

of the Church, "who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, and holdeth the stars in his right hand," to give me to behold some fruits of my ministry. Still, it is to be feared that not a few, to whom for many years, I have addressed the message of the gospel, have not yet made the great transition from nature's darkness to God's marvellous light; and some, I am afraid, while time has been rushing on, and companions and friends have been falling around them, have become more and more estranged from God, and more given up to the practices of a "world lying in wickedness."

When I look back across the lapse of the twenty years that are past, what varied emotions arise in my mind! How many scenes of joy and sorrow have I been called to witness amongst you! and what a variety of character has passed under my notice! By many a sick-bed, have I ministered, and many of your relatives and friends, have I seen consigned to the grave. When I look around this congregation, to-day, I miss many of the "old familiar faces" of those who first welcomed me, when I came, a stranger amongst you, and cheered me by a constant attendance on my ministry. Their places are now vacant in the House of God, and their dust is mouldering in the grave-yard, hard by.

Could we draw aside the veil that shrouds the secrets of the future from our view, and behold the scenes that shall be unfolded during the twenty years that are to come; could we open that book in which is recorded that which shall be, how many unexpected things should we find written therein? We may not open that Book. It is sealed even as with seven seals; and it is in mercy that it is so. For many a heart would break, and many a soul be bowed down to the very earth, could the unseen future be now exposed to them. But we know this, that "the day shall declare it." Another page of that future is unrolled, every day that passes over our heads. And, when other twenty years shall have passed away, what shall meet the eye of those amongst us, who may be spared to behold that period? They may enter this house of prayer, but many of us will not be found here. Another may stand in the place which I now occupy, and others may fill those pews where you now sit. Our friends who would find us then, must seek for us in the grave-yard, and read our names upon the tomb-stone.

The future is not ours, and we have no right to count upon a single day of it, but the present is ours, and we ought to improve it. Let those, then, who have received the Lord Jesus, walk in him yet more stedfastly. Let those who are "almost Christians," become altogether so. Let those who are "halting between two opinions, choose this day whom they will serve." Let those who have settled down into callous indifference, or reckless abandonment, turn now from their evil ways, and begin, in good earnest, to "prepare to

meet their God;" let them, while mercifully spared "in the land of the living, and in the place of hope," "seek the Lord, while He is to be found, and call upon Him while He is near." Let us all endeavour, relying upon promised grace, to begin now to live so that if God should be pleased to spare us to witness the close of other twenty years, our retrospect of what is past shall bring us no bitter regret for misspent time, and neglected opportunities, and a life given up to worldliness and sin.

And should we be called hence, as many of us doubtless shall be, before other twenty years shall have rolled away, let us seek now, to "be found in Christ, not having our own righteousness which is of the law, but that righteousness which is by faith;" so that "when the earthly house of this tabernacle shall be dissolved, we may have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Thus, "whether we live, we shall live unto the Lord, or whether we die, we shall die unto the Lord, so that, living or dying, we shall be the Lord's."

And "now may the God of peace, that brought again from the dead, our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

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Progress of Madagascar.

MOST of our readers are aware that the island of Madagascar is one of the largest, most fertile and beautiful in the world. It is situated near the equator, but its great mountain ranges give it in many places a delightful temperature, so that it may be said to possess a climate superior to many European countries. Extending more than a thousand miles in length, by from three to four hundred in breadth it affords a wide field, both for moral, religious and physical culture. Till lately, it was under the rule of a female despot, notorious for her ferocity, her idolatrous superstition and her innumerable cruelties. Her son and successor promises to be a sovereign of a very different character. Fully cognizant of the advantages of modern civilization, and convinced of the absurdities and abominations of the pagan rites and customs of his country, he is labouring earnestly and with great judgment to introduce a better state of things. Anxious that his people should be enlightened, he has not only protected, but encouraged perfect freedom of intercourse with all nati-