

SHALL WE HELP THE METHODISTS ?

SOME discussion has taken place recently in the columns of the *Montreal Witness* regarding the appeal made to Presbyterians and others by the trustees of the St. James Methodist church for substantial aid in removing the very large debt on their magnificent building. We do not think there is much need why anybody should interfere to prevent members of the Presbyterian Church, who are in a position to do so, from giving as they may feel disposed to this object. It is always easy to invent excuses for not giving, and in this case it is easy enough to find reasons that are something more than excuses. It is perfectly true that our own schemes need more support than they are getting from our wealthier members. But it is seldom indeed that liberality toward's one good cause is increased by refusing another. In this case there is no doubt that the trustees have been improvident in assuming larger liabilities than their situation warranted, but it is easy to be wise after the event and it would be nothing short of a defeat to our common Protestantism to allow the building to be sold for other uses. It is also true that the Methodist Church has rarely shown any conspicuous liberality to objects outside their own denomination, but as Presbyterians we have always prided ourselves on our more Catholic spirit and it would be a pity to belie our past record. It would not be fitting that the bulk of the load should be assumed by Presbyterians. Methodism numbers not a few wealthy men among its own ranks in Canada. Let them show that they appreciate the needs of their brethren and the work they are trying to do and then let Presbyterians come to their help with as much generosity as they can. The blessing in increased mutual respect and good-will between the two leading Protestant Churches of the Dominion would be worth all that it would cost. In the long run we might find that we had really saved on some of our own schemes, more than the amount given, by a better understanding and more brotherly co-operation in the more sparsely populated districts of the country. There is not much serious ground for complaint as to undue competition between the two Churches as yet in Canada. But the danger of over-churching through denominational rivalry is never very far off, and the only permanent guarantee against it will be found in the cultivation of a spirit of general friendliness when we have opportunity.

THE SECRET OF LIBERALITY.

THE Rev. Mr. Troop of Montreal, struck a true note in the Diocesan Synod there the other day, when he urged that the great thing needed to develop the liberality of the church towards missions was the deepening of its spiritual life. A proposition had been made to appoint an agent who should visit the different parishes in order to gain full information and stimulate the interest of the people in the work of the diocese. Without questioning the usefulness of this method he thought it would be of more value to take means for quickening the religious life of the various congregations. If they succeeded in that the liberality would follow naturally, without it their efforts would avail little in the end. This is true of other churches than the Anglican, and of other districts than Montreal. Few who heard the magnificent address at the last General Assembly in Winnipeg along the same lines, from the Rev. Mr. MacKenzie, our missionary in Honan, will be likely soon to forget it, but the importance of the matter is not always realized. It seems a round about way of securing the end aimed at. But it is the only true way. In time of famine it seems a slow affair to wait for the next sowing and the next harvest. But it is the only true solution of the difficulty. Any-

thing else is only a temporary makeshift to tide over the present distress. Unless the natural harvest is obtained by the proper seed-sowing and tillage the population will die. The church cannot live on other principles.

THE JEWISH SABBATH.

NO small sensation has been caused in Jewish circles in the United States by a proposal made by Rabbi Gries, that Sunday be observed as the Jewish Sabbath instead of Saturday. "He holds," says the *Independent*, "that neither the Jewish Sabbath nor the Christian Sunday, by the testimony of Scripture, is divine in its origin; but that the question to-day is, whether there shall be a Sabbath or no Sabbath. Holding that the Sabbath idea is of more importance than the day, he believes that it would be well to change the day so that there can be at least one day, morning, afternoon and evening, which can be given to rest and to worship." In Cleveland and other cities the proposal has created more than passing interest.

CHILD IMMIGRATION.

ONE of the most interesting lines of work conducted under the direction of the Ontario Government, is that by the Department for the care of Neglected Children, presided over by a sturdy young Presbyterian, Mr. J. J. Kelso. The report presented by him to the recent Legislature shows that during the past twenty-five years nearly thirty thousand children have been domiciled in this Province alone from Great Britain, and many of these are now men and women engaged in the work of building up the country. Owing to the absence of any definite information, this philanthropic work has been greatly misrepresented, and public attention has been directed to the few who went astray, instead of to the many who did well.

There is a very human tendency to report only the failures, but credit should also be given as a matter of justice to those who do well and fill their sphere, however humble it may be with credit to them and the agency that befriended them.

COLLEGE CONFERENCES.

THE sixth Annual Conference of the Alumni of Knox College will open on the 7th of February, and will continue for one week. The lecturers' have evidently been selected because of their special interest in the subjects of which they will treat, and the subjects themselves are varied and all of great interest to the Church and public. The Post-Graduate Conference at Knox College will be held from the 31st inst., until the 4th of February, and as we announced recently, will be taken part in by quite an array of able and representative Alumni.

An interesting and well attended meeting of the Executive of the Foreign Mission Committee was held on Tuesday at Toronto. The Convener, Rev. Dr. Moore, presided, and Rev. Drs. MacLaren, McTavish, Warden, Rev. Messrs McKay, Martin, Shearer, and Mr. Andrew Jeffrey, were present. The correspondence from missions included letters from India, Formosa, Honan, British Columbia, and the North West, containing reports of work in these fields, all of which were considered to be very satisfactory.

The Maitland Presbytery paid a well-deserved tribute to the memory of their late colleague, Rev. Alexander Sutherland, for fifty two years a Presbyterian minister twenty one of which he spent in the pastorate of Ripley congregation. He was well known and highly esteemed throughout the Church and his Presbytery's minute is a graceful recognition of a brother who ever acted his part well.