

of the Church has been rung.* It must be rung if we do not obey the command—if we do not obey the commission—which has been given by our Saviour. Am I at liberty to pick and choose which of his commandments I shall obey? Suppose I proved that I obeyed all the others, but violated this great command, I am guilty of the breach of them all. Apply this test, then, to the present case; and what have the church courts done, in obedience to this command, at home and abroad? Alas! for the last century we have heard it said, when there were no cases of discipline, no matters of party interest brought under notice, that there was no business; yet you are charged to preach the Gospel to every creature. What would be thought if the Governor General of India, and his Council, some day, overpowered with the fatigue of business, resolved to enjoy a little leisure, and cast off the cares of a great empire; and were to shut themselves up in some retreat, to riot in luxurious indulgence, leaving the rest of the great empire, of which their Sovereign has delegated to them the government, to rush to ruin? What would you think of those individuals who, confining their labours to some particular spot, should resolve that beyond this they would not go, that they would not go to all the myriads of the earth—that to those myriads they would not exercise kindness, nor any thing else? I feel that we are come to a greater crisis of the Church when we deal with this theme than when we deal with that on which we have already entered. We are guilty as a Church of neglecting our commission. It is not enough to say that we shall rise and resolve to act otherwise. We must first express our deep contrition for our past neglect. Why not appoint a day of national humiliation and fasting and prayer, that in the presence of Jehovah we may pour out of a broken and contrite heart, the confession that we, our kings, princes, and priests, have done wickedness. I do feel that unless we thus resolve and humble ourselves, it is in vain that we profess our zeal for the cause. I do not proclaim to others what I would not press upon myself; and a minister may say how dare he ask his congregation to give what he does not give himself? His tongue is bound—his heart is shut up—he cannot do it. And why should he have such scruples, knowing that many of his congregation are bestowing their fifties and hundreds of pounds on all manner of drugs that stupify the faculties? Does he not refrain because he does not wish to set an example—an example which would certainly be followed? Show me a minister that has set an example; have the people not followed that example? Yes, universally. I have known instances and could state them. We must begin at home. We dare not ask others to do what we dare not do ourselves. Let us but imitate the example of

our fathers. We cannot hear too much of the days of our fathers. We ought to bless God that we had such fathers; and think it good that as an element in the education of our land, we have such glorious names to animate our energies, and to be among us as a watchword and a trumpet sound. Yes, when borne down by the anxieties of a missionary's life in another land, and ready to sink down into despondency, and realise the feelings of the exiles of old, who by the rivers of Babylon sat and wept, yet returning home and finding the Cloud of Witnesses, reading of their sufferings and trials, I have fallen down before God, and restrained every disinclination to enter upon my duties, moved by the very feeling, and freshness, and fulness of what those men achieved. They set an example which we ought to imitate. The direction of Christ was—"if a man would follow me let him deny himself." We are willing to follow, but not to deny ourselves. Give me that which costs you something—which requires the exercise of self-denial. In stead of £8000, we should have £600,000. Yes, this may be marked down as some Brahminical extravagance of the East. I say, if we imitate our fathers, it will not be an extravagance, but a sober truth. Let others do what they please; let them talk loudly and boast of the deeds of their fathers. Oh, if we had the thousands which some men here possess, flowing into the Christian treasury! If the Lord will, my unaltered and unalterable purpose is, to return to the scene of my former labours. In adhering so determinedly to this resolution, I am not unaware of the misconstruction and uncharitable insinuations to which, in certain quarters, my conduct has been subjected. Now, though in myself I feel and confess that I am nothing, yea, "less than nothing, and vanity," I must, for the sake of "magnifying my office," be permitted to assert and vindicate the integrity of my acting motives. I would return to the land of my adoption, not because, in the gross and carnalising judgment of some worldlings, I could not do better at home. No: if the earnest and reiterated entreaties of friends, if the most alluring offers on the part of some of "the mighty and the noble," of the most tempting invitations to spheres of honour and responsibility, from not a few of the Christian people of this land, could have availed aught, I might, in the low, vulgar, and drivelling sense of the expression, have done better at home. I would go, not from the restless spirit of wild, roving adventure. If the animating principle had flown from that source, sure enough it ought by this time to have been cured, in the case of one who twice suffered shipwreck, barely escaping with life—who, more than once, was well nigh foundered amid the gales and hurricanes of the deep—and who was thrice brought to the very brink of the grave by the noxious influence of an unfriendly climate. I would go, not from any exaggerated estimate or ambitious longings after the pomp and luxuries of the East. No. Dire experience constrains me to say, that, for the enjoyment of real personal comfort, I would

* Dr. Duff here alludes to Lord Dalhousie's denunciation of the General Assembly's vote against the decision of the House of Lords confirming the judgment of the Court of Session in the Auchterarder case; by which decision the right of the patron of that parish to enforce a presentation, notwithstanding the veto of the Presbytery, would be recognised.