

we shall be called to account for the faithful discharge of our duty? Have we not a right then to regard it as an imperative duty not to be neglected with impunity? We are by nature so selfish and earthly, and so destitute of generous and benevolent impulses, that we require the constant exercise of this sense of duty to keep us steady in purpose and in action. But I hold that while this is the case, we should rise to a higher plane, and esteem it a most exalted privilege which we eagerly embrace and unwillingly forgo. In that ever memorable naval engagement fought between England under Nelson on the one hand, and her allied enemies on the other, scores and hundreds of strong arms and loyal hearts nobly responded to the call that "England expected every man to do his duty," and right nobly they did it; but there was one man at least, and no doubt he spoke for the rest, who, with the enemy before him more numerous and strong and ready for battle, fully comprehending his danger and responsibility, seemed to rise above a mere conviction of duty, and we hear Nelson exclaiming "God, I thank thee for this opportunity." So ought we, in the great battle now waging between the Gospel on the one hand and the powers of darkness on the other, to rise above a cold sense of duty; and while looking at the millions of the race still in heathenish darkness, in view of the numerous systems of error, superstition, and infidelity; and in view of the supineness and wordliness of the church; yes, in full view of the allied powers of earth and hell, the world, the flesh and the devil, I say, should we not, in view of the work before us exclaim, "Thank God for this opportunity?" And is it not an opportunity of surpassing importance even to ourselves? What an honor conferred upon us! We are permitted to assist in working out a scheme which originated in the heart of the Triune God; was inaugurated, carried out and completed by the Lord Jesus Christ, costing his humiliation, sufferings and death; a scheme which the Holy Spirit deems worthy of striving to make effectual. What an honor to be fellow-laborers with our sainted fathers in the church, who have passed to their reward; with

the heroic band of missionaries who have gone forth with their lives in their hands to preach the Gospel to their perishing fellow-men; with the holy company of martyrs and apostles who sealed the truth with their blood! May we rise higher still, and ally ourselves with angels and seraphs before the throne, for "they desire to look into these things," and willingly minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation. May we stop not here, but rise higher still, passing through the fathers, missionaries, martyrs, and apostles, and up through the shining ranks of angels and spirits of just men made perfect, and ally ourselves to the eternal throne itself, and become "co-workers together with God:" and is not this something more than duty? Is it not a privilege of the most exalted character? And ought we not to esteem it a very great privilege indeed to have the mercies and blessings of the Gospel gratuitously bestowed upon us, through the death and merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? That Gospel has stooped down to us in our low and lost estate, and raised us from the ruins of the fall up into the happy fellowship with angels and with God; it has made provision for satisfying the cravings of our immortal nature, and opened up before us, as the object of our hope, a blissful and everlasting home in heaven. And as we stand at the foot of the cross, from which all these blessings flow, and gaze up into the loving face of the suffering Saviour, may we, not exclaim,—

"See, from his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?"

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small,
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

Are you young in years, middle-aged, or aged? Are your means limited or abundant? Are you in humble life, or do you occupy an exalted and conspicuous position? Have you one, two, or five talents? When claims are made upon your prayers and sympathies, repeat the exclamation. When the officers of this Society appeal to your liberality, heartily respond, and thank God for the opportunity; and is there