

is a marked interest kept up in the weekly ministrations, which is in a great measure unknown in congregations where a different method is followed. It is a healthy as well as pleasing state of things, where a congregation becomes so interested in a course of lectures that they may derive still farther profit and delight from attending upon the ministrations of the word.— And though there may be some feeling of curiosity mingled up with this desire, especially when a difficult or obscure passage comes to be explained, yet even this is not altogether to be condemned. Better far that a congregation should feel thus, than go to the house of God with no other prospect before them than that their ears will be dunned with some stale common-places, or tiresome repetitions. Our ablest Divines seem to have been deeply sensible of the paramount importance of lectures as a means of religious instruction. A whole host of them might be cited in favour of the practice, we are now advocating, which one would think would be quite sufficient to shew that it is a good and a wise one. No doubt there is a great diversity of gifts among divines, as there is in every other department: some are excellent lecturers, who are not so efficient as Preachers, and vice versa. But though this may be the case, yet is incumbent upon every faithful minister of the Gospel to endeavour to combine the two, in order that he may be the more useful and make full proof of his ministry. Let it not be supposed that lectures during the week supply the place of lectures on the Sabbath. For while these may be very useful and instructive to those who attend upon them, yet how few comparatively, from whatever cause, come to hear them. When we urge the Ministers of the Gospel belonging to our communion to give attention to this subject, we mean Lecturing on the Lord's Day as a most efficient mode of conveying religious instruction. The best way of course is to combine the two, when it can be conveniently done, either at one diet, or two separate diets of worship, first lecturing in course, and then following it up with a sermon upon some topic, whether doctrinal or practical, suggested by the lecture.

These remarks I submit with all humility, conscious as I am of my own inferiority to many of my brethren. But being thoroughly convinced in my own mind of the vast importance of the subject, I could not refrain from expressing my thoughts regarding it.

I am, yours, &c.,

St. Therese de Blainville,  
September 3, 1856.

D. D.

#### THE CANADIAN FOREIGN MISSION.

To the Editor of the Record.

DEAR SIR,—

Though it is a duty to cherish a deep interest in the progress of christianity in all parts of the earth, as is implied in the subject of our present correspondence, yet it is natural to feel especially concerned about the religious state of those places between which and ourselves there is an intimate bond of union, such as that which links us to the land of our nativity, or to a country in which we have lived so long as to cherish towards it a feeling somewhat similar.—Such a feeling, on account of protracted residence, do we entertain towards Canada, which has led us more than once since our separation from it, to express, through the medium of the *Record*, our views on various points connected with its religious interests. To the correspondence now for a considerable time interrupted, we would desire at present to make some little addition in the form of a few remarks which have been suggested by an interesting editorial article on the subject which needs the communication, and which some little time ago appeared in the *Record*; and though, perhaps, it would have been as well if these observations had been sent

a little sooner, after the appearance of the article referred to, yet, relating as they do to a subject, not only of deep but permanent interest, we hope they will not, on account of the delay, appear unseasonable or out of place. And in these our main object is to follow out a little more fully than has been done in your own able, but brief remarks, what can be said to certain objections urged against this, as well as other Foreign Missions.

It is highly gratifying to find the Church, both in Nova Scotia, and in Canada, resolving at length to enter on the momentous work of laboring for the conversion of the heathen, and that there is such a fair prospect in both, of setting on foot the contemplated Mission.

Nor is it to be wondered at, that such interest as you refer to, should be felt by pious minds in the great undertaking. A movement for evangelizing the heathen, in any land, which hitherto has done nothing in the momentous work, is an indication both of the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, and of an increasing agency for promoting it. It is only on the conviction that the progress of christianity, and the means of advancing it still farther, take place simultaneously; that as lands become evangelized they will unite with those already engaged in the great work of conveying the gospel to other lands; so that as the reign of darkness diminishes in extent, the more ample become the means of pervading it with gospel light; it is on this assurance alone that we can found the hope of the speedy accomplishment of the promise, that the "earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." When we think of the nations being so rapidly converted from heathenism, as they may be said in Scripture phraseology to be "born in a day" and entering without delay into the great work of extending the gospel to other lands, we see then taking place, at one and the same time, an abundant increase of labourers, and a diminution of the field they were called to cultivate; and thus the domain of heathenism lessening in extent, and the instrumentality for enlightening it increasing simultaneously, we know not how soon may be witnessed the phenomenon of the field from which missionaries issue forth "to run and fro," becoming more extensive, and embracing more of the human race than that to which they are sent, in which case the missionary efforts brought to bear upon the remaining heathenism, may be on so mighty a scale that, through the divine blessing, it shall be dissipated by the light of the gospel with a rapidity almost incredible. No christian land, therefore, can, we are persuaded, enter too soon on the work of Foreign Missions. The blessings of the gospel she has herself received, she is bound to do all in her power to extend to other nations. So long as the combined efforts of christians within her territory cannot raise what is sufficient for a Missionary establishment abroad, they should aid such combination of christians as do uphold them; and so soon as adequate measures can be raised among themselves for an independent Mission, its commencement, without delay, should be the object of their strenuous endeavours; labourers for entering upon it duly sought out; and measures for their comfortable and permanent maintenance provided. The circumstance that there are so many places in a christian land destitute of the means of grace, which has sometimes, and we believe in this case, been urged against the obligation to send the gospel abroad, is, in reality no valid reason for delay in the prosecution of so urgent a work of christian benevolence. Such destitution in lands which enjoy the light of the gospel, in a greater or less degree, will never cease to exist, and to wait professedly till its removal, ere embarking in the great undertaking of sending the gospel to heathen lands, would not merely in some places, but we are persuaded everywhere, delay the work of co-operation

for the universal diffusion of truth till an indefinite period. How many dark places, how many localities scantily provided with ordinances, are there in the parent land, and yet how mighty an agency does she employ for the spread of the gospel, and though Canada may not, perhaps, be quite so well supplied as she should be, with the means of grace, yet she is favored with them to such an extent, that severe blame would, we doubt not, attach to her, were she to make no effort to evangelize the millions sunk in heathenism; now, especially, that a movement for this object taking place, and she is in so marked a manner invited to the "help of the Lord against the mighty."

When we hear of any place suffering to such an extent the miseries of famine, that numbers are dying for lack of food, would we not deservedly be thought utterly destitute of feeling, if even in a season of scarcity and dear provisions, we did not stretch out the hand of aid to starving thousands; and shall a land which, instead of having a stunted, may be said to have an abundant supply of the means of grace, withhold altogether the bread of life from the millions, who are perishing from the absolute want of it?

Surely to professing christians in Canada, or in any land similarly privileged, thus to shut up their bowels of compassion, would be to expose themselves to the divine judgments, and especially to the curse of unfruitful ordinances, while, by stretching out the hand of relief to those, in whose deplorable state, for the want of the gospel, they may recognise the affecting cry, "come over and help us," they will be more likely to secure an ample blessing on the means of extending christianity and diffusing the principles of the gospel among themselves; so that, what is true of the gifts of common charity, will be found to be no less so of compassionate efforts for the good of souls: "there is that scattereth and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty."

Should any difficulty occur in the way of finding qualified labourers for the Mission Field, we would humbly suggest, (should the plan not already have been adopted) that personal application should be made by the Church, to such as she herself might deem disposed or qualified for the undertaking. Such an application might be felt by the conscientious as a more direct and significant call to the work than a mere general appeal, and we doubt not there are individuals whom the Lord has qualified for such devoted services, who, though they might not perhaps, from a feeling of self-diffidence, readily offer themselves, might undertake it in dependence on divine strength, if in so direct a way application were made to them. It was thus, we believe, that Dr. Duff was called to the field of Foreign Missions in which he has been so pre-eminently useful, and distinguished, as well as others whose labourers have been much blessed in diffusing christianity. We hope that as the Church in Canada has made a noble effort for the establishment of the Mission that the Lord of the harvest will send forth many labourers to engage in it, so that what is now begun on a small scale, will, ere long, be enlarged into a mighty organization of means and efforts for dispelling by the light of Christianity, the darkness of Heathenism.

A. M.

Strathpeffer Wells, Ross-shire,  
August 13, 1856.

PUSLINCII.

To the Editor of the Record.

DEAR SIR,—

In the "Report on Statistics" published in the *Record*, I find mention made only of our Collection to Knox's College, and Foreign Missions of the Free Church, although we have made all the Collections regularly, since my set: