

the day is far spent, yea, when it is about the eleventh hour, he cometh, and behold he findeth you and many others standing idle in the market-place, and again he saith unto you, Why stand ye here all the day idle? Do you reply, Because no man hath hired us? What! no man! No philanthropist, no congregation, no Presbytery, no Synod, no Assembly? Go ye into my vineyard, and whatsoever your hand findeth to do, do it with all your might. Now, suppose that, moved by such a gracious invitation, I and my fellow-loungers were each of us roused to reply, "Lord, here am I, send me;" but first resolved to take a survey of the vineyard. Suppose the larger portion of it by far were found still in a wilderness state, other portions here and there but partially reclaimed, and only one small corner that could be said at all to approximate to a state of perfect cultivation—suppose that the choicest spots of that corner were not without thorns and briars, and other marks of careless and relaxed husbandry—still, as compared with the rest of the vineyard, a very paradise of beauty and fertility—what would be thought of us, the eleventh-hour labourers, if, instead of manfully resolving to put forth all our energies, and at once invade the wholly unbroken surface, with its impenetrable jungle, we should waste our precious time in clamorously petitioning the occupiers of the already cultivated and most fertile corner, in their wisdom, to devise some measure whereby we could be employed and privileged to settle there too? Oh, if the Lord of the vineyard suddenly reappeared to take an account of our stewardship, what reply could we make that did not virtually, actually, and undisguisedly imply, after all, it was our own ease, and comfort, and convenience we paramountly sought for, and not the promotion of the interests of Him, whom we in words acknowledge as our Sovereign Lord and Master! To escape from the guilt and condemnation of such laggart, and disgraceful, and criminal conduct, I would now go to the unreclaimed wastes of the great vineyard; and I would go to India in preference to other portions thereof, simply, because at present the Lord has, in the overrulings of providence, opened up a larger and more effectual door, than in any other land, for proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation to scores of millions that never heard of a Saviour. And seeing that Scotland, with its two and a-half millions, has a supply of about twelve hundred ordained pastors connected with this National Church; while the Church is satisfied with sending forth only ten to preach the Gospel to more than one hundred and thirty millions of fellow-subjects in the East that are famishing for lack of knowledge—that is, with sending forth less than the hundredth part of what she retains at home, to minister the means of Gospel grace, and Gospel ordinances, to a population fifty times greater! I have tasked myself in vain, with the Bible in my hand, to discover one Scriptural argument why the little snug, and comparatively well cultivated corner should have so many, and the great uncultivated waste

so few! I judge no man in the balance of unrighteous judgment. But, for myself, I do most solemnly declare that, with such views pressing so overwhelmingly on my soul, I cannot, without being arraigned at the bar of conscience as a traitor to my God and Saviour—I cannot, while health and strength are supplied from above—I dare not be guilty of adding one more, however insignificant, to the swelling catalogue of hundreds at home, and thereby subtracting one, however insignificant, from the lean and scanty tablet of units abroad! By the blessing of God, therefore, I propose to return and join the little band that is before me, "bearing the burden and heat of the day." And, if ye will not augment our number, till one and another has successively fallen, oh, let us have at least your sympathies and your prayers! your prayers in the closet, your prayers at the family altar, your prayers in the assemblies and congregations of the people. In the whole annals of time, I know only of one case wherein a being, in human form, could declare, not in proud, cold, stercoral apathy, but in lowly, yet calm, self-conscious independence, that he needed not, and would not brook any manifestation of sympathy or entreaty in his behalf. It was when the man of sorrows, groaning and bleeding under the burden of an ignominious cross, was wending his weary way up the steep of Calvary. The spiteful outbreak of scoff and scorn on the part of the men of Jerusalem, which proved that their hearts were hard as the nether mill stone, he could buffet with patient silence. But the tears which proved that the daughters of Jerusalem had still bowels of compassion, made him break the silence in words of tenderness, more magnanimous than any that have ever issued from the lips of man or angel. Resolved on that day to tread the winepress alone—resolved on that day to exhaust the cup of human woe and Divine wrath—resolved on that day to monopolise, as it were, the griefs, and groans, and penalties, not of time merely, but of eternity—he seemed to feel as if every tear dropped from human eye were his loss—as if every pang of anguish wrung from human heart were a subtraction from the fulness wherewith he had determined to bear our griefs and carry our sorrows. Hence the burst of God-like tenderness—"Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me; weep for yourselves." But though we cannot, dare not, appropriate these words in their Divine plenitude, we may, to the extent of repudiating all fears that involve the notion that we go forth on a forlorn hope, while we would invite the sympathies and the prayers of the faithful, because we are but "men of like passions with themselves," and exposed to peculiar trials and temptations. Armed and fortified by such sympathies and prayers, we shall go forth with redoubled energy, and a more elastic buoyancy of hope. However mighty and apparently invincible the forces that are arrayed against us, victory in the end is sure to be ours. But ere the final victory is won, we may have to encounter difficulties far greater than any yet realised. Indeed, my impress-