

## STUDENTS' MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF KNOX'S COLLEGE.

In publishing a new constitution of the above-mentioned society, it may not be improper to give a brief sketch of its origin.

On the 26th of March, 1845, a few young men, preparing themselves for the work of the Ministry, met in a small building in the City of Toronto. Impressed with the truth of the Gospel, they had assembled, for the purpose of forming themselves into a Missionary Society. Unble, from the smallness of their numbers, to accomplish much for the cause of missions, they resolved, at first, merely to procure missionary intelligence from every possible quarter. Roused by what they thus learned of God's doings among the heathen, they felt impelled to engage in some direct Missionary work. Their first effort was the raising of a small sum to assist the students of the New College, Edinburgh, in supporting their Missionary in India. In the meanwhile, as their numbers multiplied, their contributions grew in proportion; and their sympathies were called forth in behalf of individuals in their own more immediate neighbourhood. Struck with the spiritual destitution prevailing in some parts of Toronto, they felt constrained to take steps for its amelioration and removal. With this object in view, a system of tract distribution was set on foot, and a number of prayer meetings established throughout the city. Soon afterwards, another field of labor unexpectedly presented itself. By means of an essay delivered by one of the members, the attention of the Society was, in the spring of 1847, directed towards the French Canadian population. They saw hundreds and thousands of their fellow-countrymen perishing for lack of knowledge. They saw the greater portion of the Protestants looking with apathy upon the field of spiritual death that was spread out before them. They perceived with sorrow, that, comparatively speaking, little, very little had been done to enlighten and deliver from spiritual slavery those bondmen of the Romish hierarchy. Impressed with these facts, and alive, in some measure, to the guilt that so many Christians were committing, through their Cain-like neglect of their fellow-countrymen, they felt constrained to make exertions in behalf of a people so ignorant, so enslaved, and so perilously situated on the verge of eternal ruin. The hand of God seemed to be with the Society in carrying out this resolution. Difficulties apparently insurmountable, were removed; crooked places were made straight; and the voice of God in providence, seemed to be saying:—"Let the field of your Missionary effort be among the French Canadian population." In obeying this apparently providential call, the first matter of importance was the selection of a proper Missionary. After much deliberation and prayer, Mr. John Black, one of the students, was selected and set apart for that office. Since the summer of 1847, he has been more or less continuously engaged in the study of the French language; and having made considerable proficiency in it, he has recently more directly entered upon his duties. For some months he has been employed in advocating, throughout Canada West, the claims of the French Canadian Missionary Society. As the fruit of this tour, about the sum of £150 has been collected, and several contributions are continuing to flow in from various sources. In the meantime, Mr. Black has been offered an office of trust and importance, in connection with the above-mentioned institution—an office of which he sees more clearly every day the propriety of accepting. No doubt many difficulties have occurred in the prosecution of the mission, and at times it seemed that to carry it on would be impossible. Opposition arose to it on every side; and especially with those who were unacquainted with the peculiar and solemn circumstances under which the undertaking was commenced. But this opposition has gradually subsided; difficulties now begin to vanish, and the prospect of effectually co-operating

with other Christians in furthering the spread of divine truth among our perishing countrymen, is becoming more promising. And even if we admit that some of the specially cherished designs of the Society shall be frustrated, yet the interest that has been excited in regard to the French Canadian population, among so many of those who may hereafter become watchmen on the walls of Zion, cannot but produce important results.

From this imperfect sketch it will be easily perceived that the Society has gone beyond the original design of its institution. Commenced solely for the purpose of obtaining and diffusing missionary intelligence, it has now embarked in a missionary enterprise of its own. This has rendered it necessary to frame the constitution which follows these remarks. Before, however, we conclude them, one or two further observations seem to be demanded.

We are authorized to state, in behalf of the members of the society in general, that they disclaim all sectarian ends. They are seeking the good of their French fellow-countrymen—not the aggrandizement of their own denomination. If their fellow-countrymen be only freed from the priestly thralldom of the man of sin, they are not over anxious as to the particular Christian body by means of which God may be pleased to accomplish the great work. They feel a deep interest in the welfare of the French Canadian Missionary Society, and rejoice in the prospect that is opened up to their Missionary for co-operating with that noble institution. Long may it spread its truly catholic branches throughout the land, and long may it continue to call forth the united sympathies of every evangelical denomination!

In connection with this point we feel compelled to remark that the Christians of our land have need to arouse themselves, for the danger is imminent. The small cloud of Popery, that a few short years ago seemed no larger than a man's hand, has extended, and is extending its dark mantle over the whole country, shutting out from men heaven's own light—the living word. More and more widely is it stretching itself out; and if efforts—strenuous and unceasing efforts, be not simultaneously made by the Protestant population, the entire land will soon be overspread with the blackness of ignorance, and made to groan beneath the heavy yoke of spiritual despotism. The thick clouds, that portend the coming storm, are already gathering themselves; and how dreary will our beloved land become, if God, in his sovereign wrath, permit the terrific tempest of Popery to fall upon our devoted heads! Well may we cry—Christians of Canada, when will you arise? Duty, self-defence, regard for your liberties, civil and religious, regard for the future prosperity of your land, and for the welfare of your posterity, unite together in calling upon you to buckle on the sword of the Spirit, and go forth to battle against the Goliath of Romanism. By the blood of the martyrs of old, by the agonizing cries of your ancestors, as they mounted up to heaven in the flames of the burning stake; by the bones of martyrs which lay white and bleached on many a hill side; by the love that you bear for God and his word; by the love that you bear for your popery-enslaved countrymen; by the love of liberty that is instinctive in every Briton's heart, we conjure you to prepare for the coming conflict.

## CONSTITUTION

Of the Students' Missionary Society of Knox's College,

(Passed at a special meeting of the Society, held on the 14th of March, 1850.)

ARTICLE I. This Association shall be called "The Students' Missionary Society of Knox's College."

II. Its design shall be, the fostering of a Missionary spirit, and the promoting of Missionary objects, by all available means.

III. Its members shall consist of all students recognized by the Presbyterian Church of Canada, as looking forward to the Ministry, along with

the Professors of the College, and such honorary members as may be from time to time appointed.

IV. The patrons of the Society shall consist of the members of the Professors' Court, and such other individuals as may be chosen from time to time.

V. The regular office-bearers shall consist of a President, Vice-President, a Corresponding, a Recording Secretary, and a Treasurer, who, along with such other members as may be chosen for that purpose, shall constitute a Committee of Management. Five of these shall form a quorum.

## By-Laws.

I. The usual meetings of the Society shall be held on the first Thursday of each month, when an essay, connected with some Missionary subject, shall be read, Missionary intelligence communicated, and the general business of the Society transacted.

II. At the close of each session, the essayists for the following season shall be appointed.

III. At the beginning of each session, a general meeting of the Society shall be held, when the annual report shall be submitted, and office-bearers elected for the ensuing year.

IV. In order that the objects of the Association may be carried out, periodicals, containing Missionary intelligence, shall be procured, and such correspondence maintained as shall be deemed advisable.

V. It shall be considered incumbent on all the members to put forth every suitable effort to obtain funds sufficient for carrying on the operations of the Society.

VI. The funds of the Society shall be specially employed, in aiding the work of evangelization among the French Canadian people.

VII. The Treasurer shall submit, at the annual meeting, a statement of his receipts and expenditure, after it has been examined by two Auditors, who are not members of the Standing Committee. He shall not retain in his hands a larger sum than five pounds; and whenever any funds are received, they shall be deposited in such bank as the Committee may direct.

VIII. Such members of the Society as leave the College, and become preachers of the Word, shall be admitted as Honorary Members.

IX. A temporary committee shall be appointed at the close of each session, for the purpose of transacting the general business of the Society, during the summer months.

X. No alteration shall be made in the above Constitution or By-Laws, unless proposed at a previous meeting, and agreed upon by two-thirds of the Members present.

JOHN GRAY, President.

JOHN ALEXANDER, Rec. Sec.

The following list of Patrons and Honorary Members is subjoined:—

EX OFFICIO PATRONS—Rev. Dr. Willis, Professors H. Esso and W. Lyall, and Rev. A. Gale.

PATRONS (elected by unanimous vote of the Society)—Rev. Dr. Burns and Rev. W. Rintoul.

HONORARY MEMBERS (admitted in accordance with By-Law No 8)—Rev. A. McColl, J. MacKinnon, L. Macpherson, R. Wallace, P. Gray, R. F. Burns, J. Duncan, W. S. Ball, J. Boyd, John Black, J. Ross, A. Hudson, T. Dickson, J. Nisbet, R. Swinton, and Mr. J. Scott.

HONORARY MEMBERS (elected by unanimous vote of the Society)—John Burns, Esq., and Dr. Fraser, Rifle Brigade.

J. G.

J. A.

LETTER FROM THE STUDENTS OF THE FREE CHURCH COLLEGE, EDINBURGH, TO THE STUDENTS OF KNOX'S COLLEGE, TORONTO.

NEW COLLEGE, EDINBURGH,  
7th January, 1850.

DEAR BRETHREN.—In renewing a correspondence which, it is to be hoped, may be mutually