

around the throne of God,—a song sung by ten thousand times ten thousand voices, and loud as the noise of many waters—full, loud and distinct as all their voices might be, above them all in distinctness and earnestness, would be heard the dreary dirge of the martyr choir from beneath the altar—“How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth!” All honor, we say, to these noble spirits, for their noble daring and their nobler deeds.

Christians admit that honor is due to these martyrs; Christians admit that their conduct is not only to be admired, but to be imitated; Christians go so far as even to admit that every saint of God should have the spirit of a martyr in him, and should be prepared to manifest it, whenever his religion is placed in peril or jeopardy. But more than this, Christians, taking them in general, are not prepared to admit. According to their own view, while all is peace and quietness around us, there is no need to manifest this martyr spirit: in truth, there is no call for it. Such a spirit is to be evoked only in the hour of danger, and till that hour come, the christian may allow it to slumber on in his bosom undisturbed; or at most may simply nurse and foster it, that it may have the greater strength when required to be manifested. But we hold this to be a most proneous view of the martyr spirit of the gospel. We hold that instead of being called into exercise only on some occasions,—and these great, rare and perilous times,—it is a spirit which should be exercised almost every day of the Christian's life. And we hold, further, that it is because we permit this spirit to lull and die away, that so little is done for the gospel both at home and abroad. Rouse up this spirit into all its pristine vigor; rouse it up to that warmth with which it glowed in the days of primitive Christianity and the Reformation, and how dwarfish would our efforts to disseminate the gospel be now, compared with what they would be then. Let us try to make this evident, and to press it on the attention of the reader.

In what does the martyr spirit of Christianity consist? If we determine this point accurately, we shall be able to determine how much of it enters into the christian character, be the times

what they may; be they times of bloodshed and persecution, or be they times of concord and tranquility. It consists then, we would say, in an undimmed resolution to maintain the truth as it is in Jesus, in all its fulness and extent, and at all hazards. Ten thousand times rather part with liberty, with property, with country, with life itself, than part with any gospel truth essential to salvation. This is evidently one aspect in which the martyr spirit may be viewed, and it is what may be called *defensive* aspect. But there is another—the *aggressive* aspect—in which it may be contemplated; and this is one still more interesting and important. The christian is not to rest satisfied with the gospel himself; in obedience to his Divine master's mandate, he must carry it forth to the nations of the world. Never is he to relax his exertions till every isle that studs the ocean, and every land, civilised or uncivilised, upon which the sun shines, becomes vocal with hosannahs to Messiah. But with what spirit is he to go forth to these isles and barbarous lands? Is it with the crafty, wily spirit of the politician? Is it with the craven, selfish feelings of the hireling or worldling, who flees when the first symptom of danger appears? No. But it is with a determination to spread a knowledge of the Saviour, or die in the attempt; it is with the spirit of a Martyr.

Never yet has a great moral conquest been gained in the world, but it has been gained by such a spirit. When Paul went forth to the Gentiles—when he attacked the system of idolatry in its strong holds, Corinth, Ephesus, and Rome, it was with him life or death. When Luther launched his decrees at the Pope, he counted the cost, he periled on the momentous issue, his very existence. And when our own ancestors combated the unprincipled and bloody Stewarts, the alternative with them was victory and the Gospel, or defeat and massacre. Besides, the same principle enters into every doctrine and duty of Christianity. Sacrifice is its watchword. We acknowledge that we are depraved, and this acknowledgement involves in it a sacrifice of our self-esteem; we confess that we are unable by any efforts of our own, to work out our salvation, but this confession involves in it a sacrifice of our own supposed