

fifty colonies of Great Britain engaged in the work of missions to the heathen. Most were dependent on churches in the motherland, and even seemed to rejoice in drawing as much aid from abroad as they could. The body to which he belonged, too, was one of the smallest of our colonial churches, numbering only about thirty congregations, with a little over 5,000 members. With the exception of the Moravians, no church so small has in modern times undertaken a mission to the heathen. Besides, the congregations of which it was composed, were mostly in rural districts, none of them wealthy, and some of them feeble and struggling. At that time farmers could scarcely get any money for their produce. Ministers' salaries were small and irregularly paid. Most of the ministers considered themselves missionaries at home, and the church had not men to supply the fields around.

The idea of a church in such circumstances, undertaking a mission to the heathen, seemed to many utterly chimerical, and even Mr. G.'s personal friends were incredulous. But he had adopted the idea that, small and poor as she was, she might and ought to do so, and he commenced to agitate for that object. To bring the church up to such a view, required no small amount of faith and patience, as well as persevering labour. It would be interesting to trace his course, how he talked with his brethren in the ministry, how he argued in Presbytery, how he pleaded with their people, how he organized their congregations for the work, how he appealed to the church at large through the press, how he fought the whole matter out in Synod. It was rather a hard battle, but he succeeded. At the meeting of Synod in June, 1844, it was resolved to appoint a Board of Foreign Missions, and, so successful was it in drawing out the sympathy and liberality of the church, that in the following year, the Synod authorized the Board to select a field and to negotiate with candidates. The opposition, however, was by no means over. There was no objection to missions to the heathen, the difficulty was as to so small a church undertaking such a responsibility. For the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, with her membership at that time, to support one missionary, was more in proportion to numbers, not to speak of wealth, than for the Presbyterian Church in Canada

to support twenty, and to support two, which she proposed to do, was more than for the latter to support forty. We need not wonder that the resolution passed by only one of a majority.

Looking back now, we see two things: first, how all the fears in regard to the continuance of support were disappointed; and, secondly, that never was the church at home so blessed, never did every home scheme so prosper, as when she earnestly engaged in sending the bread of life to the perishing abroad. Mr. Geddie did immensely more good to the church by going to the South Seas, than ever he could have done as the pastor of a single congregation at home.

Here, too, we must notice what we regard as perhaps the most important service rendered by him to the church of Christ,—that is in working up the idea that every Colonial church might and should engage in the work of missions to the heathen. Till this time such a thing had scarcely been thought of in any colony. There had been, in a few instances, contributions sent to other societies for missions to the heathen; and at the same time that Mr. G. was agitating the subject in the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, the Baptist body in the Maritime Provinces was taking up the question, and a few months before Mr. G. sailed, sent out the Rev. Mr. Burpe to labour in connection with the American Baptist Mission in Burmah. But to Mr. G. belongs the credit of first working up a small Colonial church, to the idea of undertaking all the responsibility of a mission of her own. And it was directly from the favour of God to his mission, that the flame of missionary zeal spread to the other churches of Canada and Australia, and they were led to engage in the work. In fact we hold that he did a work for the great Colonial empire, similar to that which Carey did for the churches in England, and Mills and his fellow-students did for those of America. Considering the state of the colonies at the time, it equally manifested that faith which moves mountains, and considering the increasing wealth and power of these rising communities, the work was next in importance to that of those honoured men.

An account of his labours in the Mission field is reserved for another article.

G. P.