

they called it. He took their good-natured reproof in good part, but showed no greater disposition to be more sociable. Evidently he had some anxiety weighing him down.

At last his name was called by the merchant who presided, with the expressed hope that he would have something rare with which to entertain them.

"I think I have," was the melancholy response, whereupon he drew from his breast pocket a newspaper, from which he begged permission to read. Assent being readily given he proceeded to read, premising first that they had received no annual letter from Clifton Graham, but that perhaps the omission might be otherwise accounted for. At any rate the paper that he held contained some news of the absent missionary, for an urgent appeal made by him to the churches appeared in its columns. He has somehow become possessed of the idea that the Commission should be fulfilled *instantly*."

"Commission?" queried the merchant.

"Yes, the Commission as recorded in Matt. 28 : 20."

"Oh! Is that his idea? A rather large undertaking I should say."

"Yes, it certainly is a large one, but allow me first to read you what he has to say. He puts the matter fairly, I am bound to confess, and I cannot see how the churches, if they are not dead, can meet it except by attempting the task. Here is what he says. It is pretty lengthy but I pledge you that it is interesting."

The others drew their chairs together, placed themselves in listening postures, and indicated that the reader was to proceed.

He thereupon read the full appeal, a summary of which we have already given. It commanded the attention of every one present, even the merchant, though he made no profession of Christianity whatever. 'He hadn't time,' he was accustomed to say. When the reader finished, the merchant brought down his hand heavily with the exclamation, "That's gospel if I understand it, and what's more, it's a fair facing of the whole matter. Now if there were only some dynamite in that appeal it might do something."