

the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the word of the Lord. And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the North even to the East; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord and shall not find it." In its extent how wide-spread is this famine. It is not confined to one city, but extends over the largest portions of our earth. Six hundred millions of our race are yet in heathen darkness. To them no messenger of salvation offers the bread of life. They hear no invitation to the gospel feast—no call to eat and live. In its consequences how dreadful. "Where no vision is the people perish." It is a famine not of bodily food, but of spiritual—and unless relieved, ending in death eternal. "Unless ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you."

But "this day is a day of glad tidings." The bread of life has come down from heaven. The Son of God has become incarnate and made abundant provision for the supply of every spiritual necessity. Whoever partakes of this food is quickened together with Christ. He partakes of life spiritual in its nature—enobling and glorious in its results, and eternal in its duration. "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day; for my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." Of this food there is abundance. "In our Father's house there is bread enough and to spare." Millions have already partaken, but they have not exhausted the efficacy of Christ's blood, nor in the least diminished the fountain that flows from Emanuel's veins. Still "the blood of Christ, God's son, cleanseth from all sin." To this food all are freely invited. Wisdom's voice is in the streets, saying, "Eat, ye friends, drink, ye drink abundantly O Beloved." "She hath killed her beasts, she hath mingled her wine, she hath also furnished her table,—she crieth upon the highest places of the city, Come eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled." Well then might the heavenly host sing on the plains of Bethlehem,

"Behold I bring glad tidings of great joy."

But we have been long familiar with these glad tidings. The Gospel feast has been spread in our sight, and we profess to have partaken of its provisions. Doubtless many of us have done so. Then are we like the leprous men, enjoying it selfishly ourselves, while our brethren are perishing for lack of knowledge. A large proportion of the members of our church, yes, of those who sit down to commemorate Christ's death, give nothing to spread the gospel; and many more give but the merest trifle, and that only occasionally, and it may be grudgingly. Let our readers ponder this fact. Verily, "we do not well; this day is a day of good tidings and we hold our peace. Let us labor and pray for an extension of these blessings to every sinner of mankind. "Freely we have received," let us "freely give," increase our beneficent endeavours till all people are replenished with that feast, "a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined."

"If we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us." Delay not the work of benevolence. The shades of death may soon overtake you, and there is "no device nor knowledge in the grave, whether thou goest." Even if you live, selfishness must extend its blighting influence over your own spirit. Your soul cannot prosper, and you have reason to fear that God will visit you with some tokens of his displeasure. And, oh remember that while you are delaying, multitudes are descending to death with the piteous lamentation, "No man cared for my soul." Abide not then in luxurious ease, contented while you are "feasting sumptuously"—but think of those who would be made glad with the crumbs that fall from your table. "If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday; and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters fail not."