

PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

CHINESE MISSIONS.

The pulpit of Charles St. church in this city, was filled on the morning of the 15th inst. by the Rev. Mr. Duffus, missionary of the English Presbyterian Church to Swatow, China, who is now on his return to that field, where he has been laboring for seven years. The text was from John iv. 4: "I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day, the night cometh, when no man can work." The preacher said. These are the words of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord's life was pre-eminently a life of service, of obedience, when He came into the world He said. "I come to do thy will, O my God," and through the whole of His career He could say with perfect truth. "I seek not my own will, but the will of Him that sent me. He went about doing good, there was nothing in the world that could divert Him from doing His work, it had no attractions powerful enough, no dangers, no threatenings serious enough, to drive Him away from it. Whatever He met with in the way of attraction or danger, the Lord always drove it away, saying 'I must work the work of Him that sent me.' You see in reading His life, that He went about the world as one who had a great work to do, and but a short time in which to accomplish it. He is always at work, never resting, never ceasing, but day after day doing His work as one who says "I must work."

Very much like the life of his Master was that of the Apostle Paul from the first day when he cried, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" To the last day of his life, he could say "This one thing I do," and even when he had to face death itself he could still say, "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus." And Paul also you will constantly find using such expressions as these. "Brethren, the time is short," "Redeeming the time." He also felt that a work was to be done, and but a brief time to do that work remained. Now, brethren, we all, as Christians, at however great distance from the apostle, may take this for our motto. "As Thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I sent them into the world," not to seek our own plans or interests, but to do the will of Him who has sent us forth. These words define our position; we are not masters, independent and irresponsible, to do as we choose, but *servants*, bound to do the will of another. To hear many Christians speak, you would think they were masters, their time and money to be laid out as they please. Ah, brethren, that is a false way of looking at it: a Christian is a servant, and all that he has and is, is under the control of Him whose servant he is. Let us look, then, a little at these works of Christ; every one of them is instructive: (1) "*Work*"—the great end of life; not enjoyment, not gratification, not amusement, not making a name for ourselves; but work—honest work. How many are there whose lives, if not their lips, proclaim a very different motto, saying as clearly as words can say: We must enjoy ourselves—make a place for ourselves—gain honors and distinctions—make money. Such seems to be the motto inscribed upon their lives. Brethren, the Christian's motto is "I must work!" If we are true servants we shall be willing to take our work from the Master's hands, as He shall appoint us; not what is easy, congenial, or profitable to us, but what He commands us. Sometimes it is not an easy service; it often demands the sacrifice of the dearest ambitions and hopes; it would be an intolerable service if it were not sweetened by love. It is not easy, but it is *necessary*. I fear that the idea has crept into all our churches that it is not necessary to serve the Lord in any way that demands great self-sacrifice. I was speaking lately to a student of theology in my own country, and said. "Why is it that so few of our young ministers are willing to go to the foreign mission field?" His reply was. "The difficulties are so great." Brethren, let us not encourage in our own hearts, rather let us discourage, the idea that we are not to serve God in any way that costs us a sacrifice; let us remember that He who gave himself for us is worthy of any sacrifice, and that our highest privilege is the power of self-sacrifice to Him who gave up himself to us, and who will hereafter give us a glorious return.

Well, there is a work for all of us. Perhaps you say, "I am serving God in my daily life and work."

Certainly that is necessary; if we do not serve God throughout the day in everything, and consecrate the whole to God, we cannot consecrate little bits; but there is a *special* work in behalf of the bodies and souls of our fellowmen. *Possibly* your work may not lie beyond the bounds of your own habitation and your immediate neighbors; you must judge of that before God. The work God has given us may be very obscure and insignificant, and if so, we are not to become petulant and say, "I must do some great thing," the work given us to be done lovingly, faithfully, we are not to leave undone because we are waiting for some greater work or greater sacrifice. Brethren, whatever God calls us to is our work, if a small work, we are not to seek a larger one, and if God has called us to some thing greater and more conspicuous before the eyes of men, however much nature calls to us to go back, we are to do it. We are not to be masters to choose our work, but servants to obey, and if we are truly and honestly desirous to do our work, whatever it be, God will not leave us without guidance, in His holy providence He will lead us to that point. Only let us be honest, and be sure that we wish to know what God will have us to do.

Again, the Lord says, *I must work*. there is decision, strong, resolute firmness. Many lives accomplish nothing because they want this backbone. The Lord Jesus, with all his gentleness and courtesy, had this indomitable will, this inflexible firmness. *I must work!* Oh, how often do Christians think it would be so delightful to do this or that work for Him, and dream pleasant dreams about the work they would like to do, and never go further, never feel the constraining "must" that would lead them to work now! This necessity is twofold. *First*, there is the obligation of *duty*. Some people do not like "duty," they like "love" better, but "love is the fulfilling of the law," otherwise there is no love at all. "I come to do Thy will." "Thy law is within my heart. *Secondly*, there is that which consecrates and hallows and sweetens duty—the constraint of love, and the apostle puts the two together when he says, "Necessity is laid upon me." love, that will not let you alone, but sends you forward, irresistibly impels you in the Master's service, and thus he says, "woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel."

Then there is the pronoun, "*I must work*;" and you remember that the Lord Jesus Christ very often had to go forward alone, and not only had no companionship, but no sympathy. Not only His enemies opposed Him and threatened His life, but His very disciples did not understand Him, and one of them took Him just as He was about to accomplish the end of His life and said. "Be it far from thee, Lord." And yet the Lord said resolutely. "If no one will come with me, I will go alone." And sometimes we shall not be able to find any one to go with us on the path marked out for us; people will condemn and misinterpret, and we must go alone. I, accountable to my Master alone, wait His judgment, and seek only His approval and not the approval of men. "*I must work*."

Again, the Lord Jesus was earnest, all the time working diligently, whatsoever His hand found to do, He did with His might. A great work was to be crowded into a short day. Time is limited. What is not done now will never be done at all. the work of to-day cannot be done to-morrow. To-day's opportunities will be gone to-morrow. That may bring its own opportunities, it cannot bring back those of to-day, and when we have passed away there will be no chance to do there what we have not done here. The rest will be glorious, but now the work has to be done.

Let us consider how uncertain time is with all of us. The death of our friends, the fall of those who have been working long with us in God's service, speak very solemnly. It may be that this day may be our last day of service in the work God has called us to. Oh, brethren, let us seek to realize that life is too short for dreams; let us lay hold of the hours, and redeem them, and make the most of them while with us!

Consider how much of life is already gone. Have you filled your lives with honest service? Which of us is not ready to say with grief, "We have wasted much of our lives, and only given scraps and bits of life to the service of our Master?" Let us be more earnest in time to come because we have made so poor use of the time that is past.

It is not only a solemn thought, but a blessed thought, that the "night cometh." It was so to the Saviour who suffered so long and worked so hard.

Brethren, faithful work for Christ is no holiday pastime. It is trying to the flesh, to the heart's affections, to the whole spirit and soul and body if it is done well and honestly. But the night is coming, sweet repose from our toils and labors, and that thought is sweet just in proportion as we are faithful in our work. Who rests most sweetly at night: he who has been lying down all day, or he who has spent the day in toil? "The rest of the laboring man is sweet;" and the heaven of the laboring man who has gone from toils and suffering for Christ will be tenfold the heaven of him who has done nothing for his Master in this world. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." Why? Because "they rest from their labors and their works do follow them," and he who has most works of self denial done for Christ, will be the man upon whom the Spirit will pronounce the benediction, "Blessed is he whose works do follow him."

Brethren, let us look back at our profession. Have you some works done for Jesus, done at some cost to yourselves, done at the command of your Master, done for your fellow-sinner? Then you are blessed, because your works follow you. We are all wanting our rest *now*, to have tranquility not harassed by calls of duty. If we were wanting to labor now, we should be in the spirit of our Master and following in His footsteps. Surely we might be willing to work for Him this brief day. "What! could ye not watch with me one hour?" One little hour, and then eternity's long, deep thanksgiving psalm! Allelujah! How strange that we are not more ambitious to fill up the day's service that the glorious reward and unspeakably blessed rest may be ours!

The preacher closed with an earnest appeal to those who had not yet begun to work.

A missionary meeting was held in the school room in the afternoon, at which addresses were delivered by Mr. Duffus and Miss Ricketts, an English lady who leaves an important educational position in Brighton, England, to devote herself to the work of training native Bible women in China. Mr. Duffus, after expressing his pleasure at finding so deep and unaffected an interest in the China mission in the Canadian Church, gave some impressive illustrations of the vastness of the field—its cities of 100,000, 200,000, 250,000 inhabitants, within a small radius; its "villages" of 10,000, 20,000, even of 60,000. The empire contains one-third of the human race. To realize the meaning of this fully, it is necessary to live in China.

China possesses the elements of greatness. The people have great ability, industry and frugality, and are destined to play an important part in the world's history. How important that they should be the means of spreading the truth, instead of heathenism!

Mr. Duffus next refuted the notion that the Confucian morality was efficacious in producing change of character. "The Chinese know what is right, but they will not do it." Nothing but the gospel can bring them out of the state of moral degradation.

The inducements are great; the opportunities are also great. Forty years ago, no missionary dared preach the gospel in China; to-day there is no city or town where missionary operations cannot be carried on without serious molestation. The literati now and then stir up the evil passions of the mob, but this is only what has always happened when the work of God is going on. "There is no limit," said Mr. Duffus, "to the work, except that placed by the Church at home, by the fewness of our numbers." The results are visible, tangible. Last year 120 missionaries met at Shanghai to consult about the means of spreading the gospel. The result was to show that since 1842 the results of the work done were 12,000 or 13,000 native Christians, exclusive of the families of the converts. Last year 230 adult believers were added to the Church at one station.

Testimony was borne to the reality of the work, and the character of the converts amidst much persecution and loss for Christ's sake.

There are about forty mission centres, occupied by various mission churches established by England, America, and Germany. The English Presbyterian Church has three stations, viz.: Amoy, Swatow, and S. Formosa, and in connection with these, seventy or eighty stations where mission work is being carried on. All along the seaboard, from Canton to Manchuria, the gospel is preached.

Mr. Duffus concluded a most interesting address with a historical account of the formation of the Swatow mission by W. C. Burns in 1846; and by instances