

Missionary World.

FOREIGN MISSION JUBILEE.

THE NEW HEBRIDES.

[The following is taken from the supplement to the Foreign Mission Report of our church presented to the last General Assembly.—ED.]

On the eleventh day of July, 1844, the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia resolved "to embark in the Foreign Mission enterprise." This little body was one of eight Presbyterian Churches then existing within the bounds of the present Dominion of Canada. After several local unions the number was reduced to four in 1867, and these four in 1875 became one as the Presbyterian Church in Canada. This then is the jubilee year of Foreign Missions for our Church. We cannot over-honor nor too closely imitate the faith, zeal, sacrifice and loyalty to the Captain of our salvation, of the little church of fifty years ago that so nobly resolved to undertake the sending of a missionary to some region of moral darkness and to equip a station for him there, that the heathen might "see a great light" and have their night of misery dispelled.

In the providence of God they were led, after diligent and prayerful inquiry, to adopt some part of the South Sea Islands as their post of work; and later on, when Mr. Geddie, the missionary designated, to whose earnest pleading in the pulpit, the press and the church courts, the awakening of the missionary fervor is principally to be attributed, reached the islands of the south, he was directed by the leadings of God to Anietyum, one of the New Hebrides group of islands, as the spot where he should set up the standard of the Cross. In that group the work has ever since been carried on, and at the close of 1893 there were reported by the clerk of the Missionary Synod, eighteen missionaries, representing, besides the Presbyterian Church in Canada, seven other churches who are engaged with us in prosecuting this work. Our interest in this field should surely be undying, for, besides Dr. Geddie, the apostle of the mission who, with his devoted wife, laboured four years without a colleague, a goodly cloud of witnesses testify to the longing of the fathers for the evangelization of the whole field. The dust of four of our former missionaries, and four of the noble women that toiled there, mingles with the soil. The names of Matheson, Johnson, the Gordons, Mrs. Matheson, Mrs. Copeland and Mrs. MacKenzie will ever be enshrined in the memory of the Church, and will consecrate to her the field whereon her first triumphs in heathen lands were achieved. Others, like Dr. Geddie and Donald Morrison and their wives, who wore themselves out in the effort to save the New Hebrides and went to Australia or elsewhere to die, as well as the faithful band that are now toiling on for us, and winning every year their way into the hearts of the people and bringing many of them to trust in our common Saviour, will, while history runs its course, invest the New Hebrides Mission for the Presbyterian Church in Canada, with an imperishable interest.

The year of our missionary jubilee should impress us deeply with the sense of God's great goodness to us as a church in all the departments of our work, and should so stir us up to a sense of our failures and feebleness of effort that a new departure of redoubled energy shall be made by us in the great work which, in common with all the churches of Christ, we are aiming to compass in obedience to our Master's parting commission—the work of "preaching the gospel to every creature."

In whatever field the Providence of God leads us, there let us labor with all our might, and from whatsoever place he recalls us, because others may be ready to carry on without our aid the work which it was our honor to inaugurate, thence let us depart, that we may spend our strength where it is more needed. Duty must govern sentiment, then feeling will have full scope to widen the objects of its attachment, whilst it proves faithless to no old love, but makes the fond memory a stimulus to greater fidelity amid the changed surroundings.

Pursuant to the resolution of the last General Assembly, remitting for the consideration of the Synod of the Maritime Provinces the question of transferring the New Hebrides Mission to the Australasian Churches, the said Synod, after full discussion, resolved as follows:

"That, while acknowledging the guiding hand of an all-wise Providence in directing our church to the New Hebrides as the field of her first missionary effort; and while gratefully recognizing the Great Head of the church in the wonderful success which has attended the labours of her missionaries there for the long period of well-nigh fifty years; yet in view of the proximity of the New Hebrides group to the Australasian Churches, the Synod regards it as more natural that these churches should assume the evangelization of these islands if able to overtake the work, and thus set our church free to extend her operations in fields lying nearer, and which are at least equally necessitous and urgently calling for our aid. The Synod would therefore look forward to the time when such transference might take place, and would grant the request of the committee by authorizing them to correspond with our missionaries and the churches of Australasia on this matter subject to the approval of the Assembly, but that no further steps be taken until the results of such correspondence be submitted to the Synod."

In accordance with this finding of the Synod, the committee respectfully request the Assembly to authorize the procedure indicated in the resolution.

Since last report was made to Assembly we received the sad tidings of the death of Mrs. McKenzie, the wife of our missionary on Efate, which took place Sabbath morning, April 30th, 1893. Deepest sympathy is felt with the sorrowing husband and motherless children, and many prayers have ascended to God that they may be sustained and blessed in their bereavement. Mrs. McKenzie was a true and successful missionary, as well as a model wife and mother. She has finished her work on earth, and the Lord has promoted her to her everlasting reward.

During 1893, the maritime service of the mission was performed by a sailing vessel, chartered for the purpose, which could only make three trips from Australia during the year, and could not gather the missionaries for their usual Synod meeting. For 1894 an arrangement has been made by the Day-spring Board with the Australian New Hebrides Steamship Company, whereby there shall be an ocean steamer from Melbourne and Sydney every ten weeks, or five times in the year, to Anietyum, and an inter-island steamer, the *Croydon*, from that point through all the mission stations in the group and back, also every ten weeks. This is a vast improvement on the sailing vessel, as the trips are regular, if far apart, and the trade of the mission, as well as the accommodation of the missionaries, is assured thereby. The cost to our church is £250 stg., which the children of our Sabbath schools are expected to cover by their contributions and collections.

This mission, notwithstanding severe drawbacks, such as the continued removal of many young men to Queensland as operatives on the sugar plantations, and a fatal epidemic of dysentery, has made much progress during the past year. It is gratifying to note that the authorities at Washington have agreed to enter into the convention with the other great maritime powers of the world to prohibit the sale of firearms and rum to the natives of these islands. If this prohibition can be enforced, as we have reason to believe it can, it will prove a great help to the work of evangelizing the people.

There died in Glasgow the other day James Gilchrist, who was known as "the Scottish Stradivarius." Gilchrist, who was 62 years old, was a mechanical genius. He made the most difficult and delicate instruments, and was the chief aid of Professor Pettigrew in making his models for investigating the laws governing the flight of birds. He died a poor man, his wife often saying, "He can make everything but money."

PULPIT, PRESS AND PLATFORM.

Archdeacon F. W. Farrar: I say that our drinking system is nothing less in its present form than a national crime.

Bishop Horatio Potter: The testimony of physicians is uniform and unequivocal. They pronounce alcohol a poison.

Cumberland Presbyterian: One good consecrated church member won from the world is usually worth half a score of the sort who can be easily proselyted from other churches.

The Pulpit: We are nearer the Light in proportion as our religion has made us more lovely, more and more beautiful, more and more tender, more true, more safe to deal with.

Rev. Dr. Jessup: I have not heard since my return to the United States public prayer offered for the President of the United States. Queen Victoria is prayed for in all British churches.

Lutheran Observer: If you look for the assistance of those who are above you, remember that those who are less favored than yourself also have a right to look up to you for encouragement and help.

Sunday School Chronicle: What the glass is to the lantern, what the windows are to the lighthouse, that is the Christian to Christ. "No man hath seen God at any time," yet the world is ever seeking after Him.

Interior: For a fit of passion, walk out in the open air. For a fit of idleness, count the tickings of a clock. For a fit of extravagance and folly, visit the workhouse. For a fit of ambition, go to the churchyard and read the gravestones.

Kate Lindsay, M.D.: The woman of fifty can do much for the rising generation by giving to young mothers the benefit of wisdom gleaned, it may be, amid tears and heart-aches. She can caution the young girl who, through the glamor of false lights named pleasure, is setting her feet in slippery paths, and what work will have greater reward?

Presbyterian Witness: We have good reason to love our own country, and do all in our power to advance its interests. Here we are enjoying the loveliest summer weather while in the great cities south and west of us the people are sweltering in the ceaseless worries of the "heated term." Here we are in the enjoyment of perfect peace from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Better law and liberty, liberty with law, than hordes of European or Asiatic immigrants. Better order and comfort than myriads of idle factory hands.

The Occident: President Warfield recently made a happy suggestion in regard to literary criticism. Beaumont and Fletcher were two well-known poets in England at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Jointly they issued a book of poems. In these last days some of our best scholars have not been able to separate the poems and say which belong to Fletcher and which to Beaumont, although they had the help of books written separately by each of these men. Are we not following blind leaders when we fall into line with those men who say, "this word in Genesis was written by Moses, but that by some editor."

The English Presbyterian: Envy is a malicious discontent excited by the happiness, reputation, or superiority of another. It seems to combine quite a number of the master passions, as anger, jealousy, hatred, revenge, etc., and effectually prevents us from discovering good in others—a habit which as Christians we should assiduously cultivate. It frequently blinds us to our highest advantages, and makes us treat with injustice and unkindness those whose only offence is that in some respects they are better than we. It is in direct opposition to the spirit of religion which says, "In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves," because it will tolerate no rival.

Teacher and Scholar.

Aug. 26th, 1894. } THE FIRST MIRACLE OF JESUS. } John II. 1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT.—John II. 1-11.

This is the second recorded event in this year of beginnings, the first of Christ's public ministry. It took place three days after the calling of Philip and Nathanael at Cana of Galilee, a place eight or nine miles north-east of Nazareth, and 60 north of Bethabara. Jesus left Bethabara and came to Nazareth, and finding his mother gone to Cana, followed her with the disciples who accompanied Him—probably six.

I. vv. 1, 2. **Jesus at a Marriage.**—It is interesting and instructive to find Jesus at the very beginning of his public life and work, at a marriage, though he was the Messiah, sent on the most important mission ever undertaken to the world. This puts anew the stamp of the divine approval upon the family and home, which, next to the Sabbath, are the first of divine institutions, and sanctions and hallows marriage, and the marriage feast, which from the first and among every people inaugurates them. The marriage was no doubt that of some intimate friend or possibly a relative of the family; it was therefore an event in which Mary and Jesus himself took a lively interest, and to which both were invited, and His disciples as His friends. The feast on such occasions lasted several days, and Jesus, the Son of God, was present at, and took part in it. Home and social joys of a lawful kind may be heartily entered into, for God manifest in flesh took part in them.

II. vv. 3-6. **Wine Wanted.**—Whether because the family was not able to provide a plentiful supply, or on account of additional unexpected guests, the wine failed. It formed an important part of the marriage feast, and by the customs of the country nothing could be a cause of greater shame and mortification than that the supply them should fail. It was therefore a most suitable time for Mary and Jesus to show their friendly interest and sympathy. The absence of Joseph's name is noticed and it has been conjectured that probably he had died. Mary had in any case learned to look to and depend upon Jesus in her difficulties, and now, probably privately, with a delicacy natural to the circumstances, said to Jesus, "They have no wine," implying, "What is to be done?" If the family possessed means there could have been no difficulty in getting a fresh supply; if they did not, the greater the need of kind, friendly help.

Jesus saith, Woman, etc. The language in our ears has a sound of harshness, a lack of filial respect. It is not so in the original. The word might fairly be rendered, lady. Everything would depend on the tone of voice. It does not appear to have hurt Mary's motherly feelings, for she said unto the servants, "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." Mine hour, etc. The hour set for the public display of His real character and mission.

III. vv. 7-11. **Wine Supplied by Miracle.**—This first miracle deserves specially close attention. Notice:

(1) The vessels used were water jars, not wine vessels, so that there could be no suspicion of a sediment of wine left in them to lend flavour to water poured in them.

(2) The servants were told to fill the vessels with water, they could not know either the intentions of Jesus or that He had power to turn water into wine, and they filled them up to the brim.

(3) The quantity. This in one sense is subordinate, for if Jesus could change one gallon of water into wine, He could change more, but it precludes the possibility of any substitution by a deception of such a quantity of wine for water. The six jars would together hold from 108 to 162 gallons.

(4) The testimony of the ruler of the feast, v. 9, 10.

(5) It is called a miracle or a sign, and had an effect corresponding. His disciples believed on Him.

Everything is here narrated as has been observed so as to exclude any possible appearance of collusion or imposition.

The bearing of the working of this miracle upon the question of total abstinence is important. Notice:

(1) That it is perfectly right to abstain if one thinks proper, from wine, and all intoxicating drinks.

(2) Christ's example shows that, drinking some kind of wine is not a sin in itself. There is a right and proper use of some kind of the fruit of the vine.

(3) It is a wrong inference to suppose that the precepts and principles of Christ do not require total abstinence in our circumstances. Because a certain act or course of action is right in one set of circumstances, it does not follow that it will be right under entirely different circumstances. It is clear that neither Christ's precepts nor example justifies the ordinary drinking usages of our time with its bars, its wine and gin shops, its beer gardens, its fiery wines, and strong liquors and all their attendant evils.

IV. **The Glory of Christ Manifested in this Miracle.**—

(1) The glory of His goodness and almighty power, ministering in kindness to the needs of His children.

(2) The glory of His teaching by precept and example, and of His mission to this earth attested by such signs.

(3) The glory His Divine nature as seen by glimpses amid His human surroundings.

Practical suggestions:

(1) Jesus sanctified by His presence the common joys and duties of daily life.

(2) That kind and place of enjoyment is safe where we may expect and welcome Jesus.

(3) Jesus loves to have us happy, and approves of pure pleasures in their place, and by His presence makes them more delightful.

(4) We should be careful to do even our good deeds at the right time.