

guage almost seems harsh and repellent. It was, however, dictated both by kindness and wisdom. Such language never repels the right kind of men. It is intended to keep back those who are not. In accordance with the example of our Saviour, while we may gladly dwell upon the privileges and joys of the life of a missionary, we should not fail also to speak of the lifelong expatriation, climatic disadvantages, the work of acquiring difficult languages, the contempt and opposition of the heathen, the possible uncongeniality of missionary associates, the trial of years of labor without converts, and the "care of all the churches" when converted and multiplied. The question of duty should be decided in view of all these conditions and emergencies.

We may further inquire whether the pledging of young men and young women three, four, or five years before they are expected to enter upon their work is not premature and ill advised? The time may not have come for such a decision. Who can tell what changes may take place while a young man is in college or the seminary which may necessarily change the whole course of his life? God, who sees the end from the beginning, may call and does call some persons to the missionary work when very young. For us to do the same might possibly result in positive injury to the individual in question and the cause we wish to serve. Many who have thought that by signing the pledge early and using their utmost effort to induce others to do so they were doing a great service to the mission cause, have found that their zeal was little more than a temporary sentimental enthusiasm, expending its force long before the time came for commencing the work. A few years since a little company of student volunteers in one of our seminaries earnestly and almost reproachfully besought a fellow-student to sign the volunteer pledge, but he could not think it his duty to do so. That student is now a missionary in China, but the volunteers remain at home.

As might necessarily be inferred from the course pursued of urging all students indiscriminately to sign the pledge, a divine personal call is not deemed necessary, and the lack of such a call is not regarded as an excuse. On this point the leaders of the movement are clear and outspoken. The outward call is deemed sufficient and authoritative. It is said: "When you hear an alarm of fire you do not wait to inquire whether you are called, but respond without hesitation and do what you can." We must, however, perceive that the reasoning by analogy from a fire alarm to the call from unevangelized nations is by no means conclusive; and this illustration might be differently regarded by a person who had responded to a fire alarm, but been told by a policeman to keep out of the way, as he would hinder rather than help.

The question, "Is a special divine call necessary?" is of the first importance. In even the smallest matters a Christian should inquire, "Lord, what will Thou have me to do?" How much more so in a question which determines his life-work and is so vast in its scope and far-reaching in its