

perhaps, to form a second alliance, so as to shake their faith as to their fitness for *home* work.

A common idea is that a stout and able-bodied man is the proper person to rough it in heathen lands. No idea is looser: no impression is falsier. A mission claims graces and powers of no ordinary kind. Further, a sensitive nature shrinks from it because it is so public. The politician and the missionary are alike in this respect, that the scene of their operation is open and exposed: if either mistakes, woe to him! he is criticised sometimes justly, often cruelly, always fully.

It is rather queer to hear some pious people speak of the missionary as burying himself out of sight. Why, if we except some of the envied charges at the front, a licentiate who settles in Canada disappears from notice altogether (except indeed he self-obliviously supplies the church organ with news about his performances, and speeches and presents!)—whereas a missionary works under the close scrutiny of the church.

Now a convention informs of the qualities needful for foreign work, and therefore the convention rather dismays a man—he stops and wonders whether he possesses the required abilities.

The effect of a convention is, on the other hand, *positive*. There are two elements of it. First, the heart swells out to grasp the bigness of the enterprise; it is borne aloft to a high place of observation, and soliloquises thus: "There is an earthful of human spirits, within each of whom resides a latent infinity of spirits, of which it is a small thing to say that they are immortal, for theirs is to be a history of passion and thought growing either upward or downward, (for if it is an insult to count a career on earth merely by its length and not by its deeds and influences, it is equally

shallow and vulgar to view the future as an unended duration—for mere time will sink out of sight in the progresses and business of eternity!)—an earthful of such spirits whose character (strange to say!) in the future hinges upon the gospel of Jesus—a world like a hospital ambulance going its rounds with those whose hearts are sick, whose outlooks are bleak and gloomy." This is the lofty thought which a convention of earnest students deepens. And those whose souls are so small as to dwell upon the little matters of sectarianism and partyism, whose powers are so slender as not to glow at the awful grandeur of the earth emptying generation after generation into either a blissful or sorrowful eternity; these may spend their little strength upon little themes, for they are not cut out for the nobler matters.

But secondly, there is another element: "The field is the world"—not Ontario, not the North-West, but *the world!* How the mind of men is thrown back into a cold calculation. Where is the spot on this globe where the talents he possesses will be most useful? For I hold that he who bows to the claims of kindred or even to those of country, has yet to learn the meaning of those words of Jesus: "If any man come to me and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple": he has not yet caught the love (broader than home) of Jesus, when to his searching and likely childing mother he said, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" With a love to every human being, whatever his class, whatever his colour, we must quietly reason out where on this wide earth we shall labour. Now this is the deepest result of the convention, as it appeared to me, so I give it to you.