

# The Record.

AUGUST, 1861.

## THE MISSIONS OF THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

### No. 1.—JAMAICA.

In the actual history of modern missions there are many facts which amply disprove the argument sometimes advanced, that missions are comparatively useless, and involve an unproductive expenditure of means. Without stopping to advert to the latent infidelity involved in such an argument, we repeat that many facts disprove the argument. The conversion even of a single soul would show the falseness of the argument. For, viewed in the light of Bible truth, one soul reclaimed from Satan's kingdom is more than equivalent to all the means employed in missionary effort. But conversions have not been solitary and isolated facts: some missions, such as those of the London Missionary Society, in some of the South Sea Islands, have been the means literally of christianizing the community. A nation has been born, if not literally in a day, yet, by God's blessing, in the course of a few years. The Mission of the United Presbyterian Church to Jamaica may be regarded as of the same character. It has been the means of gathering together a regularly organized church, not only co-operating for the maintenance of divine ordinances among themselves, but raising very considerable sums for benevolent and missionary purposes.

We subjoin a brief sketch of this portion of the missionary work of the United Presbyterian Church.

This mission embraces twenty-five stations or congregations, divided into four Presbyteries, which form the United Presbyterian Synod of Jamaica. At these stations there have been admitted during the past year, 157 members, the whole number on the roll being 4290, and the average attendance 8653; the number of candidates being 1923. There are 120 prayer-meetings, 256 Sabbath classes for children and young persons, with 375 teachers, and nearly 3000 scholars in attendance. The amount raised during the past year was £3879 16s.

During the past year spiritual prosperity has been experienced, but during the closing months a very remarkable revival, which commenced among the Moravians, spread over nearly the whole island, and affected more or less all the congregations. An account of this revival, in its general results in connection with the several congregations, is contained in the June number

of the UNITED PRESBYTERIAN MISSIONARY RECORD, from which we select a few items.

1. In the Northern Presbytery, which contains six congregations, viz., Hampden, Bellevue, Mount Zion, Montego Bay, Falmouth, and Mount Horeb, prosperity and progress have characterized the missionary and evangelical operations. In the several congregations there have been considerable additions to the membership, and very large additions to the lists of catechumens, or candidates for membership. In one congregation the number was from 120 to 130. The minister at Mount Zion says:—"In July last, long before we heard of any religious excitement in this island, there seemed to be a shaking among the dry bones, at this station, and a foreshadowing of that extraordinary movement," &c. (See *United Presbyterian Missionary Record*, p. 105.)

2. The Southern Presbytery consists of 4 congregations, viz., New Broughton, Ebenezer, Mount Olivet, and Victoria Town. In all these congregations the influence of the revival has been felt, more especially at New Broughton. It may be noticed, as a good evidence of the reality of the movement, that the contributions have been greatly increased, the amount raised being £63 in advance of the contributions of the preceding year.

3. The Eastern Presbytery consists of six congregations, viz., Kingston, Carronhall, Port Maria, Goshon, and Rosehall. The ministers at all these stations report growing prosperity and increase. One of them says: "O! what a glorious work we have had here, and still have! I cannot help looking upon the past few weeks as a dream, so full are they of what is uncommon but most delightful: prayer-meetings every day, and sometimes twice a-day, and crowded. Conversing with inquirers, and the usual duties of a pastor, have for several weeks occupied almost every moment, and reduced my bodily strength so much, that it is really with great difficulty that I pen these lines."

4. In the Western Presbytery, embracing 9 congregations or stations, viz., Lucea, Friendship, Brownsville, Stirling, Green Island, Mount Hermon (2 stations,) and Caymanas (2 stations), the work has an equally decided and satisfactory character. The ministers all report very decided spiritual improvement. One of them, the Rev. Mr. Forbes, of Stirling, writes: "And now, when I consider what has been done; the mighty moral renovations that have taken place; the evil customs given up; the open sins renounced; the fear of God implanted; the concern for God's worship and

for salvation evinced; and the many other beneficent consequences that have flowed from this awakening; and when I look back to the deep night of darkness, and sin and death that preceded it, and think that all this mighty change for the better has been effected in so short a time, I can hardly avoid the fancy that I have been in a dream. It is so wonderful and has been effected so quickly, and in such a manner as to leave no doubt that this must be attributed directly to the mighty energy of the Spirit of God, and to no other cause."

His work of revival throughout Jamaica has been examined and attested by various Christians. Of these, the Rev. Archibald Crawford, formerly a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, has written a full and minute account of the work as witnessed by him. Some excesses, no doubt, have taken place in some places, but making all reasonable allowances, there appears to be every reason for believing that the portion of the vineyard referred to, long in a condition of spiritual desolation, has experienced a glorious work of refreshing and of revival. This must greatly cheer, not only the faithful laborers, who have been toiling amidst many discouragements, but the church whose special care has been extended to those in Jamaica who might otherwise have been perishing for lack of knowledge. Their efforts have not been fruitless. The Lord hath done great things for them. Is there not also a powerful stimulus and inducement to other churches—to ourselves, to enter on missionary work? We see how God bears testimony to the word of His Grace—how powerful His Spirit is to break down every barrier, and surmount every obstacle; and how ready God is, in answer to the prayers of His people, to open the windows of heaven and pour out an abundant blessing.

### PAST PROGRESS A STIMULUS AND ENCOURAGEMENT FOR FUTURE EFFORT.

While it becomes us to avoid all boasting and vain glory, it is surely our duty gratefully to acknowledge the great goodness of God as manifested in the position now occupied by the Canada Presbyterian Church. Of the two churches now forming together the Canada Presbyterian Church the progress during the years of their separate existence has been very marked. The United Presbyterian Church, we believe, was commenced in Canada by two ministers in the year 1832, and had on its Roll, at the time of the Union, 70 ministers. The Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada had, on its organization in 1844