

ERSKINE CHURCH ECHOES.

consider a similar but much more distressing time in the history of the church.

Outside the gate of the city of Zarephath a destitute and desolate widow wandered in search of fuel. The sad story of deprivation and suffering was depicted in her hopeless face, for "the famine was sore in the land." And she was gathering two sticks to bake a cake for herself and her son that they might "eat it and die." A very unlikely missionary in an unlikely place, yet here she was confronted by the prophet's singular request, "Make me thereof a little cake first and bring it unto me."

Had this woman lived in the present day she would probably have exclaimed in astonishment, "Surely you must be a stranger here and haven't heard of the hard times in this part of the country." We can imagine Elijah replying, "Oh yes, have experienced them myself, but I know something too of God's care over His people, for the ravens have been feeding me with the riches of His liberality." "Fear not," for thus saith the Lord God of Israel, the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth."

"I feel very sorry for you, Flijah; I always like to help a good cause along, but really things have come to such a pass, that it is all we can do to keep body and soul together. The season has been so dry and the crops so poor that we have only a handful of meal in the bottom of the barrel and a little oil in a cruse and it would be flying in the face of Providence to give away the scanty provision we have. I am sure the Lord does not require so much of us. I think He must have made a mistake when He sent you to me. He probably intended you to go to Mr. Dives across the road. It is rich men like him that you should ask for a donation." If the widow of Zarephath had acted upon these modern principles, humanly speaking, that meal would have been their last on earth. But heathen though she was, belonging to the despised Gentile race, she believed the word that God had spoken to her "by the mouth of His prophet," and "went and did according to the saying of Elijah," receiving for the recompense of her faith and generosity an ample supply for many days. "Never did corn or olive so increase in the growing," says Bishop Hall, "as hers did in the using."

This incident contains a lesson for the poorest as well as the richest Christian. If God did not consider reduced circumstances a sufficient reason for exempting her from doing her part, what excuse will we offer Him when He asks us to share our comparative plenty with His servants who are laboring in distant lands?

What is needed at the present day is not so much means as consecrated money. If our church had more Jacobs among its members taking for their rule of life his vow, "Of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee," there would not be so much spasmodic giving and less fear of missionary societies and benevolent institutions becoming bankrupt.

We have money for business, money for pleasure, but sometimes hardly one dollar in a hundred for Him, who counted not even His life dear for us. If, as someone says, our benevolence is measured not by what we give, but by what we have left, what sums of money which we have wasted on trifles will go before us to judgment. We are so apt to take more notice of what we give than of what we spend on ourselves. The twenty-five cents that we give to God's cause on Sunday is an ever-present subject for self-congratulation, and often calls forth the prayer of the Pharisee, "Lord, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are," while at the same time we are utterly oblivious to the fact that during the week we have spent fifty times that amount

		CONGREGATION.				W. F. M. S.				TOTALS.
		Weekly Offerings.	Missions.	ECHOES.	S. S.	AUX.	LADIES' AID.	The Mission.	V. F. S. C. E.	
July	1.....	\$34 63	...	...	\$3 76	...	...	...	...	\$38 39
"	8.....	57 89	...	...	4 44	...	...	...	...	62 33
"	15.....	45 95	...	...	4 23	...	...	...	...	50 18
"	22.....	51 78	...	...	3 53	...	...	...	...	55 31
"	29.....	52 66	...	...	3 59	...	...	...	...	56 25
Aug.	5.....	50 09	...	...	3 67	...	...	...	...	53 76
"	12.....	50 15	...	...	4 23	...	...	...	...	54 38
"	19.....	49 65	...	...	3 47	...	...	...	...	53 12
"	26.....	53 60	...	...	3 59	...	...	...	...	57 19
Sept.	2.....	49 15	...	...	4 26	...	...	...	...	53 41
"	9.....	55 62	...	...	3 72	...	...	...	...	59 34
"	16.....	68 66	...	...	3 99	...	...	...	...	72 65
"	23.....	50 67	...	...	4 51	...	...	...	...	55 18
"	30.....	53 06	...	...	4 08	...	...	...	...	57 14
July	.....	...	\$ 8 50	...	...	\$ 3 95	\$14 50	\$8 23	\$1 06	\$36 24
Aug.	.....	...	19 00	...	...	5 15	13 37	6 47	1 90	\$45 89
Sept.	.....	...	19 10	...	...	8 00	11 85	7 16	2 20	\$48 31
Totals.....		\$723 56	\$ 46 60	...	\$55 07	\$17 10	\$39 72	\$21 86	\$5 16	\$909 07

Special collection for Pincher Creek, \$19.92.

Benevolent Fund for Ladies' Aid, \$2.70.

on superfluities that neither make us richer or happier.

If Irving or Patti leaves our cities with thousands of dollars of Canadian money nothing is said or thought about it, but if Dr. Pierson or Gordon collects one or two hundred dollars and immediately transfers it to the missionary societies to aid in Christianizing and civilizing the world, instantly a great hue and cry is raised against so much money being taken out of the country when business is so dull.

This ought not to be. Instead of making the present stringency a plea for inactivity on our part, let each one of us faithfully perform his or her duty, knowing that God will assuredly supply our temporal as well as our spiritual needs out of His infinite fulness and give us grace for grace.

It may be that the Lord has a controversy with us for having robbed Him in tithes and offerings. It therefore becomes us to "endeavor after new obedience" and bring our tithes which have been so long withheld into God's store-house that there may be meat in His house. The promised blessing will then be poured upon us as a church and individually till there will not be room enough to receive it.

We have too many professing Christians who stand with one hand raised in prayer that the spirit of liberality may descend in mighty power and awaken the people to a sense of their responsibility while the other hand pulls their purse-strings a little tighter and passes the application on to their next neighbor.

Prayer is the motive power of all true action, but it is well for us to be sure that our giving is in proportion to our means and to our prayers, lest "the Great Searcher of hearts" sees the money for which we are so earnestly praying, slumbering peacefully in the depths of our own pockets. Our duty is to serve God first and self last.

If every Christian in the Presbyterian Church in Canada had only denied themselves one luxury in the past weeks and forwarded the price of it to Dr. Reid, this whole deficit would have been made up.

Is there no one who for Christ's sake will sacrifice some delicacy from their already well-filled table, that some soul may partake with them of the "bread of life" at "the marriage supper of the Lamb?" or do without some article of dress, that our dusky brothers and sisters may be clad in "the garments of Christ's righteousness?" God is asking us to day to "make Him the little cake first." If

we refuse to obey His command, have we not reason to fear that the widow of Zarephath, who gave so cheerfully of her penury, will rise up in judgment to condemn those of us who, although living in the glorious gospel light of the nineteenth century, are not worthy to touch even "the hem of her garment." The words of our risen and adorable Redeemer are as full of meaning to-day as before He ascended up on high, and He is still saying, "all power is given unto Me, go ye therefore and preach the gospel to every creature." The need is as great as ever before, and the piteous wail, "come over and help us," which rises from one thousand million perishing souls, bears witness in heaven to our sinful neglect and indifference. God's call to the church to-day is, "Awake, awake, put on thy beautiful garments, oh, Jerusalem, the holy city." May we respond by shaking ourselves from the dust of indolence and selfish indulgence, praying God to forgive the Christlessness in our own unworthy hearts and lives, beseeching the Holy Spirit to enlighten our understandings so that we may know more and increasingly more of "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich." Then and then only, will the consecrated prayer rise to our lips and find expression in our lives.

"Take my silver and my gold,
Not a mite would I withhold
Take myself and I will be,
Ever, only, all for thee."

IN AFFECTIONATE MEMORY

—OF—

GEORGE AMANN,
MRS. H. ARTHUR BUSCOMBE,
MRS. SYMINGTON.

"Asleep in Jesus."

JOHN M. MCKAY,
JOHN GORDON TIDERINGTON,
RALPH ROY TIDERINGTON.

"It is not the will of your Father in Heaven
that one of these little ones should perish."