

AGGRESSIVE CHURCH WORK.

Under this title our Detroit contemporary, the Michigan Presbyterian, offers a practical suggestion that, if acted on in many congregations, would prove exceedingly helpful. He says:

What is called church work may be said to be of two kinds. There is constructive work, and there is aggressive or missionary work.

"It is to build up within, and to win from without." If a church falls in either department of the work, it so far fails short of its duty. The pastor does most of the constructive work. By his preaching and pastoral ministrations, he does what he can to build up Christian characters in his flock, and to feed them with the word of life. But the aggressive work, the labor of gathering in, he cannot do alone. In this the church, the private and individual members, should take the laboring oar. A hundred Christians are worth more for work than the best pastor that ever lived, just as the fabled deity with a hundred hands had a great advantage over ordinary mortals. By watching for new-comers, and inviting them to church; by attention and kindness to those who come, we can all help to increase the size and usefulness of the congregation and bring people under the influence of the gospel. It is enough to ask the pastor to feed the flock; the sheep ought to bring others with them to be fed. It is well enough to have a pastor who "draws," but more important is a congregation that "holds" after they are drawn. Dr. Lyman Beecher said that he preached as hard as he could every Sunday, and then he had four hundred members who went out and preached all the week.

The universal tendency is, of course, to neglect the aggressive work, and think that it is of less importance than the other. But if the church does not grow larger, it will grow smaller. A man who does not march forward to battle might as well go to the rear. When the activities and energies of a church are wholly or mostly expended upon itself; when the idea of having "a snug little Zion of our own" takes the place of the impulse to bring men, and preach the gospel to them, the end of that church is not very far off. "Preach or perish" is the alternative. Evangelize or fossilize. Grow or die.

CENTURY FUND NOTES.

Rev. Dr. Campbell, special agent of this fund, sends the DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN the following encouraging statement of the progress of the work:

Circulars with enclosed schedules, asking returns for the final campaign now in progress, have been sent to all ministers and to all local treasurers so far as known. The agent requires the name and address of every local treasurer, and he earnestly appeals to ministers who have forgotten to send him that information, to do so immediately.

Inadvertently the circulars set date for returning C. F. banks in S. Schools as April 27, should be April 28; and latest date for despatching reports as April 28, should be April 29. As Executive meets at the end of that week to consider returns and wind up the effort, it is of utmost importance that all returns should reach Perth by May 2nd. Let none of our friends forget. The more distant should close a week earlier.

Till the present campaign no single subscription exceeded \$5000, now the limit is \$10,000 and more than one over \$5,000. We are in sight of fifteen subscriptions of \$5,000, and shall not despair of the twenty as at first suggested. At least one hundred subscriptions of \$500, and upwards of 3000, are already reported, and there will be many more when returns are complete. Those who made these investments are prudent, careful men who made enquiry and found the scheme worthy of support, and their action may well commend the matter to the careful consideration of others who have had doubts as to the necessity or expediency of the effort.

Here are returns from a dozen missions, for common fund, samples taken from east and west—\$20, \$30, \$40, \$50, \$59, \$63, \$70, \$80, \$94, \$125, \$147, \$250, \$259. There are numbers of similar cases all along the line, showing that every congregation and every mission may have a share in common fund, if only willing friends will take the lead and have the work done.

This list suggests, also, that among the instructions given to missionaries entering the fields at the present time, by Home Mission Conventions, there should be one asking that, where nothing has been done, there shall be immediate effort to secure a suitable contribution to common fund.

On Dec. 31st, a number of congregations reported "a conservative estimate of final result." If in every such congregation the work shall, in these days, be so faithfully prosecuted that on April 29th, the amount formerly mentioned, or possibly something more, shall be reported as "actually subscribed," much will have been done towards securing the \$600,000. For those who made no estimate but said "we will work on," or those who said "our work is complete" but who will willingly strain a point that the result may be made sure, and those who have begun since then and will finish this month, all will add their quota and we shall not fail.

"NO FAILURE," must be the motto of all true hearts, and working together we shall not fail.

The Nineteenth Century and After (New York, Leonard Scott Pub. Co.) With the exception of one or two articles of an historical character the contributions in this important journal bear upon the life of to-day, and discusses varied questions social, political, military or ecclesiastical. The Lord Bishop of Hereford, dealing with "Church Reform," asks the question, why not begin with the Parish? He certainly makes some practical proposals and proves that there is at least one bishop who is anxious that something should be done to remedy many of the present disorders in the Church. There are others equally anxious to put the army and the navy right; so that although the English are a slow-moving people it is likely that some things will be changed for the better. Dr. Conan Doyle is determined not simply to be famous as the creator of Sherlock Holmes, he has been to South Africa and written "The Great Boer War," and now can cross swords with the military experts as to the best method of Home Defence. The Review of the World, by Sir Wenys Reid, is as interesting and Reasonable as usual. On the whole it is a tempting bill of fare.

THE BIBLE STUDENT FOR APRIL.

The leading feature for April in the Bible Student is a discussion of the doctrine of the Resurrection. There are good papers by Dr. F. R. Beattie, who deals with the empty tomb and the risen Jesus; Geerhardus Vos, of Princeton, on Our Lord's doctrine of the Resurrection; Francis Palmer, who treats of The place of the Resurrection in the Christian System; and McCheyne Edgar, of Dublin, who writes of the harmony of the accounts of our Lord's resurrection.

The names of these contributors will give the coloring of the articles. Reverent, scholarly and conservative, they present the truth in the light that has been clearly proven to come from above. They are open to increasing light, but are cautious in admitting every flash as genuine. Casting no railing accusation, refusing to return railing for railing oftentimes, they hold on their way, and men are safe in following them. It is said that they are but laggards, that others will reach the goal when these have but started. Yet this may be said also, that little time is lost by them in turning back to retrace the ground once covered. On the whole we prefer the safer way.

The Sabbath School teacher will find some helpful things in A. J. Dickenson's article—"Jesus' method as a teacher." He chooses the passage, Luke 24:13-35 as an example, the journey to Emmaus. In an easy conversational manner Jesus gets at the actual mental position of the two disciples, then starts from that point and leads them on to the acknowledgment of the possibility that all these things they have detailed may be true, and yet Jesus be the Messiah. He awakens hope once more and stimulates thought and study. The treatment of the subject is helpful, but one would have liked less of the apologist and more of the practical teacher in the article.

In the discussion upon the proposed Sabbath School travelling superintendents or missionaries the prospective duties of that individual have become much confused. Will some one who knows kindly rise and define them to us?

Wishmakers' Town is about to be published in a new edition by R. H. Russell, New York. This little volume of verse by William Young, whose name is perhaps best known as the dramatist of "B'n Hur", in its previous edition met with much appreciation. A number of years ago, when Richard Harding Davis was still a reporter he chanced to find a copy of Wishmakers' Town at John Hopkins University, and writing to the Boston Transcript and the Philadelphia Press in glowing terms of the little volume, said that he knew it by heart and if he were the Literary Editor instead of an ubiquitous reporter, he would make the readers of the papers know it also. The book has the further advantage of having an introductory note written by Thomas Bailey Aldrich, in which he says, "The charm of it all is not easily to be defined."