

OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

PROFESSORS OF MANITOBA COLLEGE AND MISSION WORK.

MR. EDITOR.—The letter of "Burden Bearer" in your issue of the 13th ult., might be left unnoticed but that silence might be misunderstood by the uninformed. He unburdens himself thus: "He (Reformer) figures the expense of the Committee at \$2,270. Add to that \$500 of interest that never reaches the field. Then there is Manitoba College \$3,500. We do not know what the expense of the missionary to Prince Albert is, but we may safely put it at \$2,000. This will amount to \$8,270, all gone, and not a dollar of it spent in any mission field—not a sermon preached nor a prayer offered among the destitute!" It is a pity to spoil the effect of such an exclamation, but truth often plays sad havoc with eloquence. The \$2,270 of Committee expenses and \$500 of interest the Home Mission Committee could no doubt explain. Missionaries expect their salary to be paid. If there is no money in the treasury, it must be borrowed from the banks and these expect interest for it. Other people understand this. To "Burden Bearer" it only shows that there is something wrong. Let "Burden Bearer" be made a member of Committee next year, and let him be asked to pay his railway fare when going to Toronto and his share of the other expenses of the Committee, and to provide money when required to pay missionaries, and then he may get this expense matter through his head.

But the burden on your correspondent's mind is Manitoba College. The expense he figures at \$7,500. Does he mean that all this is borne by the Home Mission Committee? If he does, his statement is incorrect; if he does not, it is misleading, for the ordinary reader would so interpret him. By the action of the General Assembly in June last, the Western Section was instructed to continue to pay \$2,000 towards the salaries of the Professors of Manitoba College, and the Eastern Section \$500. I have not learned that the college authorities telegraphed for another \$1,000 or that the Committee generously agreed to donate that amount. But in such calculations as his, \$1,000 is not much, here or there.

But for this large amount "not a sermon is preached or a prayer offered among the destitute!" Save your tears, my brother; spare your indignation. Are you not mistaken? Have you a copy of the minutes of last General Assembly? Turn to pp. x-xiii. of the appendix, and you will find the report of the Presbytery of Manitoba to the General Assembly's Home Mission Committee. On page xiii. you will find this paragraph: "A number of stations without missionaries placed over them are of necessity left vacant. On account of the central position of Winnipeg and its having a number of others—as the pastors of the settled congregations, the professors, and the students for the ministry in Manitoba College—who take an interest in mission work, the Presbytery usually inclines to man the outposts and supply such stations from the centre when the supply of labourers is limited as it has been for several years. No less than nine stations have received their supply from the source above referred to during the past year." Rub your eyes and read over again; but there it is, sure enough. These two Professors and one student supplied nine stations during the year. Yes, and these two Professors have preached and prayed in destitute localities scores, yea, hundreds of times, for any Home Mission money they may have received. Come now and own up, like a man, that you were speaking in ignorance and slandering the brethren. To this allow me to add that much of the exploring done in connection with the Presbytery is done by these same much-abused Professors. Last year, Prof. Hart was sent all the way down to Fort Francis, about 250 miles east of this point, to visit the Presbyterian people in that locality, and report as to whether or not a missionary ought to be sent to the Rainy River district. This he did and Presbytery paid him for time and expenses by a vote of thanks; and yet the expenses exceeded \$30. Prof. Bryce was away west 250 miles, at the Little Saskatchewan, at the same time, visiting settlements and arranging for the organization of stations, and in the same simple and easy way his expenses were met. On two or three different occasions he has been sent out to the Pembina Mountain

country, having to travel about the same distance; and with swollen streams bridgeless and almost bottomless sometimes—with myriad mosquitoes, savage bull dogs, and the danger of losing one's way, such travelling differs somewhat from what is generally known in Ontario by that name. These gentlemen say nothing about the matter themselves, but the rapid pace at which they are ageing shows that they must have hard work; and men like "Burden Bearer" compel others to speak in their behalf. I have known them often travel between fifty and sixty miles on Sabbath with the thermometer thirty degrees below zero, preach three times, come home on the wrong side of midnight, and get up next morning to begin the week's work in College. I have known one of them drive thirty-seven miles before eleven a.m., with the thermometer twenty-two degrees below zero rather than disappoint the people. And when any one of the other ministers here is sent to do mission work these brethren cheerfully take his place. The truth is that for years Dundas, Greenwood, Victoria, Rockwood, Grassmere, Woodlands, Headingly, Riviere Sale, Springfield, Sunnyside, Morris and Union Point, Clear Springs, Pointe des Chenes, Caledonia and Milbrook, and Prairie Grove, have been supplied, wholly or in part, from Manitoba College. During some winters they preached as regularly as ordinary pastors and travelled these long stretches, and attended to College work as if that was their sole work. Manitoba College has from the outset been a Missionary College, and were it not for the work done by its professors in attending to the business of the Church here, as well as preaching, our cause in the Northwest would not stand so well today. I know whereof I affirm. Mr. Editor, the people in the east have no idea of the work the pioneer missionaries are doing here. Were "Burden Bearer" wearing the coat of one of them for a year he would better appreciate their services. I had intended to say something about the maintenance of Manitoba College but must reserve the matter for another letter, as I fear I have trespassed too much on your space now.

JAMES ROBERTSON,

Convener of H. M. C., Man. Pres.

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Dec. 23rd, 1879.

A FEW THOUGHTS ON 1 SAMUEL VI. 18, 19, AND HEBREWS XII. 24-25.

1 Sam. vi. 18-19: That wonderful ark of the covenant had been manifesting its sacredness among the Philistines, bringing down their idols and plaguing the people, till at last they send it away from them; and now we have to do with it at the great stone in the field of Joshua of Bethshemesh.

There, according to our English translation, God is represented as smiting "fifty thousand three score and ten men" for looking into the ark. The Hebrew reads "And He smote of (or among) the men of Bethshemesh because they looked into the ark of Jehovah—even He smote of (or among) the people seventy men fifty thousand men." Observe not "seventy men and fifty thousand men." Why not suppose the preposition employed twice to be understood and read, seventy men of (or among) fifty thousand men?

The Septuagint reads, "He smote among the people seventy men of fifty thousand men." Men after seventy being "andras" (accusative); and after fifty thousand "andron" (genitive).

Were this translation adopted we have seventy men slain of the people for looking into the ark of the covenant—an act of presumption and impiety—an act of disobedience to God's commands as enjoined by his servant Moses. It was a refusal of Him that spake on earth as Mediator of the covenant that then was. An awful judgment and a solemn warning to the people, causing as we are informed great mourning among them, and thus, we conceive, a new name to the stone on which the ark stood—the great *Abel* (mourning) instead of the great *Eden* (stone) of verses 14-15. And if so, hence the words employed "until this day," not that the ark or the stone remain in the field until this day, as the supplement would lead to think, but that the stone was called *Abel* until this day, a monument of judgment. Thus we find the threshing floor of Atad called *Abel Mizraim* on account of the mourning of the Egyptians, Genesis I. 11. And here also the people mourned greatly owing to the judgment of God, and might well call the stone *Abel*.

In connection with this subject, I wish to add a thought on Hebrews xii. 24-25. There is a contrast

here between the Mosaic and the Christian dispensation. At the 18th verse the Apostle says, "Ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched and that burned with fire," etc. But (verse 22) "ye are come unto Mount Zion," etc., and here in verse 24 "To Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh" (or literally speaking, present participle, dative) "better than Abel" (leaving out the supplemented words). "See that ye refuse not Him speaking." Who is this or what is this speaking? I would say *Jesus the Mediator* of (the new covenant; not, as some say, the blood of sprinkling speaking better than the blood of Abel, Cain's brother, or the blood of his sacrifice, for that takes us away from the Mosaic dispensation. But if the party speaking is Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant with His blood of sprinkling, then we would naturally suppose the *Abel* referred to was something connected with the mediator of the former dispensation and its blood of sprinkling—Moses and the ark of the covenant—and if so, we might at once consider the reference to be to *Abel* in 1 Samuel vi. 18. There we have the old covenant which undoubtedly speaks of mercy, but also of judgment, as the historical fact solemnly illustrates. If this were the reference we need no supplement, but simply "speaking better than *Abel*." With this view of *Abel* we see a reason for the neuter article (*to*) of some old MSS. which has been rejected for the masculine (*ton*). And again with this reference we find at once a connection with the 25th verse "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh, for if they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth (those seventy men at *Abel*) much more we if we turn away from Him who is from heaven." "Speaketh" is a supplement and not so simple as "is." Moses was God's *earthly* messenger, but Jesus is *from heaven*. Moses *earthly*, Jesus *heavenly*—divine came from heaven, speaks to us on earth; the same whose voice shook Sinai, but now hath He promised, saying: "Yet once more I shake not the earth only but also heaven." Let us take warning by *Abel* and see that we refuse not the Heavenly Mediator of the new covenant who speaks better things than *Abel*.

J. R. S.

B.D. AND D.D.

MR. EDITOR.—As the obstructionists have lately been carrying on the correspondence on this subject, in your columns, in such a way as to darken the arguments of "B" with a cloud of meaningless words, sometimes irrelevant and oftener disingenuous, I ask your permission to write briefly on the side of liberality and progress.

It is now granted by all parties (except, perhaps, the Halifax "Witness" and a few gentlemen who, having obtained the distinction of D.D., wish to limit the number of the honoured) that there is nothing wrong or even unseemly in the desire of the Church to have at its disposal a degree-conferring power. The Rev. Robert Campbell, of Montreal, an able Church lawyer, even concedes the right of the Assembly to bestow such degrees without application to the State for authority so to do. The advocates of Queen's College and University cannot question the propriety of certain representatives of the Church, including some appointed from time to time by its General Assembly, becoming a University corporation for the purpose of conferring Degrees in Divinity, because this is precisely what took place when that Institution was founded.

The Church, long at sea in this matter of Theological Distinctions, at last Assembly effected a landing upon the Academic coast. By hard fighting against the opposing Trojans she gained her way to everything but the nature of the degree-conferring power, and now, preparing for the struggle over this important point, she finds that the Trojans have left the field and esconced themselves behind the walls of sacred Queen's. Now, the Greeks bore no personal ill-will to the Trojans and would have left their city unscathed had these plunderers been willing to give them back their own. And as for the Church, she has ever treated Queen's as if it were one of her own institutions, that when, in her progress towards theological excellence, she finds her advance checked by the walls that her own gold has reared, she is inclined to withdraw her forces and say, "Perish learning and honours and colleges and the will of the Church, but save Queen's!"

And yet there are thousands in the Church who