

harvest," the river was unfordable and impassable; and therefore it was that there were Cities for Refuge on both sides. But some strong soul, in the valley of that river, to whom God's power appeared—as to Elijah these before him, and to John Baptist after him—might, in the day of his distress, want to get as high and as near to God's bosom as he could, and fly upward to Ramoth; even swimming the Jordan in the time of flood, as did the eleven mighty men of God to join David in the hold. Oh for the conquering faith, that makes nothing of obstacles, when God's deliverance is in view!

Mission Notes.

THE SCANDINAVIAN WORK IN MICHIGAN.

According to the last census, there were in the State of Michigan 16,445 Scandinavians. There are, now, probably about 25,000. The Free Church element found its way into the State quite recently. There are now six Free Mission churches, all built within three years, and four within one year, at an aggregate cost, lots included, of about \$8,500. Nothing extravagant in that. Three years ago only \$200 could be raised to support the preaching of the Gospel. Last year, the same field raised \$2,030, an average of \$338 to a church. Not a great sum, but a good deal for these little baby churches when one considers that at the same time they have borne the cost of building. All of these churches are self-supporting in this sense that they build and pay the preacher so far as they can, and when they cannot support a preacher, they preach themselves. They have to support themselves, and their Christian zeal and earnestness is such that they can sing, "All for Jesus, All for Jesus, All for Him the crucified."

Do you wish to know how these churches were formed? The general tone is this: A certain brother experiences the power of God unto salvation, and prostrate at the throne of grace, he wrestles with God in prayer, until others are born into the kingdom. A prayer-meeting is started, which gradually develops into a church.

A few years ago, a poor farmer in C—, Mich., sinking under the burden of sin, fell upon his knees before God, praying. To-day that farmer can kneel in a church with a company of sixty-four redeemed ones.

Five years ago, there was but one of these brethren in M—, and he became the nucleus of a church now numbering thirty-two members.

In L— there was about a dozen converted young men working in the saw-mills. When winter came

on and work became scarce, what do you suppose they contrived for winter amusement? They met, put all the money they could spare into a common purse, and then went to work to build themselves a church. Now they are doing their own preaching by turns, but are very glad to have missionaries call on them.

Six years ago, a demon-like man in M— was powerfully converted. He began at once to work for God with all his might, and through the efforts of that man there is a church of about eighty members.

In G— a young man kept up a prayer-meeting for five years. For the next three years a common labourer preached for them, the first year without any compensation whatever. For the next two years another labourer supplied them at a compensation of ten dollars a month. A year ago last summer they built a church costing \$3,000. There are sixty members, but an attendance of from two hundred to four hundred. I wish I could tell you of the spirituality of that church. Sunday evening there was a dozen young men kneeling in the front seats, remaining in this posture half an hour, and, while the people entered, their fervent prayers of praise and petition ascended in an unbroken volume to heaven. When we arose, the house was almost packed. This made a very powerful impression, and put all in a desirable frame of mind for worship.

I have alluded to myself to show their accessibility; and let me add that I have found my way to all these without recommendations from head quarters, and wherever I can go, you can go; for, although I am a Scandinavian by birth, in regard to church matters they all treat me as an American Congregationalist. Thus, the question in Michigan is practically answered. The timidity on both sides seems to wear away in proportion as they become more and more acquainted, and thus we are drifting nearer and nearer the practical issue. What does that mean? It means, another field open to the American Home Missionary Society to help these Swedish people have the Gospel preached unto them.

But what about their character? "Are they sound?" "Are they a temperance people?" "There are a great many drunkards among the Scandinavians." True; but let me tell you, that every one that belongs to these Free Churches must *live* temperance. Regarding their piety I can say that they simply cling to God, and stick so closely to the Bible, with which they are very familiar, that it is hardly safe for the minister to pick up an illustration as he passes along through his discourse. They want a simple, straightforward Gospel sermon from the word go. A man would not be appreciated who should talk about the limitations of the Infinite; or the transcendental, indescribable something, indelibly written in the bosom of the Absolute.