

taken by the Moderator, the Rev. J. McMurchy of Eldon.

After praise and prayer by the Rev. J. Machar, D.D.,

The Chairman called upon the Rev. J. C. Muir, D.D., to address the meeting.

He said: It was by no means putting the best foot forward to begin with him. He would not, however, detain them long, but merely make a few remarks to allow the audience time to compose themselves to listen to the speakers who were prepared afterwards to address them. Among the subjects on which they were to be addressed the efforts in aid of missionary and other enterprises of Christian benevolence making by the young, would, he understood, be one. This was a novel feature presented in the social aspect of our innovating times. It was not the fashion in the days of our fathers thus to bring children forward. That many should regard these Juvenile Missionary Societies with distrust or but half approval was not therefore to be wondered at. There was danger of spoiling the minds of our young people by bringing them prematurely before the public to receive such liberal doses of praise as were usually doled out to them. Still, with all drawbacks, he was disposed greatly to rejoice in these combinations of the young; for such purposes, and to regard it as a most hopeful sign of good things to come, when the God of all grace was thus tracing channels from the very fountain heads of Christian society, along which the streams of salvation were to flow forth to all the ends of the earth. These Juvenile Missionary Societies bear much the same relation to the larger associations of their adult cotemporaries as the little brooks that run among the hills to the great rivers which water the wide-extended plains through which they pass in the latter part of their course on their way to the mighty ocean. Each little rill, as it flows through its own little sequestered nook, seems to have nothing to do but to sparkle and sport itself, a thing of beauty more than use, having little land to fertilize, a mere fringe for its own adorning, but their streams meet and mingle and form the broad currents which spread fertility far and wide around them. We hold it then for a sure token that the time is at hand when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the whole earth as the waters cover the channels of the sea, seeing that God is putting it into the hearts of the young of His Church to aid in sending forth those by whom knowledge is to be increased. We look with much satisfaction on those little brooks, which run among the hills, as a pledge that waters will not fail from the channels of Christian enterprise in the generations to come.

The Chairman then called upon Mr. John Paton of Kingston.

He said: There are some subjects on which all are agreed, and therefore arguments in their support cannot greatly strengthen the cause. One of these is the usefulness of Sabbath schools, a question this day under consideration of the Synod, and respecting which the Rev. Dr. Muir has just addressed the meeting. I have somewhere read of a most successful appeal made by an eloquent orator and celebrated divine, which for brevity and force has rarely been equalled. It was on an anniversary occasion, and the schools in aid of whom the collection was made were assembled in the body of the Church, the rest of the spacious edifice being filled by a large and expectant audience. The preacher ascended the pulpit, but to the surprise of every one made no allusion in his sermon to the cause he was to plead. At the close of the service he paused, pointed to the assembled children and to the plates about to receive

the offerings, then lifted his hand up towards Heaven as if to remind them that there was a witness on high of what might this day be done. We can imagine the result. Such liberality was that day manifested as surprised every one, and encouraged the hearts of those who watched over the Institution. And so we need but to look to our Sabbath schools for our strongest arguments in their support, for near to the heart of every faithful minister are the young of his flock, and well may we care for their welfare.

My object this evening is to speak of one mode of benefiting our Sabbath schools, of increasing their interest and efficiency in the Juvenile Mission now in operation. To render a school efficient we should strive to make attendance there no hard task to the scholars. Instead of a wearisomeness rather let it be the happiest hour of the whole week to every one connected with it. A few years since I had the privilege of visiting the Great Exhibition of 1851 in London, and spent a long day in its spacious galleries and courts. From every clime had been there collected the products of man's industry and skill, and no landwork or labour under the sun was without some specimen. But around a small object with which man had little to do was ever gathered an admiring crowd. It had been found in some unfathomable mine, fashioned by the Creator of the universe with such marvellous skill that the alchemist has ever been baffled as he strove to produce a similar gem. It was the great Koh-i-noor diamond, so precious that great bars of iron were riveted all around it to keep at a distance every dishonest hand. So strong was the cage that no hammer could break in—and yet a small key in the hands of any one who knew how to use it, and a gentle turn to the lock, would at once lay open the jewel. So with the heart of a child. Like some diamond it sends its bright rays abroad through the senses, and yet the might or strength of man can no more conquer that heart than could it break open the great diamond's encircling bars. But apply the key of love, gain the affections of your youthful charge, and, with God's blessing, the prize may soon be yours. If we could but gain this key, soon would our schools be filled to overflowing, and we would find teachers in abundance coming to our aid, not mere youths or girls, whose proper place is in the Bible class, but the best and wisest men and women, for why should not such assist in the great work of Sabbath school instruction, the best preparative for the more familiar duties of family fireside training? Well may we then labour to render interesting our Sabbath schools, and in this work the Juvenile Mission claims your attention.

The position which Britain now fills among the nations of the Earth is a proud one, for in Europe she alone can await the progress of events without fear. May God grant that the swords of our soldiers, so lately reddened by Crimean and Indian strife, may not again be unsheathed for the battle. And yet we must bear in mind that Britain has just emerged from a struggle for her very existence as a first-class power, for, had India been lost, that would have followed. On the continent of Asia the sceptre of our gracious Queen is now extended over upwards of 150 millions, who are plunged in dark heathenism or under Mahomedan delusion. Why call we France Catholic? Because the majority of her people profess that faith—and Turkey Mahomedan for the same reason. Apply the same rule to ourselves, my friends, and you must admit that Britain is as yet a *heathen nation*, because the great majority under British rule either worship idols or adhere to the false prophet.

And what have we done for India? Sent

Missionaries there. Yes in some proportion, as if there were but one Minister to the entire population of Upper Canada. We have planted schools too—but without the Bible, and what have these done? If you teach a Hindoo that this earth is not a level plain resting on the back of an elephant; if you prove that it is not surrounded by seas of melted butter, of milk, &c.; if you teach him the merest elements of natural science, you destroy his whole system of religious belief and leave him an *infidel*. Were it not better to have left the multitudes, who have been thus instructed in many of our Godless schools, with at least some respect for supreme beings, though there were false gods, with some fear of future punishment, than to have plunged them in the hopeless sea of rank infidelity. Such then are some of the claims of our Juvenile Indian Missions.

The operations of the Orphanage Scheme are carried on under the superintendence of the General Assembly's Missionaries among the females of India, a class, the elevation of which is of essential importance to the progress of Christianity. That great missionary, Dr. Duff, has long since proved that missions, to be successful, must commence with the young. Our Scheme is to gather female orphans into the Institutions, where they are individually supported by Sabbath schools, the members of which are thus made to feel a direct personal interest in the work. After receiving a Christian education, these females are sent forth as teachers, often becoming the wives of native catechists, and by their influence and example are doing good service in the work of christianizing India. The late insurrection in India, however, threw many difficulties in our way, one being the impossibility of enlarging the number of orphans, and so meeting the applications of our schools to have proteges assigned to them. To meet this want, a school has lately been opened in Calcutta called the "Canadian School," at which over 30 are now in attendance, with prospects of a large increase, should our funds admit. The teacher is a native catechist, strongly recommended to us, who also labours among the population around him, when not engaged in school. To this peculiarly Canadian effort all are now invited to contribute, and from our Sabbath Schools a most encouraging response has been received.

Such is a brief account of the Juvenile Mission, and with another thought I will conclude. Why are we now preparing to send forth a devoted servant of Christ to labour among God's ancient people, the Jews. It is from a simple desire to benefit them. Another motive is probably felt by all of us. The desire to be the means of watering others, in the hope that upon ourselves may fall some drops of the refreshing shower. And so with our Sabbath schools. They cast their bread upon the waters, and to them it will return before many days. It will return when we see our numbers increased, and our children flocking to the open doors where there is much to profit and to interest. The bread will be found again when we who have labored but feebly in this work have gone to our eternal home, and when those children are taking our places in the Churches, there to carry into effect the lessons of Christian activity and benevolence now forcibly taught. It will return when our youth by their interest in the salvation of others are led to care for their own souls, when they seek and find for themselves that Saviour, the knowledge of whom they are now extending to their brethren fellow-subjects. And it may be that this bread now cast upon the waters will be found at the very gates of the Heavenly Jerusalem, when those who were snatched as brands from the burning shall bless and welcome to their Father's house those who were made instruments in teaching them