

If all of the stars in the skies
Had fallen straight down to the sea
'Twould not have been more a surprise,
So strange seemed her story to me

It started me thinking : If she
Can love me so truly and pray
Each day for my soul, it may be
That God, too, will love me some day

I'll go even now to His feet,
And tell all my sorrow and pain :
I hear His voice, tender and sweet,
"Come unto Me, Molly McVane."

A Crusade for Missions.

The time seems to me to have fully come for some new movement, which I can call by no other name, and for that crusade I solemnly appeal to my brethren in the pastorate to set themselves apart.

The evangelization of the world is a problem so grave and so great that it demands men, in a peculiar, if not an exclusive sense, devoted to it. The church needs to be aroused, quickened, stimulated, to new endeavor, prayer, consecration, giving, if we are to overtake the present generation with the gospel: To do this work of arousing the church, information must be gathered, facts collated and marshalled in effective array, and then presented with readiness of memory and of utterance, with the unique power and force that come from a mind and heart on fire with intelligent zeal and holy enthusiasm. For this work who are naturally fitted as are the devoted pastors of the churches? They are the leaders of church life and church work; their contact with the people is constant, and their touch is sympathetic; they are in the very position to take up such work with every advantage and hope of success.

Of course such a work demands a special training. There are certain lines of study and research, personal acquaintance with missionaries and mission-fields, providential contact with the work at a hundred points of approach, and the habit of advocating missions, which are requisite for the fullest measure of preparation to carry on such a crusade; but no man has the chance of such university training in the school of missions so available to him as the pastor. He whose yearnings and leanings are in this direction will unconsciously develop power in the work.

Nothing is more imperatively needed at this precise emergency, the crisis of missions, than a generation of such pastoral crusaders. There is no need of abandoning the pulpit and parish to enter upon such a crusade. The churches need not even be neglected, left unshepherded, unsheltered, like a scattered flock, in order that a pastor may go about, like Peter the Hermit, on missionary tours. The pastor must care for the flock, of course. But there is a larger, broader work for Christ than any individual church presents and every minister of Christ owes somewhat to the church at large. He ought to feel and recognize the call to ministerial service to the whole body of Christ, and seek training for that larger service.

I am persuaded that in most cases a man is more effective as a preacher for missions who is making such appeals to only one branch of a general work for Christ and His church. We need to remember that the pastoral office is the first and highest, in the church. Its forms of activity are so manifold and multifarious, that it cultivates every part of the man; every faculty finds employment. To do the work of preacher and pastor, instead of making a man narrow, broadens him. His very appeals for special causes, such as Home Missions, Foreign Missions, City Evangelization, are rendered only more effective by his not becoming a mere specialist, absorbed in one particular subject or object. The tendency of doing only one thing is to be short-sighted, and see only one interest, and so unduly magnify that one object. A specialist

in benevolence is apt to lose breadth of view, width of sympathy, and he cannot make up for such lack by mere length of tongue. The two great qualities, "audibility and volubility," may be enough for some men, but they do not prove sufficient for holding and rousing the people.

I would not have pastors abandon their flocks and folds to enter the new crusade for Missions. How-often have we observed that a pastor who is a powerful advocate of some one or all of the benevolent agencies for the church degenerates as soon as he becomes a secretary of a board or an agent. He gets formal, official, a mere functionary. And because he is expected to magnify his office, and exaggerate the relative importance of the cause he represents, he loses power with the people.

Hence, in order to be more useful in pleading for missions, it may be well for a man to keep out of all official relations with a board or a society in all ordinary cases. It takes a really extraordinary man to keep out of the trammels of a perfunctory routine. For myself, I have sedulously avoided all such complications, preferring to be first of all a preacher and a pastor, and, as such, whenever God gives opportunity, and as he gives ability, lift up my voice for every true, noble and effective form of church beneficence, with no fetters on my tongue or my independence. To do the best work in missions, it is best for me, and probably for most men, to remain pastors; and their words will have all the more spontaneity, enthusiasm and real power when they speak not as agents or secretaries but as pastors.

At the same time, I cordially recommend my fellow pastors to avail themselves, especially when they are abroad, of opportunities to gather information by personal visits and contact in the mission fields themselves. Nothing so vividly impresses the mind as the sight of the eye, and nothing so fit for vivid, graphic, telling description and reproduction. If a pastor is going to take a vacation abroad, why not for the sake of his own church and the church at large, take his vacation where recreation and investigation may be combined? Dr. Gordon and myself went to Paris together to visit and investigate the McAll Missions. We spoke twice a day in the various *salles*, through an interpreter, and saw the work for ourselves. But the help of M. Saillens, Dr. McAll's main helper in his work, enabled us to see Paris in the meanwhile as we could not have done it alone. I had written much and spoken often on the McAll Mission work, but never had I such a conception of its simplicity and effectiveness. He who would be a powerful pleader for Missions would do well to avail himself of every chance to come into personal, vital contact with mission fields and mission workers. In fact many a church might well send a pastor abroad to carry cheer to missionaries on the field, and gather a store of facts, and best of all a new enthusiasm. The time so spent would not be lost to the church at home. A true pastor may well desire to visit fields and conduct a personal investigation of the work, in order to fit himself better to do the work of a pastor. The more many-sided a man is, the better-informed he is, the more intelligent his zeal in the wider work of God the more keenly alive to the wants of the world-field, the better is he fitted to guide the flock at home, especially if his church chance to be a large and leading one among the churches.

Brotherhood of the ministry, much as we need missionaries on the foreign field, we need, even more, missionary pastors on the home field. We need men who shall make a business to keep themselves thoroughly informed as to the progress of the Lord's work and the great missionary campaign. Such men inspire a whole church, lift it to a higher level, quicken intelligence, and arouse zeal. They are the true and powerful pleaders for missions. Give us more of such men - men who can make a monthly concert an inspiring occasion, men who not only take an annual missionary collection or preach an annual missionary sermon, but whose every prayer and discourse and pastoral visit is fragrant with the spirit of missions. Then we shall have a true missionary revival, and the pulse of a sluggish church shall beat with new life, and a new missionary era shall dawn. — A. T. Pierson, D. D., *Miss. Review*.