

REGIONS BEYOND, OF GIVING.

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THERE is yet another "region beyond" that has not been taken possession of, and that is the region of *sanctified giving*. We are coming now to a very practical matter. There is a whole world of promise, of power to be taken possession of in the matter of consecrated means. The Church of God is doing nothing to-day in comparison to what she might do and ought to do. We feel ashamed, however, to speak of giving as a *duty*, because it grows on our convictions more and more that we ought to lose sight of it as a duty, and only think of it as a transcendent *privilege*. There is something in love that takes off the asperities of duty. "I delight to do thy will, O my God." That is the atmosphere of service; not the *law* atmosphere: "I ought to do this thing," but the *love* atmosphere: "My *meat* is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work." Now, in this unclaimed and untrodden region with regard to giving, there are three or four things to which we want to call especial attention.

If the first place, *individual* giving is a region beyond, yet to be reached by the Church of God. "Let *every one* of you lay by him in store." God's principle is not that the rich should give, nor that the poor should give, but that rich and poor should alike give; and every man, woman and child thus having part in this consecration of substance.

Then we need *systematic* giving. "*Upon the first day of the week* let every one of you lay by in store;" at stated times, with regularity, as a matter of habit, so that, just as regularly as the week comes round, there should be an account with God that is audited, corrected, adjusted, to see that there be no failure in this part of our duty. Just as we are to bring a certain portion of our time and set it entirely apart to God, so we are to bring a certain portion of our substance and habitually offer it to the Lord.

Then there must be *proportionate* giving. We must give, first, *according to our ability*, and secondly, "*as God hath prospered us*," and this law of proportion must never be overlooked. The difficulty with the church to-day is that, too often, we are calculating how little we can give to satisfy the claims of conscience; whereas, we ought to ask, "How much can I give to God? and how little can I reserve for myself and yet satisfy the absolute necessities of my own reasonable wants?" We ought to turn the rule of our giving entirely round. Give to the Lord the first portion, not the last. Give to the Lord the largest portion, not the least.

Then there ought to be a *self-denying* giving, which lies still further beyond in this untrodden territory. A woman went

round in a church to get offerings from the women of the congregation for foreign missions, and her uniform plea was, "You can give this and *not feel it a bit*." That was the damaging recommendation. Here is the trouble in the Church of Christ: we give and we do *not* feel it; neither does the world feel it very much. We cannot conceive how God can take much pleasure in a gift that costs us nothing; and let us pray God never to let us use such an argument as that. Rather give until you *do* feel it.

Much is said from time to time about the generous giving of disciples. There are thirty millions of Protestant Church members to-day, and twelve millions of dollars is the aggregate sum that is given to foreign missions by these Christians; whereas, if every one of them gave one cent a day, it would amount to over one hundred millions; and if every one of them gave three cents a day, it would give over three hundred and twenty-five millions a year! There is something wrong when, in the coffers of American and British Canadians, there lie twenty-five millions of dollars, and God cannot get for the whole work of foreign evangelization more than twelve millions of that immense sum!

At the same time, individual examples show us what giving is possible. There was Sarah Hosmer, of Lowell, Mass., a poor woman living in an attic, and working with her needle. She saved, on six different occasions, fifty dollars, and sent it to educate a native teacher in Oriental countries; and, when she went home to her rest, six men were preaching in foreign lands whom she had helped into the ministry.

Travellers pass by, in Scotland, the estates formerly owned by Robert Haldane, in the neighborhood of the Bridge of Allan, and one feels a degree of reverence that inclines him to take off his shoes, for it seems that he is standing on holy ground. The fragrance of the act of that goodly man who sold those estates, and offered the \$175,000 that they yielded to establish in Benares, the centre of Hindu idolatry, a mission for the Lord Jesus Christ, is still shed abroad through that country; and people pass those estates not without a reverent thought of Robert Haldane, and a grateful recognition of the power of a consecrated life.

Then, in Alloa, when the writer of these lines was delivering the closing words of one of his addresses, he saw an old man there leaning on a staff. He was nearly ninety years of age, and the chairman whispered, "That is David Paton. He has given his entire fortune—\$1,000,000—to missions, and he is living now on a little annuity which has been reserved that he may not come to actual want." And yet, when that man heard my plea for missions, he managed to get out of the little that was left him

\$1,250 more, which he gave the next day, and subsequently sent yet another \$2,000.

There was Mr. Hamilton, a mere clerk in a surveyor's office in Glasgow, and all the income that he had was perhaps \$350 a year, yet he annually gave to the U. P. Church \$100—nearly one-third of his entire income; and when, in 1887, there was a special call made by the Synod for \$100,000 for missions, that man furnished *one hundredth* part of the amount. He sent \$1,000—one-half of the savings that he had made through his lifetime. And after his death his cash account was found, with the Lord's offerings indicated there; and it was discovered that he spent only one shilling a day on his own needs, besides the three shillings a week for lodging—ten shillings sterling a week in all—that he might give the more to the cause of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Well may we feel that we have never denied ourselves anything for our Master when we read the story of such a man as that, living seventy-one years with slender income, and in such frugal fashion, that he might be one of the noblest givers in all Scotland, giving unobtrusively and quietly "as to the Lord, and not unto men."

God showed the Church in that *annus mirabilis* 1878, to which we have referred, what could be done by a few consecrated givers. In that one year there was given to the Lord, on the altar of missions, by less than twenty individuals in the United States and Great Britain, nearly one million pounds sterling, or \$5,000,000. Thus God first showed us, in 1858, what wonders He can do in *opening the way* before His Church. And then in 1878, He showed both what wonders He can do in *giving large harvests* from the seed sown, and what other wonders He can do in *moving His people* to come forward, like Barnabas at Cyprus, to lay the proceeds of their estates on the altars of Christian missions.—*The Missionary Review of the World*.

SECRETARY'S REPORT.

IN presenting this report, the Mission Board wishes to express its heartfelt thanks to Almighty God for the success the work has already attained. There have been difficulties great and numerous. The Lord has been with us. We are still fighting.

The Mission traces its origin to a small band of students from two schools of medicine in Toronto, who met together in December 1885, and established a Young Men's Christian Association for medical students. This association grew, and in the fourth year of its existence decided to send out one of its number to labor in the cause of Christ in a foreign field. The undertaking was a serious one, but it was to be performed