

tious ignorance? Is there assignable or reasonable excuse for our allowing such unwilling ignorance longer to exist? For a generation Japan, China, India, Burmah have been opened to Christian missions, and for fifteen years Africa has invited the heralds of the Cross. Modern progress is the giant with seven-league boots. It almost seems as though there were an unconscious prophecy hidden in that myth of yore. An ordinary stride may measure twenty-one inches, but human invention makes and marks at one stride seven leagues, or twenty-one miles—that is to say, we can move three thousand times as fast in these days as men could in the remote days of antiquity. Ahasuerus sent out his entire proclamations throughout the entire empire from the Bosphorus to the Indus inside of seven months, and he did this three times in succession, because he considered the matter urgent; but we, with all the aids that more than two thousand years have brought us since Ahasuerus, have never yet overtaken more than one third of the habitable earth with our proclamation of Gospel tidings. There is guilt on our garments, and there ought to be the blush of shame on our faces and in our hearts, for such neglect of man is both dishonor and disobedience toward God.

Thirdly, we need the spirit of heroism in the prosecution of missions. What is heroism but the child of a holy enthusiasm, and the parent of holy self-sacrifice! Froude tells us that the Knight Templars enlisted three hundred of the very flower of human society in the vain attempt to rescue the sepulchre of Christ from profanation, and these three hundred never came back from Palestine, but left their bones in its sacred soil; yet nobody raised remonstrance against such waste of life, though life were wasted on vanity. We must stop counting lives and counting converts, putting sovereigns over against souls, and estimating the benefits of missions on a financial basis. When Abraham Lincoln was consoled with on an apparent defeat in his struggles in behalf of the emancipation of American slaves, the noble reply prompted by his loyalty to truth and to political duty was, "Defeat! If it were not one, but a hundred defeats, I should still pursue the same unchanging course." And it was that same heroic man who, when some timid visitor expressed his hope that in the War of the Rebellion the Lord might prove to be on the side of the North, replied, "About that I am not at all concerned, but only that we should be on the Lord's side." What is life good for, and by what standards is it to be estimated? Who has the noblest soul but he who is wedded to the noblest, greatest, and most unselfish purpose, and who to work out that purpose would, like Jerome of Prague, offer up his soul in flame; like Luther, face devils, though they were as plentiful as tiles on the houses; or, like Ignatius, welcome the lion's teeth by which as grain of God he was crushed and ground to make bread for God's people.

Such heroism transforms duty into delight, and a bed of living coals into a bed of roses. "The Cross of Christ," says Samuel Rutherford, "is the sweetest burden that ever I bore. It is such a burden as wings