

# Canadian Missionary Link.

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## YOUR AMBITION.

An editorial note in one of our exchanges tells of a church which, in celebrating its diamond jubilee, was surprised to learn how few ministers and missionaries had come from its ranks through all these years. A band of women in the church have grouped themselves together, under the name, "The Mothers of the Temple," to pray and work that mothers and fathers may be led to influence their children towards the direct service of God. This brings before us what has come to be a problem in our own country. There is a lack of young men for the ministry, and a lack of young women for the missionary field, and for the many avenues of Christian service now open to them. And why is there such inadequate supply? Certainly not because the opportunities are limited. There is continually going up the cry of pastorless churches, and the insistent urging of missionaries, home and foreign, for helpers. In the women's work the departments of direct Christian service are increasing in number all the time—the missionary field, the Y. W. C. A. in its rapid development and many branches, the deaconess' vocation, the district nursing, the teaching profession in home and foreign mission schools, and so on. There is no lack of avenues of service.

The solution so often put forward is that the opportunities in business and professional life for both men and women, are so many and so promising that they tempt the young person choosing a life-work to enter them rather than service which does not receive such ready and visible returns. No doubt this is true, but there is something behind it. Where did the boy or girl gain his or her estimate of what was "success"? Who gave him the idea that money and influence in business and professional life was the "consummation devoutly to be wished"? In nine cases out of ten, does not the influence of the home, the thought and aim of the parents, do this?

Sometimes this influence may be unconsciously exerted by the parents and,

of course, is not less harmful for being so. But it is not so terrible as the avowed opposition in many homes to the thought of any one of the children entering Christian work. Have we not all heard mothers and fathers who claimed to be Christians say, "Oh, I hope none of the boys will go into the ministry." "Oh, I hope my daughter will not feel called to give herself up to missionary work. Surely she can do good work somewhere else."

And why is all this? Why do they speak so? Because the life of the minister and Christian worker is hard; because there is little chance to "get ahead in the world," that is, being interpreted, to make money; because they have to deal with the inevitable "cranks" and numberless discouragements, and so on. But, there is another reason that goes deeper than all these. These fathers and mothers have surely lost hold of the significance of "The things which are seen are temporal; the things which are unseen are eternal." Let the difficulties all be granted, is it not a supremely grand thing to spend one's whole life in leading men and women to God, and in bringing them closer to the Divine ideal? Is it not a vastly better thing than building houses and barns, "doing well," "making rich," and even giving to help the work of God? In saying this, we do not mean in the slightest to belittle the calling of any man or woman—provided he or she is called. That is the point. If one has decided on any other calling because he believes it to be his duty, he is not only doing right to enter it, but would be wrong to try and enter any other work. But it is not of those we speak. It is of those whose vision has not been that of duty, who have chosen or have influenced others' choice from less worthy reasons.

It is quite true that each person is called to some work, and that each work is a noble work when dignified by a consecrated service, but it is also true the minister, the missionary, the Y. M. C. A. leader, the evangelistic teacher, the editor of the religious paper, those who give themselves to directing the affairs