

THE DEFICITS IN THE FUNDS.

MR. EDITOR,—God has peopled the world with many millions. Millions of these know not Christ. It was so when He was in the world. For the numbers man is not responsible. Jesus said "Make disciples of all nations." This is to be done by His methods: "preaching, teaching, healing." God has not set us a time in which it is to be done. Our duty is not measured by the number of the unsaved. Arithmetical calculations do not supply our motives for mission work. We are not to take on ourselves responsibility which belongs to God. To tell a poor man or congregation that there are a billion of unsaved men means nothing to him or them. They are not responsible for this. These unsaved ones are to be saved by those who are saved. The motive of the saved to do this work is the same which moved Jesus to save. This motive works irrespective of numbers. To put other motives in the place of this is to mystify and to divert men from the truth. Only by saved men can the Church save others. God's method is, therefore, in our eyes a slow one. But it is the only one that has His sanction. All this arithmetic by which we are staggered in mission appeals is largely wasted. It only creates impatience and despair. To appeal to wrong motives confuses and ends in nothing. So the use of wrong methods ends in harm to the cause of Christ. The result of exaggerated statements of duty and responsibility is reaction.

We seem to be suffering from a reaction of feeling in all our Church work. What we need is a rational biblical statement of our responsibilities in the mission field, and also the pleading of the true motive. At home or abroad there is only so much we are asked or expected by God to do. Tell us what that is and what our motive should be, and we will try to do it. A mere ukase from a committee or convener has no effect on the heart.

The heart is not cultivated by arithmetic or assessments of so much per member. Cultivation is slow work and continuous work. The people are open to conviction. The people are not to blame for deficits. Wrong motives presented to them and wrong methods are partly to blame. The sources of liberality are love, and sympathy, and humility, and confidence among brethren, and knowledge, and the spirit of Jesus Christ breathing through the committees and church courts. The cause of deficits is substituting for these arithmetic and assessments, and the utter lack of love and sympathy between the powers and the people. Possibly also an utter ignorance of the spending of the money, and a groundless fear that it is not wisely spent. We not only need a revival of vital godliness but also of vital manliness. A greater mutual respect and sympathy and burying of self among the ministers, and the laying aside of the idea of infallibility as belonging to either men or methods. More patience, love, brotherly kindness, breadth, more of 13th of 1st Corinthians, everywhere.

Such at least is the view of one who is working as he can under a shower of seventy-five outside appeals, and as many inside ones, to all of which the people are responding as they can, but yet there is a deficit.

A COUNTRY READER.

P. S.—Number of appeals in a small church with 120 contributors.

I. Foreign Missions.

1. Through congregational society quarterly collection.

2. Through W. F. M. S. Mission Band, junior Mission Band.

3. Addresses of missionaries, special collections, three.

4. Thank offering meetings, two.

5. Sale of material for missions.

6. Contributions of clothing for missions.

II. Home Missions.

1. Ordinary quarterly collection.

2. Special collection, one.

3. Contributions of clothing.

4. Contribution from C. E. society.

III. Colleges, special appeals from Manitoba, Knox, Queen's, Montreal; ordinary contribution. Private subscription to Knox at time of jubilee.

IV. French Evangelization.

1. Ordinary. 2. Contribution to Point aux Trembles.

V. Other general schemes, W. F.; A. and I. M. F.; A. F.

VI. Bible society. Tract society.

VII. Special congregational charities.

VIII. Contributions from Sunday School, Bible class, C. E. society for Sabbath school missions and local funds.

IX. Contributions by sale and direct for church debt.

X. Special collection for special case of charity.

XI. Contributions for Presbytery and Synod fund.

XII. Contributions for the support of the church. Then there are the other local special appeals of different kinds.

How can the contribution to any one object be large when it requires much effort even to pay the salaries of the congregation?

The congregation gives a tenth of its income, but it is difficult to reach everything with it.

THE GOFORTH MEETING.

The Presbyterian congregations of Saugeen Presbytery have been highly favored, in being visited by one of our honored missionaries, viz., the Rev. Jonathan Goforth of Honan, China. The population of Honan is about ten million souls. It requires moral and physical courage to enter upon such a work in the face of heathen superstition and hatred. The Chinese as a people are proud of their ancestral religion, customs and educational institutions. They have an intense hatred of foreigners, especially of those who come to plant a new religion amongst their people. If the missionary is brave; so is his wife who cheerfully accompanies him. Think of an educated Christian lady going forth to live among such a people, not in a sea-board city where there are many European and American residents, but to a far inland city, town or village where no foreigners have ever been seen before! Such is the experience Mr. and Mrs. Goforth had to pass through, as well as those noble men and women who are associated with them in this vast inland mission field. Does any one ask for proof of moral heroism. Here it is. Two of these have fallen at their post within a few days of each other. Miss Dr. Clark and Mrs. Malcolm. Both of them were filled with enthusiasm and burning zeal for the Master's cause. Dr. Smith is now at home recruiting his shattered health that he may return to his great field of labor to literally open the eyes of the blind, to unstop the ears of the deaf, to apply the healing art under the direction of the great Physician of soul and body.

Mr. Goforth is setting an example which the writer deems of immense importance, viz., to visit congregations here in Canada, which are not along side railway stations. How often do we find city, town and village congregations visited again and again, while the country charges are over looked. This will apply in no small measure to other agents of the Church as well as to missionaries. It does not pay to pass by the country charges even if they are outside of the usual routes of travel, and run along the beaten pathway of city, town and village churches. Mr. Goforth, true to the unselfish impulse which characterized his first going out to the great unbroken field of Honan, is now visiting country charges which have seldom if ever been visited by a foreign missionary before, and electrifying old and young with his eloquent addresses, and doubtless fruit will be reaped ere long in increased contributions to the fund, and what is far better in sowing seed that will develop and call forth instruments of God's own choosing to go forth and witness for Christ in far off lands. The

politician takes good care not to pass by the country settlements during an election campaign. "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light."

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THE JEWS OF MONTREAL.

MR. EDITOR,—Permit me to draw the attention of the wide circle of the readers of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN to the mission in behalf of the Jews of Montreal. Mr. Newmark, a young man eminently qualified because of his Jewish birth and education, as well as his Christian character and devotion to the work, has been engaged for over three years in this effort in behalf of his former co-religionists. The work has been very difficult, wealthy, influential Jews have opposed it; money has been spent to destroy it; petty persecutions are resorted to to make it fruitless. The enemy has not been wholly successful. During these years many hundreds of Jews have had the claims of the Messiah pressed upon them personally, and in the mission hall several young men have openly confessed their faith in Jesus and there are others ready to take the same step when deemed wise to do so. Many have had gospel truths left in their minds and have been shown that the consistent Jew must become a Christian. That seed will bear fruit in due time. The work is done through evening classes, special study of the prophets, Gospel addresses on Sunday, house to house visitation, personal conversation, reading room, distribution of Scriptures and pamphlets.

One of Mr. Newmark's greatest trials is the apparent lack of interest on the part of Christian people in this mission. Why is this? Possibly it is because they are not informed regarding the work. Surely it is not because we care not for the evangelization of the Jews. One of the best ways of giving information is to have Mr. Newmark visit a number of our congregations and present the claims of his work. Arrangements might be made by which he could spend a few weeks in Ontario in pleading the cause of God's ancient people. Those whose hearts may be moved to help in this work should send their contributions direct to the Rev. Dr. Reid, Toronto. May I suggest that all our sessions and missionary associations bear this important mission in mind when they are distributing their missionary funds during the next few weeks. Further information will be gladly given by the undersigned.

F. M. DEWEY.

16 Stanley Street, Montreal.

TORONTO CITY MISSION.

MR. EDITOR,—Permit me in a few words to call the attention of your readers to this mission, its work and needs. The monthly meeting of the directors was held on the afternoon of the 6th ult., in the Board room of the Y. M. C. A. The financial statement showed the mission to be in great need of funds which, it is to be hoped, will not be withheld by the friends of the Mission. Mr. Laine's appointment as agent to secure subscriptions for the work was confirmed.

The missionaries, Messrs. Robt. Hall and Jas. Currie, presented their monthly reports. During November \$13.60 were expended and 34 garments were supplied to those in need. The missionaries look for a trying winter among the poor, and will be glad to receive donations for this purpose.

Several conversions were reported, and incidents related showing the necessity of such work and that God is blessing his word among the people. The several prisons were visited, also various charitable institutions in the city. A special vote of thanks were accorded to Old St. Andrew's Church, Ladies' Aid Society for the very generous donation of clothing to be distributed among the poor during the coming winter.

A. J. GEIKIE, Secretary.

Toronto.

Christian Endeavor.

A CHRISTIAN'S PROBLEMS AND PERPLEXITIES.

REV. W. S. MACTAVISH, B.D., ST. GEORGE.

(A question box meeting suggested.)

Jan. 20—1 Kings vii: 23-34; Luke xi: 31; ii: 46-47.

We are face to face with a problem when we ask ourselves what this topic means, or what was the intention of those who assigned it. It may be said that this topic should be taken up in open meeting, and that answers should be given to questions in the question-drawer. But the writer of these notes has had no questions submitted to him, and yet this column must be filled. It may be, too, that when the leader comes to the meeting he will find, on looking into the drawer, that there are no questions therein. What then is to be done?

We can at least admit that the Christian may meet with strange problems and perplexities, Job, David, Hezekiah and Martha were all confronted with difficult problems. Men of strong faith, such as John the Baptist and Martin Luther, have struggled with perplexities. It would be profitable to read the biographies of these individuals and see how their problems were solved, and how their perplexities were removed. Instead, however, of pursuing this course we shall consider some of the problems which the Christian is confronted with, and the perplexities which embarrass him.

One of the most serious problems that ever comes up for solution is this:—Why is it that the wicked often prosper in their wickedness, while God's children are sometimes compelled to live a life of poverty? Two men, the one a sincere Christian and the other an unscrupulous unbeliever, may be doing business side by side. The Christian conducts his business honestly and honorably; the other resorts to all manner of contemptible subterfuges. The Christian, though he may be loved and respected, can scarcely make ends meet; while his unbelieving neighbor, though he may be feared or despised, amasses a fortune. One acquainted with such facts as these is inclined to ask: Is there a moral Governor in the universe? If so, why does He permit such things? This is an old problem. Asaph wrestled with it, and probably as good a solution of it as was ever given was the one submitted by him. He had studied it apparently for a long time, but finally light came. Let him speak for himself. (Ps. lxxiii: 16-20).

Another problem, akin to the preceding, comes to the Christian for solution when he sees the poor and helpless oppressed by great and wealthy corporations. He sees, for example, that a laboring man must either give up his situation, or else do violence to his conscientious scruples by working on the Sabbath day. When this comes under the notice of a Christian, he is almost forced to ask. If God be just, why does He not let loose the thunderbolts of His wrath upon those who would compel others to wantonly desecrate His holy day? When a Christian is confronted with this question, perhaps he cannot do better than meditate for a little upon the parable of the Wheat and Tares. Then he will discover that if God does not pay at the end of the week, at the end He always pays. Sometime, somewhere, He will vindicate His own cause.

Again, the Christian may be constrained to ask himself why it is that God's people sometimes have to endure great trials and afflictions. Perhaps this question can never be satisfactorily answered, but there are passages of Scripture which throw considerable light upon it. In the Epistle to the Hebrews we are told that it is because they are God's children, and because He is dealing with them as children that they are chastened or disciplined (Heb. xii: 3-12). If, after a careful study of this passage, the Christian is still perplexed, he will have to content himself with the assurance which was once given by Christ to the Apostle Peter—"What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."

It is instructive to recall how Christian and hopeful made their way out of Doubting Castle. Christian said, "What a fool am I to lie in this dungeon when I may as well walk at liberty! I have a key in my bosom called Promise, that will, I am persuaded, open any lock in Doubting Castle." At the suggestion of hopeful he took it out and opened one lock after another.

It is no less instructive to remember that the women who came to the sepulchre of Christ on the morning of His resurrection had their perplexities removed by simply recalling the words of Jesus. John the Baptist in his perplexity sent word to Jesus. His disciples in their time of trouble went and told Jesus.