

HELP FOR THE STRUGGLING.

THIS is the age of organized benevolence. Like individual action it has both its advantages and its dangers. The individual sometimes gives and acts indiscriminately. He is liable to be imposed upon. The wily beggar can, at a glance detect the soft spot in his nature, and will at once seek to operate on his purse by means of the weakness he discovers. The kind hearted individual finds out that he has been victimized. He feels wounded in his self-respect; he has, in fact, been sold. An application on behalf of a really more necessitous but less plausible subject is presented to him. It is of no use. He knows better than give money to the undeserving. He was cheated before, but he won't be again.

Societies for benevolent objects are not perfect. They may not be so easily imposed upon, except occasionally when some wide-awake schemer can industriously importune some individual member, who, before he is aware of it, gets committed as the champion of one whose ingenuity surpasses his deserts. A society organized for purposes of practical benevolence will be more systematic in its management and operations than is found to be the case with individual effort; but it lacks the valuable impulse that personal communication with the necessitous is fitted to impart. The active workers, the society officials and a few friends do enjoy this great advantage; but the larger number composing the society do their benevolence, as some people perform their devotions, by proxy. This is not said with a design to promote indifference in relation to any charitable organization whatever. It is rather to call attention to the fact that all such institutions would gain immensely in efficiency and usefulness if a more general personal interest were taken in their operations. Too many of us are ever ready to cry out, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

In New York a new charitable association is filling a felt want. It is doing a great and good work under the humble designation of "The Loan Relief Association." In all conditions of social existence there are times of distress and anxiety. No home, however securely guarded, can exclude misfortune, sickness, sore trial, financial reverses. Many have friends and resources. They can tide over their difficulties with ease compared with the difficulties that beset the helpless lot of the friendless and the poor. Christian capitalists, like others, will place their loans where they will be safest and where they will bring the best returns. The suffering and afflicted who have no better security to offer than honesty of purpose and their own labour may plead their cause in vain. To risk helping such may be humane and Christian, but it isn't business and that settles the matter.

The promoters of this new scheme of active benevolence have been trying their experiment on a limited scale. Its sphere for the present has been mostly confined to one ward of the city. It will be watched with interest. Its failure or success will be a guide to those who are devoted to practical working for the benefit of the distressed. The society employs a missionary nurse, and provides necessary comforts and medicines for the sick, supplies Bibles and reading matter, gives excursions in summer to women and children, provides medical and legal counsel, which is supplied by members of the society belonging to these professions, and the loaning of money in small sums to help the deserving in tiding over emergencies. The annual meeting of the Loan Relief Association was held lately, and among the speakers who eloquently advocated its interest was Dr. John Hall.

It may be urged that harm might come to the class this society seeks to help by making them feel their dependence, and injuring their self-respect; it might even perpetuate the very evils it endeavours to remove. Such efforts some conscientious people think have a tendency to make the struggling class improvident and wasteful. Much interest is felt in the criminal and vicious classes, and eloquent pleas are urged in their behalf. This is right; but it is time that the honest, suffering, self-respecting poor should have a chance. At all events, benevolent efforts on the lines followed by the New York Loan Relief Association are full of promise.

THE Winnipeg Free Press says: Within the last week Dr. King has received from the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland, a grant of £100 sterling, in behalf of Manitoba College, with the assurance of the interest with which its increasing prosperity is regarded by that branch of the Presbyterian Church.

Books and Magazines.

THE CANADA EDUCATIONAL MONTHLY. (Toronto: Canada Educational Monthly Publishing Co.)—The number for the current month presents its readers with a rich variety of very valuable papers.

DORCAS. A Magazine of Woman's Handiwork. (New York: Dorcas Publishing Co.)—This recently established monthly has a special and useful mission to fulfil. It is just what such a publication ought to be.

THE ENGLISH ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE. (New York: Macmillan & Co.)—The February number of this attractive monthly opens with a capital short story by Grant Allen. The descriptive papers, copiously illustrated with excellent engravings, are interesting and instructive.

CANADIAN METHODIST MAGAZINE. Edited by Rev. W. H. Withrow, D.D. (Toronto: William Briggs.)—The February number of this excellent magazine contains a variety of interesting, instructive and profitable papers by able writers. Several of the articles are finely illustrated.

BIBLE HEATHENS; OR, CHURCH AND WORLD IN SCRIPTURE TIMES. By Charles Martin Grant, B.D., minister of the parish of St. Mark, Dundee. (London: James Nisbet & Co.)—We have much satisfaction in directing attention to this handsome volume. Its perusal has afforded us extreme pleasure. The literary merits of the work are quite marked, the author possessing the art of using striking original phrases as well as that of weaving the sayings of distinguished writers into his sentences. The opening chapter treats the stewardship of the Church in a novel and interesting manner. His remarks upon "Election" are fresh, presenting the view of the elect being the faithful and noble who are as stewards and ambassadors to others. The election of some does not imply the damnation of others; but rather the responsibility under which they lie to bring salvation to others. The Church is thus elected for the very purpose of evangelizing the world. In the succeeding chapters Mr. Grant discourses upon distinguished "heathens" or Gentiles who, while not originally of the Church, were endowed with gifts of prophecy and grace, and became shining lights in the midst of profound darkness. The sketch of Job in this view is a very fine piece of writing. Clear analysis, high literary taste, apt and scholarly quotation and appreciation of the purest drama that has ever been penned are marked features. The volume contains many beautiful pictures of noble men and women who were outside of the Church, and brought in by divine favour. The chapter on "Ruth" is a gem, while that upon "Ittai" is highly instructive. We feel sure there will be a demand for this book on this side of the Atlantic, and would like very much to see an American edition of it. The author is a brother of Principal Grant. We quote from the chapter on Ruth: "Pass down the stream of time. Thirteen hundred years have come and gone. The place is the same, Bethlehem, the 'House of Bread.' Another mother, the 'Mater Dolorosa' of Christendom, gives birth to another son. He and she are descendants of Boaz the Hebrew and Ruth the Moabitess. The women celebrated the birth of the one; but the angels sing their anthem of praise to the other. The reconciliation of the world's antagonisms was forecasted in the child of the son of Israel and of the daughter of Moab; it is accomplished in the child who was the Son of Man and the Son of God; for 'He is our Peace who hath made both (Jew and Gentile) one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition.'" "Dissociate not the one scene from the other, for they are joined by a unity of place and a continuity of purpose. They are parts of one grand, world-reconciling and world-saving drama. From the Bethlehem of Boaz pass to the Bethlehem of Joseph; from the motherhood of Ruth to the motherhood of Mary; from the child Obed to the child Jesus. Bethlehem unites both, for it is the holy home of both; the one is the forecast, the other is the fulfilment; the one is the anticipation, the other is the accomplishment."

RECEIVED:—WORDS AND WEAPONS, edited by Rev. George F. Pentecost, D.D., Brooklyn (New York: Joseph H. Richards), THE CONVERTED CATHOLIC, edited by Father O'Connor (New York: James A. O'Connor), THE ENGLISH PULPIT OF TO-DAY (Westfield, N. Y.: Alfred Rose), QUEEN'S COLLEGE JOURNAL (Kingston: British Whig Printing House).

THE MISSIONARY WORLD.

LADY DOCTORS FOR INDIA.

This appeal for "lady doctors" in connection with zenana mission work is from Miss Falconer, a granddaughter of Dr. McDonald, the "Apostle of the North," who is labouring in India.

I should like to send a few lines to our home friends about the need of lady doctors for zenana work, which again and again is brought up to us in our work amongst the women of India. Not being a medical missionary myself, I cannot enter so fully into the subject as one engaged in medical work could do; but as constantly coming in contact with suffering ones amongst our pupils in the zenanas and our children in the schools, I may at least ask a word of sympathy and help for these poor things who cannot plead for themselves. Again and again have I been asked if I knew "doctors' work" (as they express it), and have always had to give the same answer, each time, I may say, with greater feelings of regret: "No; I wish I did."

I asked one poor girl whom I visit, who is not able to walk owing to some weakness in the limbs, if she would see the native mission doctor if I brought him. At first she stood out against it, but after a great deal of persuasion she agreed to his coming if she might wear a "burga." This is a sort of over-all garment which covers the wearer from head to foot, with two small pieces of network for the eyes. She put out an arm and a leg from under this "burga," so the pulse was felt and the limb examined in this style; but the tongue could not be shown, as it would involve uncovering the face. It was with great difficulty that the doctor was allowed in at all, and there are hundreds who would be shocked if one proposed such a thing as a doctor seeing them. I think the nature of that girl's disease is such that it can never be cured, but with proper care and attention a measure of strength might be given. And, oh, how many there are who have to endure perhaps a lifetime of pain because there is no one whose advice they can have! And in how many cases will the knowledge of medicine gain admission for the lady missionary into a zenana, where otherwise the message of the great Physician's love might never be heard.

FROM THE NOTE-BOOK OF A FEMALE MEDICAL MISSIONARY.

"This morning a Brahmin appeared at my door, one of the most popular men of his caste. His lips were quivering with emotion. 'I have brought my wife, the mother of my six children, for you to save her. She has been gored by a cow and only you can help us.'

"I went out, and there in a bullock cart sat the sufferer, her sons beside her, from the youth of sixteen to the babe of two years; the old grandmother and the jewelled daughters trudging behind. We led the poor woman in; it was a ghastly wound, and she was faint. The silence was broken by her husband asking if I could save her. 'If God bless my efforts, and you use no heathen incantations should fever come on, I may do much for her.' I dressed the wound, and they returned home. In the evening I went to see her and found her doing well. After attending to the invalid I spoke to the friends who were gathered around her thus: 'There is a woman like me. God has given her children and given me children. She has had many earthly comforts and so have I. When I am in trouble I ask Him to help me, and He has many times. Who can heal this woman so quickly as the great God who made her? I can ask Him to cure her. 'If you are willing, I should like to ask Him to help us all that we make no mistakes, and that He will soon restore her.' The husband was too polite to refuse and said, 'Certainly,' adding to the others, 'She is going to praise the Lord.' It was a great privilege to invite the Holy One into that home, where He had never been asked before. As I finished the prayer, and looked at the sufferer, she was gazing at me with one of the pleasantest smiles I ever saw. 'I shall trust no one but you,' she said, with emphasis.

"Every evening the cart was sent for me; and last night when I said there was no necessity for my going again, the thanks of all were quite oppressive. I told them of Jesus' miracles and His readiness to bless every heart loving and trusting Him. The young ones listened with interest, the wise old women gave civil attention, and the husband looked at me politely and pleasantly, as if I were a harmless enthusiast."

A NEW and handsomely-furnished hall has been opened on the Boulevard Sebastopol, for the use of the McAll Mission.

A COLPORTEUR, who has been labouring for two years at Seoul, the capital of Corea, reports seventy men desirous of joining a Christian Church, and one in another city reports twenty. The last door closed against the Gospel is opening wide in Corea.