

PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

Vol. II.

TORONTO, JUNE 10TH, 1886.

No. 76.

The Presbyterian News Co.,

TORONTO (Limited).

INCORPORATED BY ROYAL CHARTER.

Authorized Capital, \$60,000.00. In 6,000 Shares of \$10 Each.

Applications for stock to be addressed to

G. H. ROBINSON, M.A., Manager.

A SPRINGTIME THOUGHT.

By REV. W. D. BISTRONG, M.A., OTTAWA.

I see it in the whispering showers that bless the springing grass,

I see it in the bright-eyed flowers that bless me as I pass—
God is love.

I hear it in the song-bird's note from yonder greening bough,

It sighs upon the perfumed breeze that fans my throbbing brow—
God is love.I hear its music in the stream that shimmereth in the light,
Its voice floats to me from the stars soft shining through the night—
God is love.

The fancies sweet and softened glow that o'er my spirit steal,

These kindly springtide sympathies, they teach my heart to feel
God is love.

O blessed springtide I in our hearts thy genial influence leave,

For still a glad creation felt will help us to believe
God is love

—Christian at Work.

THE TWO SAMs COMING TO TORONTO.

WE see it announced in one of the daily papers that Messrs. Jones and Small are invited to Toronto to conduct evangelistic services, and that they are to do their work under the auspices of the Methodist and Baptist bodies. This announcement may be correct, although, so far as we know, Baptist churches have had very little to do with the invitation. However this may be, speaking for ourselves, we wish to say that, in our opinion, the step taken is unnecessary and unwise. We dislike putting ourselves in opposition to brethren of our own or of any denomination, especially in matters connected with evangelistic work, and it is only because we deem this invitation a serious mistake that we venture upon this protest.

Where is the necessity of inviting outside evangelists to the city of Toronto? This is "the city of churches," so-called, and it has in connection with its various religious organizations multitudes of consecrated men and women who are willing to do, and who already do all the personal gospel work that evangelistic visits are supposed to set in motion. It has also in connection with its evangelical churches an educated and devoted Christian ministry, who are quite sufficient in themselves, God aiding them, to do all this sort of work that can be done. With such a ministry as Toronto has, acting in co-operation with the earnest endeavours of the consecrated men and women of all the churches, we see no necessity of so much dependence being placed upon outside help. We are well aware, of course, that the name and fame of noted evangelists will ensure packed houses, and thus far make for success; but we strongly suspect that the true interest of the cause of Christ is indicated otherwise than through crowded audiences drawn together by the oddities, the eloquence, or the personal magnetism of any one man. Earnest, importunate prayer, and the faithful exposition of God's Word, are the elements which make up the success of evangelistic work; and anything that may be the outcome of agencies other than these we are inclined to look upon as of very doubtful value. Suppose, now, the Christian people of Toronto were to go at this business among themselves—it is their business; it belongs to no one else—and suppose they were to make all the preparation which will be made while they are waiting and praying for the two Sam's, would not all the solid results follow which are looked for from the anticipated labours of the two gentlemen who are invited? Let the pulpit announcements and exhortations be as full and frequent; let all the prayer-meetings be as fervent at the throne of grace with this object in view; let every family altar, day after day, invoke God's blessing on the effort to be put forth; let the singers be as patiently drilled, and the corps of workers as fully instructed, and then let any one of our earnest gospel preachers conduct the meetings, and all that can be hoped for from the two Sam's will be accomplished. We do not join in this invitation because we think it altogether unnecessary. We have among us a multitude of ministers just as true to Christ, just as effective speakers, whom we are persuaded God would honour just as much in a series of meetings such as is contemplated.

Besides being unnecessary, we think the invitation unwise, for the reason that it is highly improbable that the class of persons for whom the work is contemplated will in any great numbers be brought under its influence. The reputation of the two Sam's is largely connected

with funny speeches, with slangy expressions, and with the most highly flavoured of sensational methods. This reputation will attract to the meetings every night a rink full of people—who go from curiosity, or whose spiritual being craves stimulus of the sort which may be expected, but will scarcely be attractive to those who are careless about the claims of the gospel, or to those who are earnestly seeking the Saviour. Many will go for the fun of it, many will go to scoff, and perhaps will remain to pray, but the great majority will go to hear Sam Jones, which great majority will, of course, be made up of those who already profess Christianity.

We think the invitation unwise for a still more serious reason. The dignity, the beauty, and the sacredness of Christ's gospel are already sufficiently invaded by jest and buffoonery. We know what to expect from the invited evangelists, whose sermons have preceded them, to tell us plainly about the loud laughter and the applause accompanying descriptions of scenes which ought and which were wont to evoke tears and sobs. We have no wish to say anything severe, but our notion of loyalty to the whole spirit of Christ's gospel demands of us that we condemn the light speech, the jest and the slang with which that sacred thing is now being carried to the masses, and for which the invited evangelists have their full share of responsibility.

We think it would be much better every way if Toronto ministers would do their own evangelistic work; but if outside help must be had, we hope the committee will eliminate the laughter and applause passages.—*The Canadian Baptist.*

A SCOTCHMAN'S wife besought him to pray that the life of their dying baby might be spared. True to his old instincts, the good man knelt down devoutly, and went out on the well-worn track, as he was wont to do in the prayer-meetings at the kirk. Through and through the routine petitions he wandered along helplessly, until he reached, at last, the honoured quotation: "Lord, remember Thine ancient people, and turn again the captivity of Zion!" A mother's heart could hold its patience no longer: "Eh, man!" the woman broke forth impetuously; "you are aye drawn out for the Jews, but it's our bairn that's a deen!" Then, clasping her hands, she cried: "Oh! help us, Lord, and give our darling back to us if it be Thy holy will; but if he is to be taken away from us, make us to know Thou wilt have him to Thyself!" That wife knew what it was to pray a real prayer; and to the throne of grace she went, asking directly what she wanted most.

"A SPIRITUAL BOARDING-HOUSE."—This is the expressive phrase by which the Rev. Dr. Parkhurst recently described all that the Church is to those who go to it merely to receive food and rest for the amount of money contributed towards its support. They give it their *quid pro quo*. But they render it no permanent service and never identify themselves with it as of its constituent parts. It is not their home, if it were, their heart would be there; they would take pride in giving to its support whatever would tend to make it tasteful, homelike, permanent and as much like Eden as possible. This boarding-house treatment of the Church is detrimental to all its interests, retards its growth, chills its atmosphere, disintegrates its membership and lowers it in the estimation of the world. The church-member who treats his church as his boarding-house, has yet to learn his proper relation to "the body of Christ," the functions of his membership and the inestimable value of his privileges.

"If a piece of iron could speak, what would it say? It would say, 'I am black, I am cold, I am hard.' Perfectly true. Put that piece of iron into the furnace and wait awhile, and what would it say? 'The blackness is gone, the coldness is gone, and the hardness is gone'—it has passed into a new experience. But if that piece of iron could speak, surely it would not glory in itself, because the fire and iron are two distinct things that remain distinct to the last. If it could glory, it would glory in the fire and not in itself—in the fire that kept it a bright, molten mass. So in myself I am black, I am cold, and I am hard, but if the Lord take possession of my soul, if I am filled with love, if His Spirit fills my being, the blackness will go, the coldness will go, and the hardness will go; and yet the glory does not belong to me; but to the Lord, who keeps me in a sense of His love."

A LITTLE black girl, eight years old, was setting the table, when a boy in the room said to her, "Mollie, do you pray?" The suddenness of the question confused her a little, but she answered, "Yes, every night." "Do you think God hears you?" the boy asked. She answered promptly, "I know He does." "Do you think," said he, trying to puzzle her, "that He hears yours prayers as readily as those of white children?" For full three minutes the child kept on with her work; then she slowly said, "Master George, I pray into God's ears, not His eyes. My voice is just like any other little girl's, and if I say what I ought to say, God does not stop to look at my skin."

Mission Work.

MISSION WORK IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF THE UNITED STATES.

THE Standing Committees of the Assembly reported as follows:

HOME MISSIONS.

If we consider the aggregate receipts of the Board for the past year its financial condition may be pronounced prosperous and full of encouragement. Including what came into the treasury for the liquidation of the debt, the receipts reached the unprecedented sum of \$671,728.70. It is to be regretted, on the other hand, that the number of our missionaries was smaller by sixty-eight than that of the preceding year, and fewer Sabbath schools were organized, and that important interests suffered for the lack of a little timely aid.

We closed the last year with a debt, including that of the Woman's Executive Committee, amounting to \$139,708. The result was wholly unexpected; the receipts for the seven preceding years show an annual average increase of over \$47,000. Had that average been kept up our receipts that year would have reached nearly \$650,000 recommended by the preceding General Assembly, and have left us substantially free from debt. Notwithstanding the hard times the churches came up manfully to these figures, having given \$28,000 more than ever before. But we found that the debt came mostly from the falling off of legacies. The legacies in 1882 were \$55,000; in 1883, \$103,000; in 1884, \$151,000; but in 1885 only \$55,000, or \$96,000 short of the previous year.

Notwithstanding the burden of our debt, and the order not to take up new work, the preaching of the gospel has not been in vain. The churches have been strengthened, many revivals have been enjoyed, and our missionaries have reached out beyond central points, and new Sabbath schools and churches have been organized. The growth of the work has been most encouraging. The number of missionaries employed during the whole or part of last year was 1,367. As a result of their labours, 15,695 have been gathered into the churches—9,561 by confession of faith, and 6,134 by letter. The total amount contributed to the Board, the last year from all sources, has been \$671,728.70; for current work, \$526,434.10; for the debt, \$117,531.51; for Permanent and Trust Funds, \$12,148.39; for Sustentation Department, \$15,614.70; leaving the total indebtedness at the end of the year, \$43,634.50. The resolutions of the Committee were adopted, one fixing \$750,000 as the sum to be raised next year for Home Missions.

FOREIGN MISSIONS.

The year has been one of especial prosperity in Japan, where large accessions have been made. The Union Church, with which our Church is connected, reports a gain in church membership of eighty per cent. in two years. In China, both North and South, no little disturbance has existed, partially as a result of the late Franco-Chinese war, and partly in consequence of the outrages committed upon the Chinese in this country. Notwithstanding this, encouraging progress has been made, and in the south special advantages have been gained in a peaceful occupation both of Kwang Sai Province and of the great island Hainan. The newly formed Korean Mission has met with no reversals, but instead, a still wide influence and a more favourable position have been gained with the government and with the people. General prosperity, and a sure, but not rapid advance have marked the year in the missions of India: while in Siam and Laos signal encouragements have been given to our missionaries. The Syrian Mission has experienced blessed reviving influences, especially in Beirut; and new evidences have appeared of that general leaven which is affecting all society, and especially the social condition of women. In Persia, also, the work has prospered, and the churches have advanced in strength and influence. Signal usefulness has marked the schools and the Medical Mission.

The mission in Mexico has been gradually perfecting its organization and arrangement of fields, and has given increased attention to theological education, and to the work of the press. A goodly number have been added to the churches. The work in Peru and Colombia has met with serious discouragements, owing in part to the disturbed condition of the country; but in Chili and Brazil a good degree of progress has been made. The evil results which it was feared might follow the change of administration in Guatemala have not occurred, and the mission has been undisturbed. The work among the Indians of our own country, always beset with difficulties, has been faithfully prosecuted, and with some blessed fruits. The work among the Chinese has suffered from the public hostility toward these people; but some decided steps in advance have been made, and on the part of Christian people all over the land there is an increased disposition to give them sympathy and instruction.

The full receipts of the Board for the year past were given at \$745,144.46. The expenditures of the Board for the various missions and for home expenses, have been \$745,366.02;

which added to the debt of last year, amounting to \$57,651.72, have made the total liabilities \$803,017.74. There remains, therefore, a present deficit of \$57,853.28.

The Woman's Boards of Foreign Missions have continued their generous support, aggregating a total contribution of \$221,025.40. As a rule, these helpful auxiliaries have shown a handsome advance from year to year, even when other resources fell short, but in their gifts for the past year they have fallen \$573 15 behind the total reported in 1885.

A series of resolutions were submitted by the committee approving of the work of the Boards for the past year, and then Rev. Dr. Gillespie, the new secretary, addressed the Assembly in an admirable speech, which he prefaced with a fine tribute to the memory of his immediate predecessor, Dr. David Irving. After Dr. Gillespie a number of foreign missionaries were heard, Rev. John Carrington, of Siam, Rev. Hunter Corbett, of China, Rev. Jonathan Wilson, of the Laos Mission, Siam, Rev. Dr. William H. Johnston, of India, Dr. MacIntosh, of Philadelphia, also made a noble speech for missions. The Assembly then declared that \$750,000 should be the mark for the coming year in addition to the payment of the debt of \$57,000. The report and resolutions were then adopted.

A SAMPLE CONVERT.—The following, selected as a fair average specimen of the examination converts are subjected to in the China inland mission, is not only very interesting but instructive, showing that so-called converts are not baptized at random, as many suspect and some even say. Mrs. Daz shall answer for herself. "Where did you first hear the Gospel?" "My aunt first told me about it." "What did you hear that struck you first?" "I heard that by trusting in Jesus sins could be forgiven." "How can Jesus forgive your sins?" "He was nailed to the Cross, and shed His blood." "Who is Jesus?" "Jesus is the Son of God." "What do you understand by God?" "God, and Jesus, and the Holy Spirit—three in one." "You will have to put up with a good deal of contempt, and perhaps persecution, if you join with us?" "Jesus will save me and take me to Heaven, so I am willing to suffer." "Do you buy and sell on the Lord's Day now?" "I did so some time ago, but now I have given that up." "Have you any household gods or pictures in your house now?" "I have long ago destroyed all of them." "Do you exhort your husband to believe in Jesus and to become His disciple?" "I have, and he has given up buying and selling on worshipping days." "Don't you know that when the neighbours know that you have formally joined with us they will not pay the debts they owe you, and you must not expect the Church to interpose for you?" "I have Heaven's happiness, and if they will not pay what they owe me, no matter." "If you were to die before you are baptized, and before you partake of the Lord's Supper, would you go to Heaven?" "God would say I was wanting in reverence and godliness if I were to set aside His ordinances." "But would you really go to Heaven should you die first?" "Of course, by trusting in Jesus I should go to Heaven." "Is your heart different to what it was?" "I have peace." "Where does that peace come from—from your good works?" "It comes from God." "Are you willing to help to spread the Gospel?" "Yes, and I'll give a thousand cash a year."

At one of the May missionary meetings in London, Dr. Anderson (medical missionary from Formosa, China) described the present condition of mission work in that part of the world in one word—Hope. The French war had left the work where it was before, except that the missionaries were on better terms with the Chinese than ever. While in some parts of the country persecution had not wholly died out, the medical department of mission work acted as a loadstone to draw all classes and conditions of people—from the miserable opium-eater to the high-class Mandarin afflicted with rheumatic gout. Next to the preaching of the gospel was the printing and publishing of Christian literature in the colloquial. Even the *literate* class, who generally affected to despise everything, were beginning to realize that the printing press was a power for good. Some of the churches were self-supporting, and an endeavor would be made to render them all so, as soon as possible. The first need in China was an increase of spiritual life; the second, a supply of trained native ministers; and the third, more missionaries, for whom there were open doors and eager listeners.

Dr. Lyall (medical missionary from Swatow) referring to the hospital there as presenting a fair field of evangelistic work, as upwards of one thousand five hundred villages were represented by patients treated every year. Swatow was as good a centre as could be found in China for the medical missionary. Every year a large number of patients applied for admission into the church. In one year one hundred and forty men and women so applied. They were not received into the Church until they had been home and stood the test of persecution. Some of them proved to be very successful missionaries.—*N. Y. Observer.*