

that, the confidence he had known as a servant of God—the reality of his own personal faith—seemed shaken by this new experience. It was the critical hour.

What had brought it upon him? What was in the letter received that hour from the rooms of the Foreign Society in Boston that had stricken him as swiftly and pitilessly as a jungle fever or the plague?

The letter was full of tenderness and sympathy, of personal regard, of brotherly kindness. The secretary had done everything in his power to soften the stroke. But he was compelled to say that the Baptists had not given enough to meet the budget, that the debt was now very heavy, and that retrenchment was inevitable. The Board recognized the justice of his plea for a helper, but not only must refuse that, but did not see how his own work could be maintained while he was on leave. Perhaps he could suggest a way, etc.

So this was the outcome of his long years of self-sacrifice. Worn out, absolutely needing change of climate, he must leave this field without a leader, when the demands were greater than ever. The pleas from the out-stations had been so pitiful that they had taken his last ounce of nerve force. He had dreamed of reinforcement, and awakened to retrenchment!

The fateful word burned itself into his brain. Oh, if only the church members at home could know what that word meant to the missionary on the field, surely they would never allow it to be heard again! Had they ever practised retrenchment? The last report said 64 cents a year per member for foreign missions—yet the field-work must be crippled! His people must be left—

His people! That was the crushing thought. It was not merely that they

should be left without a shepherd; but how could he explain to them? What could he say for the Baptists of America, living in the Christian land of liberty and light? How could he save the faith of his people in Christianity, when Christians knew how millions of heathen were dying without knowledge of a Saviour, yet could not give 100 cents a year to send the Gospel to them?

Again he sank on his knees: "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do!"

They found him as he had fallen. Providence spared him the humiliation of explanation. His death might save his people's faith. For him it was not retrenchment, but enlargement!—"Missions."

#### CIRCLE NEWS.

Houghton 1st.—We held a very pleasant and profitable Thank-offering meeting on the 7th of November at the home of one of our members, Mrs. William Bain. Our President was able to be with us, for which we were truly thankful, having been laid aside for several months. Our Secretary told when our Mission Circle was first organized, which was August 13th, 1886, with eleven members, five of that number being alive and two present at our meeting. In all those years we have been, with God's help, able to keep our light burning, sometimes brightly, sometimes dimly. Our pastor gave us a talk of a few minutes on some of the difficulties and hardships of a Home Mission pastor. After a short programme, we served light refreshments. During this year we have again taken up Home Mission work, and also reorganized our Band with seventeen members. We meet at the parsonage for our regular monthly Circle meetings.

MRS. J. C. FOSTER.