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Presbyterian. His. Society

A

PLEA FOR THE WEST.

A Sermon

PREACHED

BEFORE THE

MISSIONARY SOCIETY

OF

The Synod of South-Carolina & Georgia,

IN

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BY

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A Plea for the West.

EZEKIEL XXXVII. 3, 4.

And he said unto me, son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.

IT was during one of the darkest periods of the Hebrew history that the prophet Ezekiel discharged the duties of his office: and it was in the most painful part of that period that the extraordinary transactions which are here described, took place. The man of God was carried, in vision, to a neighboring valley.

———“ It was a place of dead men's bones,
 Where silence, death, and darkness held their sway.
 As if the Tomb's great Carnival were past,
 And these the remnants left.”

He passes through this extraordinary scene with the emotions it was adapted to inspire. Its fearful silence is broken by the voice of God—“*Can these bones live?*” With the remainder of this typical narrative you are all familiar. The scattered fragments of the dead assembled, each to its place.—Life and vigour return. An immense host stand up before the astonished prophet.

Some commentators have found in this vision a predictive emblem of the general resurrection. But the more judicious have discovered a far better interpretation, in a reference to the return from the Babylonish captivity. Yet even to this explanation several important objections present themselves: These dry bones are called “*the whole house of Israel*” (v. 11.) An expression to which the return from captivity cannot well answer; for the whole house of Israel did not return; nor indeed did the whole house of Judah; on the contrary, only a small part of that scattered people revisited their native land. But the term used in our

context applies to a vast host—" *an exceeding great army:*" and we might add that the Hebrew is still more emphatical—as if laboring for force of expression,—“ *a very, very great army.*”

Moreover; a promise of such a restoration would hardly be a consolatory reply to the complaint of the suffering Jews. “ *Our bones are dried and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts.*” The pledge of a deliverance, to be accomplished seventy years afterwards, would not soothe the feelings of the complainants, who speak of a lost hope as to *themselves*—“ *for our parts:*” and very few of whom could live to behold the fulfilment of that prophecy.

A better key to the meaning of this vision may, perhaps, be found in the close of the chapter, which ends in a prediction of Messiah’s final appearance. He who was known by the name of his progenitor David, was to be the one Shepherd, King, and Prince over Judah and Ephraim. But Ephraim, or the ten tribes, are, as far as we can learn, only to be found among the different nations of the earth; amalgamated with the common mass. Such a restoration, then, must be

referred to the changes which belong to "the latter day glory," when a universal and moral resurrection shall be experienced over our sinful world.

That such a radical change will take place, is now a matter of general consent in the Christian community. The expectation is already assuming the same aspect with that of Messiah's advent, previous to the incarnation. Questions on the mode, manner and time, are the subjects of discussion now, as they were then. Signs are equally corresponding to the prophecies. Some wonderful consummation is rapidly advancing. At this moment there is a general movement over the whole earth. The fanes of idolatry are nodding. The standard of the Cross is becoming planted in remotest lands. The translated Scriptures speak in the tongues of the South and East. Ingenuity is taxed to form new institutions of philanthropy. The Gospel is pressing on to the homes of the poor and the Heathen. Every thing—every minute event, or every political change,—announces a portentous alteration in our woe-worn earth. Much and frequently as we hear of the improvement of the present

age in art and science, this is by no means the most strongly marked of its characteristics. There is a moral advancement.— There is a spiritual progress. The march of the Redeemer's cause is more prominent to the eye of the observer than that of intellectual or physical discovery. It is the dignity of missionary enterprize which especially characterizes the day in which we live: The most bold, and at the same time the most elevated of all the efforts of benevolence. It is this, in a very particular degree, which distinguishes the period of our being, above the sordid selfishness of the past. It is the general operations of Christian feeling, completed in so many schemes of philanthropy— it is the exalted triumphs of humanity over haggard misery and wretchedness, which give to our time a more noble character than could be furnished by the pride of science, or the achievements of military glory. It is these, too, which distinctly tell us that we are on the eve of momentous revolution.

Whether it be an honour to live in such an age, or whether it be a curse, is a choice left to ourselves. Whether we are active

instruments of good, in a season of such singular opportunity—or whether we are wilfully blind to all that is passing, is a subject of individual deliberation. One thing is certain: a signal blessedness, or a signal woe, far above that of “nations gone by,” will be the fate of every one of us.

To proceed, however, more directly to the subject before us:—It would be no matter of surprise, if, in the infancy of this period of benevolent enterprize, when there could be no preconcerted arrangement of action, there should exist, in the different efforts made, something of an irregularity and disproportion. Such has unquestionably been the fact. The torch of missionary zeal was first lighted among us, in behalf of a remote quarter of the Pagan world: while the Aborigines of our own land were suffered to continue in moral degradation and spiritual want. And the reasons for this most unnatural distinction, were both preached and promulgated. An attempt was made to prove that the civilization of our native Indians was a secondary duty; and less practicable than that of Christianizing the inha-

bitants of a distant continent.* In this part of our country, we partook of the same feelings of invidious partiality. We followed in the wake of our Northern brethren.— They have since learnt, that a division of effort was both feasible and expedient.— And, with an unabated zeal, they have acted accordingly. Here, too, we have endeavoured to profit by their example.

Let us now proceed to the text which forms the basis of our subject. There are two particulars before us: a question, and a corresponding answer; which latter is implied in the command—“*Prophecy upon these bones.*”

I. The question, “*Son of man can these bones live?*” It is an inquiry which may agitate the bosom of the Christian, while he stands on the mount of Zion, and painfully gazes on the regions of moral darkness and death. Can energy and vigour,— can life and intelligence pervade this spiritual charnel house? And, brethren, had one,

* See a discourse by the Rev. G. Hall, preached in the Tabernacle, and in the First Presbyterian Church, in Philadelphia, on the 16th of February, 1812.

taught no more than the deductions of reason could teach, beheld, eighteen centuries since, a little band of illiterate mechanics, boldly announcing to the civilized world, that, almost single handed, they would throw down the porches of philosophy, and demolish the altars of Paganism, he would have smiled, as Paganism laughed, at the threats of such champions. Yet but a few years passed before the "wisdom and power of God" accomplished what reason proudly declared impossible. In vain did the equally interested priest and artizan cry, "*great is Diana of the Ephesians!*"—"Great is the Roman Jupiter!" The infuriated rage of the rabble died away; or subsided into accents of praise to the mighty Jehovah—to the incarnate God. The idols tottered in their niches. The temples were abandoned. The priestly robes were left on their pavements: and all was silence within their walls. And you are, at this hour, partakers of the fruits of this triumph. And that energy is not less, and that power is not more nominal, which are proffered to every prudent effort to resuscitate the spiritually dead, among the Heathen.

I am aware of most of the objections which have been advanced against the benevolent efforts to enlighten the aborigines of our country. I am not ignorant of the attempts to "write down" such projects as fanciful and visionary. And I am equally acquainted with the fact that when the loud cry for pity had sounded from our borders, there were not only those who could exclaim, "let them perish," but one who could coolly devise on paper a project for Government, to hasten such a catastrophe.* Selfishness is ever cruel, and this is not the first of her plans which merited the title of "infernal." But I am persuaded, too, that much of the opposition and lukewarmness, which has existed on this subject, has arisen from misapprehension or ignorance.

That the scheme of philanthropy to which your aid will be solicited is not chi-

* In delivering this discourse it was not considered necessary to name authorities. But, since its publication has been requested, the writer feels himself under the necessity of referring to the documents from which part of his remarks are taken. It will be seen that his language is more feeble than that of his authority. See *Dr. Morse's Report to the Secretary of War on Indian affairs, comprising the narrative of a tour performed in the summer of 1820. Page 81.*

merical; or, in other words, that our Western Indians are ripe and ready for instruction, may be infered from the following positions: I. Their present condition opens a way for it II. They desire it. III. Recent efforts prove the success of the attempt to instruct them.

I. *Their present condition opens the way for it.* The condition of this people is unknown among the great mass of our population. The cruelty of their rites, the superstition of their customs, and the ferocity of many of their former habits, have given rise to many a tale of pity. Nor were these tales unfounded. With the exception, perhaps, in one respect, of the single tribe of the Chickasaws,—for whom this hour will prefer a plea, and who boast of having never imbrued their hands in “white man’s blood”—they were found by our forefathers addicted to many of those evils, and governed by all those dispositions which public sentiment, in a savage state, would encourage. But with all this, neither generosity nor gratitude was deficient among them.—They knew how to appreciate, and they knew how to return, a favour. Suspicious

of their own strength, they were distrustful of the superior art and power which encroached on their territories. More irascible from ignorance, and less discriminating in their ideas of justice, from the same cause, it is not to be wondered that many an innocent victim fell a sacrifice to their impetuosity, or to their ferocious laws of retaliation. It is this which has laid the plot of many a story of American romance.

These are matters of "olden time." The features of the Indian state are no longer the same. As it respects those on our borders, at least, they are completely metamorphosed. Their days of chivalry are gone. Their enjoyment of independence, when they claimed the supreme right of the soil, has fled forever. The loss of their independence was the loss of many a noble quality which belongs to that state. Look at them now: haggard, abject, and pitiable. Whatever a few among them may be, this is their condition as a people. Art and cunning have impoverished them. The increase of a white population has thinned their forests of the means of subsistence. The vices of a border-people—never the most exemplary

in their conduct—have introduced disease in new and wasting forms. They look back on the past with a sigh. They are not ignorant that of numberless tribes, “many have been swept into oblivion, and are with the generations before the flood! of others not a trace remains but in tradition, or in the person of some solitary wanderer, the last of his tribe, who hovers like a ghost among the sepulchres of his fathers.” One addition completes this deplorable picture—ignorance, cherished for selfish purposes, by unprincipled neighbouring whites—or a want of any other knowledge than the little policies of a petty traffic; a knowledge by which they lose more in virtue than they gain in property.—Such, we say, is their condition wherever the benevolence of Christians has not reached them. It is a state from which they can look no where else for succour but to the friends of humanity.

II. *They desire all that instruction which may tend to ameliorate their situation.* Nor is this desire a matter of surprise. “They see the necessity of a different mode of life from that which they have hitherto pursued. Their previous dependence for subsistence,

having every year become more precarious. the only alternative left is to abandon the pursuit of game and turn their attention to the culture of the soil,"* or dwindle away and perish. To learn the arts of civilized life, and the doctrines of Christianity, is therefore, a prevailing and increasing desire among many of the tribes. Without this, all attempts might be unavailing. Insensibility to their own wretchedness might discourage the hopes of the humane. But the testimony to this desire is discoverable whenever it is sought. The petitions of this people to charitable institutions—of which our own society furnishes an example;—their appeals to government; the published correspondence of several of the Chiefs; their affectionate reception and gratitude to the Missionaries who labour among them,—all prove that they are eager and anxious for relief. Nor is this all. They reason on this subject themselves, as conclusively as we are capable of doing. I extract the following language from the communication of a

* Fourth Annual Report of the Board of Managers of the Missionary Society of the Synod of South-Carolina and Georgia, 1824.

Cherokee Chief : “ When the Indians themselves are seen to manifest a thirst to reach after the blessings and happiness derived from civilized life, I cannot believe that the United States government will still continue to pursue the same lukewarm system of policy, in her relations with the Indians, as has hitherto been adopted, to effect the purpose of removing nation after nation of them from the lands of their fathers into the remote wilderness, where their encroachments on the hunting grounds of other tribes, have been attended with the unhappy consequences of quarrels, war, and bloodshed.— Has not this been the result of the removal of part of our own nation to the Arkansaw? Yes! The uplifted tomahawk is now wielding, and the scalping-knife is unsheathed, between the Arkansaws, Cherokees, and Osages, for the horrid destruction of each other.”

“ As respects our own nation here, I could willingly say that in case the United States— would but let us remain in the peaceable and quiet possession of our country, that our own exertions, together with those of our benevolent Missionaries and friends, would, in time, testify to the world, that Indians are

endowed with mental capacity fully adequate to receive the highest branches of temporal and spiritual improvements, under the influence of civilized life.”* So speaks an Indian. He speaks as one of many. Yet he felt, as others feel, that their great hope and expectation must be derived from the friends of humanity and religion, in advancing the **Missionary** cause among them. This increasing desire for instruction is known too little. There is too little care to investigate the subject. And the true state of this desponding people has been overlooked with a criminal negligence. Nay, a single trifling difficulty in the operations of the **Missionaries**, or a single misunderstanding which candour has represented in their regular **Reports**, has been magnified into an insurmountable obstacle, by those who would grasp the shadow of an excuse to withhold their aid. One assertion may be taken as an axiom for the religious operations of the day—a people who extend their arms to welcome a **Missionary** are ripe for instruction.

* Letter of John Ross, Post-Master, a Cherokee Chief, to David Brown, a Cherokee youth, at Cornwall School, dated July, 1822.

III. *Recent efforts prove by their success, that the Indians are susceptible of spiritual and intellectual improvement.* This position stands on as firm a foundation as the preceding. The multitudinous detail of facts, which occurs to every one conversant with religious papers, would render me at a loss for a choice, if it were necessary to prop my assertion with proofs. I should be in no dissimilar dilemma, were I asked in a foreign land, for the evidence of the civilization of my native country. In my eagerness to embrace much in a little, I might exclaim—“*every thing proves it.*” And I feel tempted to exclaim, after the position before me, “*every thing proves it.*” Every branch of art or science in which we have attempted to instruct the Indians, has been acquired with a facility and readiness which would do honour to the intellect of any of us. The tomahawk has been converted into the ploughshare. The forest has given way to the cultivated field. The wigwam has been succeeded by the dwelling of comfort and taste. The son of the warrior has become the husbandman or the mechanic. Sentiments of justice have taken the place of lawless retaliation. And where the savage

war-whoop was lately sounded, the songs of Zion may be heard from a Christian temple. But order, decency and art have not been the only successors of ignorance and barbarism. There has been a moral advancement among some of these people which might put many a nominal Christian to the blush. I select a single authenticated fact to corroborate this statement: but it is one of many. The females of one of the tribes among whom Missionaries had laboured, gradually raised a sum of money, as a society, for some charitable purpose. They felt at a loss with respect to its disposal. One of them, before whom the principles of the man of honour might cower, proposed aiding a mission among a neighbouring Nation, with whom her own tribe was then *at war!* Revenge may be sweet to the savage; but it is bitterness to the Christian. This proposal was overruled: But only because it appeared, on discussion, more generally useful to aid young men in preparation for the Gospel Ministry; of whose instruction they still sensibly felt their need. To this end the money was devoted. What a comment on the responsibility of him who lives in a land of pri-

vilege, and who gives his uncounted tens to ease and luxury, while he reluctantly drops his single dollar into the treasury of Zion!—Nor is this all. With such avidity have many of these people received religious instruction, where the standard of the Cross has been planted among them, that not a few “appear to know more about the religious state of our world—about our Sabbath Schools, our Revivals of religion, our Bible, Missionary, Education, and Tract Societies, than multitudes in our land who have been connected with our churches for twenty years.”*

And now, brethren, what do these facts prove?—What do a thousand others prove, which every one, who will take the pains to inquire, may learn? Simply this: that all controversy on the practicability of Christianizing the Indians, is at an end.—*These dry bones CAN live.*

II. The second particular embraced in our text is an implied answer contained in a command: “*prophecy upon these bones.*”

* Rev. W. Goodell's Report to the United F. M. Society in New York.

Were I standing upon the elevated mount of Zion, and gazing upon the scene of spiritual death, as displayed in all its terrors among the Heathen, I might sicken in sight of the spectacle. I might see no reason for a faint and flickering hope. But did I hear the voice of the Omnipotent breaking the fearful silence of the occasion—"prophecy"—"use my appointed means!"—my mind would be as free from a doubt as it would otherwise have been from a hope.—I would exclaim, in joyful exultation, "Yes, they *can* live!" Ezekiel's answer did not imply a feeling of skepticism. And if it did, the divine order would have created assurance. If the facts which have been just stated had no existence—if no such incontestible proof presented itself, in favour of the cause of Indian Missions—if no experiment had yet been made—the Christian would have had as much encouragement to begin, and to persevere, in the means of benevolence, as the husbandmen to break up the fallow and to scatter his seed. He would have had more. A variety of natural causes may disappoint the latter. But the promise of Jehovah never failed. The order of the

Almighty never trifled with the hope of his creature. The veracity of God will redeem every pledge he has given. Nay; were I stripped of all the encouragement which facts and a promise can afford—had I nothing to awaken even a trembling expectation—I should still have enough to arouse every dormant energy to activity. The order of the Most High must be obeyed. And it is not mine to pause and question the expediency of Divine injunctions: injunctions most urgent and binding on every one of us: injunctions to carry, or send, the Gospel to every creature.

Let us now examine the encouragements to the discharge of this duty with a special reference to the object immediately before us.

I. We have a strong encouragement to this duty *from a sense of gratitude for the mercies we enjoy*. This position is predicated on the simple truths, that all our mercies are from our Creator himself, and that in carrying the tender of salvation to the Heathen, we make some little return to him for benefits received. Nor does he fail to recognize this principle himself. He that

giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord: Inasmuch as we do favour unto the least of his own we do it unto himself,—are scriptural ideas which distinctly imply such a recognition. We lend unto him! We do kindness unto him! What condescending grace that can consider it so! What a powerful motive for the zeal and liberality of every one of us! *lending* to him *viz.* pays with infinite interest: doing *kindness* to him to whom the most unremitting practical zeal would be only duty discharged!—Ah, my brethren! it is only because the heart is proverbially hard, that this most powerful of all motives is not universally effectual. But when I enter the portals of the sanctuary, and feel myself enriched with the privileges of the Gospel: when I open my eyes to the glory of the cross, and behold its light penetrating through the darkness of the tomb,—“the resurrection and the life” a free gift to my panting spirit,—can I, without an overwhelming sympathy, behold the darkness which envelopes others? or can I fail to ask of my God, “teach me to render a return to thee?” And when I hear his answer,—“impart this gift unto the destitute,”—can

I pause one moment on the question of obedience? Can I set an over-rating value on my temporal possessions—themselves, at best, a loan? Oh what a maze of painful inquiry, and what a source of humiliating reproof do these questions furnish!

II. *The common claims of humanity* present a motive to this duty. This position is true, apart from every Christian feeling.—The temporal wants of the Indian, pitiless and forlorn as he is—looking to us for help—uttering the moan of despondency, and often the expression of despair—speak imperatively to the hearts of the humane. I know there are those whose near-sighted eye cannot see beyond the little circle of their own particular matters. Who can only feel when the beggared object for whom we solicit stands between them and the beams of the sun: who consider the claims of charity light, because they are common; and who are ready, on such occasion as this, to magnify, with all the power of selfishness, their own necessities; and to exclaim with Nabal of old, “*Why should I be such a fool as to give my flesh which I have prepared for my Shearers, to men I know not from whence they be.*”—

On such, every draft of humanity may be returned protested. I pray God that none such hear me. Oh if wealth have a single charm to the reflecting mind; if it be able to confer a single pleasure pure and unembittered; if it can present a single comfort surviving its own departure; it is the permanent satisfaction that we have relieved a fellow: it is the happiness we have conferred on others reflected back on ourselves. To him to whom this is dear, humanity speaks loudly on behalf of our present plea.

III. A third motive to this duty consists in *the extent of good to be accomplished, compared with the smallness of the sacrifice to effect it.* This is a mode of calculating which influences our daily conduct. It is a ground on which we cheerfully meet the most narrow-souled calculator. Look at that miserable horde of sufferers! It is not that they are homeless: It is not that the bread of the day is uncertain to its end: It is not that the miserable blanket apologizes for the wretchedness of the wearer: It is not that their woe is for a moment forgotten in the brutalizing cup of intoxication; it is not ——— but I will not enumerate. These

things speak to the humane alone. But it is not because they all exist that we address you now. No: It is because of the piercing shriek of the immortal soul. "We go down to the grave in darkness and terror; a host of fearful doubts shroud our eternity: the light that cheers the christian reaches us not: help, or we perish forever!" I turn from this appalling scene to ponder its meaning. I scrutinize the character of an undying spirit: its capacities; its destiny. I examine the price of redemption. I see Heaven impoverished to accomplish it. I behold angels wrapt in wonder. What is my conclusion? were there but *one* immortal soul, the Great of the earth might muster their forces; kingdoms exhaust their treasures; science and talent; plan and devise, for its salvation: And when all is done, the means were little, compared to the end.

It is this, brethren,—this infinite gain of good, to which we invite you. Thanks be to God, it is practicable to save, not one, but with his blessing, hundreds. And the sacrifice to accomplish such an end is not that you "sell all"—that you render the offering of the primitive disciples, in captivity and

toil, in ignominy, persecution and death.— No peculiar effort of magnanimity is demanded at your hands. The self-denial and labour have been undertaken by others. All that is arduous and all that is personally painful, falls to the part of the devoted Missionary. You are even spared the sight of distress. Your sensibility is not invaded, nor your peace disturbed, by the personal intrusion of spectacles of woe. Continue to live in all the comfort of the domestic circle ; in the choice and variety of spiritual privilege : Still it is within your province and power to accomplish infinite good in the Redeemer's cause. It is your province to furnish the means : it is in your power to support the instruments of conveying the offer of redemption to the lost. And you do all this by efforts less than are exerted for your transitory pleasures ; and at an expense less than they can cost ; while it bestows the infinite riches of the grace of God.

IV. We will name one more encouragement before we close our subject ; *obedience to the command in our text is connected with the promise of a blessing.* Oh, it is noble to be a co-worker with Jesus Christ ! to be

reckoned an almoner of Heaven! to be an instrument of advancing Messiah's glory.— And it is such that the testimony of an approving conscience will richly reward in time, and the greetings of the redeemed hail in eternity. God shall stand his security for the payment of more than he gave.— The character and extent of that reward, it is not mine to state: and it is neither yours nor mine to conceive. The security is enough. But without a reference to a future re-payment, it is sufficient to know, that man, who was made for deeds of benevolence—man, who in deeds of *Christian* benevolence may most nearly retrieve his fallen character,—gains more in a triumph over the miseries of his fellow than could be secured by the conquests of a Napoleon.— Yes; the blessing is *sure*. All other enterprize may fail: because all enterprize is regulated by the Creator, and he will prosper only whatever tends to the ultimate glory of his kingdom. “Time and chance,” so called, belong to every earthly matter: but there is an infallible certainty in all that appertains to the honour of the Redeemer.— There is an infallible certainty of reward,

if it consisted only in this,—that the Almighty rewarder looks to the design of the giver, while he takes care of the object himself.

But I pause : Not because our subject is exhausted : its richness tempts to its prosecution : but because I dare encroach no longer on your time.

My text is one of many which announces the glory of the Millennial day. The part which you will take in its advancement is left to yourselves. The subject immediately before you is a branch of the references of this text. Here, too, you have a part to choose : And no strong hand will influence the agency of your choice. We have endeavoured to prove to you both the practicability and the duty of attempting to Christianize the Heathen of our native land. The whole matter comes home to every breast with the most solemn and awful responsibility. It may be forgotten. It may be hidden. But, as the Eternal lives, it stands ready to face you at the judgment seat.

You are not now to be informed, Brethren, that the Synod at present conven-

ed in your city, has attempted to answer the earnest calls of one of these tribes — They have seen and felt that not one among the Indian nations on our frontier, has presented a more powerful claim to their sympathy and assistance than that of the *Chickasaws*. Distinguished by many excellent qualities, by a peaceable demeanour, and by an unwavering friendship for the United States, their first application to the “American Board,” met with an immediate promise to commence a Missionary establishment among them. Almost simultaneously with this engagement, (then unknown to us,) the Synod, by their Commissioners, entered into a regular contract with this nation for the same purpose; which has, most probably, superceded the intentions of the Board. The result, you well know, is very far from being discouraging. With a laudable economy and prudence, the Missionaries, at *Monroe Station*, have been blessed with a degree of success beyond the most sanguine expectations of its founders. A second School has already been established among this people; and the increasing and pressing solicitations on the part of the the Parents in be-

half of their rising generation, brings the day very near for the foundation of a third. The improvement of the children has kept pace with their opportunities. Its happy influence is already extending among the tribe at large.

Yet with all this in their favour, the Synod know, and you are assured, that all their success, under God, must depend on the liberality of the churches—on the benevolence of individuals. It is, then, by the important considerations already named, we have to beseech your assistance. The enlargement of the Mission family, and the increased extent of the establishment, have this year required a heavy expenditure. Our efforts are trammelled by an exhausted treasury.—We look with pain on a work nobly begun, yet in danger of languishing from the poverty of means. We come to you in the character of *petitioners*, in the name, and for the sake of Jesus Christ. You will give, not to us—you will give to *him*. I could leave the result of our prayer to you; even now, without the addition of a word, I could leave you to exhibit to him the evidence of your gratitude and your love. But before

you lay your hand on the portion of property which you consecrate to him, I cannot resist the temptation to entreat you to hesitate on the deed you are doing.

You may have decided on the sum you will bestow. But have you weighed the object before you? You may determine to square your liberality by that of others around you: but will the tracing of their example satisfy you at the bar of God? Would an adherence to that example, in ordinary matters of religious duty, give you an approving conscience? May it then, do so in the instance before us? And have you not an individual responsibility, made up of your own knowledge of duty?

Bear with me, brethren: but before you drop that sum into the treasury of Zion, judge of its proportion to the end before you. Before you decide on your own ability, ponder on the worth of an immortal soul. It is nothing to us, so far as the relations of eternity are concerned, what broad or narrow views you may have of the principles of charity. But to you it is of infinite moment. We would not arrogate to ourselves the prerogative of dictating what you shall give.--

But we beg leave to say, that when you present this sum, whatever it is, you announce to the Lord Jesus Christ, that with this infinite object before you, and in view of all these circumstances, you will spare him *so much* of your property. We do not ask you what, with present feelings, you consider yourselves able to give : but we beseech you to ask of yourselves, whether this is the sum you will be satisfied to have given, when these very Heathen stand before an assembled world—free to tell their joy and to point to the blessed instruments of their salvation, with the glad voice of gratitude uttered in your behalf ; or free to plead “ trumpet-tongued” the palliation of their guilt in your neglect. Before you bring your gift to the altar, mark for a moment, in fancy, what you shall soon realize, in fact ; the hopes and the grandeur of the earth departed ; the loud shriek of accusing and once neglected, witnesses of the higher value many have set on their property, than on the redemption of the soul. Before you bring your gift to the altar, anticipate for a moment, if you can, what would be your feelings, did the shout of welcome break from

the band of the blessed,—from the lips of but a single soul,—on your arrival in the presence of God; that shout announce to all Heaven your name as instrumental deliverer; and the records of Heaven's book tell the infinite issue of this very hour's liberality.

Bear with me, brethren, in this seeming importunity. I await with deep anxiety, the result which follows our petition for help.—Yonder parents have brought their offspring to the Missionary family. They ask, in their behalf, instruction in the knowledge of Jesus. They beg for them a shelter from examples of vice and obscenity. Alas, the means of their support are exhausted. 'Return disappointed father—return disconsolate mother—take back these little ones to the dark places of their birth—we have nothing to bestow but the sigh of regret.' Oh, my God! is it not enough that our Mission family have abandoned the comforts of home—have retired from the pleasures of social life—have taken self-denial and toil as their future lot?—have they still to endure the writhing of feeling from such scenes as this?—and that, while the professed friends of humanity,

and even the professed friends of Zion, "have enough and abound?" Forbid it brethren. Let not the comforts you enjoy carry with them the reproach of selfishness. Wrong not yourselves this hour. Dishonor not the common cause of humanity and religion.— Compare the gift you shall lay on the altar with the infinitely glorious ends you are invited to accomplish.

Yes, Redeemer, we are not insensible to thy claims. We give thee this,—and this,—in the very conviction of right and duty.— Measure by this our love for thee and thine!