

name, was the then king of the Ilovas. A beardless youth of sixteen, with morals so pure that he was deemed a man of feeble character by his father and his counsellors, who actually employed persons to allure him from the path of virtue as a necessary part of the education of him who was destined to rule a deceitful and licentious people. Don't start, reader, there are circumstances now in which we estimate strength of character by the wild oats sown. There was, however, no lack of character in Radama; from the time that he became king renown and power were ends energetically sought, not covertly, but openly, for till his dying day he shunned and hated a lie. His dying father's charge was to become possessed of the sovereignty of the entire island, and there is reason to believe that the favor with which he received the first missionaries was due very largely to the fact that they represented the religion of the people from whom he expected to learn the most in raising his people to supreme power, and to a rank among the more civilized nations of the earth. The "beardless youth of sixteen" in four years made himself master of the island, put a stop to the slave trade, encouraged missions, and then issued this proclamation:—"The whole island is now mine. It is governed by one king, ruled by the same laws, and must perform the same service. There are no more wars. Guns and spears may sleep. I am the father of the orphan, the protector of the widow and the oppressed, the avenger of evils and wrongs, and the rewarder of the good and just. With regard to yourselves, you must now work. Cultivate the waste lands. Rushes grow from the earth, gold and silver will not be poured down upon you from the skies." Under his patronage the missions prospered, the idols were discredited, many superstitions were weakened, some completely overthrown, schools were established, churches planted, laws framed against infanticide and intemperance, the Bible was translated and books of Christian tone to the number of five thousand printed. Not that the people were all won, but Radama was firm and the work went steadily on.

The king died, 1828: then came intrigue and plotting. Ranavalona, the senior of the king's twelve wives, (though it would appear only one, Ratsimilaho, was formally recognized), was declared queen. The missionaries were at once distrusted—their services gradually dispensed with. Radame had so interwoven their work with his rule that prudence forbade their sudden suppression. Old customs were encouraged, superstition again lifted up its head, until in 1836 the missionaries were compelled by royal will to leave the island. For twenty-five years, with greater or less severity, persecution against the Christians prevailed. They were literally torn asunder, pierced with spears, burned, hurled from precipices; the queen had declared that "the bowels of the earth must be searched, and the rivers and the lakes dragged with nets" till the Christians should be destroyed. Yet her son was a follower of the Nazarene! Think of it. Ten years had so established Christianity in that island that eight years

of royal discouragement, where royalty was absolute, followed by twenty-five years of relentless persecution even unto death could not efface it; so that upon the queen's death, in 1861, her Christian son, Radama II., with acclamation ascended the throne. missionaries were welcomed back, and the great work goes on.

In a future article we shall speak of subsequent changes and of present work; meanwhile, this closing sentence must suffice as to the position.

Members in full communion with the churches in Madagascar now number sixty-seven thousand seven hundred and thirty. Ordained native pastors, 368; evangelists, 156; local preachers or teachers, 3,468; 44,800 children in the schools, of whom 20,000 can read. Blessings on the martyr church of Madagascar; we can still say as of old, What hath God wrought? "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

OUR excellent contemporary, *The Canadian Baptist*, has fallen into an error in its issue of last week, with respect to the Stannard case in England, at which we are a little surprised. It heads the article "Congregational Heresy Case," which is itself an error, there can no more be a "Heresy Case" amongst the Congregationalists than among the Baptists. The *Baptist* says:—"The proceedings raise some important questions such as, 'Does the judge appointed by the Queen not in this case virtually try Mr. Stannard as to his soundness in the faith? If he does, is this not placing the State above the Church?' Certainly not. The judge was simply asked to decide if Mr. Stannard had fulfilled an engagement into which he entered when he became pastor of Ramsden Street Chapel, just as he might have been called to decide if he had fulfilled any other contract, say, for the delivery of a cargo of wheat, or the erecting of a machine to do certain work. The 'heresy' or orthodoxy of Mr. Stannard had absolutely nothing to do with the Vice-Chancellor's decision: simply, did he (Mr. S.) preach the doctrines he undertook to preach when he entered upon the pastorate of the church? which it was found he had not done. Had the thing been reversed, and the trust-deeds of the chapel framed on what our contemporary calls 'heresy,' and Mr. Stannard preached what is deemed 'orthodoxy,' the judgment must have been the same. It was clearly a case of breach of contract, and as such was decided. The *Canada Presbyterian* says correctly that it was a case of 'hard law.' On another point we most heartily agree with the *Canadian Baptist* when it says:—"Better, in our opinion, if this case had been settled by Christian arbitration than by a court of law." Surely, yes; and we shall be mistaken if that is not the conviction of those who pushed it to the bitter end before many years are past.

—We insert a communication from Rev. W. H. Allworth on the article of Mr. Hannay, although we must honestly confess to our surprise on reading it. Mr. Allworth cannot seriously expect that we, or any of

our correspondents, are to furnish "a reliable list of the churches that have been dragged into the ditch by clerical adventurers." Does Mr. A. want all the dirty puddles of the last fifty years stirred up afresh; are we to exhume the well-nigh forgotten troubles of churches, open afresh old wounds, and revive old irritations and bitterness? Even were there no other objections—which there are many—that reason would be sufficient. The fact is certain, question it, although Mr. Allworth may. Our one concern now should be to avoid a repetition of old errors. As to the effect of the "Bond Street mistake," our good friend thinks it "more imaginary than otherwise;" we can assure him that his opinion is not shared by many in Toronto who are in the best position to judge.

HOW TO HELP MISSION WORK.

Certain friends of Missions who are strongly convinced of the paramount duty of the churches in regard to them, and who are persuaded that none can prosper who neglect their claims, have just put forth a successful effort to awaken a deeper interest in the great cause so dear to the Saviour. They called together representatives of the churches in Montreal, who cheerfully co-operated in asking a visit on the part of the Revs. Drs. Clark and Means, secretaries of the American Board in Boston, and of Rev. John Wood, of Ottawa, formerly superintendent of our Home Missions. Very cheerfully did these brethren consent, and on the third Sunday of this month the two Boston ministers occupied four pulpits, namely those of Emmanuel, Calvary, and Wesley Congregational, and of the American Presbyterian churches. Sketches of the discourses appeared in the *Montreal Witness*, and less fully in some other journals. That to which the writer listened was of surpassing excellence as an address on Missions, a large map being suspended at the back of the pulpit. No one who loves the Lord Jesus and His kingdom could fail to be stirred in heart and purpose by the facts and principles brought out in a manner singularly interesting. And four congregations were placed under the spell of a similar influence. It was shown that all missions might now be called home ones, as the word foreign was hardly applicable in this age of prompt and rapid intercourse, of telegraph and telephone, of steamships and steam printing press.

On the following evening a united meeting was held in Emmanuel Church, which was addressed by Mr. Wood on behalf of the Cong. Miss. Soc., Dr. Stevenson for the Cong. Indian Mission, Rev. G. H. Wells, of the Am. Pres. Church, in relation to the Labrador Mission, Mr. Geo. Hague (Merchant's Bank) on behalf of the Infant Mission in Manitoba. The chair was occupied by Dr. Wilkes, who made a few remarks. The latter half of the time was occupied to excellent purpose by Drs. Clarke and Means, to whom the thanks of the audience and of the churches were accorded. Dr. Clark left for home the next morning, but Dr. Means remained over by request in order to give to us his comprehensive and able lecture on Africa as a field for Missions, on Tuesday evening. This was listened to with much delight and profit, by a large audience in Wesley Congregational Church, and Dr. Means bade us farewell. The writer believes that the collections amounted to a considerable sum, even after needful expenses were paid, and it is hoped that the good effects of this movement will be seen from this time onward in our churches in Montreal.

It will hardly be deemed impertinent

to suggest that a similar course might be adopted in all our cities. Why not ask some able minister, full of the spirit of missions, or a missionary who may be at home on furlough, either of whom might probably be found in Western New York, in Ohio, or in Michigan, just bordering Ontario, to visit the church or churches in our cities on one Lord's Day, and in connection with our valued brethren in the neighborhood hold a stirring missionary meeting on Monday evening? It were vain to expect real prosperity in our churches without practical interest in the great work of Christian Missions.

H. W.

Montreal, 31st March, 1881.

Correspondence.

To the Editor of the *Canadian Independent*.

DEAR SIR,—In the letter of the Rev. A. Hannay from the *Congregationalist*, on the causes of what is termed the "weakness of Congregationalism" in Canada, we find the statement that "some of our churches, with a credulity which it is difficult to understand, putting their trust in men of this class (clerical adventurers) have fallen with them into the ditch. The annals of Congregationalism in Canada contain some surprising records of this kind. But these are after all exceptional," &c.

These statements, in some sense correct—that is, with the qualification that the cases are *exceptional*—are nevertheless calculated to mislead in the connection in which they are found, they leave the impression that we have been weakened by putting our trust in "clerical adventurers," and Mr. Hannay alone should be responsible for what he says.

But I suppose he received his impression from the brethren who met in Conference with him, whom he naturally supposed to be the representatives of congregationalism in Canada. Would it be too much to ask you, Mr. Editor, or through you anybody that can furnish it, for a *reliable list of the churches that have been dragged into the ditch by clerical adventurers*, or how much we have been weakened by that sort of thing.

I do not refer to ministerial mistakes, or imprudences, for these are legion in every age, and every country. But I refer to the cases wherein our churches for want of a council have been dragged in the ditch or destroyed. We ought to know the magnitude of this evil. Some of us have seen, we think, much more of it in other denominations, and with a few exceptional cases, lately, we do not see how we have been weakened this way. "Breeze" evidently deceived the Presbyterians and Methodists, as documents laid before the membership committee showed, before he deceived one of our churches, and he got the cold shoulder from the whole body, and the damage he did was very circumscribed. The Forest case is yet undecided, and they say their man has been a blessing to them. It is rather premature to ascribe our weakness to that matter.

As to the damage done the body by the Bond Street mistake in the matter of Handford, it is more imaginary than otherwise; nobody who understands our principles will hold any of the churches responsible but the church who were deceived, and many at a distance regard that church as more sinned against than sinning.

I am aware that the Methodists and Presbyterians are trying their best to make capital out of this case, to bring our system into disrepute, they have had nothing like it *outside their own lines* during our history, and they work it up, forgetting that we could pounce on similarly disreputable cases which other systems cover up.

I should like to see a published list of the cases in our denomination, if any brother can give it—wherein our