

Parish and Home.

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"JOY UNSPEAKABLE"

To gain a life for Jesus—
To speak some God-given word,
Whereby a heart that knew Him not
Is drawn to Christ the Lord:—

Time hath no joy so precious,
And—time's brief space gone by—
Methinks that e'en the eternal years
Will bring no bliss more high

Than, in His home of glory,
To see the love-lit gaze,
And listen to the raptured tones
Of gratitude and praise.

With which some white-robed spirit
(Who found the heavenward way,
Guided by words entrusted to
Our stammering tongues to say)

Will, His dear face beholding,
Take from the Saviour's hand
The palm and crown, of Him prepared
For all His sin-freed band.

Oh, happiness past measure!
Oh, hope supremely sweet!—
On earth to win a soul for Christ—
In heaven, that soul to meet!

AMY PARKINSON.

Toronto, Ont.

THE MISSION OF PERSECUTION.

"In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."—John xvi., 33.

We are living in troublous times. The present year will mark an epoch in the tribulation of the Church of God. During the past few months hundreds of Christian missionaries and thousands of native converts have been massacred in the Kingdom of China. The horrors of the past in the way of religious persecution have been repeated and intensified with awful detail under the eyes of Christian nations. A

sad wail of suffering from agonized and dying men, women and little children has gone up again into the ears of the Lord God of Sabaoth.

I suppose, as a result of all this, that there is one chief feeling in the hearts of a great many; it is that the missionary work of the Church of Christ has received a most serious and perhaps disastrous and fatal check in that land, and that all future efforts in that direction must be abandoned. And then, perhaps, in some quarters, the feeling of heart depression is followed by another, and, to my mind, a far more serious one, a mental conviction, namely this: That the reason for the disaster is not so much the fault of the Chinese, their nation or their people, nor of the gospel, rightly interpreted and used, as it is the fault of the Missionary Societies and their agents. In a word, that the whole policy of the Christian Church in this respect is wrong, that foreign missionary effort is a mistake. From lips that are high as well as lips that are low utterances of this kind are coming to us.

Now if this be to any large extent the case, I think we are face to face in the work of the Church with a very grave duty, even this, the duty of maintaining Christianity at home, of maintaining it as it should be maintained, truly apostolic, truly evangelical, truly missionary, truly aggressive. If Christianity is not God's religion for the Chinese, neither is it God's religion for the Englishman, the American or the Canadian. But it is God's religion to us, and if we allow any discouragement of this kind to turn us aside for one moment from obedience to the great missionary commission, it will indicate, it seems to me, that we do not understand, or that we have forgotten, the divine claims of Christianity, on the one hand, and the no less divine method of its propagation on the other. We need to go back to first principles, to go humbly and penitently to the feet of the Master, and ask Him to teach us over again something we have forgotten, forgotten in the days of ease and quietness and prosperity, in the days of exemption from trial and persecution, namely this, what are the first principles of the doctrine

of Christ in regard to the extension of His kingdom among men. "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world."

I. Consider the candidness of Christ in calling His disciples. "In the world ye shall have tribulation." There was surely no mistaking that call to service, as to what it meant, what it involved. It was a call to suffering, to pain and agony and death, to a life and a work like His own. It rung with the hissing sound of the Roman scourge, *tribulum*. The Lord Jesus concealed nothing in this respect from those who sought fellowship with Him. He declared to them, as fully as they were able to bear it, all that was involved in Christian discipleship. If any man came to Him encouraged by some false hope as to what such following might bring, some speedy millenium, some sudden exaltation to power, some world-satisfying glory, such an one could never turn upon Him and say: "Master, you deceived me in this; I was misled by your promises." No; it was about all such things, the trial and the travail, the loss and the labour, the sorrow and the suffering, the dying and the death involved in Christian discipleship that He said: "These things have I told you, that when the time shall come ye may remember that I told you of them." "In the world ye shall have tribulation." These words do not by any means stand alone as the bearer of this message. It would seem as if the New Testament were largely charged with it. The quiet, happy Sermon on the Mount did not ignore it: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake." We remember the reply of the Lord Jesus to the young scribe who came to Him with that beautiful offer of service, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." And we cannot forget that condition of discipleship which found a three-fold repetition in the