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Contributors and Correspondents

FOREIGN MISSION WORK.

MR. EDITOR.—Knowing the growing interest in the Foreign Mission work among the Presbyterian women of Canada, brought about largely I doubt not through the prominent place given it in the BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN, I am confident your readers will be interested to hear direct from a work none the less foreign, because it is carried on among the Chinese brought to our own shore. While politicians under the power of the priests and the world, to state it mildly, have looked upon them as only an evil, the Christian has seen a golden opportunity to reach China through America. Six Christian young Chinamen have recently returned to China from San Francisco, and are about to establish a mission one hundred and seventy miles from Canton. How much more readily will they find access to their own people than ever missionaries would be able to do. They can live far more cheaply than it is possible for an American to do, and with their knowledge of the language can at once enter into their work, and find access to the homes of their people. I believe "Nations will be born in a day," when the land has been thoroughly permeated by the gospel, and a knowledge of Christ carried to them by those who have lived in Christian England or America. God's Spirit blessing the seed thus sown, as well as that of the Missionary, will bring thousands to Him so quickly, that we like the Christian women who were praying for Peter's release, will I fear be astonished too. But this letter is to be written for the women of Canada, among whom I have so long and pleasantly labored while in Montreal. A Christian's field of labor may change but the spirit changes not. As the Moslem only asks, "which way lies Mecca?" so we who love to work for heathen souls only need ask where lies our field? And lo! white for the harvest, it stretches just before us.

There is in San Francisco a "Chinese Mission Home" for women; women who have escaped from a life so terrible that one shrinks back in terror from the very thought. Having been sold into a bondage too frightful to believe possible, they have found that here is a "Home," and while thus seeking refuge from their human foes they are told of a foe yet more deadly in his enmity (if possible), and of a refuge more enduring, never changing. We find it very hard to gather in the children, but at our Industrial class on Friday last, we had several little ones. They showed no desire to come until the thought occurred while in one of their homes (how little their houses deserve such a name), that Paul once said, "Being crafty, I caught them with guile," so I said, "bring all these little ones, and we will give them some candy." Immediately there was much chattering in Chinese, and many smiles, and the result was, the next day, several came. "A little child shall lead them." We hope through these little ones to win the mothers too. It seems to me accustomed to use the word "home" in its highest sense, simply marvellous to see so many human beings crowded into such narrow quarters. Our interpreter Cho Se is one of two wives. The second was recently brought home to the great disgust of Cho Se, but there was nothing she could do but to submit; they fortunately have not yet followed the Californian fashion of a divorce every time one is annoyed at one's husband or wife. The home of these two amiable wives and their mutual "husband" is a little larger than a good sized closet, which is entered by a dark passage, with small rooms opening in every direction, literally crowded with people. These Chinese are mostly from the region about Canton, where families live in boats, and the smallest possible quarters. Yet as our interpreter accompanied us through the street, from house to house, with her loose tunic with large flowing sleeves, and her hair most beautifully arranged, it seemed hardly possible to believe that she had just emerged from such a room. In some of the rooms incense was burning before the idols. Many of the women looked hardened in sin, others looked as if they would gladly escape from such a life of bondage. It is said that, of the twelve hundred Chinese women in San Francisco, only three hundred are virtuous. When one married woman was asked to come to the class she said, "I cannot be let." I replied, "You are too busy I suppose." "Oh not that," was the response in broken English, "my husband only allows me to go out twice a year." The class began to arrive at the Home at twelve o'clock (the hour appointed was two), the little

children evidently had drawn some of the older ones.

A Missionary recently returned from China, bade us remember the "cup of tea," which to the Chinese means a great deal. With this mark of respect and kindness, the way was paved for hymns and the Lord's prayer in Chinese. We remained at the close of the class for an hour of prayer, one of the Chinese Christian women also leading in prayer in her own language. A Toronto lady was also of our number. There was a solemnity, an earnestness, about their manner that proved the truth of the assertion that when a Chinese is convinced, he is thoroughly convinced.

I will enclose a letter for a future number of your paper, as your readers may wish to know more of this work. It is a branch of the Women's Presbyterian Missionary Society of Philadelphia. When shall we hear from Rev. J. Fraser Campbell, and his work in India?

All the Christians who are interested in Foreign Missions ought also to be in Temperance, and such will be glad to know that five hundred copies of "Overcome," the new Canadian Temperance story has been ordered by one bookseller here to place in every library on the Pacific Coast. Is it in the Canadian Sabbath Schools?

This letter gives a brief account of some of the inmates of the "Home" in San Francisco.

"Gin Ti came to our Mission Home two years ago, when she was sixteen years old. She was aided by Chinese friends in making her escape from a woman who carries on a traffic in women and children. The little ones can be bought for a small sum, and when grown are sold for a large profit, into prostitution. Gin Ti fully appreciates her escape from a sinful life. She has made good progress in her studies, is able to do neatly plain and fancy sewing, and is apt with a sewing machine. She recently married one of the Christian Chinese, an advanced pupil from the mission, and has since been baptized and united with the Chinese church. Her room is tastefully fitted up, and she proves a tidy housekeeper. We rejoice that we have another Christian family.

"Chun Ho has been in the Home one year. She has been good and obedient, is industrious and learns well, and seems especially capable of receiving religious truth; we have much hope of her as a Bible reader. When she entered the Home she had promised herself in marriage to a Chinese Romanist, but as light came into her mind both the Buddhist and the Romanist religion became distasteful to her, and she voluntarily gave him up. She only hesitated in taking this step because she had no means of support, and she felt that it would not be just to depend upon this society for an indefinite time. Fortunately a society of young ladies in Ohio assumed her support.

"Ah Ling came to us six months ago, her body covered with bruises. She was owned by a cruel master, who gave her in charge of a woman who kept a house of prostitution, and the money earned was divided equally between the master and keeper. She was beaten and bruised if she failed to make their business remunerative. She has won the hearts of the friends of the Home, and with tender care gives promise of good progress in the better life she has entered. She has been hunted by the fiend who owned her and his accomplices, and we have appreciated the virtue of our bolts, and the protection our missionaries could give her. Ah Fah was a prisoner in a dark room for six weeks, waiting for an advantageous sale. Six hundred dollars was the price asked for her. She fled from her confinement at the peril of her life, and is a favorite in the Home.

"Sooch Ying, a young bright girl, passed through similar perils at San Jose, and was rescued by Christian ladies of that city and brought to the Home.

"Ah Gue, a widow, came from Sacramento to the Home for shelter. Her brother had plans for realizing six hundred dollars from the sale of her.

"And thus, all our inmates could tell a bitter story of cruelty and oppression. It was touching this morning to hear them sing alone, in the absence of their teacher, with their faltering untutored voices, 'Rock of Ages Cleft for Me.'

"E. V. R., Sec. California B. of W. B. M. "San Francisco, Dec. 21st, 1876."

Ah Ling, above alluded to, has been sent back to China with a Christian family. She sold the jewels given her during her former life of sin to defray her expenses, and was placed in the care of a Christian Chinese family of good position who were returning home. Her former owners had been told by their lawyer that they could kidnap her any time, so that she knew her life would be one of constant fear. The American Consul at Canton was written to regarding her, and a most courteous reply was received by the ladies of the society that he would aid them in any possible way. What may not Christian women do for their own sex.

GERMANY, twelve years ago, had no Sunday Schools; now it has over twelve hundred, with over eighty thousand scholars—a large or small number, according as one looks back or forward.

(For the Presbyterian)

LIFE AND IMMORTALITY.

BY R. HENDERSON, FLORIDA.

What is life? What are we living for? What are we to be when this life is over?

None can tell what life here is without knowing what life beyond the grave is—but none who go there come back to tell. Here is just the reason why heathenism and philosophy alike have failed. God, who only could, has told us what immortality is; and men continue to cherish and cling to the thousand conflicting theories of "philosophy, falsely so called." They are too proud to accept what they cannot themselves discover. The "great thinkers" behave like fools and babies—and much more do they who trust in them.

God has told us in His Word what "life and immortality" are. When we study that Word we see the light, which God's people had from the beginning, getting brighter and brighter, till, in the full blaze of the Holy Ghost dispensation, "life and immortality were brought to light in the gospel." In this gospel the questions are fully answered:—What is life? What are we living for? What are we to be when this life is over?

Reader! what is *your* life? What are you living for? Whether is *your* life going to lead you? The Gospel tells you what eternity is; and therefore, and along with this what your life here ought to be.

Does some one say? "I don't believe the Bible. At any rate I'm not sure whether it tells the truth or not. Very well. What do you believe? You must have some notion concerning what this life is or living means. Do you believe this life is all, and nothing beyond? However much you try you cannot do it. Your own reason tells you that your soul is immortal. However much you may fight against this conviction to silence it, and though you may think it is silenced, let danger come upon you, and death stare you in the face, and your actions will show that you do not believe "it is all of life to live, and all of death to die." But granting that you believe this life is all, what grounds have you for it? What ground can philosophy offer? Nothing but *supposition* at best, and that in opposition to the voice of reason and the Word of God. Are you going to rest your eternal destiny on this? If you have money in a bank, and you see a "pressure" brought upon that bank which must "break" it, would you feel secure in leaving your money there? You might suppose that all would be well, but that would not affect the *truth*. In regard to eternal things how worse than madly men act!

But supposing you could get proof strong enough to justify you in believing there is no life beyond—you cannot get such proof—how are you to account for this life? Come, tell me what is life? To enjoy the world, is it? Alas! this is what it is to thousands—and they forget that no matter how they live they are *preparing* to "meet their God." Some live for wealth, some for pleasure, some for one thing and some for another. Take wealth, enjoyments, everything, and however right they may be, you only have them for a few days, and then leave them forever. Is this what life means? Why this is *nothing* to live for. If life is only to struggle for "the world," and have troubles and trials, and lie down and die, and *cease to be*, then life is a dream—life is nothing! If I am going to exist in this life only, why am I living at all? What does my life mean? Ha! it means more than the brief, passing present. Take a tree. It grows—bears fruit—every year the same kind. It cannot get beyond that. It is not in its nature to get further. When it serves its purpose it dies and returns to the earth again. Not so with the soul. The more it knows the more it wants to know, and is capable of knowing. It brings forth varied fruits, and day by day more varied, showing that it is capable of expansion in every direction beyond the few days allotted to human life. This shows that the soul does not, cannot serve its purpose here. If I am to die, and be annihilated, in the face of all this, then human life of all creation is the only thing which is a mockery—a sham. Tell me is man an exception to *everything* else? No! My friends, "immortality" is written on your soul, and you cannot wipe it out! Look and see. Bodies will crumble into dust. A tree will decay and appear in other forms different from what it was before. But the *soul* which thinks, and fears, and hopes, and loves, cannot pass into anything else—from its very nature it cannot—but lives on and on forever.

Now look at the Gospel which tells what life is and whether we are going—just look at this glorious old Gospel and think of how many souls it has lightened and

brightened—how many troubled ones it has cheered with its blessed and encouraging promises and hopes. Socrates, that good old heathen, died cheerfully because he had lived a "virtuous" life, and had a faint notion that after death he would continue to exist in some happy place. The Christian dies happy because he *knows* there is an eternity of joy ahead. What shall I do then? Leave this blessed Gospel which "hath brought life and immortality to light?"—leave Jesus and the cheering hopes of eternal joy?—leave the Saviour on whose breast our fathers and our mothers, and our sisters and our brothers, fell asleep?—leave the Bible when I know what it has done, and what it is doing, and what it can do even for me?—leave it and go outside into the heartless, tearless, chilling realms of doubt, indifference and infidelity? No, no! Doubt, indifference, infidelity! Ah! I know what these have done—I know how sceptics and infidels have died—shall I leave Christ and go out there? I'll not go! No, no, I will not go! For I must die soon, and I feel, I know, the Bible declares it, this life is not all!

The History of Montreal College.

EDITOR BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—I admire the adroitness of "Your Contributor" in leaving the "main question," and trying to retire under the smoke of my "inaccuracies" illustrated. He had asked "on what principle of fairness and justice does this territorial distribution rest. . . Why should the Montreal Constituency be dealt with so differently from the others," etc. I had replied in substance, that the church had not contemplated putting the colleges on an equal footing, but had done the best by Montreal that she could without injuring the other institutions; that the friends in Montreal assumed a very great and disproportionate responsibility in order that the College might be established; and that the territorial distribution was not made as "fair and equitable," but from time to time, as it was deemed expedient. Instead of assailing one of my positions, "Your Contributor" spends his time in "illustrating my inaccuracies."

Well, Mr. Editor, I plead guilty to one inaccuracy. I have good reason to have impressions and recollections regarding what happened in November, 1871, and the results of the proposal then made; but as "Your Contributor" will not be satisfied with any history that is not on record, only those who know the facts will fully understand how slight and only seeming the inaccuracy is. The proposal to raise the common endowment of \$250,000 was the result of a desire to have both colleges in a safe footing before union, and to make an end of the territorial distribution (see min. p. 58.) But notwithstanding the action of the Assembly, and the peculiar crisis of affairs, so decided was the opposition to the scheme that it had to be abandoned without one subscription being asked. It is true, therefore, that the Church never entertained a proposal to put the colleges on an equal footing, and my inaccuracy does not affect the "main question" one iota.

To say that because the committee of the united church reported that in case of an additional professor being appointed at Montreal and Kingston, the expenditure would be increased, and that this implies the equal equipment,—as both colleges in that contingency would have had three professors—is a specimen of special pleading that needs no answer.

As for the *history*, I will simply give my version, and have your readers judge as to my accuracy. In 1864 the establishment of a college was first proposed by overture from the Presbytery of Montreal; it led to much discussion. At last, by a majority, it was decided "to sanction the formation of a Theological College, as craved by the Presbytery of Montreal." The amendment, which was lost, proposed sending the overture down to Presbyteries in view of "the important interests involved."

In 1865 a charter was submitted, and other steps were taken. The discussion was carried on in committee of the whole house, and hence there is no record of it. "Your Contributor" can only get recollections or impressions which he holds as of no value. At last it was resolved "that the proposal contained in the report, not being such as to warrant the Synod in bringing the College into operation at present, no further action be now taken, but it be remitted to the Presbytery of Montreal as a committee to mature arrangements for the adequate support of at least one chair."

In 1866 the report of the Presbytery was received, satisfaction was expressed with

the progress made, and it was remitted to the Presbytery to prosecute and mature the scheme.

In 1867 the Presbytery reported that \$20,880 had been subscribed, and certain recommendations were submitted, among which was one that the Presbytery should be permitted to increase the endowment to at least \$30,000. Another proposed that the Presbyteries of Brockville, Ottawa and Kingston should be united with that of Montreal in their effort to erect and maintain the college. And the third proposed the appointment of a professor at that meeting of Synod. The postponement of the consideration of the second named resolution was agreed to, "until the Synod had considered the report of the Board of Knox College." Afterwards there was "long reasoning," and at last the two Presbyteries of Brockville and Ottawa were united with that of Montreal. That of Kingston, as proposed, was not conceded.

In 1869, after recording satisfaction, particularly with the prosperous state of the finances, two lectureships were granted, and while resolving to have a French lecturer in the College, provision for the expense was made from the French Canadian Mission contributions.

In 1871 the report of Montreal College proposed "that in order to meet the necessary expenditure of an increase in the staff of instructors, the Assembly grant the entire Synod of Montreal for the support of the College." This was not granted; but it was resolved to raise an endowment of \$250,000 for both colleges.

In 1872, after the failure of the endowment project, the College report again proposed "that the Presbytery of Kingston be added to the three Presbyteries," etc. After keen discussion, this proposal was remitted to the Presbytery of Kingston, and liberty was granted them to send their contributions to Montreal that year.

It was further reported that \$10,000 had been contributed for the support of an additional chair in Theology for five years; and in view of that the appointment of an additional professor was proposed. This proposal was allowed to lie on the table till next Assembly.

In 1873 an overture auct putting Knox College and Montreal College on an equal footing was received, but the Assembly deemed it unwise to change existing relations. At the same time Mr. Campbell was appointed as a second professor.

The above statement is all to be found in the minutes, and I think confirm my impressions, (which I may here state, I share with not a few, and cannot help calling recollections.)

(1.) That the College was established at the urgent request of friends in Montreal. (2.) That in order to obtain this they willingly assumed a responsibility greater than the church generally was prepared for. (3.) That the first chair was not established until an endowment deemed sufficient had been secured. (4.) That before a second chair was established, support for it also had been secured. (5.) That in the granting of territory for the support of Montreal College, regard was had to the interests of the older institution. (6.) That the proposal to put the two colleges on an equal footing was not entertained by the church. Any little inaccuracy or inaccuracies in my statements do not affect the main question, viz.: that the claim put forth for an equal territory for each of the colleges is based on (1) justice, and (2) fairness; and that the present distribution of territory which leaves Montreal more to do than the west, is unfair and unjust.

We all would like, Mr. Editor, to see each of our colleges fully equipped. Our present resources will not allow of this, and it is only right to maintain in efficiency the older institution and to help on the younger as we are able. I am yours, etc., JOHN LAING.

Dundas, January 27th, 1877.

Induction of the Rev. J. M. McAlister.

The Presbytery of Ottawa held a special meeting in Knox Church, Beckwith, on Thursday, the 25th of January, for the induction of the Rev. J. M. McAlister into the pastoral charge of the congregations of Beckwith and Ashton. The church was well filled with parties from both sections of the charge, who had evinced their interest in the proceedings by coming—some of them—a long distance, and who listened with devout attention to the sermon and addresses that were delivered. The Rev. J. B. Edmondson preached and presided on the occasion; Rev. J. Carswell addressed the pastor, and Rev. W. Ross the congregation. At the close, Mr. McAlister received a most hearty welcome from the people of his charge.

In the evening a social meeting was held in Ashton, which was well attended. After refreshments had been served, addresses were given by Messrs. Carswell and Ross, and the newly inducted pastor—an efficient choir rendering pieces of music between the various addresses. Mr. McAlister enters upon his labours in this congregation in circumstances the most encouraging. The Ashton part of the charge where he is to reside have never had a minister residing amongst them, and so it presents a most encouraging field, and will undoubtedly soon become under his ministrations as strong as the other section,—the long established and more wealthy congregation of Beckwith.—CON.

A new congregation of Presbyterians has been organized in Mount Forest.