

HALIFAX, N.S., Oct. 14, 1890.

To the Quarterly Meeting of the W. M. Aid Society:

DEAR SISTERS,—Kindly allow us the privilege of extending to your Quarterly Board these lines of condolence:—We sincerely mourn with you in your awful visitation, in the sudden call of our dear and highly esteemed Sister Seldon. We are all aware, as far as human beings can form a judgment of the lives of their fellow-creatures, that our dear sister was, in every act, deed and word, a true Christian, and it must be a melancholy pleasure for those who were more closely acquainted with her every-day life to dwell upon the virtues and accomplishments of our dear departed sister. May we all copy her noble life, as a worker for God, in the church as well as that mission cause.

We hope that the members of this noble Society will look forward to that brighter and happier world to which we shall go to those who cannot return to us. And may God bless her labors that she has often planned, and comfort the family which has so recently sustained the loss.

Yours fraternally, in behalf of the Cornwallis St. W.M.A. Society,

L. A. THOMAS, Sec. pro tem.

"Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." When these words were heard, the church at Antioch was in an expectant attitude: Had it not been, the command would not have been given, or if given would not have been understood. Antioch had become a great religious centre, there Barnabas and Saul had labored for a whole year, and with marked success; and those believers first received the appellation, which we at this hour have the honor to bear. The church was just awakening to the consciousness that they ought to send the gospel to those who had never heard it, and it was in reference to this that they were fasting and praying, when the order came. Soon were the first foreign missionaries sent out—men richly endowed by nature, possessed of ardent piety, and one of them highly educated. We will not follow those men on their missionary tour, nor discuss the question why John Mark, their assistant left them at Pamphilia, nor why the name of Saul was changed to that of Paul, nor tell how he and Barnabas narrowly escaped being worshipped as gods, nor enquire as to the length of time occupied in the tour, nor tell of their return to Antioch, nor ask how they were employed between their return, and what we call Paul's second tour, nor speak of the reason why Paul and Barnabas parted, nor ask why Silas, was chosen as Paul's associate, nor why Luke became one of the company; nor why young Timothy was pressed into the work; but simply state that Paul set off on a second tour, his object being to visit the brethren in every place where he had preached, and learn of their welfare. This plan was but partially carried out. "A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps." The Holy Spirit by a strong mental impression forbade Paul to preach longer in that locality. These words sound strangely. God the Spirit forbidding the proclamation of the gospel of God the Son. Let us look for the reason of this prohibition. Our Lord Jesus Christ tells us in the parable of the sower, that the seed is the word, and in another parable, that the good seed are the children of the kingdom; and as in Asia the word had been preached, and there were several groups of believers, it was as reasonable to expect that there the knowledge of God would increase, and sinners be converted,

as that seed would germinate when cast into the soil; while in Europe the gospel had not yet been preached, and there, there were no believers to exemplify its truths by holy lives.

As our Lord and Saviour was on one occasion driven by the Spirit into the wilderness, so these missionaries were driven to Troas. Had Paul been asked why he came thither, I doubt much that his answer would have been satisfactory to any one who had never been conscious of his own spirit being controlled by the Spirit of God.

Paul's companions had retired for the night, and had fallen asleep. But Paul could not sleep. His heart was to full to allow his brain to rest. He was expecting a revelation. The oft-repeated maxim of our Lord Jesus Christ: "To him that hath shall be given, in this, as in all other instances, was fulfilled. Paul had acted up to the light received; now greater light was to be vouchsafed; no door is opened, no footstep is heard, but suddenly an angel in face, and dress, and voice, a Macedonian, stands before him. He utters but one short sentence and that is in the form of a request, "Come over into Macedonia, and help us," and then disappears. Now that which had been mysterious becomes plain. It is evidently the will of God that the gospel should be preached in Macedonia.

The morning comes, the vision is told, and Paul's companions, like himself, conclude that they are called to pass over to Europe.

One would like to go with Paul to Samothracia, and thence to Neapolis, and thence to Philippi and be present at the female prayer-meeting at the river side, and afterwards look on while Lydia and the employees composing her household were baptized, and then passing over the disagreeable part of the history, join in the midnight prayer and praise, and witness the baptism of the believing jailer and his believing household; and then go to Thessalonica and hear Paul allege that Christ must need have suffered and have risen from the dead, and then to Berea, and with this people study the Scriptures, and thence to Athens and ascending the Areopagus hear Paul for the first and last time quote a heathen poet, and thence to Corinth, where the gospel met with much opposition, and yet reached many hearts.

Again, one would like to talk a little about the Epistles written to Europeans, in one of which we are taught with the greatest clearness that justification is only obtainable by faith in one Lord Jesus Christ, and in another the glorious doctrine of the resurrection is revealed, and in still another we have the most explicit statement found in the whole Bible relative to the condition of the righteous dead between death and the resurrection.

But I must stop here and seek to learn the lesson taught by the Holy Spirit, forbidding Paul longer to preach in Asia. Are we not taught that it is not the will of God that some should during their whole lives have the opportunity of hearing the gospel fifty-two times in a year, while others never hear of Christ; that Christianity is not for any particular nation or people, but for the whole human race; that where man is found, there the gospel should be sent; and that the religion of Christ has a centre, but no circumference?

Is it not possible that if the young men at Acadia, who are about to enter the ministry, would listen to the voice of the God within them and the voice of God above them they would, many of them, learn that they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in the Dominion of Canada, and be constrained to go to some of the many millions who have never heard of Christ!

April, 1890.