

celled houses, and My great world-wide house still lies waste?"

He told them more than that. He sifted their objections, and then He told them what they got—what the fruit was of raising their objections against God's commands. He told them that their harvests were a failure, that their food and drink were unsatisfying, that their clothes were unwarming, that their labours went for nothing, that their wages went into bags with holes, and that the heaven was restrained from blessing, and the earth prevented from bringing forth its fruit. Because though they laboured diligently and in lawful things, yet they laboured at lawful things to the exclusion of God's things, which should come first.

Is there anything like that with us to-day? We are like them in the call; we have been like them in the excuse; we have been like them in that God has known our thoughts. Have we been like them in the results? Think a moment. What results are we getting to-day? It is a day of the most marvellous Church organization which the world has ever seen. It is a day of the most conspicuous devotion to every form of Christian work here at home that the world has ever seen. We are amazed at what is done to-day. Just remember that we have thousands upon thousands, tens of thousands, probably into millions, of Christian workers in our British Isles. And what is the fruit of it? Is the fruit commensurate to the seed? Are we getting back a hundred-fold, or sixty, or thirty? Are we getting back a single-fold for what we are giving out? We are looking around, and we see and hear of divisions and of dissensions and discords amongst those that own the same Lord. They have time to quarrel about their own houses, because they have not given themselves to building God's. We see, one side, alas! and with sadness—with heart-breaking sadness sometimes—that superstition and sacerdotalism and sacramentarianism are taking away the glorious liberty of the children of God. And on the other side, we see a falsely so-called science, and a doubtful scepticism, and we may call it a half-taught criticism, that are eating away God's Word from God's people—and that amid the teeming multitudes professing to follow Christ.

What are we doing at home? I will take a single example, a town of 60,000 inhabitants. It is like many others in our country, and may well stand as an example of almost all. There are thirty-two Church of England Clergymen in it; there are eighteen or twenty Nonconformist Ministers; they have, on the average, from thirty to forty helpers working with each one of them—Sunday-school teachers, district visitors, Scripture readers, Bible-women, nurses, open-air workers, and tract distributors. Thus, on the average, there are 2,000 Christian workers for 60,000 souls, so that every thirty in that place have got some one running after them. But out in the heathen world there are still 800 millions of whom we are told that they have not yet heard the Word of Christ. Have we not turned every one to our own house, and left God's house lying waste?

Are you satisfied with the fruits of your own labour? Do you find, for this wondrous work that God's people are doing at home—do you find a satisfying answer? Do we not mourn over this, that there are but few, comparatively speaking, that are converted; and few converted that care to be consecrated; and few consecrated that care to be at work for the

evangelization of the world? Are we satisfied? Can God be satisfied, while half of the world is without the knowledge of His Christ? Let us think of that. Is God, our God, any more satisfied with His Church to-day than He was with His people when they left His house waste, and were running after their own? Think of it for yourself. Supposing you went away from home for nineteen years, and you left a capable servant in charge of four acres of land, and you told him to keep them for your benefit. But when you came back, after nineteen years, you found a fledge planted right across the middle, so that one-half could never be touched at all; and a smaller hedge down the middle of the half that was left, and over one portion of that just a seed here and there, cast in almost by chance. And suppose ninety-nine hundredths of that man's powers—aye, nine-hundred-and-ninety-nine thousands—spent on the little acre of land where his own cottage happened to be built, would you be satisfied? Now carry this picture further. Consider it as Christ does to-day. Instead of four acres, you have all the world; and instead of nineteen years you have nineteen centuries. And that is what He sees to-day. Oh, He cannot be satisfied. And if He is not satisfied, we had better not be satisfied either—until we begin to rise up and do what He would have us do.

Now, personally, I am strongly convinced that unless a man believes a thing to be really possible he will never put his heart into the doing it. We must be convinced, first, that the work before us can be done; or we cannot put our hearts into the doing of it. Sometimes faithful workers, noble labourers, have been put into a new sphere of work quite beyond their powers; sometimes a man placed in charge of a parish of 20,000 of our abject poor has let his hands hang down, and his knees become feeble. He has said, "It cannot be done"; and he has done nothing. We must believe a work can be done, if with our hearts we are to do it.

Now, in suggesting that this evangelization of the world can be done—is that any new thing? Are we inventing it in 1899, or have we invented it during the last ten years through the Student Volunteer Movement? Oh, no! Sixty-three years ago the American Board of Missions met for their annual meeting in Hartford, United States, and they passed this Resolution:—"In view of the signs of the times, and of the promises of God, the day has arrived to undertake a scheme of operations, looking towards the evangelization of the world, based upon the idea of its speedy accomplishment." And that was spoken sixty-three years ago. It was a noble hope and prospect. It was a living seed, but it has lain in the keeping of the half-dead, slumbering Church for the last sixty-three years. Shall it be planted out, and shall it begin to live to-day? It is no new idea. Go back further still, centuries further, and you see it is as old as the day when the Lord ascended to heaven, and gave His parting command to do it.

But not only is it the Lord's command, and therefore true; but it has been before God's people for nineteen centuries, and therefore is not new. Is it practicable, and can it be done? I take the words of one who knew the heart of his fellow-countrymen well, and who laboured for Home Missions as perhaps no other man has done in this century—the great and good Lord Shaftesbury; and this is what he says: "In the latter part of these eighteen centuries the Church of Christ has had men enough, and means enough,