

medans than does the Sultan of Turkey. Fifty millions of our fellow-subjects in India live in the joyless shadow of Islam. Over two hundred millions are steeped in polytheism. Many millions more know nothing of religion except in the guise of devil worship. And what is perhaps as sad a fact as any—in Ceylon to-day there are fewer Christians than when the island became a British possession in 1798.

### III.

The call of God to us in these days is no less definite and no less imperative than it was of old. "Go ye, and teach all nations, baptising them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

Was it for nothing, think you, that God raised us in our tiny island to be the first of the nations of the modern world? Do you really suppose that it is for our own glory, our own pride, our own material wealth that the government of India is ours? God forbid that we should glory save in the Cross of Christ. Not until the Cross of Christ is raised side by side with the emblem of Government can we claim to be a Christian Empire.

But our responsibility in this respect, tremendous as it is, does not end here. We are also "fellow-citizens with the saints," we are co-heirs with Christ, for each of us in his baptism was made an inheritor of the Kingdom of God. Is this heritage so small and inconsequent a thing that we can afford to let it lie idle? Suppose, instead, it were an earthly fortune or estate. How we should labor to improve it; what earnest care and thought we should bestow upon it!

Nearly two thousand years have passed since God Almighty, the Creator and Ruler of the universe, took upon Himself human form and lived the life of a man as it had never been lived before or since, and for the sins of the whole world, for every human soul whose every name is known to Him, died upon the Cross, suffered the vilest death meted out only to the basest criminals, that we might be saved and blessed. And then after His glorious Resurrection He taught that little band of eleven simple men concerning the Kingdom. Of all that He said or did during those forty days only one great command is recorded—not once, but five times. Nothing else of our Lord's ministry is so recorded. In St. Matthew it is, "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." The same command, in slightly different words, meets us in each of the other Gospels.

Last of all, in the Acts of the Apostles, we read, "You shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses of Me . . . unto the uttermost parts of the earth. And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up." "The uttermost parts of the earth!"—the last recorded words of our Blessed Lord, spoken to His Church two thousand years ago—yet half the world has never heard them.

Here in England we live within the sound of a church bell, and are ministered to by many thousands of priests. We rejoice in our splendid cathedrals and churches with their beautiful music and stately ceremonial. All this is as it should be. "My house shall be exceeding magnificent." But it is not as it should be if we are content with that: if we are satisfied to enjoy these priceless privileges of dignity of worship and spiritual ministrations while half the world has not heard the Gospel!

Selfishness is at all times a deadly thing, but there is nothing more deadening to the soul than selfishness in religion. We sometimes hear people try to excuse themselves for their lack of interest in the great work of the Church by saying, "Well, after all, 'charity begins at home.' We've plenty of heathen in our own country." To them I would say, "What do you suppose would have become of us if the Apostles and early Christians had acted upon that principle and said, 'We must Christianise Palestine first; we must convert our own people, God's chosen people, the Jews, first?'" Palestine is not yet a Christian country, the Jews are not yet evangelised. There never was such a strong case for home missions as that of the early Church. But they knew their first business was to carry the Light of the World into the world. What right, then, have we to a monopoly of that which belongs no less to India and Africa and China than to ourselves? What should we say of a man who inherited his father's property while his brother was abroad, and although it was bequeathed to them both equally, the one at home kept the other in ignorance and kept the fortune to himself? We should say that such a man was a thief. How much better are we who say, "We must first have a thoroughly Christian England?"

To the uttermost parts of the earth, then, must the Gospel message be carried. But it must be carried by men and women. Money is no good unless there are the men to send—faithful servants of the Lord, who are willing to give up much that they hold dear in order that they may do the will of God; ready to answer the summons whenever and however

it may come. To most of us it will come in the light of knowledge. Knowledge, that is, of the facts and the need. To very few is the open vision vouchsafed.

Dives, when he was in Hades and saw Lazarus lying in Abraham's bosom, prayed that Lazarus might be sent to testify to his brethren. But Abraham said, "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them." Dives cried, "Nay, Father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead they will repent." But he said, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." So to us, in these days, the call of God comes through the voice of Holy Church to obey the great command of our Heavenly King, "Go ye into all the world." "Go ye"—not "Let somebody else go," instead.

### III.

Of every one in this church I would ask, "Are you certain in the bottom of your heart that you are doing the work in the world that God intends you to do?" If you can honestly answer, "Yes," there is still something more that you can do. When some years ago the day of intercession for foreign missions was instituted, there followed a remarkable impetus to the work of the Church abroad that seemed a direct answer to the prayers of the faithful. It is within the means of all to pray. It is very hard—few things are harder than earnest prayer and communion with God. And a praying people is the greatest need of the world to-day.

More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.

But if we are to pray intelligently, we must know something of what we are praying about. We must know what has been done, what is being done, and what the need is.

Get some sound book about the missions of the Church generally. The facts and the need have been set out in the four reports from the mission field presented to the Church last week. Take one of these reports and read it. If you begin, you will be bound to go on. You will probably find your interest centring in one particular part of the mission field. That will lead you to follow its work in the magazine of the mission, and your prayers will be stronger and more real, because you know that without prayer the work must fail.

Just think what could be done if there were every day and night a great volume of prayer rising up like incense before the throne of God from all His faithful people; praying, as He taught us, to the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth laborers into his harvest. Truly,