to be a rogue, so it seemed to him, and they could not succeed. A man must also, if he preached, feel the power of the doctrines he proclaimed.

The next rule of success was to aim directly at the heart; to try to put their preaching into such a shape that it should affect the soul. Again, let their sermons be full of sound matter; they did not need to give a corn-field every time, but they could give a loaf of bread. So many preachers put anecdotes into their sermons, and very proper they were as illustrations,

and, like the windows in a house, should give light; but then a house; should not be like a conservatory, all windows, and a sermon should not be anecdotes and nothing more; there should be more stable parts, for what was the good of mere illustration without doctrine? People wanted plenty of teaching; if they listened to five lectures on geology they ought, if the lectures were what they should be, to get a pretty good idea of the science; and they ought in twelve, sermons to get a good body of divinity. The Religious Tract Society required that there should be in each tract enough truth to save a sinner, and surely there ought to be as much in a sermon. When they first began to preach they mainly thought of how they were going to say it; but, if they must ask only one question let it be, “*What am I going to say?*” Their fine gentlemen who learned pretty pieces out of the poets, and inserted in their sermons passages — well, from other divines — looked very fascinating before the glass before going into the pulpit, and caused the admiration of Miss Jemima, and nobody else. He gave them up, the dogs of criticism might do what they pleased with them. A minister might not be so precise in language; he did not, perhaps, cut up a joint *artistically*, and did not help them to such thin slices as their late minister; still, what he gave was excellent food. He might stand at the block and chop it off in large pieces, but it was good meat. and worth coming for. There was nothing like plenty of gospel in their sermons. There was nothing to beat their spiritual rivals out of the market like giving plenty of the best stuff possible. Let them be prepared for anything between earth and heaven.

A student who means to be a gentleman minister might find a difficulty, lie did not know whether that was likely to be managed nowadays. Salaries were small, prices high, and children always multiplied with Baptist ministers and with Independent ministers. The ministerial text was, “*Let Asher be blessed with children; let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil.*” Then they should endeavor to have influence over their people. He believed he had as great a power over his people as any man, and whenever a man had anything nasty to say to him, he said it, and he (Mr. Spurgeon) was able to take an awful revenge. He bided his time, and did the man some kindness that made him his friend his life long. He might have done that out of policy, as a man was utterly disappointed if he had said a nasty thing, as if they were silent, their silence seemed to say “*The fellow has no feeling at all.*” He believed in resurrection of character, and they might be content to. let their character be buried; it would rise

again at the last day and shine like the righteous. Then the minister must, if he went into a country place, be ready to put up with the talk of the village, and Mrs. Grundy, and the gossip, about the young lady he married, and the ribbon on her bonnet, and that she was not fit to be the wife of a minister. Let them bear on to the end, and God would give them the best of success. If they wanted to succeed in the ministry let them subject every other desire to this, endure hardness, as they of the arena did, putting themselves through a course of training which made them martyrs for months before the conflict came on. They would have temptation in the college: scholarship would tempt them; there would be pleasant paths of knowledge, and they would like to turn down this and that vista; but they must not, they must keep straight on. Of course everything improper, the lust of the flesh, must be utterly denied them; but what would be commendable ambitions in some men must be put aside by them. Let them be earnest always. He liked to see a minister going about half-cocked, always ready to take a shot at the devil or anyone else who wanted shooting. Some people were only earnest at particular hours of the day; if they came in on them at a certain hour, say six, souls might be damned; it did not matter to them. But if they came in at seven they began to be wound up, and at eight tears were ready to flow. His father had a model man, who would work when he was turned round until the sand ran out. That was a horrible style of ministry — simulated zeal; and after sermon they might see in the interiors of houses singular things of men who said they would lay down their lives for the salvation of sinners; it was a wonder they did not share the fate of Ananias and Sapphira. Once again, let them seek guidance; and did they always get the power out of prayer they might: Their extempore prayers were poor sometimes; though, when they were at their worst, they were better than the other sort when at its best. Adam Clarke used to say that every student should study himself to death and then pray himself alive again, and he commended that advice to them. In fine, let them go in for all that it was possible for them to be for the glory of God. Let them go in to be a pastor, and make up their mind to visit. If their ministry was not successful, let their pastorate be; but they should keep their best food for the Sabbath. The pulpit was the Thermopylae of Christendom, and they must guard the narrow pass well. Let each of them say, even if in a village, “I will be the best preacher in the county; I will cut out all those London and Bristol men, God helping me.” Let them be not afraid of putting every iron into the fire, and let them be red hot; let every faculty be used. Then they would be successful; but at the

same time success was not to be measured by the space they filled. A man might fill a narrow space in human observation, and a blessed space in the presence of God and the angels before his throne. Might they plough in the weeds, sow good seed, reap with a sharp sickle, and at last gather into the right barn.

Mr. Spurgeon, having concluded his address, said that, as there was a deficiency of modern books in the Bristol College, he had set apart 100 to help to supply that deficiency. He thought he would spend it for them, so that it might be spent pretty well, and he had laid out a portion of it on works of his own, forty-four in number; they cost him £31 3s., and were bound strongly, leaving £68 17s. for the treasurer, he requested that £18 17s. of this might be expended in the purchase of any more of his books he might write if he lived and did well; and the other £50 he wanted the treasurer to spend as well as he could in good standard works. He would wish to do the same for other colleges, but he had not the means. He thought the books he gave would be useful to students, as most of them were sermons; “and if any brother would like to preach them (continued Mr. Spurgeon) I hereby decree he shall not be guilty of plagiarism, as I hand them over to be the property of the college.”

Dr. Gotch (Principal of the College) acknowledged the presentation. He said he expressed the mind of the students when he said they were thankful for the advice given to the college and for the permanent gift. He was not expecting so large a gift, or so long an address. He understood they were to have a little talk; it had been very pleasant talk. He thanked Mr. Spurgeon for the words of exhortation now, and the written words of exhortation he hoped would be of great use for the future.

Mr. Spurgeon briefly responded, and pronounced the benediction.

COUNTRY CHURCHES AND EVANGELIZATION. ^{F16}

Mr. Spurgeon seconded the resolution — “That this meeting has heard with much satisfaction the Report now read, and while thankful to God for the rich and effectual blessing which he has bestowed on work of the Home Missionary Society during the sixty years of its history, has yet to deplore the need not only of continued but increased effort,” etc.

I am not conscious of having done anything to deserve your cheers, but I thank you for them all the same. I must confess, however, to a good deal of disappointment. When you were singing that hymn, ^{f17} I thought that somebody here had had an increase in his family, and that a ceremony in which you are all deeply interested was about to be performed, and I have been musing and meditating to *discover* whatever that hymn was given out for. In fact, I concluded that you had some naughty children, perhaps, in your denomination, who had been crying a good deal, and that we were offering prayer for them. I am sure I sincerely join in the prayer concerning them, “Be thou their Friend and Father, their Savior, Guide, and King;” and I commend to some of them that they should themselves sing the third verse of the next hymn. I see all these hymns are for the young. I remember that Cruden, whenever he met with a young minister who did not believe in the doctrines of grace, made him a present of a :”Westminster Confession or Catechism,” which had on the outside of it, “For the young and ignorant;” and the next time you want to discuss this subject I would recommend you to sing, “Make an unguarded youth the object of thy care; help me to choose the way of truth, and fly from every snare.” I really think, brethren, you will then do very well, if, as Mr. Hebditch says, you are so thoroughly evangelical. I am happy to believe that you are, though I did not believe it till to-day. I have grown sorrowfully suspicious of a great many of you, and not without some cause, as I think. I am an impartial onlooker from the outside, except that I am wonderfully partial to evangelical doctrine; and inasmuch as you are so evangelical, and can say it, do say it. I always like to go on the policy of Cobbett, who said, “I speak not only so that I can be understood, but so that I cannot be misunderstood.” If ever there was a crisis in your history when I think you

should do so, it has now arrived, and you may speak so that nobody in this world can misunderstand you, but all shall know that by the grand old truths of the gospel you stand as your fore, fathers did before you.

Well, still trying to find some mystical, spiritual reason for this little hymn having been sung, I afterwards discovered that it was a hymn which Mr. Wilson wished us to sing on behalf of the new committee. The light dawned upon me that they were new comers, just taking up their new society, and I did feel it was a very delightful thing that we should ask that the Lord would seal for ever these, little ones as his own. I hope that the new-born society will grow up and be very strong. The organization is, as Mr. Morley says, perfect and complete, and I wish it success exceedingly abundant above what you ask or even think. Now, if I speak at all, I like to speak practically, and therefore I will come to the point.

The matter I thought of speaking upon was our Country Churches, for which we are all so anxious. If there is a point in which the weakness of our Independency shows itself it is in these small country churches, and this is constantly being brought against us. I myself often feel that the Presbyterian polity, or the polity adopted by the Wesleyans, has a greater adaptation for country towns than our own, but if I believe ours to be right, I do not care about want; of adaptation. I believe that somehow or other there must be some cog that has broken off a wheel, and we need not alter our polity, but should try to supply anything which is required where our principles do not work well. I believe there are many villages that find it difficult to support the ministry of the Word, but; where the gospel would be well kept up if we had some division of incomes, or some increase and augmentation to small incomes, after the manner of our Presbyterian friends. They have managed to evangelize all Scotland from its northernmost isle right down to the Tweed, and to maintain a ministry in almost every parish by their methods of working. We cannot adopt their methods, I suppose, but we must aim at the same ends, and we will by God's grace. We ought not to be ashamed to say that we feel any difficulties, or that our machinery does grind a little. I believe that it is a good thing to maintain our position as Dissenters most firmly, but sometimes we pick more holes in the Church than there are, and do not lay hold of the things that really are entirely bad; and occasionally when they touch what is a weak point with us we get a little angry about it. Let us rather say, "*It is so, and we will try and mend it.*" At present I think that is a weak point in our harness, and your plan will help to mend it. I plead to-

day on behalf of the country churches. At all hazards they must be maintained in the greatest possible efficiency. If we leave hamlets and villages alone because towns appear to us to be so much more important, we shall fail in obedience to our Master's command, who bids us "preach the gospel to every creature; " we shall begin picking and choosing, which in his parable he never allows the sower to do.. but he is to sow his handful on the hard ground on the wayside as well as on the honest and good ground out of which the harvest comes. We shall be acting wrongly if we omit to care for the sparsely populated places, and I believe we shall also act very unwisely, because we shall then give occasion to the advocates of a State Church to say, "You see, the poor people of the villages are to be left altogether in heathenism, unless the State Church provides for them: the voluntary principle breaks down exactly at that point." The voluntary principle cannot get blood out of gateposts; it cannot expect a people who are earning eleven or twelve shillings a week to support a minister. Poor souls, my marvel is how they support this mortal life at all with the wages some of the agricultural laborers earn. We never professed that the voluntary principle could make men give what they had not, and we must see to it that somehow or other we do provide for the poorer places and maintain a ministry suitable to the people in every village and hamlet throughout the whole kingdom. We must see to this, or else we shall indeed give cause to those who are on the opposite side to find just fault with us.

Moreover, I am persuaded that if we were to lose the work in the small country places we should lose from the larger churches some of their very best blood. Mr. Morley alluded to the heathenism of some of our large towns. It is very true, and I constantly notice with grief that we have a great number of our artisans and laborers in London who never go inside a place of worship, but the people who come, and are converted, are very often those that have come up from the country. The other afternoon I saw some twenty-five who had professed to have found the Lord, and one after another addressed me in such tones that I soon found the majority of them were persons who had attended the means of grace in country villages, and who, when there, never thought of being absent from the house of God. Of course, when they came to London they turned in to hear the Word of God preached to them. Our people in London are losing the habit of attending the house of God. That is not true merely of the poorer people, but out in the suburbs there are a number of persons whom you consider ladies and

gentlemen, and who are so in position, who never go to a place of worship at all, and who live in such places somewhat more readily because they are not there under the bondage of a social custom that would lead them to the irksome task of going to the house of God. Well, if the country villages are not kept right, instead of having a pure stream of blood, as we now have, flowing to the heart of the country, we should have heathenism coming into it to swell its already awful sin. I thank God for your brethren in the country that you do send us up some fine young men. I wonder whether you feel as pleased to lose them as we do to get them. They come to London, and they are amongst our very best workers; and the ministers of the larger churches ought to feel that you are doing them grand service, and that they must return to you some token of gratitude for what you are doing. I feel sure that the country churches give us the sturdy backbone of our Nonconformity. I hope our London ministers are very sound Nonconformists, but the air is not so congenial to very strong speeches, because we get among very good friends, and having no Church rates to pay, and not having a squire — which is a great loss to us no doubt, — and feeling ourselves quite as good as the rector, and perhaps a little better, we do not get to feel the mind of the church as our friends do in the country. But the black ox treads on the toes of our poorer brethren in the country very heavily sometimes, and they see in the denial of charities, in the habit of always boiling the Prayer-book up with the soup, and so on, various things which materially tend to keep them very sound in their Nonconformist principles. I believe a man is always the sounder for feeling a little of the weight of the whip upon him every now and then. Whenever there is a meeting of the Liberation Society, for instance, you can tell that a lot of the people came from the country by the loud “*hear, hear.*” Welshmen, too — somebody said that everything was good that came from Wales; and our friends do really supply the very backbone of Nonconformity. I hope and trust, that for that reason, the greatest possible endeavors will be made by all our towns to maintain our country churches in efficiency.

I think, too, that our country churches contain some of the very soundest of our divines, and some of the very best orthodox members. “Well,” says one, “if that be so, it is because there is more ignorance in the country.” Ah, I would like you to deal with countrymen, and see whether you will find any material ignorance among them. I wish that some of this so-called ignorance would wipe out some of the wisdom that we have in our towns.

You, gentlemen, sometimes hear about eminent scientific men. Now, some of the most eminent scientific men in England never sent a contribution to any magazine or paper, and never appeared in public. Every now and then they are disinterred, as one was by Mr. Smiles, in Banff, not long ago; and there are in our churches persons of remarkable attainments in different branches of science who remain faithful to the truth as it is in Jesus; and in my judgment — and I know something of country churches, taking them all round the members are as sensible and as shrewd as any congregations in the world, and have a great deal more common-sense than they are sometimes given credit for. A man who has to work for his bread and cheese, when he goes to hear a sermon will have something solid, and soap-bubble blowing will not please him. He says, “*All the week I am at work, and I don’t want my minister to make me work on a Sunday.*” How many do break that commandment. You make a poor fellow turn over a big, long word fifty times to find out what it means, and so he has to work harder than he does all the week beside. And he knows you are breaking the Sabbath by making him work. He says to himself, “*If that man understood what he was talking about he would make me understand it, but he, does not: he has gone down to the bottom of his subject, and has stirred up the mud, and he cannot see his own way out of it, nor can I.*” They will not go to hear that kind of thing. I know it is generally very young gentlemen who talk in that sort of way; but let a man have trial and considerable experience, and have to fight his way in the world, and I tell you on the Sabbath he want, the shew-bread and not the shew-stones; he wants the glorious gospel of the blessed God upon which his soul is fed, and nothing less will content him. I can point you to some country shop-keepers who are all the week busy behind the counter, but who oftentime go five, six, or ten miles on a Sunday to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, without fee or reward. They are, at the same time, deacons, but they cannot attend their churches because they go out to preach; and they are the very best contributors to the funds of the church in proportion to their means, giving far more largely than some of the wealthy. If you go and take a cup of tea with them, you find they know what Nonconformity is very thoroughly; and if you just have a crack with them over theology, you will see if they do not understand whether man is fallen or not, whether they have not seen it in their children and felt it in themselves. If you ask them about the atonement, see if they do not believe that. Ask them if they have seen the power of the gospel in converting men, and you will hear some things from some of them that you might not have heard if you had

listened to a doctor of divinity, though I have an unbounded respect for every doctor of divinity. No, give me the old stamp of Christian after all, who knows his Bible and his own heart, and something of the power of grace upon his soul: and I am afraid you will very often have to go into the country to find that sort of people. A man said to me the other day, "I was a poor man once, and moved in quite another line of society. If half-a-dozen of us then met together, say twenty years ago, we used to talk about the things of God; but now, when I get on a Turkey carpet and into a very respectable house, it seems to be almost indecorous to talk about the things of God. Of course we talk together of such-and-such a minister, and pick his character to pieces — that is very good and profitable — and set up one man against another; but as to getting into the deep things of God, or talking about vital experience, how little there is of it." I am afraid that the wear and tear of London life, and the going about to various meetings, may very often tend that way. Our country friends have not so much to do. The wear and tear of society, and town life, distract people; and they do not grow so deeply instructed in the things of God. May our country churches always furnish us with a contingent of sound divines, who will come up to London and set the London fellows right when they get wrong, though I believe in this particular instance the London brethren have been found faithful through and through. The Lord grant they may be so found even to the end.

One speaker has told us that the countryman will not take in Ritualism, and that is true, but he will not take in Rationalism either; he has a means of casting out both if he be, indeed, an instructed servant of God. Because you will find that some of your ablest ministers have come from the country, because some of your ablest Christians in all ranks of society first of all learn the name of Jesus in some rustic village sanctuary, therefore keep these places going with all your might. What is to be done to keep them up to the mark? Dear friends, there must be a large expenditure of money to help the country churches just now. I have in connection with the Metropolitan Tabernacle Colportage Society eighty-six brethren working as colporteurs, and we have had them up to London lately, and the reports I had from them were very, very sad. I think from almost every part of England the information was that many people were out of work, and that great distress prevailed. "How can I sell books?" said one. "Why, the people cannot even find bread: there, are hundreds and thousands out of work, and they have, in some cases, to tell their pastors, "We cannot

possibly maintain you.” Some two hundred miners had contributed to support a colporteur, but they were obliged to say that they could not do it any longer. Now, there ought to be this year an extra expenditure upon the poorer ministers of the country; they will greatly want it just at this time. I labored under the delusion that you, dear brethren, of the Independent denomination, were very wealthy; but my dear wife; undertook, some time ago, to assist poor ministers, and she told me the other day, when I was looking over her books, that she believed the Independent denomination had more poor ministers than any other, with, perhaps, the exception of the Primitive Methodists. One reason why we do not know so much about your struggling men is, that you have a habit of having some men who really are pastors of churches, but are not down in the list as pastors at all. They are, I suppose, paid by some county association, and if they were Baptists they could come up and say,.” We will attend the county association as well as anybody else..” And I would back them up. But some are very badly paid. I have heard of one, with six or seven children, who says he cannot find clothes for them, and does not know where to apply for help. He has been helped, but the help has been totally insufficient. I do trust that in this special time of need you will use double efforts to prevent the servants of the Lord from knowing any lack. Oh, that we could help all the poor, but especially those who are devoted to our Master’s service, and are our brethren in the ministry. They must have help, and especially just now. I do not know whether your society is going to do it, but it lies upon my heart to recommend it — to send to the country churches evangelists to preach to them. Choose out two of the best men in your denomination, and send them into a district for a month; get their churches to give them up for a month, and let them stay in a district and work up a series of earnest meetings, and the blessing it would be to humbler brethren who are laboring there no tongue can tell. I am sure that if some of the distinguished brethren whom you have in your midst would go into a country town and stay there, and work even for a week, it would give to your cause an impulse such as hardly anything else would give. I thank God for the work that was done by Messrs. Moody and Sankey, and I am thankful for a good deal of irregular effort that has been put forth. But I devoutly wish that we had such effort in a regular manner, and that we had men officially recognized as evangelists who would go right through England from end to end and stir up the people. A brother who can sing might go with a brother who can preach, for there is wonderful power about the singing. We are not to follow one standing

rule, but really, when a brother has the gift of doing it well and tenderly, it often is a great means of attracting persons who otherwise would not attend.

We are always forming new committees and altering our machinery. I always speak tenderly of a committee: I almost feel as if I could fall down and worship a committee. There is a kind of idolatry that comes over my soul when I think of committees, though I am afraid it is idolatry, for “*eyes have they but they see not.*” I will not go on with the parallel. I beg to retract any observations I might have made that look like a want of deference to committees. I believe in committees, but I think that they should consist of three, and — two of them should stop at home. Something will be done on that occasion.

Dear me, we of the Baptist denomination and you of the Independent denomination have been tinkering away for everlasting. We have always had the man with a little bit of fire and a soldering pot mending up our old things; now let us boil something in the pot — make some soup, do something. After all, what have our missionary societies done? A great thing, but compared with what our Lord deserves, what a small thing it is. God help us to get at it by some means, and that plan of sending out leading men who have influence and power to evangelize, strikes me as likely to produce great results in our country churches. But we must cultivate what is wrongly called the “lay” talent. You must encourage us laity to speak. You gentlemen, with the white neckties, let us lay-men have our turn. We have unbounded reverence for you of the clerical order in general, but at the same time there are a good many in our congregations who could preach almost as well as the ministers. Turn them out; do not let the fellows stay near you; turn them out. If a man comes to hear a minister preach a hundred and four times in a year, when he could do almost as well himself, and can criticize the minister pretty sharply, turn him out, make his seat uncomfortable. I know ways of putting gun cotton and dynamite under such brethren. I cause the cap to be so accurate a fit, that the brother very naturally puts it on. I owe very much to the opportunity I had at Cambridge of preaching in the villages in connection with the association of lay preachers. Might not many of our stations be just as well occupied by a brother who is engaged, as Paul was, tent-making all the week. Some of us, I am afraid, will never be able to rise to the dignity of earning our livings as well as preaching the Word. I sincerely wish we could, for it is a most respectable thing. Paul did it. I have never been able to rise further

than our Lord, who was dependent upon his disciples. I want classes for young men to speak in. Opportunities to talk will do them good. "Oh, but they are fast enough already," you say; well, give them rope enough. Why, oftentimes a pastor trying to keep a young man silent reminds me of this little country trying to keep the United States under it. Of course it could not be done, it was unnatural. Zwingle once said "*In the name of the Holy Trinity, let all loose.*" "*Oh! but they are ungrammatical!*" "*Never mind; people get to heaven ungrammatically.*" "*But they might not understand the doctrines.*" "*All right; they will learn them while they are preaching them.*" Let every bit and shred of ability be used, and then God will bless us, and we shall see our denomination becoming strong and yet stronger in the midst of the land.

The last point is the one to which I attach most importance, and that is, that we do maintain with all our might, spiritual power. Brethren, I think some spiritual power is lost by many of our preachers not preaching in the English language. I have always felt that the use of the Latin tongue in public worship was not desirable; but some of my brethren are not of that opinion, for they use a very large quantity of Latin. There are half-a-dozen sets of languages in this country, and there is a certain stratum of language which is nearly all Latin, and that happens to be the peculiar lingo of a large number of my brethren. Depend upon it, our power over the masses will be in our speaking so that we can be understood. They make fearful blunders over what we say when we speak plainly, but if we use hard words they will not know what we mean. We must try and cut long words right in halves, and when we have done so we must burn the two pieces. Take the common Saxon tongue. "*But we should be vulgar,*" says one. Well, be vulgar. They used to make the sponsors at baptism promise that they would see that the child was instructed in the "*vulgar tongue,*" and we have to make the people comprehend the gospel, not to reverence us for our Latin. We have got to bring them to Christ, not to Lindley Murray. A French dinner is very nice indeed, but some of us do want a cut of roast beef. So it is, I think, with some preaching. "*There now, it's wonderful,*" and you stand and look on like Manoah while the angel performs his wondrous feats, but he is gone, and there is nothing left. Once, after hearing a very fine sermon, I felt like the Primitive Methodist after a dinner with the squire. The squire asked him to return thanks. "Lord, we thank thee that we do not have such a good dinner as this every day in the week, or else we should be ill." People want good, plain, substantial fare, to be

well fed. The way to make strong Christians is to feed them well; let them have good spiritual food, and then we shall rear good, strong backboned Christians. We have got enough jelly-fish now. You have heard of the Hard Shell Baptists. I am not one *of* them myself; but for all that, I would rather grow a shell as hard as steel than be molluscous. I want to get to Christ, and not to be ever fighting about who he is and what he is. I want to get to his table, and sit down there, and enter into fellowship with him. We must fight. It is our duty to do so, but it is a great blessing when we get over all that, and just get into the house and enter into communion with our Lord. May the Church arrive at that stage, and may the dew of heaven rest upon you.

A COUNCIL OF WAR. F18

THE very best speech that could be made for Home Missions they would find in their own Report. Reports of societies were, as a rule, very useful things when a man could not sleep. If he would sit by his bedside and read a portion of one of the Reports usually presented he would be pretty sure to obtain a good night's rest. But the Report just read seemed to have no narcotic quality. In listening to it he was quite awakened and quickened, and he hoped they would get the benefit of it in his speech. In writing such a Report Mr. Clifford had departed from all real precedent, and they might consider him a thorough Radical. What worse could they say of any man?

Let us hold a council of war to-night. I do not compliment you on the Report. It must be greatly improved. It would never do for churches belonging to a society, and pledged to support it, not to do so. One did not know what to do with such churches sometimes. It was very easy to get them to pledge, but they did not always redeem their pledges, which are so far like the pledges at the pawnbrokers with the sign of the three balls, which he had been told was two to one if ever anything came out again. It must not be so amongst them, but all promises must be faithfully kept, and exceeded if possible, and he would like to hear the Report another year in which it would be said that not one church had failed of its word. Some of the sums might be *very* small, but they were very acceptable. Little fishes were very sweet, and there was no nicer dish than whitebait. If they could not send up a sturgeon, a royal fish of one hundred pounds, let them send a few pence or shillings, and the society would be glad to make a hearty meal thereon.

Now for the council of war. What had they met together in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to contemplate? That was rather poetical, and in the region of high-flying still. They did intend this grand work by God's grace — the saving of souls. At least, he used to think people had souls to be saved, but he had been informed that they had not got souls until they were saved. He did not believe it, but looked on every man as immortal, and would not care twopence about his salvation if he did not. If the heathen were dogs and cats let them keep so. If they were as the horse or the mule, let them keep as they were. He could assure them they would get no tears of sorrow from him, and no energetic action for their salvation. But the

loss of an immortal soul was depressing, and might keep him sleepless on his couch, unless it awakened him up to lay his life down that; he might be enabled to save some. They did wish to save souls, and they did not go in for anything else. The preaching of fine sermons, or even the erection of fine houses in which churches can be gathered, was a very poor object compared with the winning of souls, the piling together of living stones into a spiritual temple for the habitation of Jesus Christ by the Spirit. They hoped to affect the whole world, for it was quite by the winning of souls, they thought, that every good, moral and spiritual, would come; for when a man is made a Christian he should be made to attend to the laws of health better, though he was afraid some of the members did not think as much of that as they should, and forgot the command, "Thou shalt not kill." If they did or tolerated anything in their houses engendering disease, they virtually killed their neighbors and broke the law of God. But if a man can be made temperate, honest, to love his kind, and seek their good, it is to be done by saving his soul, for when his heart gets right, his habits, his family, and his neighbors will, through his being blessed, participate in the blessing. They consider themselves the best moral reformers that live, and the best political reformers, for the principles of truth, right, justice, and freedom must spread where the grace of God is put into the hearts of men. There would come an end of war, of slavery, of tyranny, of class legislation, if the great vital principles of loving God with all our hearts, and our neighbors as ourselves, shall be spread by the grace of God in the hearts of men. They had, therefore, a very high mission to purge this fallen world by turning the stream of loving waters flowing from the altar right through it. The Lord send a copious stream very speedily, for there was much need of it, and might they have some part in fashioning the channel along which the mighty stream might flow.

They went in also for the universal spread of Christianity. He hoped they believed in it. There was some miserable theory that the world is a great wreck, and that they could only pick a few poor seamen off it, and that all else must drift and go to pieces. He believed the kingdoms of this world would become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. He could not imagine that the great drama of human history would otherwise wind up, and that it could be possible that on the present lines the Eternal would admit that the world is not to be saved, and begin again a new dispensation. Nay, it was a great thing he should have chosen by human weakness to overcome all the strength of sin and Satan, and get to himself

the victory. Would he give up the conflict as altogether disastrous, and begin again by something wonderfully physical — a material splendor among the sons of men? If it be so, he knows best, and all glory to his name; but he (the speaker) could conceive that throughout eternity it would redound more greatly to his everlasting praise to still continue to work as he has been working by his Spirit given to poor feeble men, who went forth to battle with the sling and the stone, and ceased not from the conflict until they came back with the giant's head. Yes, the world for Christ and Christ for the world. They did conceive that their business had not only to do with time, but with eternity. A soul converted affects every golden street in Paradise, and shall not only affect every wave of time that shall pass over this globe, but affect yonder golden harps when they shall resound his praises. They expected to people heaven by their exertions, to crown the Christ of God by their honest endeavors to spread the glory of his cross. Theirs was an immense aim, not readily compassed even by the imagination. He liked a man to think he had a great work, or he would not be likely to put forth all his strength in it. Certainly never was such a work proposed to human mind and heart as the conversion of the world to Christ, that it may lie at Jesus's feet and there sing his praises for ever and ever. This was what they expected to do.

He hoped, nobody there sought and made it the great object of his life to answer all the objections ever raised against Christianity. He was sick of objections. They had been answered so many times, and had sprung up again so rapidly. It had been well said — and he gave it, homely as it was — that “*a fool can ask many questions which a wise man cannot answer*”; and that had been verified. It was the business of fools to ask questions. Let them continue to do so. It was the business of other fools to spend their lives in answering them. They belonged to neither class. The skepticism of most men was of the heart, and not of the head. They would believe if the thing suited them, but because it does not, therefore, they cannot believe; even as Christ said, “How can ye believe which receive honor one of another?” There *was* some sin lying at the door, some slavery; and being believers they would say to them, “We cannot help it; it is a hard stone on which you will stumble to your overthrow,” for “he that believeth on the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned”: and we say it solemnly, without retracting one word of it, or in the slightest degree attempting to diminish its force. No, if you will not believe, you must perish; if you will not accept Christ, you must be

lost. How can you be happy? how can you get right, and get things right with you, unless you first get right with the Creator of all things by believing and trusting him? Trying to answer every objection. was like the task of Sisyphus — for ever rolling a huge stone up hill, but it was constantly rebounding; or like that of the daughters of Danaus, trying to fill a bottomless tub with buckets equally bottomless. It was not to be done. If they would demolish the skepticism and “*vigorous* thought” of the present time, there were., thousands of men who would make as many objections again. Like spiders spinning, there was no end to it. They had something else to do besides sweeping away cobwebs. Let them walk through, scarcely noticing there were such things.

It was an age of taste. They did not hope to gratify everybody’s taste. They must not sing the praises of God unless they were great singers, or somebody in the choir would look down and frown. How dared they thus interfere? He went in for singing anyhow, so that the heart poured itself out before God. He thought God would accept his poor, growling music, if it be sincere, as better even than that sweet chorister’s voice if he was looking round the chapel all the time he was singing.

They did not attempt to gratify taste in the style of their sermons either. They did not wish needlessly to offend, but taste was so strange a thing that those sermons which seemed as if they could not by any degree have offended a mouse, offended some critics. Let them break men’s hearts, not tickle their ears; get at their consciences, rather than give them what he had heard a sermon called, “*a fine intellectual treat.*” A fine intellectual treat is an abominable sin, and a great sermon is generally a great crime. To do anything on the grand scale, of what service was it? A French writer had said that poets were of no use whatever, for they never served either the church or the world; and they might as well play at nine-pins as write poetry. He hoped, by-the-by, that some of those who sent him poetry would take to that work. He did not care for the modern Miltons and Cowpers. The old writers were good enough for him. If, then, poets could not satisfy taste, how could poor preachers hope to do it? If even the poets failed, they had better not attempt it. No, let them go as the Lord helped them, and speak out of warm and honest hearts to the souls of men, Let them pluck their words up by the root out of the field, and not spend so much time in the conservatory making them up into grand bouquets, for perhaps they would not have half the scent and beauty about them of the wild flowers, or of the heather torn from its native soil. Seven-leagued

boots were fine things to go in, but they did not fit him; he could walk better in the boots made to his own last. They did not, therefore, propose to go in for those grand things.

Neither did he think they proposed to obliterate all moral distinctions. So far as he could make out some of the most modern philosophical works on Christianity, every man was as good as another, only a little better. They would all get right at last he was given to understand, except the righteous perhaps, who seemed rather in a difficulty as to whether they ever would have everlasting life at all, because there was a question whether the word everlasting does mean everlasting in relation to their joy. he pitied the poor righteous. The ungodly seemed to have virtue as their advocate, and sin was rather cried up — at least it was said to be a very mitigated evil, soon coming to an end. He believed, however, that there was a great gulf fixed between righteousness and wickedness, and that men must still be born again. They did not, therefore, shade off their preaching like heat and cold on the thermometer. There was a vital and real distinction between men in and out of Christ; and the distinction would continue, and this must be recognized in their prayers and teaching still, if they were to have men saved and brought to Christ. They did not want to slur over evil, but to get at the bottom of it as far as they could. God would have them preach against sin; not try to make the world into the Church, which would only end in dragging the Church into the world; but try to make a distinction between good and evil. Still he came back to this: — Their object was to save souls. There died a suicide about a fortnight ago; his body was dragged out of the Thames, and in his pocket was a letter, in which occurred the following words, “*I greatly respect Jesus of Nazareth*” — a great deal for a suicide to say — “*I die safe, saved is ridiculous.*” Really there had been a good deal. of teaching which looked like that. They believed in no safety apart from being saved. They believed in real loss, and in real ruin, and in real salvation; and their work was to go in for the latter, in the power of the Eternal Spirit, that men might be turned from darkness to light, and from the power of sin and Satan unto God.

That was the poetry of the work; now for the prose. How must they set about it? First they must set about it, and get into actual service. There was a great deal of sentimental godliness in the world, or what he was accustomed to call disembodied grace. It was a ghostly thing, He always felt pleased in trying to prick the bladders, and in fetching down these unsubstantial things. He dare say they had read the queer story about the

appearance of the spirit of Daniel Webster. A cute Yankee put some tin tacks on the floor, which the spirit, when he began to tread, discovered, and at last; sat down and swore in the most celestial manner. They would meet sometimes with some purely spiritual brethren — very spiritual they were all spirit; and if one of the tin tacks of the Home Missionary Society, or of Foreign Missions, was put before them, up went the foot. If they got at them, and gave them something to do, or tried to extract a little metallic currency from their pocket, they sat down with that kind of celestial swearing which they might occasionally have heard when a brother was out of temper with them, and felt himself much better than they were — going about their work in such an ordinary common-place manner.

He had heard a great deal of religious talk about what was going to be done. And when he had heard it, and happened to know of individuals who were doing nothing, being at meetings where it was also stated that two-thirds of the churches represented did not subscribe to the Mission Fund, he was reminded of Dr. Johnson who received a Ladies' Committee, appointed to wait upon him by a number of ladies who had read his "*Rasselas*," to read a paper of adulation and praise for its composition. The old gentleman listened to it, and then said, "*Fiddle-de-dee*, my good gals, fiddle-de-dee." Had they, never themselves said a good deal that was fiddle-de-dee? Actually doing something for Jesus Christ was better than all the talking about it. Instructing one poor ignorant child, or cheering one poor faint-hearted believer, or sitting by the bedside of one poor dying saint and uttering a cheering word, was better than all the day dreams in which they sometimes indulged about what they would like to do and hoped to do. They must get at it if they wanted to save souls; they really must, in their Master's name, put their shoulders to the Wheel. The man in the shirt sleeves was the man who would do it by God's grace — not the gentleman in the kid gloves, especially lavender. Let them not be too nice about it, but get to work. What was wanted was personal service, if they were to achieve the grand purposes. Every one of them must endeavor to win a soul for Christ. Mr. Clifford used the editorial "We," in his magazine, and he (the speaker) did the same, and he felt very grand when he said "We." There (pointing to Mr. Clifford) was *The General Baptist Magazine* "We"; and here (alluding to himself) is *The Sword and the Trowel* "We"; and if they saw the "We" of *The Times*, who dealt with thunderbolts, very likely he was a very "Wee" man. They had a deal of that "we" in their churches. Reports said, "We have an excellent Sunday-school." Perhaps

they said," We have good lay preachers societies." Did they preach? No; we think a good deal of the Sunday-school. Had they ever visited it? Did they subscribe to it? Were they teachers in it? Perhaps to those questions no answer was given, and yet it was" *We*." He would agree to the "we" where there was anything done. Of course the man who blew the bellows might say:, "We played finely." That was all fair. Those good people who found the wind for the society ought to have a part in the "*we*" as much as the speakers. All could not be mouth. There was a denomination who believed in all mouth, and the result was a vacuum. Each one must do something personally. Each member of the body must take its own share in the organization of the body according to the intent of him who made that body. Only through personal service could they expect their great designs to be accomplished. And then there must be plodding, sticking to the work, going on with it. There were some souls who never would be brought to Christ by one entreaty, nor by two, nor twenty. There must be entreaty year after year in different ways, with many tears, if people are to be saved; and it was the Lord's will they should be. Let them drive the Church before them, and drag the world behind them. They had their work cut out, and they would have to keep on and on. Sunday-school work was very pleasant for six months, but not pleasant, perhaps, for twenty-six years. Doubtless there were many veterans present who had been many years in it who, at times of depression, would have run away if the Lord had permitted them. But, they must plod on; if it took millions of years before the world was converted they must keep on. He believed in the coming of the Lord, even that night he would be glad to see him; but he did not stand and open his mouth gazing for him. Blessed was the servant whom the Lord should find hard at work at his post. If they should not accomplish the work they would pass the banner on to their grandchildren, for Moses prayed, "Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children." They must work personally and individually, never ceasing until the work was done.

And they must do the, work then present before them. Did they ever find themselves inclined to bring the world to Christ there and then? Yes, that was very pretty and right, but it was poetry. To bring that one poor servant to Christ was prose — reality. That was the work of Christ. What splendid schemes they sketched on paper! He liked to see them on paper because he never saw them anywhere else. A better thing than scheming great things was to do little things, just the things they had to do; to teach the infants,

or call at that little lot of cottages in the hamlet and leave a tract. Perhaps it was a work which would never get into the report, except the one above, which would be published one day and have abundance of readers, on that memorable day when all should hear it. Let them do the next thing — put their hands out and do the thing nearest to them. In large towns no one need enquire for work. They were lazy, or they would not ask. In God's name let them get at it. Their time was short; their day could not be long. There must be hard, plodding, persevering work, and it must be done very unselfishly if souls were to be saved. He had read a book about the art of sinking. He would liken the art of sinking to being nobody, for a man was never so big. The door-mat at the house of the Lord was the best article after all. If a man was willing to lay there and let all the brethren wipe their boots upon him it was a great thing to do; if any would be great, by being the least he should become the greatest. The mischief of the churches was that every one wanted to be the first horse. He supposed the General Baptists never fought? If they wanted a really respectable row in a church, a Baptist church used to be the place for it. They were so conscientious, that if a man did not see as they did they knocked both his eyes out by way of improving him. He thought, however, they had a better spirit now. They wanted plenty of backbone, but they wanted marrow in it. They must be nobody if Jesus Christ was to be all in all, and if anybody stood in his way he must come down.

They must also work hopefully. A crown was given to the man who never despaired of the republic. Let them give the crown to the man from the village church who never despaired of it. They need not despair if they did not; but when once despair entered a church that church might as well shut up its doors. Let them believe that though the squire and the parson were very big, yet God is bigger still; believe that though the cathedral was very cold and very dense, yet the shadow of Jehovah's wing was better far, and had more influence. There were forces against which they had to contend which they could not calculate. They were immense, and their own strength was little enough, all too little for such an enterprise. None but madmen would enter the work with it. But there was one who made their work both sane and safe. The Lord taketh part with them that help me, I shall look into the faces of mine enemies. There was no cause for fear when a man could say the Lord was with him. They must keep themselves up, and not let even a notification, that one hundred and twenty churches had not subscribed, damp their spirits. They would cheer them up until they

expended a little more; and try and make them so happy that they could not help feeling they must have their honest share in the good work.

They wanted, too, more home-life godliness. London would never be reached by ministers. The people would not come to hear them. They saw the fustian jacket and the blouse only occasionally; he got a fair proportion of working men, but no proportion of those in London compared with what they ought to get. He knew district after district where not more than one man in the street goes to a place of worship, and everybody in the street knew him because he was so remarkable an individual. In country towns everybody goes, but in London the non-chapel or church going people were getting to be the dreadful rule. They could not get at them. The only way was for their church members to live Christ at home.

Some people talked a good deal of the doctrines of grace, but directly one preached anything decided it was bigotry. Better, however, that, than not believing in anything, and give up everything worth retaining. They must have in the churches the real solid, down-right, up-straight people, who would not do wrong for the whole universe, who would not be, bought by all the soup at Christmas-time nor by all the attentions of the parish priest. He knew some who followed the plough who were grand theologians, and knew the Scriptures by heart and life. They must have such people if ever the nation was to be permeated with gospel truth, and if ever they were to go through the toil. and achieve the wondrous purposes set before them.

Then, after all, true religion was God's work. If there was any faith in the world, God gave that faith and wrought it in the men; therefore it did not come by any process of reasoning, and was not sustained but through the operation of the Spirit of God. If the work of God was within them, all things were easy to them, for he who could give faith could open blind eyes, could change hard hearts. They felt they could not do it of themselves, let them, therefore, fling themselves back on the Eternal. It must be done, for he never did fail, nor could he fail or be discouraged till he had set his kingdom in the midst of men.

“DRIVE ON!”^{f19}

The Revelation C. H. Spurgeon's appearance on the platform (he having just arrived from East Parade Chapel.) was the occasion of a demonstration of welcome that completely baffles description, the whole audience rising en masse, and cheering to the top of their bent; while from the organ pealed forth in tones of thunder the opening strains of a chorus by Handel. When the excitement had somewhat subsided Mr. Spurgeon spoke as follows:—

I THANK you very much for this hearty reception, but I am sure have not the slightest idea of what I have done to deserve it, and I am afraid it arises from a lively sense of something to come which will be grievously disappointed. I am one of the most unfortunate of human beings. I am expected to make a great speech, and that is a thing I never did do. I was not born to it. I am not an orator as Brutus is. I can only speak right on to tell you what I do know. We have had a good meeting at East Parade Chapel, but I have come from good to better; and may we have a blessing from God to finish up with. You all know the name of that great Welsh Baptist minister, Christmas Evans, and. how gloriously he preached. He was accustomed to spend very much of his time in making evangelistic journeys from town to town with his little pony and chaise; and so, when he came to die, they gathered round the old man to listen to his last words, and after he had said some precious things about his Master he began to dream, and the very last thing he said was, “Drive on! drive on!” And somehow I thought it was a very good word to address to you, my brethren of the Baptist Union, and to you, my brethren of all Christian denominations. Drive on! drive on!

There is such a tendency to pull up to refresh, such a tendency to get out of the gig and say, “What a wonderful horse”. Never saw a horse go over hill and down dale like this horse — the best horse that ever was, real sound Methodist or Baptist horse.” Now, brother, admire your horse as much as ever you like, but drive on! I have known some who have felt a sort of disposition to go back; they have been afraid. “Philosophers tell us the road is up; we cannot go that way;” but I say, drive on, over the philosophers and all. You will find when you get to that desperately bad piece of road that they are always telling us of, that after all it has been

improved by being broken up a little and being rolled down again — at any rate, drive on! Oh, if there are any of you that have got to sitting still in your gig, admiring the scenery, and counting over all the souls that you have already brought in, do drive on, brethren, do drive on. Your Lord and Master tells you to “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature “ and you feel perfectly certain that you have obeyed that command because you have opened a little room three-and-a-half miles from where you are. Now drive on, do drive on. There is more to be done, a great deal than you have attempted; and much more than if you had attempted it you would be likely to accomplish — drive on. Our only hope, as Christian churches, of healthy existence lies in progress. You cannot stand still; it will be your ruin if you do, and it is at your peril if you attempt it. When Napoleon engaged in fresh wars, some one asked him why he should wish to push his armies any further, and he said, “Conquest made me what I am, and conquest must maintain me.” It is so with the church of God, you must go on conquering or being conquered. The case stands just thus, as the Scotchman put it to his regiment before the battle. Says he, “*Lads*, there they are. If ye dinna kill them they will kill you,” and that was quite enough. You must go on and vanquish sin, and all the powers of darkness and evil, or else you will be vanquished yourself.

I have got a fine son, as I think, but he is not contented with being tolerably tall he must ride on a pair of wheels. I shall not try it myself. Reasons forbid; but I am told that the practical reason why a fellow keeps upright on those wheels is because he goes on and if he did not go on he would go *off*. It certainly is so with every Christian church. If it does not go on it will go off; if it does not advance it is impossible for it to retain what it already has; it will lose if it does not gain. Go forward, brethren! Drive on, I pray you, because your Masters command is large and wide. We have no idea of what the world is. There was a mouse that lived in a box that one day found the lid open, and it crept up to the side of the box, and stood in the cupboard, and looked round the cupboard, and said, “*I* had no idea the world was so big as this” And sometimes we come out of little Zoar and Bethel and Ebenezer, and we say, as we look at Leeds, “Dear me, what a large world this is.” And so it is. Leeds is a very wonderful place, but London is almost as wonderful, and the British Isles are larger still, but their population is as a drop in the bucket to the teeming millions of India. What a meaning there is in those words, India and China. If we did but know their meaning we should scarcely need to hear the word

“Drive on!” and “*Rest* and be thankful” would never cross our minds. We should say, “*Speed* on! speed on; the wings of angels are heard in the air. God hastens on his everlasting purposes. The great commission is given to *us*, and we must obey it.” Go on, brethren, because the need of the world is something terrible; and I charge you, do not believe those who would make the needs of the world to be less than they are.

Nowadays it seems that men are not immortal. We have lived to grow so wise that first we were informed that we were next-of-kin to the ape; now, at last, it becomes a portion of theology that we are apes till we are converted, and then we get souls. I do not believe it, and I believe that such theology hamstrings activity, and cuts the very throat of earnestness, and is to be denounced straightway. I believe that if men do not believe in Jesus Christ they will be cast off for ever from the presence of God and the glory of his power; and it is ours constantly to carry the remedy to the utmost ends of the earth, according to our ability. Besides that, recollect that if our Master’s commission and the world’s needs do not move us, we have this reflection: if we do not drive on Satan will, and if we are not active he will be. He is not omnipresent; but though I cannot say where he is, I should not like to say where he is not, for he seems to be everywhere, either by himself personally or by his messengers, and he compasses sea and land to win souls for destruction. He is an example to us in that, and I cannot help thinking that the devils are an example to us in one other point — that you never hear of their quarreling. I never heard that there were sects among them, but they seem with an awful rarity to press forward in the cause of evil with an intense and terrible earnestness, trying to maintain the throne of darkness and death. Let us be earnest because they are; let us be united lest our kingdom fall. God help us to be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. “Drive on” is my motto. Union is strength; “*weave truth with trust*” — yon wall can finish my sentence. It is one of the best lessons, that a Christian church can ever learn. I want to say to you, brethren, that one great reason why the church of God should go on is because of the multitude of persons that remain altogether unchristianized in this land of ours.

It has been very properly said that the Church of England is divided into three denominations — the platitudinarians, the latitudinarians, and the attitudinarians. I demur to the first title, though it may be somewhat deserved, for there are a great many of us that would be obliged to wear the title just as much as the brethren to whom it is given. As for the

latitudinarians, I will say little about them, for I am not in their latitude; and as for the attitudinarians, I can only say that they must be seen to be appreciated. I shalt not depreciate them, however, because my object tonight is to allude to a section of the Church not yet mentioned, neither High Church, Broad Church, nor Low Church. The people I am thinking most about are the No Church people. We can put up with a great deal of difference among those that are sincere in the Master's service, and with many mistakes, too, when we think of the great masses around us that have no religion at all. Oh! the thousands, and the tens of thousands, who have not heard of Jesus since they were in the Sabbath-school — thank God they were ever there! — in the land of Bibles which they have never read, whose conceptions of religion are drawn from newspapers, which do not understand religion, and therefore misrepresent it. I say not that all newspapers do that; but many to which some refer as their guide and oracle do most distinctly, for want of knowing better. And here we have, side by side with a light as brilliant as the sun, a darkness deep as death-shade. We want to send missionaries to China, India, and the like; let us send them, but let us see to the heathen, population at our doors. Oh, how many there are of them! Brethren of the Baptist Union, I hope I shall be forgiven for having grumbled, but sometimes it seems to me intolerable — you will excuse me for grumbling — when I see souls perishing for lack of knowledge, and a lot of you divines must be accurate about the cross *of a* “t” or the dot of an “i.” Cross them twice over, and dot the “i’s,” or do not dot the “i’s,” as you like — do let us get to work saving souls and building up churches.

A friend of mine, John Ploughman by name, a person of whom I will say but little, was one day dreadfully angry when he was requested to stop ploughing, when he had got as fine a team of horses as could be, to kill a mouse. He did not see it; he did not care whether the mouse was killed or not; he wanted to plough, and get his master's work done. And sometimes that kind of spirit comes over *us*, who rather want to be at work. We get rather fidgety, we are not good committee men — horrible committee men, though I for one, believe in committees, from the crown of my head to the sole of my foot — only, mark you, I like a committee of three, two of them in bed. Nothing can be better than that; for all denominations, all Christian men of all denominations should give most prominence to the work to which our Master has called us; and while we hold our distinctive principles — as I hope we always shall, for a man without backbone is not

worth anything — yet let us always hold them in subservience to the great work of saving souls. Therefore, my Methodist brethren, if you can touch that man's heart that I cannot reach, fire away by all manner of means. If, on the other hand, I may be able to reach a certain class that you cannot, well, give me a chance, and do not find more fault with me than you are obliged. At the same time, if you do, I won't fret; neither need you fret if I find fault with you, if you are sincerely doing your Master's work. What we want to do is to bring these No Church people into the church, of God. We want that promise to be fulfilled — "I will make them a people that were not a people, I will call her beloved that was not beloved; people that knew not thee shall run unto thee." This is what we desire. Now, how are we to do it?

Whenever a man undertakes anything, if he is a wise man he says, *Where* is the power to come from? There is a factory, there are all the wheels and the machinery; but they are of no use unless you can get power. We are all taught; that in us lies no power for saving the souls of men. We are all anxious to serve our Lord; but, of course, we can do nothing for Him unless we have power. Where is the power, then? Certainly it is not in ourselves, the power lies in the Holy Ghost. And what a mercy this is, because he is divine, and consequently, whatever the enterprise may be, he is equal to it. Now, the conversion of the world, and the turning of the myriads to Christ, becomes no longer an idle term if the Holy Ghost himself is to help us in it. There lies our power; but how are we to get it?

I believe, in the first place, that we must, if we are to see greater things than we have done, have more real prayer. Oh, my brethren, how are your prayer-meetings? It is a stale subject, perhaps you will say; but I do know some places where the prayer-meetings are positively shocking, and still is that the current speech, "I shall not go out this evening, it is only a prayer-meeting." It is in the meeting of the Church for earnest, fervent, and believing prayer that the power of God is communicated to the church to make all its agencies strong, and if the prayer-meeting be neglected, depend upon it, you have shorn away the locks of your strength, and when the Philistines are upon Samson he will not know how to meet the foe. The longer I live the more sure I am of it that God must hear prayer. This is immortal in all generations, and I do not think there will be found any exceptions to this rule, that the power is in proportion to the prayer. The prayer-meetings are not always an index of our churches' strength, for some ministers are so in God's company that they alone bring down a great

blessing. What might not we have if we would get up to the top of Carmel, with our head between our knees, and cry unto the living God, and determine that we will never leave the place of prayer until the heavens pour forth the floods of rain and the earth is deluged with divine grace? It is to be had, all power is given to the Master, and he is ready to communicate it to his church.

Then, if we are to have the divine power, we must each one of us have it in himself. A church cannot do work unless there is some vigor in the persons who are to work. Supposing I go to a consumptive hospital to find a number of working men to make a railway, I fetch them from their beds; all panting for breath, I get the poor creatures down to where there is a cutting to be done, and I present them with pickaxes and spades, and say, "*This* is your work." Why, dear me, they want somebody to hold the pickaxes up for them; they can let them drop, and that is about all they can do. It is a very long while before the Great Northern Railway will ever run through that cutting. They are not the kind of men; wheel them home in their own barrows, and put them to bed. But now, if you want this cutting done, get a hundred Yorkshiremen. I say that because I have been informed, on the high authority of a Yorkshireman who ought to know, that we down in the south grow very fine trees; but they grow men up here. I am pleased to hear it, and I am delighted to see that it is true of a good many here, only the biggest men I can see around me I have seen before in London. However, be it so or not, if you put these hundred men there, and say, "*Now*, there is that hill to be tunnelled," why, you see daylight through it almost directly; see how easily they do it — it seems a pleasure to them. Now, get a man of spiritual stamina, let his vitality be up to the right point, let him be full of spiritual vigor, and give him work to do, and the work flies before him.

Now especially we Baptists must take care that we are strong, because if ever there was a point for which we were noted it was for strength. I do not think we were ever noted for beauty. Our forefathers were men who used to do their own thinking at home, and when they had found it out made up their minds about it. They did not particularly care whether the Government of the day thought that way, nor whether the bishops thought that way, nor whether the Synod and the creed-makers thought that way at all. They just thought — "That is what is God's Word, and we do not care what Caesar's word is." Some of them, I think, made a mistake; but they meant rightly when they put on carnal weapons and buckled them down to

their sides. It was awful work for the Cavaliers then! Nobody cracked a skull like an Anabaptist. They were terrible fellows; but when they entered a town there was no sacking of it; there was no woman that had to regret that Cromwell's soldiers came there. The first thing was "Smash that painted window, down with the saints and angels, every man Jack of them." They did do that, and that was very wrong — indeed I have no doubt those things ought to have been preserved, that the Attitudinarians might worship them — our forefathers did not go in for that line of preservation. They said, "These things have been put to bad uses, smash them up," and they did. Very rough and ready as iconoclasts they were; but when that little work was done, and they met around the camp fire, there was the ordinary soldier admonishing the captain that he was backsliding, that he was not exhibiting the grace that he had some weeks ago; and even old Nol himself, if he met a Baptist, would get told that they did not enter into the army to make a king of him, and they did not want him to be king, and they wished he would keep his place, and they were not going to be dictated to by Oliver Cromwell any more than by a king. That was the style of our Anabaptist fathers, and there is a little of it about us still. We are the least clannish of all denominations — we do not, certainly, run into one mold, and I do not know why we should. I know we, like to go to our Bibles for ourselves. When they were telling me years ago how bad the milk was, one of my neighbours said, "I do not care how bad it is, I keep a cow of my own." That is what I like to do. If the preaching should be adulterated, and the literature should be adulterated, we like to go to Scripture for ourselves, and keep a cow of our own. And we beg to say to all friends, that that point on which we differ — namely, believers baptism — that we shall be very glad to see altered, because it is very wrong that there should be two or three baptisms, where there ought to be only one, and we believe we are certain that if you will find us a precept for the baptism of infants, we will follow it — a plain one, mark you. And as it is very clear to us, and we think to you, that believers were baptized, that is one baptism — that is plainly in Scripture, is it not? Very well, the other one — that is the other baptism.

My black friend, Mr. Johnson, gave me the other night a very excellent reason for being immersed. Being a Negro, and very uneducated, he did not know much, but people that do not know much sometimes blunder very nicely into the truth. He said, "*I know I ought to be baptized;*" so I says to one, "What do you think?" and he says, "You ought to be

sprinkled." I says to another, "How do you think I ought to be baptized?" "Well," he says, "*you* ought to be poured." I says to another, "*How* ought I to be baptized?" "*Oh*," he says, "*you* ought to be immersed." "*Well, now*," says I to myself, "*well*, if I am immersed I shall be sprinkled and I shall be poured. So that the others may be right, but this one must be right, there was no mistake about that." That is the reason why we are Baptists, because we think we have the plain word of God for it. A Congregational brother said to me, "*Any* fool can be a Baptist, for the plain texts of Scripture run that way or seem to, but," he says, "*it* wants a man of intelligence to understand our theory." Well, enough about that.

I want all our brethren to keep their stamina up upon that point, for even though you get into a great deal of trouble, it is a part of a good cause, because when a brother has a peculiarity which he believes to be Scriptural, even if I think he is wrong, I like to see him conscientiously carry it out, because to have a conscience at all is, nowadays, not the commonest thing in the world. When my grandfather lived in this land, consciences used to work up and down like this way [working his arm out straight], but since then they put a circular motion in, and now consciences work on a swivel. I once said that if a man said a child was born again by baptism, and he did not believe it, he was telling a lie. But it was wrong of me. It was a mistake; I ought to have recollected the swivel. There is a way of getting out of it; there is a way of saying black is white. But in my great charity, which is every day increasing, I always remember the swivel, and say no more about it. But still, brethren, do not you go in for the swivel if you can help it, because the straightforward, up and down thing will win. the day as surely as we live. Loyalty to Christ in every point young man, is the way to begin life; and, old man, it is the way to make your grey hairs to be crowns of glory if you can say at the last, "I have been under law to Christ, and as far as I knew my Master's will I have obeyed it in all respects as he has enabled me." Now, supposing we have the power, how would you use it? I am not going to answer. I would have every man use the divine power when he gets it as best he can. The Duke of Wellington on one occasion asked a soldier, "*Now*, sergeant, suppose you had to fight the battle of Waterloo over again, how would you like to be accoutred?" Said he, "I should like to do it in my shirt-sleeves." That is the way to work if you have to fight, and I think the more Christian people can get rid of all formalities and organizations, and just get to work the best way they can as God helps them, flinging themselves on the foe, determined to fight in the

strength of God for Christ and his truth, the sooner will they win the victory. Do not try and be somebody else. A carpenter carries many tools in his basket, and he wants their diversity; and our great Master, the carpenter's Son, has many tools in his basket, and each one is wanted for his own work. Let us talk English too, while we keep up our individuality. Let each one say, "*What* can I do for Jesus Christ?" One brother says, "I cannot do any more, for really I do all I possibly can — I am so busily engaged." It is a remarkable, thing, but it is the man that is doing too much already, that is the man who is likely to do more; and it does not matter how full you are of work, you can do some more, and you are the man to do it.

There was a learned society in Persia, founded upon the principles of eloquence, not of the silvery kind, but of the golden. They were all to be silent. The first rule was that every member of the society should think much; secondly, that he should write very little; and thirdly, that he should say nothing if he could help it. I wish some of us could be led to join that society. Well, there came a learned man to the society, wishing to join. They only had a hundred members, and they were full. He made his application, and the president gave his answer in this way (filling a glass of water to the brim). There was not a word exchanged; he saw that. there was no room for him, but, stooping down, he picked up a rose leaf, and very gently laid it on the top, and there it was. Now, if thou art full of business; if thou art a member of Parliament, and a member of the municipal council; if thou art immersed in business, it is full; but pick up one rose leaf, and just lay it there for your Master on the top of all thy present work, and, it may be, there will be more perfume in that extra work which costs thee great self-denial than in all that was there beside.

Mr. Spurgeon urged upon his audience the appeal made by the president to young men to join the ministry, and said: Let others follow the example of Mr. Lockhart, of Liverpool; while continuing in business let them become preachers and pastors without pay or reward, except the souls of men. Let the young men start new churches; for he had heard, though he had no experience of it, that entering the pastorate of an old church was like marrying a widow, who was very apt to mention number one at times. As to those who could not preach, but were persons of property, let them imitate the example of a gentleman whom he married a short time since, who after the ceremony entered the vestry and told him he would pay for the support of a minister regularly, being informed from time to time of

blessings resulting from that minister's labors, so that he might share in the joy.

Mr. Spurgeon continued: He wished he could say anything that would lead men to consecrate their substance, and young men to consecrate themselves to the work of the ministry. But they could not all do that; but they could all help in the Sunday-schools. He said he was afraid some of them were rather beginning to neglect their Sunday-schools. In London many of their wealthy people lived out of town, and consequently their sons and daughters, who were the best educated, did not come into the town to help in the Sunday-schools. Some of the schools were consequently suffering from want of teachers; but let it not be forgotten that the influence of Sunday-schools was so great they could not overestimate it. He mentioned as an illustration that when he was a little boy he saw a vase upon his grandmother's mantelpiece containing an apple, but could not understand how it got there until the next spring he saw in the garden another vase tied on to the tree with the small apple placed through its neck, so that the fruit grew larger inside it. Thus, while they could not get aged sinners into their churches, they must use Sunday-schools to secure the rising generation. And when the children did come to the Sunday-school, let the teachers try and make it as pleasant as possible for them. Do not let their little girls say as one little lady was reported to have said to a minister who asked her, "And now, Mary, my dear, why did the Ethiopian eunuch go on his way rejoicing?" "Please, sir," she replied, "because Philip was done a-teaching of him." He was afraid that many a child had gone on her way rejoicing that; the teaching was done, but the teaching ought to be of such a character always that the children would be glad of it. Let them try and get the *elite* of the church to be engaged there, and not leave it entirely to the young people. He liked to see the grey-headed man as superintendent — he meant that grey-headed man who was an old boy when he was over sixty years of age, just as genial and hearty as ever he was, and with the experience which entitled him to respect, so that he was a proper leader of the young ones. And he liked to see the Christian women — as he sometimes did — a mother at home, also a mother in Israel. He knew one who gathers fifty boys round her on a Sunday — rough boys, that no man could manage; but they were never rough to her. She was a lady, and they were gentlemen when she was there. He knew of many that were brought to Christ out of her class by her gentle teaching. And in the name of Jesus; let all do something. If they had not a call from

heaven they had better go home and go to bed, but if the Master called them let them get to work. He never knew the people of the world love those whom Christ employed. In Luther's day, though the church wanted reforming, they "*objected* to have it done by a rascally friar like Luther." They wanted "refinement," a "confus'ling of the understanding," a parsonic preaching of the gospel. It was very queer that some ministers were so dignified. He revered them with all his heart. He hoped they all did, though he feared it was highly probable they did not. Somehow or other if they got to work for Christ, and shook the devil's kingdom, he would say, "You are a vulgar fellow"; and they were told they should always endeavor to be in accordance with the general current of thought. Ugh! Paul did not appear to have gone to their university, because he was crucified unto the world and the world unto him. For them to speak with bated breath until they knew what "my lord professor" had said, was to give up their true position and to be traitors to their Master. He alluded to the proposal of an American to vanquish the British army by conquering the men one or two at a time. So the thing must be done for Christ. If they had more individual seeking after souls, they would see a great blessing. He often told his friends that on the Sabbath-day they must not let anybody come in the Tabernacle and go out of it without speaking to them about their souls, and very curious things sometimes happened as the result. He was; preaching one day, and said the minister ought to be like a sportsman going out with his gun; and when he fetched the people down by the gospel, all his members should be like dogs, to go and fetch up the wounded and the dead. When he had done preaching one of the deacons said, "*I* believe there are many of us, sir, that would be very glad to go out as dogs after souls, but our minister is a dreadfully poor shot. There is never anything to pick up." Well, pray for him. If they prayed for him he would take truer aim next time. And let them look after the worst people that they knew, and believe in the possibility of their conversion. They paid wonderfully well for converting. When a man who had been a ringleader in Satan's cause was converted, he brought an amount of vigor, naturalness, originality, and earnestness into the church which they did not often get from any other quarter. Oh! seek the lost, seek the wandering, seek the stray sheep, and never cease from seeking until they were found. They knew the name of Grimshaw, a name honored in Yorkshire. He preached, as they knew, at Hawick. Though one of the holiest men that ever preached the gospel, he had one of the most wicked sons possible. He lived a life of the utmost sin; but his father's prayers had been registered in

heaven for him, and the Lord met with him, and he became a saved soul. One of the last things he said when dying was, “How my father will look when he sees me come into heaven “ and he could imagine, if possible, the surprise and gratitude and joy of the father that saw such a wandering son come in. Fetch in the lost ones, for how their great Father would look when he saw them coming into heaven with those lost ones! And how the Savior would look! Oh, for a painter that could strike that off as with a flash — the look of Christ when he saw the “*travail* of his soul,” and clasped to his bosom in glory those whom he bought with his precious blood! Fetch them in! Gather them in! Drive on! Farewell!

FOOTNOTES

- ^{Ft1} Speech at the Annual Meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society, May 4th 1864.
- ^{Ft2} Speech at the Annual Meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society, May 5th, 1875.
- ^{Ft3} Address at the New Year's Assembly of the London City Missionaries, January 1st, 1861.
- ^{Ft4} Speech at the London Tavern during the week of United Prayer, January 6th, 1874.
- ^{Ft5} Speech before the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, on Tuesday, May 29th, 1866.
- ^{Ft6} Speech at; a syndical missionary breakfast meeting, under the auspices of the Foreign Mission Committee of the United Presbyterian Church.
- ^{Ft7} Speech at the King's Weigh House Chapel, May 12th, 1874.
- ^{Ft8} Speech at: the celebration of the Toller Centenary, September 29th, 1875.
- ^{ft9} Speech at the Baptist Union meeting at Plymouth, October 6th, 1875.
- ^{ft10} Speech at the Annual Meeting of the Pastors' College, January 2nd, 1877.
- ^{ft11} Speech before the London Baptist Association, January 16, 1877.
- ^{ft12} Speech at Exeter Hall before the Baptist Missionary Society, April 27, 1877.
- ^{ft13} Speech at the Annual Meeting of the Liberation Society, in the Metropolitan Tabernacle, May 7th, 1877.
- ^{ft14} Speech at the Meeting of the London Baptist Association, September 25th, 1877.
- ^{Ft15} Speech at the Baptist College, Bristol, December 5, 1877.
- ^{ft16} Speech at the Annual Meeting of the Home Missionary Society, May 7, 1878.
- ^{Ft17} No. 970 in the Congregational Hymn Book.
- ^{f18} Speech at the annual meeting of the Home Missionary Society, June 25,

1878.

^{ft19} Speech in the Town-hall at Leda before the Baptist Union of England and Wales, October 10th, 1878.

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