

## Our Contributors.

### BIG DEMANDS AND SMALL MONEY.

BY KNOXONTIAN

A brakeman on one of the American railways walked through his car muttering the name of the next station. As he was passing out of the car a passenger shouted, "Why don't you speak plainly?" Turning around, the brakeman asked, "How much allowance do you expect for ninety cents a day?" That was a sensible reply. Ninety cents a day is not a princely income, and if a brakeman discharges his whole duty at the brakes, he cannot reasonably be expected to do much fine elocutionary work for a daily allowance of that amount. The brakeman had more sense than the passenger.

That passenger was a representative man. He stands for millions of people who make unreasonably large demands and are willing to pay wretchedly small sums of money to have their demands satisfied. These people abound in both Church and State. They fairly swarm in the rural regions. If an office of any kind becomes vacant, they demand the very highest qualifications, and pay a salary scarcely large enough to keep an average business man in macilage and postage stamps. Let us suppose that a judgeship at Osgoode becomes vacant. The names of half a dozen leading barristers are soon mentioned in connection with the vacancy. Their record is looked up, their "points" are discussed, their claims are canvassed, and there is enough of talk and writing about the prospective appointment to lead one to think that a Canadian Judge must be paid about twenty thousand a year. As a matter of fact, we believe a judge's salary is about one-fifth that amount. Any leader of the Bar taking a judgeship has to sacrifice about three-fourths of his professional income for the honour of dispensing justice. Big demands and small money is the rule for regulating judgeships.

What a tremendous amount of talk there is when a vacancy occurs in the Ontario Government! Judging from the high demands of the people, one would think that Sir Oliver Mowat and his colleagues must have official incomes of at least ten or fifteen thousand a year. As a matter of fact, most of them, perhaps all, lose money by serving the people. The Attorney-General of England receives an official salary of twenty thousand a year, with chances of promotion to the highest place on the Bench that almost amount to a certainty. The people of England do not make anything like as exacting demands upon him as the people of Ontario make upon Sir Oliver Mowat. Big demands and small money is the order of the day in politics.

People often complain about the class of men that find their way into the Ottawa Parliament, and certainly some of them are mean enough. But who is to blame? The people who make such unreasonable demands on their representatives are mainly responsible. If a man must ruin his business by becoming a representative, and a large majority do ruin themselves financially by going to Parliament, what more natural or likely than that men should go to Parliament who have no business to ruin? If a man must bleed at every pore when he is a candidate, and be fleeced and flayed while he is a representative, the only man safe in public life is one who has neither money nor reputation to lose. We make big demands on our public men, but we pay them small money. The sessional allowance is quite enough if they were not asked to pay more than their expenses at Ottawa, but Ottawa expenses are not a drop in the bucket.

The ecclesiastical, however, is the arena in which the demands are always certain to be large and the money sure to be small. Last year the Presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church in Canada wrestled with the appointment of a Foreign Mission Secretary. There was much discussion with pen and voice. After a year's deliberation a majority seemed in favour of the new departure. The Assembly took the matter up, and there was more discussion, of course. Four esteemed brethren were nominated, and their "points" discussed in public and in private with as much minuteness as if they had an arch-hispanic in sight with an income of twenty thousand a year. No mention was ever made of such a sordid matter as money. If anything was said on that point, we never heard it. Certainly the trifling question whether the servant of the Church could live on his income or not, was never discussed at any length. Paul thought it worth his while to discuss that question, but the Assembly spent so much time on the qualifications that the question of income was overlooked. Perhaps the salary, like a good many other things, was fixed in Committee. Now, the demands on the new Secretary will be as numerous and exacting as if he had five thousand a year, the sum paid, we believe, to each of the Secretaries of Foreign Missions in the American Presbyterian Church. Big demands and small money.

What an agitation there would be if Dr. Reid's place had to be filled! The "points" of the brethren named for the agency would be discussed for a year or two with more minuteness than Gladstone discusses the qualifications of his Chancellor of the Exchequer. When the question had been discussed for a year or two, and the Assembly had wrestled with it for several seditious and referred it to a special committee, the new official would be offered a smaller sum per annum than many a doctor or lawyer earns under thirty years of age. The venerable Dr. Reid works, and has for years worked, for a salary amounting to one-fourth or one-fifth of the commercial value of his services. Big demands and small money again. Some years ago, a professor of Homiletics was

spoken of for Knox College. Had the planet Mars been near at that time the inhabitants, if innocent creatures, might have imagined, from the amount and size of the talk, that we were going to pay the new man at least ten thousand a year. As a matter of fact, he would have had scarcely salary enough to keep the wolf from the door. Big demands and small money.

To find the demands of colossal size and the money cruelly small, go to a vacancy in a small, worn-out, dead and alive village, in which all the denominations are represented. The new minister is expected to build up the church, though there is little material to build it with; to raise a revenue, though there is little money in the place to raise for any purpose; to humour cranks who are so cranky that no power in the universe can straighten them out; to sweeten people so acid that bitterness is their normal condition; to turn rounders into decent, church-going people, and for satisfying all these and many other equally reasonable demands, the "new man" will be paid at irregular intervals a salary that will keep his family about midway between starvation and genteel poverty. For big demands and small money, commend us to a small congregation in an old village of a few hundred people, in which there are four or five congregations doing, or rather undoing, work that could be easily done by one or two. The severest frost that ever nipped the nose of a Manitoba settler, is a luxury compared with the insolent and unreasonable demands made by some Eastern congregations that do not pay even the minimum salary without a bonus.

Once upon a time we went to a tea-meeting in a vacant congregation in the country. An array of speakers expatiated at length on the kind of minister the congregation should call. A hard-headed business man from a neighbouring congregation, a Scotchman, was called up to say a few words near the close of the programme. His first sentence proved an electric shock. "You have heard a great deal to-night about the kind of minister you ought to get, but I tell you if you want a decent minister you ought to pay him a decent salary." The congregation had never been noted for that kind of thing—rather for the reverse—and the shot brought no cheers. It did not take half as well as some of the wretched Irish stories that had been told, but it was worth more than all the other speeches.

Moral: Keep the demands and the money in proper proportion.

### JAPAN AND THE GOSPEL

Shintoism, the official faith of Japan—originally the worship of the Sun-goddess and the saints—has faded into a colourless, uninfluential system of morality. Its temples enshrine no image: a sheet of white paper, a fold of white cloth, a mirror, denote the purity of soul that ought to be man's ideal aim. A beautiful thought; but the people think they have done their part when they offer their fruit or rice, or cast a coin into the huge collecting box, which is always well to the front in every temple. It is a mistake to suppose that "the plate at the door" is peculiar to western, or, as some seem to think, to Scottish ideas of worship, or that a man escapes it when he forsakes United Presbyterianism for, say, Shintoism. Go where you will the world round, you find "the plate at the door;" and it might not be good for us if it were not there. The poor heathen, indeed, puts more into it than we do, gladly spending on fireworks, in honour of his "Joss," in one forenoon, more "cash" than many a good Christian, with a grumble, puts into the missionary box in a twelve-month.

Buddhism is still, so far, a power in Japan. Its shrines cover the land. In every village the begging-bell of its priests and the tap of its drum calling to never-ending prayer, are familiar sounds. But its day, too, is passing. Only one new temple—though it is indeed of cathedral-like proportions—has been built in new Japan. Above the great trees of Kamakura the gigantic and imposing Dai-butsu or Great Buddha, fifty feet high, still keeps its silent watch of six hundred years; but no new incarnation disturbs its repose, no new revelation gives its votaries a more present hope. Its placid lips can never bring a new message to mankind. But where Buddha makes no sign—Christ has spoken, and the silver trumpet of the Gospel has broken the silence of centuries.

I do not like "the silver trumpet" any the less that it was, in this case, literally a Psalm of David, and, better still, a psalm in the Scottish metrical version. The story has been told how Commodore Perry, sent out by the United States Government on a mission to Japan, having anchored in Yokohama Bay on a Sunday morning in March, 1853, called his officers and men together and had "worship" with them, leading off with "All people that on earth do dwell." Yes, the "Old Hundred" blew the Gospel trumpet on that spring morning. Talk about the sleeping beauty and the fairy horn that wakes her and all her court after a thousand years!—here the servant of the true Prince sounds a call which wakes an empire from its dreams, and summons it to newness of life. When that psalm stirred the echoes, it was death to be a Christian in Japan. The edict threatening doom to any adherent of the "evil sect" might be read at the cross roads, and in all public thoroughfares, for nearly twenty years afterwards. Suspected persons were compelled to trample on a cross. One of the first converts was stabbed to the heart by a neighbour who would not rub shoulders with a follower of the despised Nazarene.

The American Treaty was not made till 1859, the Christian Commodore coming more than once before he was successful. At first the missionaries found it stiff work. Not till

1864 was the first convert baptized, and at the end of 1867 after twelve years' effort, there were but ten native Christians—not a convert a-year. Let us be done with all this toil and expense? No, that was not their resolve. Rather, let us wait more humbly on God, and do our work with "More prayer, more humility, more politeness"—as good Ahob of Foochow put to me,—the three great missionary requisites. And thus in the second twelve years the ten converts of the first multiplied and grew into 6,598.

The latest missionary statistics—those for 1890 report 577 Protestant missionaries at work, 297 organized Churches, of which 54 were wholly self supporting and 193 partially so, with a membership of over 30,000. There are 171 native ministers, and 455 unordained preachers and helpers—colporteurs and ninety-six Bible-women. The missionaries have established 117 boarding and day schools, with 1,115 pupils; and 514 Sunday schools, with an attendance of 71,115 children. In twenty-one theological seminaries 300 students are being trained for the ministry. I will only add here that two missionary hospitals and six dispensaries are at work, benefiting 202 in-patients, and 2,999 out-patients per annum. I have sometimes found the missionary reporter "blowing" a little, and am delighted to notice the severe respect for truth which keeps this one from turning the 3,000 into 3,000, rather than put in an odd out patient to make up the even number. It gives one confidence in the rest of his items, of which I quote but one more. The contribution of the native Church, he says, amounted, in 1890, to £10,500, which, brought down into plain £ s. d., gives £10,500 a noble gift when the number and circumstances of the people are considered. I am told, though I cannot vouch for the truth of the statement, that the income of the bulk of the contributors is not more than a shilling a day. Rice is cheap in Japan, but even rice has to be paid for, and we may be sure it was not without sacrifice, of which most of us know little, that this £10,500 was given. But the poor make it up for the Lord, and then the Lord makes it up to the poor, and so the gracious circle is complete.

Our friends in the United States have the impression that, ecclesiastically, Japan ought to be considered an American Reservation. But they are not allowed to have it all their own way. England, Scotland, Canada, Switzerland, and Russia claim their equal rights. Japan is appealed to at once by the Old World and the New; and, as it would seem, by every denomination under heaven, from the Greek Church to the Cumberland Presbyterian, from the particular Baptist to the Universalist, which is not particular at all. Happily the Japanese have as great a genius for uniting Christians as we have for dividing them. Episcopalians and Methodists of various names have yielded to their spell, while, under the designation of the "Church of Christ in Japan," they have united the missions of four Presbyterians and two Reformed Churches, including our own. A union between the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists was almost completed four years ago, and would have been so but for the fears of the American Churches that the Presbyterians were getting too much of their own way in the business. In Osaka I found that the Episcopalians, Congregationalists, and Presbyterians had not only one Bible, but one hymn-book in common. Only now is there a faint hope that some day we may come that length, so far as the three larger Presbyterian Churches are concerned. In Scotland we have as yet been unable to unite all our Bible Societies; but the Japanese Churches laughed at such an impossibility, and said it must be done. And they did it, uniting not simply three societies of Scotsmen, which we have failed to do—but the societies of England, Scotland, and America. Unfortunately the three in one are not, as yet, doing more than our own Scottish society when stood alone. This is so far to be accounted for by the altered conditions of things, which I need not discuss here, but the fact would seem to indicate that, good as union is, it may have its disadvantages.

One of these disadvantages comes home to the experience of our own Church in Japan, where the United Presbyterian Mission and our interest in it have suffered through absorption into the "Church of Christ in Japan"—a Church, by the way, with the shortest confession of faith of any Presbyterian Church in the world. We have had, and still have, good men in Japan. Mr. Davidson and Mr. Waddell continue to hold the fort nobly, and their names appear at the far end of our missionary Report, but, as a Church, we have lost grip of Japan, and our living interest in the people, like our missionary staff itself, is fading away. Union and concentration are the order of the day, and, doubtless, the action of our Church in both directions is well-founded, but the "advance backwards" is never a graceful or agreeable movement.

I found both our good missionaries hard at work, each in his own fashion. Both showed me no little kindness, as indeed did every missionary I met. The Scotsmen welcomed me to bed and board, the Americans to "tiffin" or supper as the case might be. The Episcopalians were glad to see me at the Lord's Table; and the Baptists, who wouldn't give me a place at it, were ready to give me both sides of their own. Mr. Waddell was my Tokyo host. In Japan he carries the accent on the second syllable of his name, but the man is the same as ever—the same warm-hearted, generous, Ulster-Scot, with more than a dash of genius, and the least bit of a grievance to give life a flavour. I found him and his family—running into double numbers—in a big, rambling native house on the top of a hill—a house in which I lost myself regularly twice a day; but always found a welcome.