

THE ATTRACTION OF THE CROSS

A Sermon, preached before the London missionary Society, at Surrey Chapel, on Wednesday morning, May 12, 1819, **by John Angell James**. (The impression produced by the delivery of this sermon first attracted public attention to the author. Of all his printed sermons, it remains the one most well known.)

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me—this he said signifying what kind of death he would die." John 12:32, 33

"We preach Christ crucified!" 1 Corinthians 1:23

"For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. My speech and my proclamation were not with persuasive words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and power." (1 Corinthians 2:2-4)

If the perfection of wisdom consists in seeking the noblest ends by the fittest means, then does the cause of missions appear before the world, invested with the glory, and preferring the claims, of the wisest scheme for man's activity which has ever been devised. Of the benevolence and sublimity of our object, there can exist no doubt; and the only question which can arise about the rationality of our scheme, must relate to the adequacy of our means. We are not infrequently told that all attempts to convert pagan nations to Christianity, not supported by the aid of miracles, must prove entirely ineffectual, or be followed with very inconsiderable success. That miracles were necessary at the introduction of Christianity, as the witnesses of its heavenly origin and descent, is obvious; they formed the visible signatures of the divine hand to the testimony of the Son of God and his apostles; but to argue for their repetition through succeeding ages, in every country which the gospel approaches for the first time, is to contend that a deed, however well attested, cannot be admitted as valid unless

the witnesses who originally signed it live forever to verify their signature. This objection, however, is best answered by an appeal to facts. However difficult it may be to ascertain with precision the exact time when the testimony of miracles ceased, nothing is more certain than that these witnesses had finished their evidence long before the conversion of the northern and western parts of Europe; and the demand of supernatural interposition, as necessary to the propagation of Christianity, is urged with an ill grace by a Protestant, when it is remembered that there is not a single Protestant country which did not receive the gospel unaccompanied with signs and wonders; and with still greater inconsistency is it made by an Englishman, when it is considered that this happy country, the glory of Christendom, the joy of the whole earth, and the evangelist of the world, was recovered from the thralldom of Saxon idolatry without one miraculous operation.

What, then, are the means with which we set out on this high and holy enterprise of converting the world? I answer, the doctrine of the cross—for, says Christ, "If I be lifted up," or "when I am lifted up, I will draw all men unto me."

In these words our Lord announces the nature of his approaching death—he was about to be lifted up, or crucified; he predicts the consequences with which his crucifixion would be followed; all men would be gathered to him; he specifies the means, and the manner of their conversion—they would be drawn, or attracted by an exhibition of his death. In other words, the text presents us with the great object of missionary zeal, the grand instrument of missionary exertion, and the final consummation of missionary success.

It will be instantly perceived that I have not sought after novelty of subject, and it will soon be discovered that I have not attained ingenuity or profundity of discussion. The state of my mind and feelings since I received the application of the directors, would alone have precluded these. Their request for my services on this occasion found me at the tomb of all that was dearest to me on earth, a situation not very favorable for penetrating into the depth of any other subject than my own irreparable loss. One thing which

induced me to comply with their solicitation, was a hope that my mind would be drawn away in some degree from the heart-withering recollection of departed bliss—nor has that hope been altogether disappointed; for the subject of my sermon has often presented such visions of spiritual glory as have made the tear forget to fall, and hushed the sorrows of a bursting heart, and taught the preacher that while the missionary cause goes as the messenger of mercy to pagan realms abroad, it is one of the best comforters in the house of mourning at home.

I. The text presents us with the great OBJECT of missionary zeal, "To bring men to Christ."

There are at the present moment more than six hundred million people in the appalling situation of the men whom the apostle describes as "without Christ in the world;" and the question is, with what feelings and what purposes a Christian should survey this vast and wretched portion of the family of man. To ascertain this, you have only to contemplate the scene which at your last anniversary was brought before you with such force of reason, pathos, and eloquence. Behold Paul at Athens. Think of the matchless splendor which blazed upon his view, as he rolled his eye round the enchanting panorama which encircled the hill of Mars. Around him, as he stood upon the summit of the rock, beneath the canopy of heaven, was spread a glorious prospect of mountains, islands, sea, and sky. Within view was the gulf of Salamis, and on the horizon the plain of Marathon, where the conquests of the old Greek heroes had saved not their country only, but the mental liberty and energy of man. Above him towered the Acropolis, crowned with the pride of Grecian architecture. There, in the zenith of their splendor and the perfection of their beauty, stood those peerless temples, the very fragments of which are viewed by modern travelers with an idolatry almost equal to that which reared them. Stretched along the plain below him, and reclining her head on the slope of the neighboring hills, was Athens, mother of the arts and the sciences, with her noble offspring sporting by her side. The Porch, the Lyceum, and the Grove, with the statues of their departed sages, and the forms of their living disciples, were all

presented to the apostle's eye.

Who of us possessing the slightest pretensions to knowledge or taste, can even fancy himself gazing upon this sublime and captivating scenery without a momentary rapture? Yet there did this accomplished scholar stand as insensible to all the grandeur, as if nothing was before him but the treeless, turfless desert. Absorbed in the holy abstraction of his mind, he saw no charms, felt no fascinations, but on the contrary was pierced with the most poignant distress—and what was the cause? Because "he saw the city wholly given to idolatry." To him it presented nothing but a magnificent mausoleum, decorated, it is true, with the richest productions of the sculptor and the architect, but still where the souls of men lay dead in trespasses and sins; while the dim light of philosophy which still glimmered in the schools, appeared but as the lamp of the sepulcher, shedding its pale and sickly ray around gorgeous chambers of death. What must have been his indignant grief at the dishonor done by idolatry to God? What must have been his amazement at the weakness and folly of the human mind? What must have been his abhorrence of human impiety? What must have been his compassion for human wretchedness, when such stately monuments had not the smallest possible effect in turning away his view from the guilt which raised them and the misery which endured amidst them.

Yet how many professedly Christian travelers and divines, while occupying the same spot, though they saw not a thousandth part of what the apostle saw, have had their minds so engrossed by the scene, as not to feel one sentiment of pity for the Pagans of old, or the Muhammadans who now dwell amidst the venerable ruins. But we being of one mind with Paul, and looking upon the souls of mankind in the light which his inspired writings have thrown upon their destiny, have imbibed his temper, and feel our spirits grieved within us, over the multitudes that are given to idolatry. We cannot help thinking that men without Christ are in the very depths of misery, though they may stand in other respects upon the summit of civilization, literature, and science; and for such an opinion we can plead the authority of the apostle, who, as we have seen, bewailed a city of philosophers with more intense and piercing grief

than any of us ever did a horde of idolatrous savages.

Here, then, is the object of our zeal—to bring to Christ those who are afar off. "To turn men from dumb idols to serve the living and the true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven." To induce them, by the power of persuasion, in humble dependence upon the blessing of God, to renounce all their systems of error for the revelation of Christ as our divine Prophet; to abandon their rites, sacrifices, and penances, for his one oblation as our great High Priest; and to forsake their wicked customs and immoral habits, for obedience to his laws as King in Zion. In fact, to accomplish in the happy experience of the heathen, the descriptions which the pen of prophecy has given of the Messiah and his kingdom; to achieve the victory announced in the mystic terms of the first promise, and bruise the head of the serpent; to circulate the blessing of Abraham's seed through all the families of the earth; to bring the gatherings of the peoples unto Shiloh, as the way, the truth, and the life; to cause that bright star to rise upon the benighted parts of the world, the beam of which so confounded the eye of the hireling prophet, that his tongue forgot to curse the armies of Israel; to scatter the fruits of Isaiah's rod, and diffuse the fragrance of Jeremiah's branch, over all the famishing and fainting children of the fall; to open new channels through which the cleansing streams of Zechariah's fountain, and the vivifying waters of Ezekiel's river, may flow; to prepare for the coming of Haggai's desire of all nations, and to bring forth the people sitting in darkness and in the valley of the shadow of death, to feel the enlivening beams of the moral sun, the dawn of which Malachi foresaw, and to catch the healing virtues which he shakes from the golden plumage of his wings.

Now, such an object associates our cause, first, with the design of the Son of God in redemption. The object of the Redeemer's visit to our world was not to teach men the arts and the sciences, not to instruct them in letters, not to introduce the reign of philosophy, not to break the yoke of civil tyranny, nor to promulgate the best theory of human government. As valuable as are these objects to the present interests of mankind, they are infinitely too low to be the end of the incarnation and death of the Son of God. For such

purposes he would not have deigned to approach the horizon of our globe. No, my brethren, the one object of the humiliation of the Son of God was the salvation of the human soul; and what must be the value of the salvation which was worthy of that humiliation? When Jesus Christ departed the throne of his glory, it was to avert the curse which threatened to sink a guilty world to perdition, to roll back the torrent of damnation, and pour through its deserted channels the streams of salvation; to rescue innumerable millions of immortal spirits from the consequences of the fall, and lift them by the power of his grace from the borders of the flaming pit—to the heavens of the great God. This was the favorite object on which his mind reposed from eternity, which he seemed in haste to disclose, as soon as the apostasy of man presented an opportunity; which he loved to announce to the world by the messages of the prophets, and to exhibit in shadow, by the sacrifices of the priests, for four thousand years before its accomplishment. In seeking to save the souls of the heathen by bringing them to Christ, we raise ourselves into the dignity of a partnership with the Son of God in these mighty designs of his; we enter into the fellowship of that cross which is destined to occupy eternity with the development of its wonders, and to fill the universe with the brightness of its glory.

Such an object associates our cause with the ultimate end of all Providential arrangements. Providence is the direction of all human events with immediate reference to the kingdom of Christ. The government of the world has ever had for its object, the accomplishment of the mediatorial scheme. From the fall, Providence devoted itself to redemption, and directed all its energies and resources to prepare for the crucifixion. Separate from this, it has no interests to establish in all its sphere of operation. Hence the language of our Lord, "You have given him power over all flesh, that he might give eternal life, to as many as you have given him;" and hence the echo of the same truth in the writings of his apostle, "He has put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to his church."

All human events, the revolutions of empires, the change of dynasties, the succession of monarchies, the results of war,

the councils of cabinets, the debates of senates, the progress of discovery, the course of invention—in their immediate influence and remote effects, are all parts of that great plan which has for its object to bring men to Christ. This is the center where all these lines converge. The world is given to Jesus, and he is incessantly employed in bringing it to himself. The Babylonish, the Persian, the Macedonian, the Roman conqueror, each at his own proper period, and in his own proper place, entered upon the stage, and though "he did not think so, neither did his heart mean it," ministered to the designs of God in redemption. Little did Julius Caesar imagine, when the white cliffs of Britain, glittering in the sun, excited his ambition and drew him across the Channel, for what purpose he disembarked his legions on our coast; but we know that it was to open a door through which the Gospel might enter our beloved country. Little did the spirit of commercial enterprise imagine, when urged only by the love of mammon, it fixed its establishments near the mouth of the Hoogley, or on the banks of the Ganges, that it was sent there as the forerunner of Christian missionaries. Little does the genius of war imagine, when impelling its mad votaries to new contests, that Christianity is following at a distance, in the rear of its victorious armies, to plant her stations on the fields of their encampment, to bear away the best of the spoils, and assume the dominion which other potentates have lost. Little did Columbus imagine, when with his heart big with his mighty projects, he walked in silence on the shores of the new world, and watched the star of evening go down the western sky, who it was that dictated the purpose to explore the region which she went nightly to visit on the other side of the Atlantic.

We live at a time when all these events are clearly seen to connect themselves with the grand purpose of Jehovah, "to bring all men to Christ." And the people of future generations will as clearly discern the same relation in the circumstances of our day. Behold, then, the position occupied by the friends of missions. We are following in the rear of Providence, pursuing the very line of its march, moving when and where it moves, like the children of Israel in obedience to the cloudy pillar, availing ourselves of all the advantages it throws in our way, and embracing in our plans

every favorable occurrence which we perceive in the universal history of the globe.

Such an object associates our cause with the best interests of the human race. If by the blessing of God upon our labors, we succeed in drawing men away from their idolatry to Christ, we save their immortal souls from death, and provide them with a blissful and glorious eternity. There are not lacking those who would restrict our benevolence to the 'temporal interests' of mankind. Civilize the savage, say they, cultivate his intellect, teach him to farm the ground, and deliver him from the galling fetters of slavery—but leave alone his religion. Yes, such an admonition is in character with the man who, having himself no part in Christ, would gladly find himself countenanced in the dreadful deficiency by the universal suffrages of a world of atheists or idolaters. Such a scantling philanthropy, if that indeed may be called philanthropy which proposes to leave men without God, and Christ, and hope—may satisfy the abject creeping spirit of infidelity, which, beyond the visible heavens, sees nothing to expect or fear. But it will not do for the lofty benevolence of Christianity, which soars upon the wing of faith until she beholds the unseen world, adapts the plan of her operation to the scale of eternity, and pursues it with an energy inspired by a view of heaven on the one hand, and of hell on the other.

Suppose, that out of compliment to the mockers of missionary zeal, we relinquished its highest, and indeed its identifying object, and confined our efforts exclusively to civilization, sending the plough and the loom instead of the cross, and that upon this reduced scale of operation we were as successful as could be desired, until we had raised the man of the woods into the man of the city, and elevated the savage into the sage. What, I ask, should we effect, viewing man, as with the New Testament in our hands we must view him, in the whole range of his existence? We may pour the light of science on his path, and strew it with the flowers of literature, but if we leave him to the dominion of his vices, it is still the path to perdition. We may teach him to fare sumptuously every day; but alas, this, in his case, is only like offering food to the wretch who is on his way to the place of execution. We may strip off his sheep-skin dress,

and clothe him with purple and fine linen—but it is only to aid him, like Dives, to live in luxury, on the way to the torments of the damned. We may raise the sculptured monument over his bones, in place of the earthly hillock in the wilderness, but though his ashes repose in grandeur, the worm that never dies will forever devour his soul, amidst the flames that can never be extinguished.

In the civilization of the heathen, we confer a blessing which is valuable while it lasts; but it is a blessing which the soul drops as she steps across the confines of the unseen world, and then passes on to wander through eternity, "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." But let us aim first to save the soul, by bringing it under the influence of Christianity, and then as we advance to the end of our exertions we shall not fail to scatter along the path of our benevolence all the seeds of civilization and social order.

It is a mere assumption destitute of all proof, that such tribes as those of South Africa, and the inhabitants of the South-Sea Islands, could be civilized without the aid of religion—but it is not an assumption, for experience proves the fact, that in their savage state they are capable of receiving the gospel. And who needs to be informed that the principles of true religion contain the seed of all that is polished, as well as all that is excellent, in human nature. Religion is strictly and essentially a civilizing process. By **faith**, the mind is raised above the debasing tyranny of sensible objects, and sensual gratifications; by **hope**, the influence of present and pressing impulse is controlled by the prospect of future benefits; **love** establishes a law of kindness in the bosom, by which the irascible passions are subdued. And thus the elements of barbarism are expelled whenever the soul is brought into union with Christ. Industry is enjoined by the weight of a heavenly authority, and enforced by motives of eternal importance, while the intellect sublimated and quickened by its communion with immaterial objects, is prepared to start in the career of endless improvement.

If, then, you would convert the wilderness into a garden, let the first tree you plant in it be the tree of life, and you shall not long see it skirted by the nettle and the briar, much less

like the poison tree of Java, shall it stand the center of a circle of death. But you shall behold it dropping its fruit for the life of the world, and shedding its leaves for the healing of the nations, while civilization shall, with feeble and tender arms, clasp its trunk, and be raised by its support into notice and strength.

II. Let us now consider the grand INSTRUMENT of Missionary exertions. This is the doctrine of the Cross, "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw men unto me."

It was evidently our Lord's intention to represent the conversion of the nations not merely as a circumstance that would follow his death in the mere order of time, but as a consequence connected with it in the order of cause and effect.

This day do we see something resembling the splendid fable told of Constantine's conversion. You armies of Christ, marshaled around this pulpit, and confederated in the mighty enterprise of wresting the empire of the world from the prince of darkness, behold the cross suspended in the firmament of revelation, radiant with its own brightness, and inscribed with the auspicious motto, "By this conquer!" Yes, this is the emblem which must wave alone in our banner, "and to it shall the Gentiles seek." I preach another and a true crusade to the heathen world; far different from that convulsive mania which, in the midnight of superstition, disturbed the slumbers of the globe, and like a volcano, precipitated all Europe in a state of merger upon the valleys of Judea. Our **object** is not to recover the holy sepulcher from the possession of heretics, but to make known the death of Him who descended to it to wrest the keys of empire from the king of terrors. The **weapons** of our warfare are not carnal, as the sword, the spear, and the battle axe—but spiritual, as the doctrines of the gospel exhibited in the sermons of our missionaries. The line of our **march** will not be marked by ensanguined fields, and the reign of desolation—but by the comforts of civilization and the blessings of Christianity. We shall not be followed in our career by the groans of dying warriors, and the shrieks of

bereaved widows—but by the songs of redeemed sinners, and the shouts of enraptured angels. Our **laurels** will be stained with no blood—but that of the Lamb of God, and bedropped with no tears but those of penitence and joy. Our **spoils** will consist not of bits of the true cross, or shreds of the Virgin's robe—but rejected idols and the regenerated souls of those who once adored them.

1. It will be important under this head of discourse, first, to **state what is essentially included in the doctrine of the cross**. It includes, of necessity, the **MANNER** of Christ's death. The sacred historian having conducted us to Calvary, and pointed to its summit, exclaims with pregnant simplicity, "and there they **crucified** him." Crucifixion was not only the most agonizing, but the most ignominious death. By the Jewish law it was pronounced accursed, and by the jurisprudence of Rome it was employed as the broom of destruction, by which the vilest of slaves and criminals might be swept from the face of the earth, "as the filth and offscouring of all things." And did You, who are the brightness of your Father's glory, humble yourself to the death of the cross? Yes, you did, but by that cross you shall conquer the world!

The design of Christ's death, as an atonement for sin, is essentially included in this doctrine. It appears to me to be one of the mysteries in the world of mind, that the doctrine of the atonement should be disputed by any who profess assent to the testimony of Scriptural revelation. Have they ever read with attention the language of Paul? "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as an atoning sacrifice by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus." (Romans 3:23-26)

How is it possible to avoid seeing the great truth for which we are now contending in this most convincing passage, where, in the compass of two verses, it is thrice affirmed that the end of Christ's death was a declaration of justice?

For in what other way than as an atonement his blood can be a manifestation of justice, it must confound even the ingenious spirit of error to inform us. The atonement is not, so much a doctrine of Scripture, as the very Scripture itself, and if it be removed, leaves all that remains as incoherent and unmeaning as the leaves which the Sybil dispersed to the wind.

The **divinity of Christ's person**, as constituting the value of his atoning sacrifice, appears to me to be an essential part of this system of truth. While the hope of a guilty world can rest nowhere else than on an atonement, that in its turn, can be supported by nothing short of the Rock of Ages—and hence it is that these two are so often exhibited in the Word of God in close connection with each other. It was he "who was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, that humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." It was he "who was before all things, and by whom all things are held together, who made peace through the blood of the cross." It was he "who was the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person, and who upholds all things by the word of his power, that by himself purged our sins." It should not be overlooked, how closely connected with the divinity of Christ, and how dependent upon it, is the success of the cause of missions. This cause with all which it involves, is supported by the power of Jesus. "The pleasure of the Lord is in his hand." "The government is upon his shoulders." "The Father has made him to be head over all things to his church." "All power in heaven and earth is given to him." Do we, then, depend for success upon the energies of a mere creature? Is it an arm of flesh alone that we must look to for support and conquest? Then, indeed, may we sound the 'signal of retreat' to our Missionaries, dissolve our Society, and abandon the field of conflict to Satan. But we have not so learned Christ; we believe him to be the omnipotent and the omniscient God. In him we trust, and shall not be ashamed.

Essential to the doctrine of the cross is **the gratuitous manner in which its blessings are bestowed**. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him might not

perish, but have everlasting life." "It is by faith that it might be by grace." Leave out the justification of the soul by faith alone, and you send to the heathen but a lying resemblance of the cross. And to complete the scriptural view of this sublime compendium of truth, it is necessary we should include **its moral tendency and design as respects the heart and conduct of those by whom it is received.** "I am crucified," said the Apostle, "with Christ," earnestly desiring, "that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings; being made conformable unto his death."

It is not one of these, but all of them combined, which form the doctrine of the cross. Take any of them away and the arch is destroyed, all the rest sink together to the dust, a mass of splendid ruins, a heap of crumbling fragments. Without the atonement, the fact of the crucifixion appears to me, a dark unintelligible inexplicable spot upon the page of revelation, connecting nothing, supporting nothing, explaining nothing. The atonement without the deity of Christ, lacks both the impress and the value to secure for it confidence; and acceptance of the atonement and the deity of Christ, without the justification of the soul by faith, leaves the system without any link which can connect it with the experience of the sinner; while all together would be of no avail in his salvation, unless they secured his sanctification.

2. I shall now illustrate the various POWERS OF ATTRACTION which the doctrine of the cross exerts.

The stupendous fact of the cross, arrests and fixes the attention. The human mind, especially in its cruder states, where there is such a preponderance of 'imagination' over 'reason', is much more easily and powerfully wrought upon by a narration of facts than a statement of principles. And the whole fabric of Christianity, both as to doctrines and duties, is founded upon a fact; and that fact, drawn out into details more touching and tender than can be found in any real history or in any romance. The life and the death of the "man of sorrows," unites to all the sobriety and power of truth—the fascination of fiction. The veiled splendor of his deity, occasionally bursting through its thin disguise, and irradiating the gloom of his poverty; the extremity of his sufferings, and the heart-affecting meekness with which he

bore them; the perfection of his virtues, together with the unrelenting cruelty of his enemies; the mysterious combination of glory and humility in his person and life; the garden of Gethsemane; the scenes of Pilate's hall, and the mount of Calvary—give a magic power to the story of the cross!

But when we thus know that this was the incarnation and crucifixion of the 'Son of God' for a 'world of sinners'—we arrive at the pinnacle of all that is marvelous, and interesting, and sublime! History in its most extraordinary narrations, and imagination in its loftiest flights, are both left infinitely behind. When with devout contemplation we have been engaged in surveying this stupendous fact, we feel, in turning away to other objects, just as the man does who has been gazing upon the unclouded sun, so dazzled with excess of light, as to perceive no other object, whatever its magnitude or splendor. We no longer wonder at the researches of the prophets, nor feel any surprise that the angels should leave every fountain of celestial knowledge to look upon the cross.

Conceive then, my hearers, the effect of this wonder of wonders upon the minds of the poor pagans, who, after having been conversant all their lives with nothing but the despicable ignorance of a barbarous state, hear for the first time of the death of the Son of God. "Tis this," said our Missionary, Ebner, speaking of the wild Bushmen, "tis this that excites their admiration, melts them into tears, and breaks their hearts." If then, you would arrest the savage of the desert; if you would detain him from the chase; if you would rivet him to the spot, and hold him in the power of a spell that is altogether new to him—do not begin with cold abstractions of moral duties or theological truths; but tell him of Christ crucified, and you shall see his once vacant countenance enlivened by the feelings of a new and deep interest, and the teardrop glistening in the eye unused to weep; and shall witness the evil spirit departing out of the man, as he drops one by one from his hand, the murderous weapons with which he lately would have sought your life.

As an exhibition of unparalleled love, the cross melts and captivates the heart. The cross has been beautifully

denominated the noon-tide of everlasting love, the meridian splendor of eternal mercy. The sacred writers never seem to labor so much for expression as when setting forth this mystery. "Herein, is love"—as if, until God gave his Son, men had never seen anything that deserved the name of love. John calls it the 'manifestation of love'—as if nothing more now remained to be known of love in any age or any world. And Paul speaks of the cross as the commendation of love, as if nothing more could now ever be said upon the subject. Jesus Christ, in describing this act of divine mercy, uses this remarkable emphasis, "God **so** loved the world," importing that this is a demonstration of love which will send rapturous surprise to the remotest world that Omnipotence has formed.

In short, all we can say of this this love which was demonstrated at the cross, is that it is ineffable; and that all we know of it, that it passes knowledge. Now, my brethren, there is a mighty power in love. He that knows all the mechanism of the human mind, has told us, that "the cords of love are the bands of a man." That heart, which wraps itself up in the covering of a stubborn and reckless despair against the attacks of severity, like the flower which closes its petals at the approach of the angry blast—will put forth all the better parts of its nature to the smiles of love, like the tendrils of the sea anemone, when it feels the first wave of the returning tide upon its native rock.

Think then of the **attraction of the cross**—when the love which it exhibits is seen and felt by a mind under the influence of the Spirit of God. What was it, my hearers, that melted your hard and frozen hearts into penitence, and gratitude, and love? What was it that drew you away from your sins? What was it that brought you as willing captives to the feet of Jesus? It was the love of God beseeching you upon the summit of Calvary, and with open arms bidding you welcome to the heart of Deity! Everything else united to repel you; the terrors of justice petrified you with horror, and despair was binding you more closely than ever to your sins—until divine mercy appeared and told you there was hope for the guilty—in the cross of Christ!

And shall not the same attraction be felt, do you think, in

pagan realms? Shall **this heavenly magnet** lose its power there? O no! Many circumstances unite to increase its influence among those miserable tribes. Does it heighten the love of God to consider the sinfulness and unworthiness of its objects? What then must be the views of it which the poor Hottentots will entertain, whom their Dutch oppressors have taught to consider themselves as little above the level of the baboons and monkeys of the woods! and which the wretched Chandalahs of the East will entertain, who are considered unworthy to look upon the face of a Brahmin, when they are informed that God so loved them, as to give his Son to die upon the cross for them? Does the guilt of its objects heighten the love of God, and render it more and more astonishing, how will it appear to the South Sea Islander, who so lately rioted in the brute violence of the passions, gorged his cannibal appetite with the flesh of the man he had murdered, and offered human blood in sacrifice to demons, when he is informed that God so loved him as to give his Son to die upon the cross for him?

And then there is another circumstance which must add to the attraction of the cross in heathen countries. One of the prevailing features of all idolatry is cruelty; and for this plain reason—When man lost the knowledge of God, he cast his deities in the mold of his own imagination, and animated them with the dispositions of his own heart. The prototypes of all the idols in the Pantheon were found in the human bosom; and because 'mercy' had no altar in the latter, she therefore had no statue in the former. Go, Christian missionary, to the dark places of the earth, which are full of the habitations of cruelty, and to those who have never associated any other idea with Deity than inexorable cruelty, and never contemplated their gods but with uncontrollable terror—proclaim that God is love; and by all the soft allurements of heavenly grace, draw them away from the hideous frowning objects of their homage—to the Father of Mercies.

As a system of mediation, it allays the fears of a guilty conscience, and draws the soul into confidence in God. History informs us that the greater part of the religion of all idolatrous nations, both ancient and modern, has consisted of denigrating rites of expiation—a plain proof, in my

opinion, that no nation ever considered penitence and obedience to be sufficient to satisfy the demands of an offended deity. So far as the testimony of history and experience goes, the idea of 'retributive justice', as an attribute of the Divine Being—seems far more easily deducible by a sinner, from the light of nature, than that of 'free mercy'. What, I ask, is the meaning of all those bloody sacrifices, and rites, and penances, which have been multiplied without number in the ritual of idolatry? They are the efforts of a guilty but blinded conscience, groping, in the hour of its extremity, after some atonement on which to roll the burden of its sins, and seeking some satisfaction to the justice it has offended, by which its fears may be allayed, and on the ground of which it may have confidence in respect of the past. No sooner does a missionary set his foot on any part of the heathen world, than innumerable objects seem to ask him, with deep and lengthened emphasis, "How shall man be just with God?" Here, then, is the attraction of the cross—it removes every obstacle out of the way of the sinner's approach to God; it puts an authorised and perfect satisfaction to God's justice in his hand, with which he may venture to the very foot of the eternal throne, and gives him that boldness which arises from a perception that God has not more effectually provided for the sinner's salvation, than he has for the glory of his own attributes, government, and laws. In short, that God is both "just, and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus."

By admitting an 'individual appropriation' of its benefits, it appeals to all the feelings of self-regard and personal interest. It is the glory of the Gospel, that, while it makes an ample provision for the world, and invites the whole family of man to the feast, it lays all its blessings at the feet of every individual to whom it comes, and tells him that they are all for him—if he will accept them. It does not appraise the value of the human race by a method of calculation founded only on the mass of mankind, but represents every individual as an object of infinite importance, and of distinct and separate consideration in the view of Infinite Mercy.

Think of the effect of this upon the mind of an obscure pagan, who, amidst the millions around him and above him, has no idea of his own individual importance; who, by a long

series of cruel oppressions, has begun to lose all self-respect; who, under the debasing influence of tyranny, has reconciled himself to the thought of having no separate destiny or accountability, and of being a mere appendage to the establishment of some lordly master. I say, conceive the effect of the gospel upon this man's mind, when led forth by a missionary to Mount Calvary, and told that, if he believes the truth that the Son of God died upon the cross for him, for no child of Adam rather than for him, as much for him as if he stood alone in need of a Savior, and that all the blessings of salvation shall center and settle in him. Do you think there is no attraction here? Yes, and could you follow this man home to his hut, you would see him pondering the mystery in the pensive attitude of thought, or repeating it to himself while lost in wonder—or collecting around him his domestic circle, and telling it to them in the first raptures of amazement.

By the suitableness and certainty of its blessings, the cross awakens hope, and establishes faith. From the cross—as the tree of life, hang in maturity and abundance—all those fruits of grace which are necessary to the salvation of the soul. Are we guilty—here is pardon. Are we rebels against God—here is reconciliation. Are we condemned—here is justification. Are we unholy—here is sanctification. Are we agitated with conscious guilt—here is peace for a wounded spirit. "But from Him you are in Christ Jesus, who for us became wisdom from God, as well as righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."

Here, at the cross, every curious enquiry which the mind might originate concerning God, and the soul, and death, and eternity, and moral obligation, and personal accountability—is answered satisfactorily, and set at rest forever. With what feelings must an intelligent heathen approach his final catastrophe—death. He has seen his ancestors go down to the dust, and often, when standing upon their graves, has felt a distressing solicitude, which nothing could relieve, to know something of that state of being into which they passed when they vanished from the earth. At length his own turn has arrived, and he too must die. Where is he going? What is to become of him? If there is a God—how shall he meet him? If there is a future

state—how and where is he to spend it? Not a whisper of consolation is heard from the tomb, nor a ray of satisfactory light is thrown upon its darkness by the instructions of the living. Oh! with what horror does he turn his half averted eye upon that sepulcher, in which he must shortly be interred! And with what dreadful efforts does he endeavor to force his reluctant spirit upon her destiny, astonished every moment at the specters which rise in her own disordered imagination. Oh! how much would he give for someone to tell him what there is beyond the grave, and what he must do to get rid of his guilt—so as to be admitted to the world of the blessed.

Just at this time, one of our missionaries reaches his abode, and declares to him that Christ, by his death, has brought life and immortality to light. This is bliss indeed; he never heard such news before. The Spirit of God gives effect to the gospel message. He is drawn to Jesus, clasping to his bosom that doctrine which gives him life in death, and hope in despair. And he who but a few weeks before was stumbling upon the dark mountains of idolatry, just ready to be descend into eternal night, leaves the scene of his earthly existence with the language of Simeon upon his lips, "Lord, now let you your servant depart in peace—for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles!"

Such, then, are the sources of that attraction which is destined in the divine councils to draw all men away from their idolatry—to the true and living God. Not that this effect will ever be produced independently of the influence of the Spirit, or merely in the way of moral persuasion. Nothing short of the supernatural agency of the Holy Spirit accompanying the truth, will render it in any case "the power of God unto salvation."

It is, however, a tribute due to the wisdom of God, to observe the moral fitness of the instrument by which he accomplishes the purposes of his mercy. As auxiliary to the power illustrated above, I ought to mention the **MODE** ordained by the Divine Head of the church for publishing his gospel. Preaching is a very important part of those means which Christ has instituted for the conversion of the world. It

is, in fact, the necessary introduction of all other means, and that from which all the rest draw much of their energy. What stress is laid upon this in the Word of God. How emphatically does the apostle dwell upon **the preaching of the cross**. It is the doctrine so made known, which becomes the power of God unto salvation. For one person that is converted by reading the gospel, it might be safely affirmed there are a hundred converted by the preaching of it—a circumstance which, in considering the relative merits of Bible and Missionary Societies, throws an immense weight of importance into the scale of the latter. Giving to Bible Societies (who print and distribute the Scriptures)—all that is claimed for them, and too much cannot be claimed; still, without Missionary institutions, they would present a very incomplete system for the conversion of the world. The preaching of the cross has peculiar force in foreign countries, where, in addition to all the attractions usually found in oral instruction and impassioned address, the hearers see and feel the influence of the benevolence which has led the preacher to leave his home, to traverse the ocean, and dwell in a strange land, for the benefit of others.

III. I shall now consider the EFFECTS which the doctrine of the cross has produced. Contemplate the mighty wonders which were wrought by the cross during the apostolic age. It is a fact that the personal ministry of our Lord was attended by comparatively little success. While exhibiting an example in which the uncreated glories of the Godhead mingled their splendor with the milder beauties of the perfect man, while working miracles brighter than the sun, and preaching morality purer than the light—but few were attracted to his cause. We do not read that a single soul was converted by the sublime discourse upon the Mount. But no sooner was he crucified, and his death had become the theme of apostolic preaching, than Christianity assumed a new aspect.

The scene of its first triumphs was **Jerusalem**. Those simple words of Peter addressed to the Jews on the day of Pentecost, "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken, and with wicked hands have crucified and slain," wounded three thousand to

the heart, and drew them, with weeping and supplication, to look on him whom they had pierced. For a long season, as often as the cross was exhibited, multitudes of the seed of Israel became the trophies of its power. We might have expected it to be successful anywhere rather than there. The inhabitants of Jerusalem had many circumstances in their case which opposed it with the strongest resistance. They had seen all that was repulsive and forbidding—in its exterior aspect. They had beheld the Crucified One in the very lowest stage of his humiliation; they had seen him covered with shame and spitting, the object of derision, the butt of ridicule, lifted up in the place of public execution, associated with malefactors in his death—and expiring in a way that, according to their own law, rendered him accursed. In addition to this, they had all the consciousness that they themselves had put him to death; which, even if they could admit that he was the Messiah, seemed to throw them to the greatest possible distance from his mercy. They heard the apostles charging them with his murder, and knew the truth and justice of the accusation. Moreover, if they became this man's disciples, it was necessary they should abandon their fond and long cherished hopes of a temporal prince and worldly domination. Yet even there, and over all these prejudices and obstacles, did the doctrine of the cross so remarkably triumph, as to fill Jerusalem with its followers; and vast multitudes, who had remained unallured by the splendor of his living miracles, were captivated and subdued by the spectacle of his dying agonies! Where, I ask, in the language of triumphant exultation, may we not expect it to prove successful, when it subdued the guilt, the fear, the pride, and the bigotry of those very men, by whom the crucifixion itself was effected?

We have heard much of the bigotry of the **heathen**, especially of that bigotry as fortified in the East by the adamant bond of caste. But what is the power of caste, when set in opposition to the rod of Jehovah's strength? No matter what is the deity which is at the head of their idols; no matter what the distinctions of the privileged order, or what the reproaches to which their voluntary forfeiture exposes them, let the Brahmin only look by faith to the crucified Savior, and that moment the altar and the god sink together to the dust—his soul swells beyond the measure of

her chains, which burst from around her like the green ropes of the Philistines from the arms of Sampson—and the regenerated spirit walks abroad, amidst the whole family of God, greeting them in the language of the apostle, "Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."

When the Apostles and Evangelists were driven by the storms of persecution from Judea, they turned to the **Gentiles**, "preaching Christ in every place." One of the earliest scenes of their labor, after they had passed the confines of the holy land, was ANTIOCH, a city, which, with the beautiful grove of Daphne in its neighborhood, was so utterly abandoned to licentiousness as to be shunned by every heathen who had any regard to his reputation, and to give rise to the phrase, "horrid Daphne morals," which expressed the utmost corruption of their morals and manners. "Those who had been scattered as a result of the persecution that started because of Stephen made their way as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the message to no one except Jews. But there were some of them who came to Antioch and began speaking to the Hellenists, proclaiming the good news about the Lord Jesus. The Lord's hand was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord." (Acts 11:19-21)

In that scene of lecherousness, debauchery, and voluptuous sin, was the truth so remarkably successful as to originate a new name for the followers of Jesus, and the "disciples were called *Christians* first at Antioch." Tell me in what country, however abandoned to depravity, we may despair of the triumphs of the cross, when it expelled the votaries of Bacchus and Venus from the grove of Daphne; raised a magnificent church upon the site of the temple of Apollo, converted this haunt of vice into the walk of Christian meditation, and taught even the inhabitants of Antioch, to "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world."

CORINTH was another of the cities into which Christianity made an early and victorious entrance. This was a place of great renown in its day. Such were its commerce, its science, its temples, and its schools, that the prince of Roman orators denominated it "the light of all Greece", and

another writer called it the ornament of Greece. Its elegance, however, was exceeded by its vice. Lasciviousness was carried to such a pitch in this most abandoned city, that in the language of those times the appellation of a 'Corinthian' given to a woman imported that she had lost her virtue; and "corinthianize," or to behave as a Corinthian, spoken of a man, was the same as to say, that he was given up to lecherousness and debauchery. To this scene of iniquity did the apostle direct his course, like the sunbeam to the stagnant lake, not to partake of its impurity, but to draw from it a pure and beneficial exhalation.

And how did he attempt the reformation of this dissolute people? Did he begin by descanting upon the deformities of vice, and reading lectures in praise of virtue? Nothing of the sort! He himself shall inform us. In writing to his converts he tells them, "And I brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, except Jesus Christ and him crucified." And at Corinth was the attraction of this truth so irresistible, as to raise one of the most considerable of the primitive churches there, to which no small portion of the New Testament was addressed.

These, however, are but instances selected from a general course of exertion and success. Wherever the apostles went, the doctrine of the cross was the theme of their public discourses, and the topic of their more private instruction. Whether standing amidst the luxury of Corinth, the schools of Athens, the overwhelming grandeur of Rome, or the hallowed scenes of Jerusalem, they presented this to all men alike. They did not conceal the 'ignominy of the accursed tree' behind the sublime morality of the gospel, and permit the 'unsightly object' to steal out only disguised, and by degrees. No! They immediately exhibited the naked cross—as the very foundation of the religion which they were commissioned and inspired to promulgate. When the Jew on one hand was demanding a sign, and the Greek on the other was asking for wisdom, they replied to both, "we preach Christ crucified!"

They never courted the philosopher by a exhibition of

science; nor the orator by a blaze of eloquence; nor the curious by the aid of novelty. They tried no experiments, made no digressions. Feeling the power of this sublime truth in their own souls; enamored by the thousand, thousand charms with which they saw the preaching of the cross attended; emboldened by the victories which followed its career; and acting in obedience to the divine authority, which regulated all their conduct; they kindled into rapture amidst the scorn and rage of an ungodly world; and in the fervor of their zeal, threw off an impassioned sentiment, which has been returned in distinct echo from every Christian land, and been adopted as the watch-word of an evangelical ministry, "God forbid that I should glory, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ!"

Wonderful was the effect of their labor. A revolution more extraordinary than history records, or imagination could have conceived, was everywhere effected, and this by what the men who gave laws to the opinions of the world, derided as "the foolishness of preaching." The powers of paganism beheld the worshipers of the gods drawn away from their shrines by an influence which they could neither understand nor resist. Not the authority of the Olympian Jove, nor the seductive rites of the Paphian goddess, could any longer retain the homage of their former votaries. The exquisite beauty of their temples and their statues, with all those fascinations which their mythology was calculated to exert upon a people of refined taste and wicked habits, became the objects not only of indifference, but abhorrence. And millions by whom the cross must have been contemplated with mental revulsion as a matter of taste, embraced it with ecstasy as the means of salvation. The idolatrous rites were deserted, the altars overturned, the deities left to sympathize with each other in dumb consternation, the lying oracles were hushed, the deceptive light of philosophy was extinguished, Satan fell like lightning from heaven, while the ministers of light rose with the number, the order, and the brilliancy of the stars. Resistance promoted the cause it intended to oppose, and persecution like the wind of heaven blowing upon a conflagration, served to spread the flame. In vain "did the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord." The imperial eagle collecting all her strength, and rousing all her fury,

attacked the Lamb of God, until she, too, subdued and captivated by the cross, cowered beneath its emblem, as it floated from the towers of the capitol, and Christianity, with the purple waving from her shoulders, and the diadem sparkling upon her brows, was proclaimed to be the Truth of God and the empress of the world, on that throne of the Caesars before which she had been so often arraigned as a criminal, and condemned as an impostor.

What an illustrious proof is there in all this of the divine authority of the New Testament. The men who set out on the project of converting the world from idolatry and irreligion, with no instrument but a cross, and no patronage but his who was crucified upon it, must either have been mad or inspired, and the result proves which was the fact.

Since the apostles fell asleep, and others have entered upon their unfinished labors, has not this continued to be the means by which nations have been subjugated to the sway of religion? I appeal to the records of ecclesiastical history. What was it, I ask, which, by the instrumentality of Luther and Melancthon, and Calvin, and Zwingli, dissolved the power of the Beast on the continent of Europe, and drew a third part of his worshipers within the pale of a more scriptural communion? It was the doctrine of justification by faith in the blood of Christ.

David Brainerd, the apostle of the American Indians, has left an essay to inform the world that it was by preaching Christ crucified that he was enabled to raise a Christian church in the desolate wilds where he labored, and among a barbarous people devoted to witchcraft, drunkenness, and idolatry.*

* "I cannot but take notice," he remarks, "that I have, in the general, ever since my first coming among these Indians in New Jersey, been favored with that assistance, which to me is uncommon in preaching Christ crucified, and making him the center and mark to which all my discourses among them were directed. God was pleased to help me 'not to know anything among them except Jesus Christ and him crucified.' And this was the preaching God made use of for the awakening of sinners, and the propagation of this work of

grace among the Indians; and it was remarkable, from time to time, that when I was favored with any special freedom in discoursing of the ability and willingness of Christ to save sinners, and the need they stood in of such a Savior, there was then the greatest appearance of divine power in awakening numbers of self-secure souls. And it is worthy of remark, that numbers of these people are brought to a strict compliance with the rules of morality and sobriety, and to a conscientious performance of the external duties of Christianity, by the internal power and influence of divine truths, the peculiar doctrines of grace, upon their minds. And God was pleased to give these divine truths such a powerful influence upon the minds of these people, that their lives were quickly reformed, without my insisting upon the precepts of morality and spending time in repeated harangues upon external duties. When these truths were felt at heart, there was now no vice unreformed, no external duties neglected. Drunkenness, the darling vice, was broken off from, and scarcely an instance known of it among my hearers for months together. The practice of husbands and wives in divorcing each other, and taking others in their stead, was quickly reformed, so that there are three or four couples who have voluntarily dismissed those they had taken, and now live together again in love and peace. The same might be said of all other wicked practices. The reformation was general, and all springing from the internal influence of divine truth upon their hearts, and not from any external restraints, or because they had heard their vices particularly enforced, and repeatedly spoken against. Some of them I never so much as mentioned, particularly that of the parting of men and their wives, until some having their conscience awakened by God's word, came and of their own accord confessed themselves guilty in that respect." (See Brainerd's Journal, Edwards's Works, vol. 3, p. 416.)

The Moravian Missionaries, those holy, patient, unostentatious servants of our Lord, have employed with peculiar effect these heaven-appointed means, in converting and civilizing the once pilfering and murderous Eskimos. With these, have they also "dared the terrors of an Arctic sky, and directing their adventurous course through the floating fields and frost-reared precipices that guard the secrets of the Pole," have caused the banner of the cross to

wave over the throne of everlasting winter, and warmed, with the love of Christ, the bosom of the shivering Greenlander.

Mr. Kicherer, when he first labored among the Hottentots, proceeded upon the plan recommended by some modern sociologists. He tried to civilize their habits, as a preparatory process for communicating to them the principles of religion; but every effort failed, until he was obliged to try that last, which he should have done first, and proved by an additional experiment that **the doctrine of the cross is the only certain method of improving the moral condition of the world.** And what is it which, at this moment, is kindling the intellect, softening the manners, sanctifying the hearts and purifying the lives of the numerous tribes of the degraded sons of Ham? It is the "faithful saying, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." It is this, poured in artless strains from the lips of our missionaries, and sent home to the soul by the power of the Holy Spirit, which is more than realizing the fable of Amphion's lyre, and raising up the stones of African deserts, into the walls of the church of God.

O, had the cannibal inhabitants of Tahiti been persuaded to renounce their wretched superstition and cruel customs, by any efforts of a purely rational nature; had the emissaries of 'philosophy' been the instruments of their conversion, and had the gods of Pomare been sent home by them, to be deposited in the British Museum, instead of the Missionary Rooms, how would the world have rung with the praises of 'all-sufficient Reason'. New temples would have been raised to this modern Minerva, while all the tribes of the heathen would have been seen moving in triumphal procession to her shrine, chanting as they went the honors of their illustrious goddess. But yours, O crucified Redeemer! yours is the power, and yours shall be the glory of this conquest. Those islands of the Southern Sea shall be laid at your feet, as the trophies of your cross, and shall be added as fresh jewels to your mediatorial crown!

And indeed, not to leave our own age, or our own land—do we not see all around us the attractions of the cross? What is it that guides and governs the tide of religious popularity,

whether it roll in the channels of the Establishment or those of Dissent? Is it not this which causes the mighty influx of the spring tide in one place, and is it not the absence of it which occasions the dull retiring ebb in another? Yes, raise me but a barn, in the very shadow of Saint Paul's Cathedral, and give me a man who shall preach Christ crucified with something of the energy which that 'all inspiring theme' is calculated to awaken, and in spite of the baseness of the one, and the magnificence of the other, you shall see the former crowded with the warm and pious hearts of living Christians, while the matins and vespers of the cathedral, if the gospel be not preached there, shall be chanted only to the cold statues of the mighty dead. To conclude this part of my discourse, **where**, I ask, and **when**, was there an idolatrous nation converted to Christianity, or a lukewarm church reclaimed from indifference; when was there minister at home, or missionary abroad, who was successful in bringing sinners unto God through Christ, by any other system than that which I have before described? This has ever been successful, and with the proofs of its power embodied in the records of its victories, can we, who have adopted it as the instrument of our warfare, doubt for a moment of its ultimate and universal triumph?

III. Let us now anticipate the final CONSUMMATION of Missionary success. "All men shall be brought to Christ." I do not mean to infer from this expression, or from any other which can be found in the Word of God, that we are ever to look for an age when every inhabitant of the globe shall become a real Christian. But what I contend for is, that the Scripture warrants us to expect an era when, by means of human exertion, and in answer to the prayers of the righteous, the power of Antichrist shall be dissolved, all fundamental errors in Christendom shall be exploded, the blasphemies of infidelity shall be hushed, the Jews shall believe in Jesus, the pale crescent of Mohammed shall set forever in the blaze of the Sun of Righteousness, the multiform systems of idolatry retire before the growing brightness of eternal truth, and the whole earth be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, the fruits of righteousness, and the works of peace. So has God decreed. So has prophecy declared. "Men shall be blessed in him, all nations

shall call him blessed." "I saw in the night visions," said the prophet Daniel, "and behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days; and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and languages, and nations, should serve him—his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away; and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." If on the one hand there is much in the present condition of the world to try our faith in these animating predictions, is there not, in the exertions of the Christian world, very much on the other hand to confirm and strengthen it? Contemplate for a few moments the state of the earth, together with the means which are employed for its improvement.

Suppose, for the sake of illustration, that you occupied the station of the angel represented in the Apocalypse, as standing in the sun, and that with eyes piercing as the beams of day, you were looking down on the revolutions of this low earthly sphere. Scarcely had England turned towards the east, before Ireland, an integral part of your own empire, would present four million of Roman Catholics, satisfying themselves with the crucifix instead of the cross; at the same time, however, you would behold the preachers of the Irish Evangelical Society, and the Schools of the Hibernian Society, lending their assistance to the Protestant ministers of various denominations, and all infusing the pure principles of the gospel into this mass of superstition. The Atlantic having glided away beneath your view, and with it the United States which fringe its western shore, you would look down on the innumerable tribes which wander without God through the unexplored regions of the American continents; still among these would be discovered here and there a missionary conducting them to Jesus. Then would follow the broad Pacific, spotted with innumerable islands, each the domain of idol gods; yet Tahiti and Eimeo would shine resplendent, like bright specks upon the bosom of the ocean, whence the light of salvation is diverging in every direction over that mighty mass of waters. No sooner had your eye regaled itself with Christian temples, floating, as it were, upon the great South Sea, than China would heave into sight its unwieldy empire, groaning as it rolled beneath the crimes of two hundred millions of idolaters; but even

there, groups of Chinese, assembled to read in secret the Testaments circulated by our honored Morrison and Milne, would exhibit the first attraction of the cross in that most singular country. Now, the plains of Hindustan, watered by the obscene and deified Ganges, would arrest your attention and produce an indescribable horror, as they disclosed the frantic orgies of Juggernaut, the flaming pile of the devoted widow, with innumerable other spectacles of idolatrous cruelty; yet, in the center of Oriental abominations, would you discover the crimson standard waving from the Mission-houses of Serampore and Calcutta, with Carey, and Townley, and the men of other missions, directing the teeming population to the means of salvation. If you looked northward beyond the mountains of India, immense tracts, covered with ignorance and idolatry, would be seen stretching away to the pole, but at the same time you would spot the rose of Sharon, planted by Stallybrass and Rahmn, amidst the snows of Siberia, and attracting the Calmuc and the Tartar by its fragrance and beauty. Persia and Arabia would succeed, presenting in the numerous millions devoted to the false prophet, a formidable phalanx of blindness and bigotry; but moving down from Astrachan, along the shores of the Caspian, borne by the missionaries of the Edinburgh Society, would be seen the cross, advancing to spread the spirit of division and revolt through this army of the aliens, and to bring down the tottering fabric of Mohammadanism to the dust. Palestine, "the ground of sacred story," next appears. How would your eye linger over the valleys where the father of the faithful pitched his tent, the mountains on which Isaiah struck his harp; and above all, on the summit of that hill, where the Savior of the world poured out his soul unto death. Little, I confess, would be seen at Jerusalem but the mosque and the minaret, save where a company of Jews, veiled with unbelief, sit down round the site of their ancient temple; still would you not there anticipate the accomplishment of those numerous predictions which assure us that the exiles of Judea shall one day dwell in their own cities, and look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn?

In Asia Minor, amidst prevailing superstition, you would trace the Russian Bible Society, bearing back the golden candlestick to its place in one hand, and in the other the

torch of truth, to rekindle those lamps which once threw their luster on the waves of the Mediterranean. Africa would then pass by shrouded in the gloom of barbarism, and still bleeding from the wounds inflicted by the ruffian hand of commercial avarice, an object as wretched as ignorance, oppression, and idolatry can render her; but ah! you would exclaim, with joyful exultation, "I see Bethelsdorp, and Theopolis, and Guadenthal, and Sierra Leone, in each of which I behold a pledge that Africa shall yet be free, enlightened, and holy." Europe, debased by the superstitions of the Greek church in the north, and by the errors of the Vatican in the south, would present that wonder of the age, the British and Foreign Bible Society, rising up to complete the work which Luther's life was too short to finish, and effect a universal and perfect reformation.

Such, then, is the present condition of the moral world, and such, in part, the means employed for its improvement; from which you perceive that the church of Christ, like the woman in the parable, has hidden the mystic leaven in the mighty mass, and that the assimilating process is commenced. It has commenced, and though it operates a while unseen, it shall never cease until the whole lump is leavened.

Evidence is not lacking that the period is rapidly approaching when all the nations of the world shall be brought to Christ. I pretend not to ascertain the year, nor the century, when the millennium shall reach its meridian. I am not in the secret of "the times and the seasons which the Father has put into his own power." I am not versed in the symbolical arithmetic of prophecy; but it appears extremely probable, from all the movements of Divine Providence, that a great and happy era is struggling in the birth. The political, the moral, the religious world, have all been agitated of late years, by new and quickening principles. The stagnancy of past ages has been disturbed. A vivifying wind has been sweeping over the face of chaos, preparatory to the new creation. The day has broken upon the world, and, just as might be expected, after a night so lowering and cloudy, beams of light diffuse themselves from one side of the heavens, and the storm rumbles with solemn grandeur, as it retires across the other.

Nor should it be overlooked that the chief splendor of that illustrious era will consist in the universal subjection of the world to Christ. It appears pretty evident that the grand contest which was originated by the entrance of moral evil into the universe; which converted the regions of celestial peace into the scenes of destructive war; which was then cherished in hell by the powers of darkness, and has since been perpetuated on earth in all the multiform systems of error and vice, has more particularly concerned the dominion and glory of the Son. He seems to have been the special object of satanic envy and hate, and to prevent his reign, all the resources of the infernal world have been incessantly in motion. Here, then, is the glory of the latter day; it shall exhibit the termination of this grand rebellion, the cessation of this long conflict, in an entire victory over the rebel armies, and the universal subjection of the world to Jesus. "Every thought is to be brought into captivity to Christ." "He must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet." Hence the shout of victory which is to be uttered at the close of this solemn contest, is represented as uttering this language, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of God, and of his Christ." Let the children of Zion be joyful in their king. Let them anticipate with triumph his universal reign. All men shall be gathered to him. Wherever the traveler directs his course through this wide world of ours, he shall behold in every country, city, town, and village, the friends and the disciples of Jesus, and none else. He shall hear every temple echo with his praise, and see every land filled with his renown. He shall witness all the kings of the earth casting down their crowns, and all the nations laying their glory at his feet.

And how greatly will it contribute to his renown, that this mighty conquest was effected by his cross. It will raise the fame of his power and wisdom to the highest pitch, that by "the foolishness of preaching" he overcame every enemy, and subjugated the world to himself. Had human reason devised a method for overturning the fabric of idolatry, and for establishing the true religion upon its ruins, it would have been anything but that which was employed by God. We would have said, "Adapt your system as nearly as possible to the fashionable philosophy of the day; announce it with

Tully's golden writings; and celebrate its glories with the harmony of Virgil's numbers, and then you will probably succeed, especially if its apostles be the princes, the conquerors, and the scholars of the age." "But God's ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as ours." He determined to conquer by an instrument despised for its weakness, and hated for its ignominy. "The weakness of the rod of Moses magnified the power of which it was the instrument; the contemptible nature of the rams' horns, signalized the victory at Jericho; the despicable appearance of the lamps and pitchers celebrated the defeat in the valley of Moreh; and the 'ignominy of the tree' will raise the fame of the power of Jesus in conquering the world, to a pitch beyond which nothing can advance it. To have broken and dissolved the gates of hell in a situation advantageous and honorable, would have magnified his power and wisdom; but to do this upon the cross, the instrument prepared by themselves for his destruction, elevates the glory of the achievement above our comprehension and our praise."

I shall now conclude with an address to the directors, to missionaries, to ministers, and to the congregation.

Directors of this vast and noble institution, see in this subject your honor and your duty. Yours is the distinction of uniting, organizing, and directing the zeal of a large proportion of the Christian world; a zeal which has for its object to make known to perishing millions the Savior of mankind. A sacred trust is reposed in you. May the wisdom that is from above, replenish your minds, the love of Christ constrain your souls, the unity of the Spirit pervades your councils, the bond of peace encircles your hearts, and the blessing of God crowns all your exertions. Continue to cultivate a friendly fellowship with other kindred societies, remembering that we all attack the same enemy, and move under the same banner; and though one may have inscribed upon the pole of his standard the name of the Church Missionary Society, a second that of the Baptist Mission, a third that of the Wesleyan Missions, yet all have placed the cross in the center of the banner, and all have written over the sacred emblem the ancient motto, "By this conquer!" Your generosity in past times to our Moravian brethren, and more recently to the Edinburgh society, produced but one feeling, and that was admiration; and called forth but one

expression, and that was applause. Perish forever all envy and all rivalry, and let the only contest be this—who shall most glorify God and bless the human race.

Direct your missionaries to exhibit the great atoning sacrifice of Christ, to the heathen, and to consider this as the very end of their mission. At the same time, give them every opportunity of acquiring those qualifications which are so pre-eminently important in their situation. I speak the sentiments of all my brethren in the ministry with whom I have conversed on the subject, when I respectfully but urgently advise a lengthened term of education for such of our missionaries as are destined to the East. It is our opinion that four years are quite little enough for the literary and theological education of men who are to preach the doctrines of the gospel in a strange language, and to present them pure as they were revealed from heaven, in a faithful translation of the sacred volume.

In this country, valuable as are literary attainments, and highly valuable they are everywhere, a minister may discharge the duties of his office with considerable success, although he be ignorant of every language but his own; and even should he unhappily swerve from the truth, there are many on every hand to pluck up the weeds of error as fast as they arise in the garden of the Lord. But what is a foreign missionary to do without a literary education, who cannot hold a conversation with a pagan until he has acquired a foreign tongue; who cannot distribute a tract until he is able to translate it into a language—the genius and structure of which are totally dissimilar to any with which he is acquainted? The work of translating the Scriptures is of immense importance, and of no small difficulty, and should not be entrusted to unskillful hands. One imperfect version of the Bible may pollute the crystal stream of revelation for ages, and one error in theology planted among the heathen, may proliferate amidst almost boundless space. First Scripture versions and first systems of doctrine delivered to the converts from idolatry should be as perfect as possible, since these are the models of others which succeed, and in addition to the circumstance of propagating their own imperfections, if any such attach to them, they soon acquire the veneration which is paid to antiquity, and cover their

errors with the defense of this sacred shield. I can assure the directors that any increase of expense incurred, by renewed attention to civilization in barbarous countries, and by an extended literary education being given to their missionaries going to the East, will be most cheerfully defrayed by increased liberality on the part of their constituents.

There is one circumstance which is as a bundle of myrrh in the festive goblet of these annual banquets of benevolence and zeal—I mean the vacant seats of some who have "fallen asleep in Jesus," and the increasing infirmities of others who yet remain. Aged and honorable men! whose revered forms inspire veneration, whose noble exploits provoke emulation, and whose memory will be held in everlasting esteem; you linger amidst the scenes of labor, weary and worn as you are, yet almost unwilling to retire to your eternal repose, through fear lest, when you are gone, the cause which you have sheltered by your prayers, watered with your tears, and which is dearer to you than your life's blood, should be neglected. Dismiss your fears; around you are your younger brethren, whose character you have formed by your example, and into whose spirit you have breathed your own, confide the sacred trust to them. Bequeath to them as a legacy the interests of the Missionary Society, and whenever the chariot shall arrive, far distant be yet the day, which is to convey you in triumph to the skies, step into it without reluctance, being assured that we will search for your descending mantle, and never give up the pursuit until we have found the inspiring vestment.

Missionaries, you noble hearted men, whom I feel myself unworthy to address, and whom we all regard, or ought to regard, not as the servants of our institution, but its respected and beloved agents in foreign countries; receive my congratulations upon the high honor to which you are called. Yours it is to follow in the train of the Redeemer's retinue and earth's best friends, next to apostles, evangelists, and martyrs. Learn from the subject of this discourse your exalted and unalterable duty. Your peculiar and almost exclusive business is to "make manifest the savor of the knowledge of Christ in every place." "You are debtors both to the Greeks and to the barbarians, to the

wise and to the unwise, so much as in you is, to be ready to preach the gospel of Christ." You go far hence to the heathen to make known "the unsearchable riches of Christ." However you may sometimes, for relaxation, engage in the studies of natural history or local pursuits; this is your business—to preach the gospel. Seek to have your own minds filled with the glory, and your own hearts attracted by the influence of the cross, until you burn with inextinguishable ardor to plant the holy standard on the loftiest ramparts of superstition. Take as your example the inspired missionary to the Gentiles, and determine in his spirit "to know nothing, except Jesus Christ and him crucified." Repose unbounded confidence in the weapons of your warfare. Seek to be full of faith. Leave your unbelief in England. In England did I say? Oh no—leave it not here, we have too much of it already; carry it with you on board the vessel which is to convey you to your station, then sink it ten thousand fathoms below the surface of the ocean, and call the monsters of the deep to sing its requiem. "Be holy—you who bear the vessels of the Lord." Be diligent; death has passed on before you; along the line of your march rise the tombs of departed heroes; and Swartz, and Brainerd, and Vanderkemp, and Cran, and Des Granges come forth from their sepulchers as you pass, to admonish you in the language of Scripture, "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, where you are going." "Be faithful unto death." Never forsake your cause. When you are found among the slain, let your face be toward the foe, and no scar be seen upon your back; then will we tell the world that,
 "When you fell, you fell like stars,
 Streaming splendor through the sky."

My respected fathers and brethren in the **ministry**, has this subject no voice to us? Let us learn here our obligations. The pulpit is intended to be a pedestal for the cross, though, alas! even the cross itself, it is to be feared, is sometimes used as a mere pedestal for the preacher's fame. We may roll the thunders of eloquence, we may dart the coruscations of genius, we may scatter the flowers of poetry, we may diffuse the light of science, we may enforce the precepts of morality from the pulpit—but if we do not make Christ the

great subject our preaching, we have forgotten our purpose, and shall do no good. Satan trembles at nothing but the cross. At this he does tremble; and if we would destroy his power, and extend that holy and benevolent kingdom, which is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit, it must be by means of the cross. "We preach Christ crucified!" "For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. My speech and my proclamation were not with persuasive words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and power." (1 Corinthians 2:2-4)

Upon the **congregation**, the discourse which they have heard demands just and extensive claims. Behold the Lamb of God for yourselves, my hearers, with penitence, with prayer, and faith. Could you direct the eyes and hopes of millions to the Savior, this would avail nothing for your salvation, in the absence of a personal application on your own behalf. Having first given yourselves to the Lord, then use every scriptural means for making him known to the heathen. Be importunate in prayer that his kingdom may come, his "will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Believing prayer is the animating soul of the missionary cause. It is this which distinguishes it from every worldly combination, and elevates it far above the level of mere earthly institutions. Let this cease, and it sinks down from its own exalted rank, to take the place and share the fortune of all other human associations. Any increase of eloquence, funds, or patronage, which the cause of missions might acquire, when the spirit of prayer is departed, is only like the rigidity which the human body sometimes gains when the vital principle is extinct, or at best but as the swelling which precedes death.

Your property, however, must be added to your prayers, since he who has commanded us to ask, has also enjoined us to seek; evidently intending by such an injunction that all rational means should be united with devotion in every case where human agency is employed for God. Christians, I come to ask you this day, not what you will give to send a specific remedy to a nation desolated every year by the ravages of the plague; with such an object I might be bold

in appealing to your benevolence; how much more bold, then, when I ask what you will give, what you ought to give, to send the doctrine of the cross to more than six hundred million of your fellow sinners, who are without Christ, and therefore without God, and without hope in the world. Answer this question, not upon the principles of a mere worldly calculation, which looks around upon a circle of luxurious enjoyments with the enquiry—what can I spare and not be the poorer; or which values everything by a financial standard; but as a Christian, who professes to have felt the constraining love of Jesus, and "to have rejoiced in God through Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement;" answer me as a Christian, with your eye upon the cross for salvation, what ought you to give out of that property which God has first given you, to send the gospel to the heathen? If anything can be needed to excite your benevolence, I bring forward this morning five petitions, each soliciting your assistance, and each sufficient of itself to merit the greatest liberality.

The first petition is uttered in the groans of six hundred million human beings, who as they pass before you on their way to eternity, repeat that imploring language, "Come over and help us!"

The second petition is from several hundred missionaries, who, looking around upon the immeasurable scene of their labors, urge the admonition of their Master, "The harvest is great, but the laborers are few; ask therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth more laborers into his harvest."

The third petition is from the directors, "stating that their expenditure this year has exceeded their receipts above five thousand pounds, and entreating that they may not be forced to slacken their exertions, for lack of funds to support them; which must inevitably be the case, unless they are encouraged to go forward by increased liberality on the part of their constituents."

The fourth petition is from heaven, borne to us by the spirits of departed missionaries, who hover over our assembly this morning, "beseeking us to carry on with renewed vigor that

cause in which they sacrificed their lives; and the magnitude and importance of which, amidst all their zeal for its interests, they never perfectly knew until they were surrounded with the scenes of the eternal world."

The fifth petition is from hell. Yes, directed to your hearts in the shriek of despair, comes the solicitation of many a lost soul in prison "Oh! send a missionary to my father's house, where I have yet five brethren, that he may testify to them, that they come not into this place of torment!" You cannot reply to this, "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them." What hearts you must possess if you can be deaf to such pleas, and can turn away such petitions unrelieved. Have you arrived at the very limit of your ability, and is every private resource exhausted? Then let us go to the treasury of the sanctuary, let us melt down the golden church plate, and convert even that into a means of sending the gospel to the heathen, assured that if we have nothing else to give, it will be more acceptable to our divine Lord to see it so employed, than to behold it glittering upon his sacramental table.

But do not plead such a necessity until you have surrendered the luxuries of your own houses, until the gorgeous display upon your own tables is given up. The mere 'tithing of extravagance' would support all the Missionary and Bible Societies in existence, magnified to ten times their present extent. A showy and lavish profusion in our habits is not only injurious to our own spiritual interests, but also to the interests of others. It is a felony upon the fund of mercy. Frugality is the best financier of philanthropy, and one of the most important auxiliaries of the missionary cause.

It is an encouragement to your liberality to know that eventually nothing shall be lost. You are employed in building that temple of which Jehovah declares, "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations;" and of which the top stone shall at length be brought forth, amidst the shouts of exulting spectators, crying, "Grace, grace unto it!" Stupendous and glorious edifice! its transept shall extend from the northern to the southern pole. Its choir shall rest upon the empire of China, and its western window look out upon the waters of the great South Sea; while all the

nations of the earth, attracted by the cross which shines upon its dome, shall assemble within its mighty circumference, and amidst the sacred memorials of missionary institutions, and the monumental inscriptions of illustrious men occupying every niche, and hanging from every pillar, shall celebrate the jubilee of the world, and unite in the sublime anthem, "Hallelujah; salvation, and glory, and honor, and power unto the Lord our God! The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever! Worthy is the Lamb who was slain!"

While the ten thousand times ten thousand angels around the throne shall respond to the shouts of the redeemed on earth, "Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing!" And still the chorus shall swell, and still the strain shall wax louder and louder, "until every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, shall cry, Blessing, honor, glory, and power, be unto him who sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever! Amen! Amen!"

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