

and go out there and help to develop the latent wealth. What was their duty as Canadians and Presbyterians to this country? He stated that the immigration pouring in was half of English speaking people and half of the foreign element from northern Europe. In the northern part of Alberta a large proportion of the population were Poles and Norwegians and Swedes and such foreigners, and in the south was a large settlement of Mormons. Across the mountains in the mining district of British Columbia were English, Americans and Canadians, and here the Sabbath was not kept, and every form of open vice prevailed. Many requests had been sent by the foreign element in the west for missionaries to teach them, and if this request could be complied with these people would be rapidly assimilated with our own and become good subjects, but if they were left to themselves we in Canada might at no distant day have to face the dangerous social questions which had been created by them in the States. The Mormons were propagandists, and, despite their promises, were practising polygamy in defiance of our laws. They should be made to obey the laws. The miners in the mineral districts were largely the children of eastern parents, and were many of those who had gone to the Klondike. Were the people here going to let them suffer for lack of moral and spiritual food? The people in this Synod had just given 27 cents apiece last year towards this Home Mission work in the West. Assistance could no longer be expected from the old country. When he was over there they asked him why he came to them for money. The Canadians, they said, were well-to-do and sent 30,000 pounds to the Foreign Mission field. "Are you Canadians," then old country people asked, "more concerned about the heathen than you are about your own sons and daughters? What a queer lot you must be." Dr. Robertson charged that the ministers were indifferent about this Home Mission work, which was of such vital interest to themselves and their country, and that if he had them on his side in the matter his battle would be won. In this they were not displaying loyalty such as they should. The women, too, organized for the work in China, in India, in Fiji, but their own country did not interest them. In closing Dr. Robertson made a strong appeal for support.

The Power of the Pulpit.

BY REV. M. MCGILLIVRAY, KINGSTON, ONT.

Following is a summary of an able paper read at the Conference of the synod of Toronto and Kingston:—

"The power of the pulpit, is it losing or gaining?" In setting out Mr. McGillivray defined his understanding of "the pulpit" as a widely extending institution and not individual preachers, whose function was the stated orderly ministry of the Word. Within these limits its aim was to educate and reform, to exert a social and civilizing force, to improve the moral condition of the world and to unite all these ends in one supreme result, the salvation of men. The speaker, in the course of his address, alluded to the commonplace cant of the day about "the decline of the pulpit," "the decay of preaching," "the lost influence of the church" and similar sayings, and quoted a remark to the effect that the church too readily acquiesced in the view that she was now so little able to be a prime teacher, she was too ready to acknowledge some of the substitutes for her which secularism would thrust upon the world. In attempting a correct estimate of contemporary pulpit power certain circumstances of the time were to be considered. Powerful agencies for good had arisen which crossed former lines of pulpit work. Subjects of which the pulpit had once a monopoly were now discussed and largely settled in legislative halls, on the public platform, or by the press. But the introduction and energetic activity of these forces did not imply that the pulpit had necessarily lost any of its power. The new agencies might be more demonstrative than the pulpit, more noisy, yet all the time the power of the pulpit might have increased and the very agencies which were regarded as its rivals might have become means for augmenting its efficiency. There might be no loss, only a new distribu-

tion of power. A great pulpit to-day preached to the whole Christian world as its congregation. The press took up its message with avidity and multiplied it by tens of millions, and that message became a significant factor in a life more agitated, more active, more influential than of old. And if the life forces were becoming more intensified the pulpit gained, if only indirectly, by sharing in the heat and vitality of these elements. In dwelling on the need for the right kind of a ministry the speaker questioned whether the Universities and theological colleges were alive to the present needs of the preacher, whether they were keeping in close enough touch with the people to know how modern thought was affecting them. To the preachers he wished to say that they must, next to the spirit of God, be their own best helpers. All knowledge and experience must be thrown into the milling part of the preacher's own discipline and consecration.

The Influence of the Home in the Work of the Church.

BY REV. T. J. THOMPSON.

The influence of home life and training can be spoken of under three heads. First, interesting its members, especially its younger members, in the service and the work of the church. Second, promoting such a spirit of respect and reverence for the work and the workers as will win the best results. Third, co-operating to render the machinery of the church practical and effective. There are many devices in these later days for winning some sort of attention from the younger members of the flock: brigades, circles, bands and societies, and yet nothing has been devised to do any work as good as the work done in the old-fashioned home. If these things can be made to supplement the wise influence of a home life they are something to thank God for, but if the church allows undue emphasis to rest on such devices home life will lose its true proportion. With all the prizes and premiums that are to be offered, the best instructors in the Shorter Catechism will be found in the home. The quiet, steady, though sometimes irksome, discipline and instruction of the home will develop a feature that will never come from an evangelist-stirred and meeting-fed generation. As a teacher no skilled worker, no gifted talker, can supply the place left vacant, or made vacant when young people are torn from their home life by artificial devices and modern methods. Timothy's character never grew out of his early training in the junior society of Christian Endeavor. The ideal is the home, its supervision, its careful instruction, its quiet, loving insistence upon authority and obedience. These things are all threatened by the modern tendency to multiply meetings. If homes are encouraged to commit the care of their younger members to the tender mercies of many organizations there is not only the danger of raising up a generation of religious prigs, but there will be the loss that home will suffer for lack of exercise.—Synod Conference at Cobourg.

An Eminent Scholar Gone.

BY THE REV. PATON J. GLOAG D.D., EDINBURGH.

On the first of April Dr. Samuel Davidson died. He was Irish by birth, being born near Ballymena in the county of Antrim in 1807, so that he had reached the venerable age of ninety-one. His name was much more conspicuous twenty-five years ago than it is now. He belonged rather to the past than to the present. For half a century he occupied a very prominent position among biblical critics. His first work—*Lectures on Biblical Criticism*—was published in 1839, and his last work, the third edition, revised and improved, of his *Introduction to the New Testament*, in 1894, so that an interval of fifty-five years intervened between his first and last publication. The list of his works is considerable; no fewer than fifteen of his works are enumerated by Dr. Schaff in his *Encyclopedia of living divines* most of these being works of great research, exhibiting much learning, and evidently produced at the cost of much time and thought.