

THE MISSIONARY WORLD.

DEVELOPMENT OF MISSIONARY SPIRIT.

The following is the address delivered by the Rev. Dr. Wardrope at the Synod of Toronto and Kingston Conference at Bowmanville.

It seems unnecessary now to dwell upon the more ordinary and obvious means of developing a missionary spirit in our congregations. Yet it would not do to omit all mention of them. These are:

1. The assigning of its due place, in our public ministrations, to the command of our Redeemer: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." That must surely be a very defective pulpit teaching in which that command is seldom referred to. It forms so essential a part of the invitation given to us that it is difficult to see how, without it, any exposition or exhortation could be called a fair presentation of the truth as it is in Jesus. On one occasion, a man who had been hearing an appeal in reference to missionary work asked Mr. Spurgeon: "Could not, in the wisdom and power of God, the heathen be saved without our sending the Gospel to them?" "That is not the first question for you," replied the great preacher: "The first question is, Can you be saved?" That view of the matter, whether personated in that particular way or not, should be kept before the mind of every hearer of the Gospel.

2. The imparting of the fullest possible information in regard to missionary work. We sometimes hear a remark made as to the remissness of pastors who content themselves with a bare announcement of the various collections appointed by the Assembly to be taken up in aid of Home Missions, French Evangelization, Foreign Missions, and other departments of the Church's work. What is to be thought of those who do not even announce the collections? In some places, we meet with men, not unobservant of what goes on in the congregations to which they belong, who say that they have known half a year, or even a year, pass away, without a missionary collection being taken up, or asked for. Those who think, and even say, that their own congregational needs will be more fully met by their withholding of all aid from missionary objects, have not mastered the A B C of the Christian faith. If there were no blanks in our congregational returns, if every congregation were represented by a contribution small, perhaps, in many cases, but in some degree commensurate with its ability, our colleges, our Augmentation Fund, our missions, Home, French-Canadian, and Foreign, would be sustained with an efficiency and liberality far surpassing our present or past experience. And I believe that such contributions would be given by almost all our congregations, if our pastors were to make frequent, concise, and hearty statements of what is being done in the various mission fields. Their people would be instructed and encouraged, and their own spirits would be quickened. They would be brought more into line and harmony with Him who has assigned to us our various positions in His service and said to us, "Occupy till I come."

3. In close connection with what I have been speaking of would be the circulation of missionary literature. The papers published in more or less intimate relation to the Presbyterian Church are in every way deserving of our confidence and commendation. They render most essential service in their advocacy of missions, and they should be well supported by such a constituency as that which our Church affords. It goes without saying that the *Record* should be found in every home of the Church. I have heard it said, "It contains little or nothing." I never heard that said by any one who carefully reads it. I am sure it is the wonder of all who know how to estimate such work, that a periodical containing such wealth of intelligence about what is being done at home and abroad, so packed with wise counsels, timely hints, and seasonable encouragements, besides its lessons for the young, can be furnished for 25 cents per annum. No one reading the *Record*, and the admirable leaflets of the Woman's Foreign Mission Society can be ignorant of what is being done in mission work among us. And many, by the reading of them, will be led to procure and read larger papers and magazines, in which the great themes pertain-

ing to the extension of Christ's kingdom are more fully discussed.

4. Generous sympathy with Woman's Foreign Mission Societies and Mission Bands in our congregations. What has been accomplished by these, through God's grace, during the thirteen years that have passed away since the Woman's Foreign Mission Society was first organized, excites our gratitude and our wonder. The existence and operation of the Woman's Foreign Mission Society has had an uplifting effect on the whole life of the Church. Many have, through its instrumentality, been brought to the experience of a communion with Christ such as they had never enjoyed before. And I believe it is not too much to say that some have been brought to a saving knowledge of Christ through the influence brought to bear upon them by the Holy Spirit, in direct connection with its meetings and its efforts.

Other means might be specified, as, for example, the enlisting of our young men, and of our men old and young, as well as our women, in work with special reference to Home Missions and French Evangelization. There are hundreds and thousands of men and women in actual Church membership who have not yet been reached by any appeal for the consecration of themselves to Christ and His cause. They do not yet know that "the Lord hath need of them."

This leads me on to say that above and beyond all these more ordinary and obvious means of developing a missionary spirit, there must be a more full and abiding conviction that it is for mission work—for the evangelization of the world—that the Church exists. Our average and every-day thought about our Church work has been too much like this: "Now that our congregation has reached a fair degree of prosperity, and Sabbath school and Bible class are in good working order, and our contributions to the Schemes of the Church raised to a figure that will not appear discreditable when compared with the givings of other congregations, we may be satisfied." Such thoughts are among the "things behind" that must be forgotten. We must awake to the conviction that if we are in the state referred to (for which indeed we may well give thanks), we are in it in order that we may the more effectually and the more heartily, and with a self-surrender beyond anything that we have ever known, give ourselves to the Lord. Our very prayers, the most earnest of them, must be reviewed; and while we pray, not less but more than ever, for the growth of spiritual life in our own souls, we must remember the order indicated by the Great Teacher, "When ye pray, say . . . Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come."

I believe that greater numbers than ever before are asking the question, "Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us and not unto the world?" And we have preached and heard sermons on these words along His line. "Christ manifests Himself to His people in the gifts of His providence, in His ordinances, in the afflictions and trials by which He brings us near to Himself, and in other corresponding ways." All true; but we often seem to forget that He himself gives us the direct answer: "If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and we will come unto Him, and make our abode with Him." "If a man love Me, he will keep My words." What words? you ask. I say, All His words: His words to the twelve, His words to Nicodemus, His words to the woman of Samaria, His words to Martha and Mary, His words to the multitudes; all that He spoke for the instruction and salvation of men. But if you ask, what words, more particularly? Then I say that, if you are with a loved friend whom the Lord is just calling away to Himself, if you hear him speaking last words to you, these are they that you specially treasure up in your memories and in your hearts. Now what were the last words of Him whom our souls love? You remember how "the eleven disciples went into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. . . . And Jesus came and spoke unto them saying, 'All power is given unto Me &c.'" Matth. 28. 18-20. Any later than these? you ask. Yes: "In the day in which He was taken up" He said to them, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses

unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

It seems to me that, in proportion as we are "keeping" His word, allowing it to abide in us and to influence us in our plans and in all our anticipations as a Church and as individual members of it, the Lord is blessing us. "My Father will bless Him, and we will come unto Him, and make our abode with Him." Do you fear there is to be a shortcoming on His part? Will He not come fully up to all His engagements, and so far as exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think? Do we not see fulfilment of this promise in the wonderful supports and constitutions given to His servants in mission fields, far from the ordinary comforts of home and friends? Does He not open to them a new meaning in this word. "As the Father hath sent me, so send I you?"

In order to the development of a missionary spirit which might be in some degree worthy of that name, we must seek for ourselves, not for those with whom we are associated in Church fellowship and Church work, that we may be brought into further harmony with our Lord in His great design, that we may understand the evangelization of the world not to be something for which the men and the means that we can spare may be given, but as the very end for which the Church lives, and in the prosecution of which she is to enjoy the closest, and the most strengthening, and the most blessed fellowship with Him who says "Go, and teach all nations, and lo, I am with you alway."

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