

THE STUDENT VOLUNTEER MOVEMENT FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS.

The approaching Quadrennial Convention of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, which occurs in Toronto February 26 to March 2, 1902, is an event of such importance that the organization responsible for this gathering is naturally attracting much attention. If the enterprise of a few men, most of them of little culture, wrought such great results in the first Christian century, the Movement which promises to bring together in a great missionary gathering in Toronto 2,500 students and professors from nearly 500 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada and which is represented on the field by over 1,800 missionaries is certainly worthy of consideration.

The significance of this Movement to institutions of higher learning is very manifest to all who can compare the American College of twenty years ago with the same institution to-day. Then there rarely existed so favorable a sympathy even as apathy with regard to the missionary enterprise; there was absolute ignorance or thoughtlessness concerning the subject. In the vast majority of our colleges missionary meetings were non-existent; missionary libraries were as exceptional as fossil toothed-birds; contributions to aid in the world's evangelization and college-supported missionaries were equally infrequent; downright mission study was almost unthinkable; and candidates for the foreign field, feeling the chill of an unsympathetic or scoffing environment, kept their high ambitions locked within their own breasts. To-day these conditions are totally reversed, and almost wholly because of the Student Volunteer Movement and its strong ally, the missionary committee of the college Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Association. Travelling secretaries of the Movement visit some 300 colleges each year, carrying with them the appeal of the non-Christian world and putting new life and methods into existing missionary machinery. Missionary reading and study, missionary meetings and giving, and intelligent prayer for missions are the rule instead of the exception and each year they are becoming more effective. Under this new order missions take a rightful and honored place in the student's estimation. Volunteers, literally by the thousand, are naturally won and begin in undergraduate days a wise study and preparation for their important work. Their association in Boards is helpful to them personally and is an aid to the strong propagation, both within and without the institution, of the missionary idea. Probably no single missionary force outside the missionary boards is so effective as the summer campaign and winter deputation work of these volunteers.

What is the significance to the churches of this great student uprising? When our choicest young men and women are freely offering their lives for the non-Christian world, surely the trifling sacrifice of financial support and the exercise of prayerful interest in these young volunteers, are but as dust in the balance in comparison with the great renunciation which these students have made. No clarion call has come to the churches in

all the Christian centuries that should be so awakening and effective. The Volunteers' watchword, "The Evangelization of the World in this Generation," has put new life and purpose into 5,000 young men and women; and when understood as a sane call to the Church to consider its responsibility toward an unevangelized generation that in a few years must pass beyond her reach, it should be an equally powerful factor in her own thought and activities. It is the divine imperative of the Gospels, plus the inspiring energy that should come from clearly apprehended duty. We may certainly expect that one result of the coming Convention will be to bring before the American Christians, as never before, the solemn issues at stake, and the urgent call to participate in so glorious an enterprise.

PATRIOTISM vs CREED.

We take patriotism in its ordinary sense to be, that love of country which constrains one to serve it by advancing what he considers to be its interests in any way, material, social, intellectual, moral or spiritual. Different classes of patriotic citizens may be impelled to service in many various ways according to their taste, sense of duty, or capacity. The poet Burns, whose patriotism can never be questioned, wished

"For pair auld Scotland's sake,
Some useful plan or work to make,
Or sing a sang at least."

So the teacher, the learned professor, the preacher like the prophets of Israel of old, may all with high patriotic feeling serve their country in their way; and so also may the great leaders in industry, the merchant princes, upright judges, wise farseeing statesmen, single-minded, clean handed politicians. Of all these we have had already in our brief history as a nation many noble instances. Conspicuous among these in our own day have been the late Sir John A. Macdonald, and are now Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Lord Strathcona and many more. At the present moment very patriotic efforts are being made to advance the material interests of the country by improving our transportation facilities, finding new and the best markets for all that our country can produce.

An instance and illustration of this latter kind of patriotism is furnished by the offer of the premier of Ontario, of \$5,000 for five years, to open and keep up in London, England, a sample room to make known to the parent country the products of Canada and increase their sale. Nothing is more alien to the spirit of patriotism, or more dead to every noble sentiment than greed to make money. In the same paper in which we find this patriotic proposal of Mr. Ross made, we see also by individual greed it may be neutralized. Great as the services are which our great railways have rendered to the country in the past, and are now rendering it in promoting its material interests, they are also the greatest sinners in being ready to sacrifice everything, if only they they can increase their dividends. Of course great railways which have cost millions to build, and which cost millions of dollars to keep up, cannot be run at a loss simply from patriotism. But it is not too much to expect that they should deal fairly

and justly by the people who have given millions of their money to help build and maintain them. It is notorious that our railways do not act even justly in this respect, and are unpatriotic to a degree. At the Western Dairymen's Convention, it was shown by one well informed member of it present, that during the season of 1899, Canadians were charged for the transportation of cheese, bacon, butter, apples and cattle produced in Canada, \$1,000,000 more than would have been charged American shippers had the same articles been produced in the United States. Instances of this kind could easily be indefinitely multiplied, not on the part of railway companies only, but in many other kinds of business in which the best directed efforts of patriotism to advance the material interests of the country are thwarted by greed. The men who palm off upon a market home or foreign, at a good price, a Canadian article inferior to what it professes to be, and what the buyer understood he was getting, is not truly patriotic, however loud his professions to the contrary may be.

No advice could be of more value to young men entering upon or engaged in business, than that given out of the fulness of a wide experience by one who has himself won success, especially such success as has made his name known in business circles in the whole Dominion. Addressing a debating club a short time ago upon, "A young man's opportunities and responsibilities," Mr. J. W. Flavelle, of the Robert Simpson Company, Toronto, warned young men against the folly of worshipping at the shrine of money. Comparing opportunities in Canada with those of other countries he used the following language which we earnestly commend to all our young men readers especially to those who fancy their opportunities in this country are very limited. "Trace the extent of this great country, think of her resources, think of her mines, her fisheries, her forests, her streams and lakes, her seaboard east and west, her great and fertile plains, and then get down upon your knees and thank God you are a citizen of no mean country, a citizen of a country with possibilities and opportunities for young men second to none in this wide world—opportunities in letters, in academic life, in Parliamentary life, where men of character and purpose are sorely needed; opportunities in business, in finance, in transportation and all its possibilities. Everywhere there are opportunities, everywhere the field is ripe unto the harvest, and only wanting men. And to you comes the opportunity of supplying this need by fidelity in everyday life and action to the best that is in you."

Men are likely to think that they are living in an age when God is not so strict as in the old days when Achan was slain because of a single disobedience, and the Sabbath-breaker put to death before Sinai. But it is not so. God has not changed, and His laws have not changed. The only difference is that since Christ came we have far more help toward keeping God's laws and living a life of obedience.

Yes, it is safer to be a little bit easy on the poor tramp. It may be that if your home was as bad as his you would be a tramp, too, before to-morrow night!