

of the character of the meetings, to overhear the religious conversation that went on before they began between people who evidently were unknown to each other. There pervaded the meetings from first to last a most social feeling, and as often the same people met in the same part of the hall, before the close they felt like friends of one another. All denominations were there and the Catholicity of the audience was well represented on the platform and by those who in turn presided. So genuinely Christian and brotherly was the pervading feeling that not a note was uttered during the whole convention by which it was possible to tell to what denomination any one belonged. The unity and deeply spiritual character of the subjects presented, and the method of their treatment, while it had not been so, was as if it had been pre-arranged and kept steadily in view, and it tended much to deepen and intensify the impression produced.

The simplicity of the management and conducting of the large and thronging numbers was a most helpful and agreeable feature of those meetings. There was no fussy, self-important manager-in-chief rushing hither and thither, hailing now this one and now that, distracting, vexing and worrying the minds of quiet people. Everything went on with a smoothness as if somehow the convention ran of itself with the quietness of a well-oiled machine. When the audience had assembled and before the formal opening, Mr. Jacobs, who led the singing in admirable style and spirit, appeared on the platform and gave out distinctly, quietly, as if it were really the worship of God which was to be engaged in, a suitable hymn, and accompanied on the piano by a lady, or on the organ by a gentleman whose demeanor was serious and becoming, the praise was conducted in a way that was simply delightful. There was none of the distraction of a large choir, not half of whom perhaps had any real heart-interest in the worship. And such singing! so led, such a swelling volume and tide of praise; it was gladdening, uplifting, enlarging to the heart and making it receptive. It was to our mind a model praise service, and happy would the churches be that could or would just copy it.

The speakers and soul of the convention on the human side were only two, and they were enough; men different, but both of them men of great power. There was Rev. Dr. Pierson, a man of high intellectuality, ratiocinative, whose heart truth must reach and impress through the reason and understanding, and who instinctively seeks to reach others in that way; a full man, with a wealth of knowledge of the Scriptures in the vernacular and original, and of secular science, which, with great facility, he draws upon and uses for illustration, who has reached his present spiritual standing only after some very humbling experiences, and who has still, we should say, no small struggle to keep up against the flesh not yet thoroughly subdued; making freely frequent personal references, and of a fiery energy; he was the Paul of the occasion. Rev. Mr. Murray was more of the emotional, meditative; the purely spiritual, mystical we might call it in the theological sense dominating him, dwelling in more ethereal, purer, spiritual atmosphere than the other, more wrapped up and completely absorbed with the presence of the Divine Being, with more immediate and clearer spiritual vision of divine things, as if they were the very element in which he lived moved and had his being; he was the apostle John of the two, the man who sat closest to His Master and leaned his head upon His breast. His prayers, his appeals, his wonderful insight into, his knowledge and laying bare before people the working of their own hearts, will never be forgotten by many who heard him, and came under his magnetic spiritual power.

#### YOUNG PEOPLES' SOCIETIES MISSIONARY CONTRIBUTIONS.

PERHAPS after the correspondence which has taken place in our columns on this subject it may appear that it is one on which, according to the old proverb, "the least said is soonest mended." And yet perhaps a few words to help to dispel any little haze upon the subject which may still be left will not be out of place. We need not bear testimony to the excellent spirit which has marked the correspondence; that is what we would expect from the men and has been manifest to all. The little apparent conflict of interests which has arisen, has

evidently been due to causes, none of which imply blame to anyone concerned.

The first one we may note is a prevailing impression on the minds of many, for which we suspect there is good reason, that an undue proportion of the contributions of our Young Peoples' Societies, Christian Endeavor and others, goes to the support of objects, which though good, are yet extra-denominational, even although our own denominational objects, equally good, are enfeebled for want of adequate support. All will agree that the effort to correct that evil and put our denominational Christian objects and work in the highest state of efficiency is legitimate and right. The next point which may be noted is that the slight variance which has arisen, was due to a desire, which all will welcome as most commendable, to advance the cause of missions among the young people of our Church. The immediate cause of difference as to the means taken to promote this object, by those who took action, was a misunderstanding of the scope, perhaps also to some extent of the purpose of the letter of Dr. Cochrane, and his position in regard to the whole matter. What he intended as a private communication and the expression of personal opinions were understood in both cases to be official and authoritative. This was most innocently done, and not unnatural perhaps in the zeal and anxiety for missions felt by those who drew up and sent forth the circular which led to this correspondence.

The correspondence having taken place, and Dr. Cochrane's explanation having been given, it will of course follow that from the circular will be erased, the clause assigning British Columbia for the young people's support. There could not be, it is certain any disposition on the part of any one to interfere with the Home Mission Committee's management of their own department of the Church's work. The scheme, however, so far as Foreign Missions are concerned, we understand, will be carried out, and the young people of the Church are accordingly asked to apply their offerings for Foreign Missions this year towards the support of the Mission in Honan. We may repeat what we have already said that we regard the scheme as having some good features not the least of which is that, it will make correspondence between the societies and missionaries more close and personal, and if as is proposed, different fields are taken up one year after another, the results must be satisfactory avoiding as it will the narrowness usually resulting from specialization. We recognize, however, that this does not apply in the same degree to the Home Mission fields and that what may be the best policy in the one may not be so in the other.

We may add by way of caution that, while in our Church there is no desire to exhibit or cultivate the narrowness which would strictly limit all contributions to purely denominational Christian objects, wisdom and care should be shown in giving to those which are extra-denominational and that there should also be the most loyal, hearty and liberal support of our own Church work through the ordinary Church channels. There needs to be constant watchfulness exercised in the addition to the machinery, so to speak, for carrying on our Church work, as there is a natural tendency so to increase it that the attention is directed to and taken up with the means rather than with the end.

How to secure the most loyal and hearty support for all our Church schemes and direct it so as to be most effective are questions of the utmost importance. As things actually are, other schemes of our Church, in addition to Home and Foreign Missions, or special fields, have received support from our Young Peoples' Societies in the past and have recognized claims upon them, especially Augmentation and French Evangelization, and while it may be hoped that the missionary contributions (Home and Foreign) of these societies will be greatly increased, these other objects may fully expect that their support will not be lessened, but rather increased also. Seeing that the General Assembly at its last meeting sanctioned a permanent, standing committee to deal with the whole subject of Young Peoples' Societies and their relations with the Church, we may in a few months expect some valuable light and leading from this committee, and in the meantime let those societies, both as a matter of duty and of privilege, do their utmost for the interests of the Church and the cause of Christ in the future even more than in the past.

## Teacher and Scholar.

BY REV. W. A. J. MARTIN, TORONTO.

Sep. 22nd } JOSHUA RENEWING THE COVENANT. { Josh. xxiv  
1895. } 14-25.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Josh. xxiv. 24.

MEMORY VERSES.—xiv. 15.

CATECHISM.—Q. 38.

Home Readings.—M. Exodus. xix. 1-25. Th. Deut. xxviii. 1-22. W. Deut. xxviii. 23-40. T. Deut. xxviii. 41; xxix. 1. F. I. Kings xviii. 19-39. S. Deut. xxvii. 1-10; Josh. viii. 30-35. Su. Josh. xxiv. 1-25.

The life of Joshua is drawing near to a close. For probably about twenty-five years he has had the direction and control of Israel, while Canaan was being taken possession of, divided among the several tribes, and gradually brought under cultivation by the Israelites themselves. Though there have been several years of peaceful enjoyment of the good land, Joshua has not been idle or unattentive to the condition of things among the people. He has noted their proneness to depart from the living God; and now as he feels that his years are numbered, and that to some one else must be entrusted the supervision of the people he makes one last effort to "bind the wandering hearts" anew to Jehovah. All Israel is gathered to Shechem; and there Joshua recounts briefly what God had done for them from the call of Abraham to that day; testifies that not one good thing has failed of what God spake; and warns that God will be just as sure to visit infidelity with evil as He has been to keep His promise; and then calls upon them to renew their Covenant. Let us try to array our thoughts under the heads: "The Choice Called For," "The Choice Made," "The Choice Confirmed."

I. **The Choice Called For.**—After recounting God's goodness, Joshua calls upon the people to fear the Lord and to give Him the service of loyal hearts; instead of the half-hearted service which apparently many had been offering. Some of the people seem to have professed outward loyalty to Jehovah, while they secretly practised the worship of such gods as their fathers had served in Mesopotamia and during the Egyptian bondage. We have no certain information as to the character of this worship. We know, however, that when Jacob with his wives and children stole away from the service of Laban, "Rachel stole the teraphim of her father," and that Laban called these his "gods," so that household idols in some form or other were worshipped, but whether as themselves gods, or as symbols of the true God, we cannot tell. Either was of course contrary to the law of God. Joshua's call was, therefore, to a clear cut choice between Jehovah worship in all its purity, and idol-worship pure and simple. There must henceforth be no pretence, the people must be out and out for God or against Him, and are therefore called upon to put themselves on record as to where they shall choose to stand. And then Joshua, to show which he believes the people ought to choose, declares "as for me and my house we will serve the Lord." It is right for us not only to call upon others to make choice of Christ, but to set them an example by putting ourselves boldly and unreservedly upon His side and undertaking to use our influence and authority to secure loyal service to Christ on the part of those over whom we have control.

II. **The Choice Made.**—The people with one accord followed Joshua's example, and expressed the utmost abhorrence at the suggestion that they should forsake the Lord who had wrought such marvels both for their deliverance from bondage and to secure them in the possession of their promised land. They had been careless and half-hearted in Jehovah's service, but when they were called upon to surrender it, were startled at the proposition. Is it not true of very many around us? is it not true of our own hearts that we do not appreciate the blessedness of God's service as we ought? At some crisis in our lives we realize the comfort and blessedness of being Christ's, but we do not "lean upon our Beloved" from day to day, in such a way as to find great delight in His presence. We would not forsake our Lord, we would be shocked at the suggestion; but it is just such half-hearted following that induces such suggestions from the tempter, and, alas, too often, leads to denial of the Master. Israel, however, at once declared unreservedly for Jehovah with a "God forbid" that it should be otherwise. Their choice was a virtual pledge that henceforth all other form of worship, than that of Jehovah according to His own appointment, will be put away and Him alone will they serve. Joshua's heart must have rejoiced, but he did not at once take it for granted that all he desired had been secured. He sought to put beyond doubt the question of the people's understanding of the position they had taken. Therefore he reminded the people of what the service of Jehovah demanded of them: His holiness, His jealousy for His honor, His uncompromising exclusion of all other gods as objects of worship—these and other things would render true service of Jehovah a difficult thing, and failure would merit and receive punishment. Doubtless Joshua desired to test the people's sincerity, and at the same time to bring them to realize their need of something other than their own service to commend them to God. The people stood firm, however, and reiterated their choice: "Nay; but we will serve the Lord."

III. **The Choice Confirmed.**—Satisfied at last that the choice made was made with understanding, and in sincere dependence upon God's grace, Joshua proceeded to solemnly ratify it. First, the people are put upon oath as to their sincerity and determination to serve Jehovah. "We are witnesses," they say, "that we have chosen Jehovah to serve Him." Then they are called upon to put away everything inconsistent with the choice they have declared, and to yield their whole hearts unto Jehovah the God of Israel. They must not be content with profession but must follow it up with "works meet for repentance." And, lastly, after a renewed declaration of their faith in Jehovah and their determination to obey Him alone, Joshua engaged them in solemn covenant with Jehovah, as had been done at Sinai, and again on the plains of Moab, by Moses, and made a record of what had been done in the book of the law of the Lord to be a "statute and an ordinance" unto the people forever. We are not told anything of the ceremonies which attend this solemn covenant rite, but doubtless they were such as went to deepen upon the people's minds the solemnity of their undertaking and to impress them with their need of reconciliation with, and grace from God to enable them to be faithful to their undertakings.