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TORONTO, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 1878.

THE SYNOD OF CHINA.

THIS reverend court met in May last, and transacted quite a large amount of business. It is an interesting outgrowth of the labours of many missionaries during a lengthened period to learn that there is a sufficient number of Presbyteries to constitute a Synod. In the earlier years of the history of Foreign Missions, a missionary laboured in solitude. In some cases a wife or children might brighten his life with companionship. In others he was necessarily alone in the midst of teeming millions who spoke a foreign language and whose manners and customs were all unfamiliar. But railways and telegraphs are working wonders for the missionary life. These are bringing the ministers of religion together. Those who are sufficiently near one another naturally crystallize into a Presbytery. At first their church court is likely to be rather of an advisory nature than to have the wide range of technical business which characterizes our Home Presbyteries. But in this light such a thing as a Presbytery or Synod must prove a delightful gathering of brethren engaged in such an important cause. They will rejoice with one another over their triumphs in the missionary field. They will strengthen each other's hands by their sympathy and prayers. It is found that very soon the Church court has business of its own to do. The organization of congregations, the work of the Sabbath Schools, the ordination of ministers, the diffusion of a sound literature, will occupy their attention. When several Presbyteries have thus been formed, the next step is the institution of a Synod. In the case of China this court is of course supreme. Judging from the intelligence we have received of what was done at the late Synod of China, the reports of conversions, of Sabbath Schools, of Presbyterian visitations, and such business, brought to light the progress which the cause of Christ is making in that country. But the missionaries themselves were cheered by thus meeting together. They returned to their homes with their hands lifted up by the prayers and praises in which they were privileged to engage. All this

tells the story of the work and influence of our Foreign Missions. It points not merely to conversions, but to the growth of congregations, and to the development of a native ministry. It speaks of Christian civilization with its train of literature and commerce, science and art—being planted as good leaven in the midst of heathendom. It is a prophecy of the good times that are surely coming. In view of all this, is there any one who will still insist upon contributions to Foreign Missions as an unprofitable investment? Then these persons are sinning against the light. The one fact that comes to us from China of no fewer than three missionaries going forth to the famine-stricken millions carrying provisions for the suffering and comfort for the dying, and sacrificing their lives in their daring attempt, has thrilled the Chinese, and in consequence ministers at the court and mandarins and editors have unanimously declared that that must be a true religion which is taught by such men. The lives of the heroes and martyrs of the missionary cause are a noble testimony to the truth of the Gospel, and a valuable complement of the work of Christ and his apostles.

SUMMER RECREATION.

AMIDST the splendid weather which we are now experiencing, it is difficult to realize that we have reached the fall of the year. But for such self-asserting facts as the approach of election day, of the great exhibition in Toronto, and of the near departure of the Governor-General, we all feel as though luxuriating amidst the wealth and luxuriance of summer. There never was a season bearing so little impress from the sweeping changes of harvest. While as a rule barns are filled with the bounties of providence, the fields have not the appearance of fall about them. The stubble is hidden away amidst the verdure of a second growth. Flowers were never seen in greater perfection than at the present moment. The foliage of trees remains fresh and green as it was in early summer. It is questionable whether there ever was in Canada a season of such long continued beauty and productiveness.

With this it follows as an obvious remark that the out-of-door enjoyments of the people have been commensurate with the remarkable character of the year. At the rate at which we are going we bid fair to be regarded like the French as a people living in the open air. Torontonians have had their eyes opened as to the marvellous beauty and attractiveness of their great lake, and the people of the other cities and towns lying along its shores have been not a whit behind in their appreciation of this valuable property of waters they hold in common with us. Never before was Lake Ontario so furrowed and ploughed by steamships carrying their delighted throngs of living freight. The railways, too, have been alive to the importance of catering to the public by furnishing such trips and excursions as would draw out the people to behold and enjoy the beauties of nature. There cannot be too much of this heathful recreation. This will furnish the proper and natural stimulant which the human system requires. Give the people a ready access to plenty of fresh air and water, and to change of scenery, and we guarantee it will do more for temperance

and health than all other expedients combined. As proof of this we were gratified to hear the other day a statement of an official of the Northern Railway to the effect that the company's steamer, the "Lady of the Lakes" plying upon the waters of Simcoe and Couchiching, has carried more passengers this year than in any previous season, while the sale of liquors on board has been less than the average. Such a remark as this speaks volumes for the goodly influences of summer recreation. The next thing which the steamboat companies will find it easy to do is to shut up their bars altogether, or still better substitute for liquors such wholesome beverages as tea and coffee.

While great numbers have been taking frequent advantage of such excursions, many families have shut up house and gone to the country for an extended period. The Paris Exhibition, with the consequent lowering of passage fares across the Atlantic, has of course attracted the wealthier classes to the other side. Not a few of our inland people have gone to the sea-board to enjoy the beneficial influences of bathing in the briny waters, and breathing the salt-laden breezes of the Atlantic. Others again have sought the attractions of the St. Lawrence or the Muskoka region, and have discovered that Canada is not simply a country for toil and money-making, that is only fit for winter residence and is to be deserted for other climes when the season of summer comes round, but that this is a land which can well compare in point of natural beauty and sublimity with the more renowned centres of attraction for pleasure-seekers. From our own experience we are satisfied that along the shores of our inland lakes there are many lovely spots to be found on which may yet spring up cottages and mansions that will prove to be as charming as those which fill our eyes with delight when sailing up the Frith of Clyde, or the River Thames.

Summer recreation is to be sought with a definite end in view. That were a lavish expenditure of our blessings if we were simply to enjoy ourselves and nothing more. The object for which we ought to seek rest and recreation is to sustain the highest point of health, and thus fit us for the duties and occupations of life. Business men are making the important discovery that there is a real gain arising from devoting a sufficient time to summer recreation both for themselves and their employees. A holiday pays. There is wisdom in taking a *siesta*. Deep inhalations are necessary for the long and powerful stroke. The clerk or salesman or woman comes back from holidays well spent with a reserve of health upon which big drafts can be made during the long months of business activity. And so it is with our clergymen, and teachers, our lawyers and physicians and editors. When they begin to feel the summer solstices they become languid at their tasks. The brain power seems to evaporate. The pen loses its magical power. But what a change a week or two will make upon the weary look and wan face, and dull lugubrious eyes. The step becomes elastic, the face shines with a happy light, the eye glows with the increase of intellectual force. The minister becomes more eloquent and devoted, the teacher more keen and enthusiastic, the phy-