

ment. But we should do well to view the matter apart from this borrowed splendour, which, by its glare, obscures rather than brightens the object of our contemplation. After all, the greater part of the work must be accomplished by ordinary men. And I am persuaded, if we but take a candid and sober view of the case, we shall begin to suspect that the matter may come home in the shape of duty, even to ourselves. Great, as are the sacrifices the missionary makes, they are but small when we take into account those sublime truths which we believe, as well as he. And it is of the very deepest importance that we should bear in mind that those very sacrifices are represented in the Bible, not as the fruits of an over-reaching faith which may fall to the lot of but here and there a mind of apostolic endowment; but as the test of simple discipleship itself. "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." If by these, and the remarks that follow, I can impress the mind of any one of you with the duty of engaging in this great undertaking, let me warn such an individual of the delusion of putting such convictions away from him on the ground that this is a work far too high for him to engage in; or under the deceitful impression that his shrinking from such an enterprise is a sign merely that his faith is weak, and has not yet acquired sufficient strength to warrant his engaging in a work of such difficulty and self-denial. If the words of Christ be true, which I have just repeated, to shrink from duty, even in the face of all the trials that present themselves in the contemplation of the missionary life, does not argue a weakness of faith merely, but a want of faith. The man who is not ready to part with country and even life itself, at the bidding of his Saviour, is not worthy of the name of a disciple. *Vol. ii. pp. 65, 66.*

—Now, I say, there is a call for much more devoted services on your part, than you have ever yet rendered in the work of evangelising the nations. If we are disposed to estimate the prosperity of the missionary cause from the sums that are annually poured into its coffers, we should indeed augur well of its success. But you are aware, that, after all, money is but a subordinate part of the apparatus. It may be the main spring of the machine, but it is not the machine itself. The agents, who go forth to the work, are the effective part of the mechanism. And what avails it, that we have obtained a good moving power, if there be no machine to set in motion? A good will to the cause of missions has been on the increase, but there is every reason to fear, that the spirit of missionary zeal is on the decline. It has grown more fashionable of late to subscribe to missionary societies: in consequence of this, the revenues of the different societies have been so increased, as would enable them to extend their plans, could they but find a sufficient number of zealous and devoted agents. But such is the languishing of missionary zeal,—so little is there of what Horne would call "a passion for missions," that it is with considerable difficulty the present stations can be supplied; and, in such circumstances, it is altogether vain to talk of extending the plan of missionary operations. *pp. 67, 68.*

—The Scottish Missionary Society is in want of labourers; the London Missionary Society is in want of labourers;—the Church Missionary Society (to the shame of the churchmen of England be it told) have for some time been compelled to gather the missionaries, whom they send forth, from the other countries of Europe. And, to sum up all, even among the Moravians themselves, so famed for the devotedness of their missionary zeal, that spirit of other days, which could brook slavery and death for the sake of Jesus, would seem to have died away. Of them, it once could be said, that, no sooner was a missionary station vacant, than there was an eager competition who should have the honor to supply it;—for then it was counted an honor, for the love they bore to Christ, to succeed to a dreary station amid eternal snows, or to fill the places of those who had fallen by the murderous hand of the savages for whose sakes they had left their country and their me. But now there is a difficulty in finding persons willing to go to stations of ordinary comfort and ease. In this state of matters, what avails the increase of Missionary funds? Do you not feel that there is a loud call for something else than mere sub-

scriptions? And to whom can this appeal be made, but to the members of Missionary associations. And on whom can it be urged home, more forcibly than on those who have professed to surrender the whole energies of their minds and their bodies to the promulgation of the religion of Christ?

This is a statement of facts, and such a statement, I am sure, would be quite sufficient to call forth the willing offer of his services, from any one who believes in the efficacy of missionary exertions, and who is not tied down by some peculiar circumstances to his native land, were it not that the mind is driven from its convictions of duty by prejudices and affections, the strongest that can influence our nature:—and I will even say, the purest that can even oppose the will of God. Accordingly, I have found in my own experience, that even those who are most liberal in their donations to the missionary societies, and most active in spreading among their friends, a spirit of good will to this work of Christian philanthropy, immediately abate their ardor, and turn upon another tack, so soon as the duty of personal engagement is pressed home upon themselves, or even upon any of their near relations. Those who are most strenuous in their arguments for the general cause of missions, instantly start objections to the proposal of themselves becoming missionaries. A thousand plausible arguments immediately present themselves. Our own country has much higher claims upon us,—all are not yet converted here. Besides, the success of missionaries has not been very great; and we think we can do more good by remaining at home. Such arguments, when in the mouth of an opponent to the general cause of missions, none are so forward to answer, or so eloquent in refuting as they, and yet to the same refuges do they betake themselves, when we merely carry out a little farther and make a new application of their own previous assertions. *pp. 67, 68.*

—Let us imagine, that instead of the world, a single country had been pointed out by our Lord as the field of action. And, since we are most familiar with our land, let us just suppose that the particular country specified was the island of Great Britain: and that, instead of the command to go forth into all the nations, and preach the Gospel to every creature,—the order had been, to go throughout all the countries of this island, and preach the gospel to every inhabitant. I find, that on a scale which would make the population of Great Britain represent that of the world, the population of such a county as Mid Lothian might be taken, as a sufficient accurate representation of the population of our own land.

In order, then, to have a just picture of the present state of the world, only conceive, that all who had received the above commission, some how or other, had contrived to gather themselves together within the limits of this single country. Imagine to yourselves, all the other divisions of Scotland and England immersed in heathen darkness; and that by these Christians, who had so unaccountably happened to settle down together in one little spot, no effort was made to evangelize the rest of the land, except by collecting a little money, and sending forth two or three itinerants to walk single-handed through the length and breadth of the country.

I shall be told, however, that illustration is not argument; and so distorted have our views been on this subject, that you will be disposed to think this a perfect caricature of the matter. But I deny that this is an illustration at all. It is merely a representation, on a reduced scale;—and I believe you will find it to be a correct representation of the state of the world. It is no argument against the conclusions of the practical mathematician, that his calculations have had to do nought with the very objects or doctrines themselves, about which he determines, but with proportional representations of them which he has delineated. The very same thing holds here. And if you but grant the correctness of my representation, then the deductions made from it are every whit as conclusive, as if our minds could so expand, as to do away with the necessity of the representation, and could gather their conclusions with as much ease from the consideration of the object themselves about which we reason.

You will permit me, therefore, to argue from the representation a little farther.

Were I to ask you what, in the case we supposed, you would imagine to be the duty of the ministers who had clustered within the limits of a single coun-

ty, when their commission embraced every county in the land? You would at once reply, that they ought to spread themselves over the face of the country, till every corner of the field shared equally in the benefit of their ministration. Now I am almost afraid to transfer this question from the representation to the actual case before us. Not, but that I believe I might most legitimately do so, but because I feel that I cannot carry along with me the sympathies of the Christian world. In fact, I am arguing at present for a much laudable effort, than the fair answer to such a question would land us in. To return to our ideal field of operation, let us suppose, that even the little band of itinerants began to fail, and a difficulty was found to recruit their numbers. Let us suppose, that the funds collected were sufficient to send forth more, if any could but be found who were willing to go. Let us try if we can fancy any thing in the shape of an excuse, which our professed evangelists could alledge, for still refusing to quit the little territory to which they had all along so pertinaciously adhered. Some might say, they did not think it was the proper time to go forth. You might meet them with the unlimited command of their Master, and especially his promise, to be always with them in the work to which the commandment called them. Others might say, they did not think those who had gone forth already had taken the right plan, and might even urge, in support of this, that actually the two or three preachers who had been sent forth had not yet covered the country. The direct reply to such, would be—The error of another is no apology for your disobedience. It is only a louder call to you to fulfil the command of your Lord, by some plan which will be more agreeable to his will. Such excuses might be framed by those who had never co-operated in the little effort that had been made. But can you conceive, that those who had given their entire consent to the plan itself and had been zealous in sending forth others, could have any imaginable excuse from shrinking back, when their personal services were called for? Let us try if we can invent any. They might tell us, there were yet many within the little sphere they had allotted to themselves who were yet unconverted. They might bear witness to their own negligence, by telling us, that actually there were still some within their own sphere of action, to whom the message they had received from the Lord, had never been fairly delivered. They might express their apprehension, that if they began to go forth over the face of the country, the little spot which they had hitherto cultivated with so much care, might hereafter be overlooked in the wide field which lay before them, and come to be altogether neglected. And some might even have the effrontery to tell us, that they quite felt the urgency of the call, to go forth over the face of the country; but for their part, they had rather stay at home and persuade others to go.

You feel that there is something ludicrous in the very description;—there is such an utter discrepancy between the command and the professed obedience of it; between the work to be performed, and the scantiness of the means that are expected to accomplish it; between the obvious calls of duty, and the frivolous excuses by which they are evaded. Now, would this were but an imaginary picture; but it must recommend itself to all of you as too true a representation of the present state of the world, and of the kind of obedience which the disciples of Christ render to the last command of their Lord and Saviour.

DOMESTIC MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

The Anniversaries of the Wesleyan Missionary Branch Societies, in the Westmorland and Petto-diac Circuits, have been held for the present year as follows:—

WESTMORLAND CIRCUIT.

Bai de Verte—Monday, January 19, Mr. Joseph Avard, sen'r. in the Chair. Preacher, Rev. R. Williams; other speakers, the Rev. Messrs. Busby, M'Nutt, and Williams, and Mr. Jonathan Goodwin.—Subscriptions, £16 17 4.

Point de Bute—Tuesday, 20th, Mr. Joseph Avard, sen'r. in the Chair; Preacher, Rev. R. Williams, other speakers, the Rev. Messrs. H. Pope, Hennigar, Busby, M'Nutt and Williams, and T. Roach, Esqr.—Subscriptions, £28 18 6.