

Jesus;" if the woman of Sychar, when the same truth was communicated to her spirit, ran eagerly into the city, and urged the inhabitants thereof to learn for themselves that which she had earnt; if Peter, when he was converted, was commanded to "strengthen his brethren;" if, upon the same authority received from the lip of Christ, and binding upon every generation of His Church, the commandment has been issued to "go forth and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:" then it follows, that we are clearly constrained, by the working of every instinctive energy of our nature, as well as by the solemn command of that Lord, into whose Church we have been received by baptism—to press forward to "the mark of the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Acknowledging the one privilege, we are bound to remember the other duty.

The blessedness of this privilege, and the solemn obligations of this duty, are so vast, that they are sufficient of themselves to engage our attention; and, fixing our deepest thoughts upon them, we might well essay to examine them as far as we are able, in themselves and in their results. And if, in the course of ordinary pastoral instruction, I were now called upon to speak to you, I would fain endeavour to pursue that train of thought. But such is not the occasion on which I now stand here. I feel too, that the general truth involved in the declaration of the text is that which must once and again have been brought before you; and remembering, as we all must, that only upon the last Lord's day, the words which I have just read, and their context, formed the Gospel appointed for that day's service; I trust, that the hearts of most of those to whom I speak, have already been filled with a deep and abiding sense of this touching record of Scripture. I purpose, therefore, if God will, to go on to the application of the general principle which it involves, and which is associated with the object which has called us together this evening.

And I address myself the more willingly to this consideration of the subject, because I believe the historical circumstances connected with that field of Christian enterprise, in

which the Society I am now advocating has been for some years engaged, are such as may furnish to those who have not hitherto been acquainted with them, and even to those who have been familiar with them, some solemn and important lessons.

I would, therefore, as briefly as I can, place before you some of those points, marking the relation between this country and the first scene of this Society's labours—I mean the island of Newfoundland—which appear to claim our regard. It was the first land, as you know, discovered by British mariners, when stimulated by the discoveries of Columbus, they went forth, five years afterwards, with the authority of Henry the Seventh, and under the guidance of the Venetian Cabot, to reach, if possible, India and China, across the north western waters of the Atlantic. It was also the first field of foreign enterprise, on which the power of the British Parliament was ever known to operate; for as early as the second year of Edward the Sixth, an Act of Parliament was passed, for licence to traffic to the same. Again, it was the first country, in which a British colony was planted; for in the year 1583, the 25th of Elizabeth, the half brother of Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, an officer who had served with great distinction, both at home and abroad, and who had long turned his attention especially to the promotion of commercial and maritime enterprise, set forth thither with varied and extensive powers which he had received under letters patent from the sovereign. There is no doubt, and we admit it freely, that the character of the powers vested in him by those letters patent, was more in accordance with the high prerogatives of princely power which prevailed in the sixteenth century, than with those principles by which it is now deemed right that colonisation should be regulated. Nevertheless, one of the most important articles in those letters patent ought thankfully to be noticed; namely, that which provides that the laws which he was empowered to establish in the island, should, "be as near as conveniently may, agreeable to the laws of England, and also not against the true Christian faith or reli-