

## ADDRESS

Delivered by the President of W. F. M. Society of Ontario, at the Annual Meeting, Oct. 26th, 1888.

After some preliminary remarks Mrs. Castle said:— I have much pleasure in extending to the visiting delegates of this Society, and the representative of other Societies the hearty welcome of this church to their church home, their fireside, and their hearts; and a welcome of not this church only, but of the entire Baptist community of Toronto. We have been welcomed to your homes in many of the towns and cities of Ontario. Cordially and heartily you have allowed us to crowd you out of your beds, and from your tables, and have even bade us come again. Now, we hope you will have as good a time with us as we have had with you. We are glad to see familiar faces from the older circles, and the unfamiliar faces from the newer ones. But we are sad to miss the face of one whose fervent soul was full of zeal for our great work. For several years Mrs. James Grant, wife of the efficient Secretary of the General Board, was a member of our Board. But in the youth of her widowhood and motherhood and Christian usefulness she was suddenly called by the Master to "Come home." What a welcome she must have had "over there." We tender to Mr. Grant and his seven motherless children our sincerest sympathy, knowing the while, that our hearts, ignorant of such sorrow, can offer but poor consolation. May the Great Comforter comfort them, though they sorrow not as those who have no hope. Hopeless are those in whose behalf we have come here this morning, and in whose interests I may say a few words, rather than to anticipate the interesting reports of our Secretaries, save only to mention the happy fact that three young lady missionaries from our Society, conjointly with the Quebec Society, are on their way to India, or are very nearly there. This is cause for gratulation when we remember that three years ago we looked in vain for one fitted for the work. Since that time a wave of missionary interest has rolled over the Christian world, and more have offered themselves to the Missionary Societies than there have been funds to send out. So the startling fact confronted us, that the harvest is great, the laborers are many, but the funds are "few," and our gratulation may well be turned into humiliation before the Lord of the harvest, that we have sent *three only* in all the years to a land where 20,000,000 widows are waiting in the most abject misery, to be freed from the bondage of a false religion, besides the thousands who as wives are but ignorant slaves or toys. To be sure we have already in the Telugu country a noble little band of workers, in Miss Hatch and a coterie of native Bible women and zenana visitors, and schools supplying every year fresh recruits for the field. But what are these among so many? As we look back over the year, can we *each say* honestly to the Master I have done for these, thy destitute children, *all that I could*? Yes, some have, no doubt with sacrifice and prayer, given to their uttermost. But for the most of us, dare we ask what His verdict would be?

We are living in a most momentous period of the Church's history. The command of the departing Saviour to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, is taking hold of Christian people as never before. During the past year over two thousand men and women of Canada and the United States have declared themselves ready to go as missionaries to the uttermost parts of the earth. The watchword of civilization has been for centuries, Westward ho! Eastward ho!

is the rallying cry of Christianity. It is no time for any Christian church to sit at ease. The grandest opportunity awaits it. The most momentous responsibility rests upon it now, and upon every individual member of it, and we cannot get away from our responsibility. When his country was in peril, Lord Nelson said "England expects every man, this day, to do his duty."

During the last American war, a young man who shrunk from flying to the rescue of his country would have thought himself contemptible. The time has come for the Christian church to take the world for Christ. The marching orders are being filled. All are drafted and there is no exemption. As we have gifts differing one from another in church work, one may do one thing, and one another, but all alike are called to preach the gospel to every creature, by going or sending. But all do not go nor send. Among women, about one half, as a rule, in a church are living in obedience to the command. Over and over, the question is asked, "How can we in terest every woman in our church in missions?" Is Christianity a poorer thing and less soul stirring than patriotism, that the Master's call may be obeyed or not, according to convenience or inclination? and that there is so much inclination not to obey it? Why is this state of things? It must be through ignorance of the Master's plan. And why this ignorance? Are church creeds defective, or church teaching, or Sunday-school teaching, or parental teaching? The Scripture teaching is plain enough.

A most thoughtful, able and earnest minister, of this city, who has given during this year the priceless gift of a daughter to our mission in India, said recently, that if every Christian would do his duty, the gospel would be preached to every creature in five years! "A great statesman has affirmed, that in any community there is enough intelligence and virtue to take care of all this ignorance and vice." We may assert that there is Christianity enough to fill the whole earth, "as the waters cover the face of the great deep," if it were only sent out! Think of it; if every Christian man, woman and child wore "this day to do his duty," not one half doing half they might do, but every one doing all he can the whole earth would be filled, if not in half a decade, perchance in twice that time, with the glory of the Lord.

John Farnam, in the *Missionary Review*, says "as the sea bed, full of deep caverns and high, rugged jagged peaks, is covered by one great ocean, so the earth scarred and furrowed and valleyed by sin is to be covered by His grace."

How is this to be done? Not by the light, easy way we have been skirmishing around for the last few years. By *one half* the Christian people doing only *one half* what they could. "Every man" must do his *whole* duty and do it *with his might*. Those who go must, and just as much those who stay at home. The Crusaders looked not for ease and personal comfort when they rushed to rescue the empty stone tomb of the risen Saviour. The Jesuits looked not for it when they planted Catholicism in North America so deep and strong that the efforts of Protestantism to move it make little more impression than a ball tossed against a rock. Ease, comfort, luxurious living, that we all, every one of us love so much, are the hindrances. Musa Bhai says missionaries can never reach the people of India until they adopt the dress and ascetic life of the native priests. While we deplore his ignorance of the great past and present of missions in his own land, wrought not by means such as he prescribes and while we may not ask of our missionaries other sacrifices than those they are now making, we may sug-