

## Our Contributors.

### THE HOME MISSION CRISIS.

BY KNOXIAN.

The Convener of the Home Mission Committee having issued a circular saying that the Church had reached a "crisis" in Home Mission work, we may imagine that the following is a report of a meeting held in the congregation of Orthodoxville to consider the best means of averting the crisis:

The chairman read the Convener's circular setting forth that \$46,000 will be needed next March, and that \$44,000 had been allocated to the Presbyterian; that the reserve fund is wiped out; that unless the contributions of the Church are greatly increased there will be a deficit next March of over \$20,000; that a heavy loan has been made to meet claims due on Sept. 30, and that unless the contributions of the present year greatly exceed the contributions of the past grants must be reduced one half, and fewer appointments made for next summer. The work is exceedingly prosperous, but the money does not come in.

Having read the circular, the chairman called for discussion.

MR. TIGHTHIDE said that there was only one course that could be pursued under the circumstances, and that was to cut down expenses. Some of the missionaries should be withdrawn from the field, and the salaries of the others decreased until the income and expenditure of the fund become equal. He knew of no way of balancing the account except by reducing the expenditure. That was their only plan. The Home Mission Committee should be instructed to stop expending money until they had a surplus in the fund.

MR. SPITPEA agreed with all that had been said by his friend, Mr. Tighthide. The right way to meet the crisis was to cut down the expenditure. He knew of no other way.

ELDER SKINFLINT was of the same opinion. The Church must cut down the expenditure. He strongly denounced the committee for making a loan to pay claims due last month. His motto was always "pay as you go," and the Church would never be right until this motto was adopted. He never did like that little man Cochrane. His ideas were always too large, and he was spreading the Church out too far. What business had we opening out churches in British Columbia? Let the British Columbians take care of themselves. He was opposed to the reckless expenditure of men like Cochrane, Macdonnell, Warden and others of the same school, and he hoped that the day was near when prudent economical men would come to the front—men who would rather stop all mission work than borrow money. The Church was never better than in the good old times when there was no mission work. He would say to these men, Give us a rest, Give us peace. Let us have a free Gospel for ourselves, and let the Indians and the British Columbians and all other people take care of themselves.

ELDER PAYWELL addressed the meeting at length, and, as his remarks were well on the point, we give his speech *verbatim*, and in the first person. After some introductory remarks, the esteemed gentleman said:

In common with all Presbyterians who love their Church, I deeply regret the occasion which has called us together. To me it is a matter of painfulness that with all our talk about our unions, our great Church, our colleges, our learning, our influence, our growing numbers, our conferences, and our revival meetings that look so large on paper,—with all this talk, I say, it is to me a matter of pain and shame that our Home Mission Fund should be in such a condition. I entirely differ from the former speakers when they say that the only way to balance the fund evenly is to decrease the expenditure. There is another way, a nobler way, a Christian way, and that is to increase the income. (Cheers.) What does cutting down the expenditure mean, Mr. Chairman? It means that we beat a retreat in Muskoka, in Manitoba, in the North-West, in British Columbia, and wherever we occupy mission ground. It means that we break faith with the people that we have organized into mission stations, and promised to supply with Gospel ordinances. It means that the Presbyterian Church is not willing to follow up her sons with the Gospel, and take care of

them even in our own country. It means that we proclaim to the world that we as a Church are unwilling to preach the Gospel even to our own poor, and when we have made this proclamation our first duty is to die. Mr. Chairman, any true Presbyterian should be ashamed to proclaim to the world that we cannot or will not take care of our people in our own country. (Cheers.) Men talk about the "Church of the fathers," and the "blue banner," and the "claymores of the Covenanters," and our "history written in blood," and yet some of these men are willing to hand over their own sons to the teaching of any tramp that may happen to cross their path in Muskoka or the North-West. (Cries of Shame.) Out upon such cant I say! (Loud cheers.) Is not a living son as much an object of interest as a dead grandfather? Should a good man not be as much concerned about his daughter as about his grandmother? (Loud cheers.) I am opposed to the withdrawal of one missionary from any field where he is needed, and the right way is to raise more money, and increase rather than diminish the expenditure. (Cheers.) Elder Skinflint I think it was who laid down the cast iron rule that money should not be borrowed for any purpose. I should like to ask Elder Skinflint one question, and I hope he will answer it.

ELDER SKINFLINT.—Certainly.

ELDER PAYWELL.—Did you vote for that by-law that was submitted to the people lately, authorizing the council to issue debentures for the purpose of raising money to make certain public improvements?

ELDER SKINFLINT.—Ah—um—er—ah—I believe I did.

ELDER PAYWELL.—I thought so. You believe it was perfectly right to borrow money to improve the municipality, but quite wrong to borrow some to carry on the Lord's work! It's the old story. Take all necessary risks, display skill, enterprise, ambition, energy, push in your own affairs, but if any difficulty presents itself in the Lord's work, lie down as helpless as an upset turtle. How many railways, how many gravel roads, how many town halls, how many churches and schools would there be in Ontario today if nobody had borrowed any money? The fact is in a new country like ours we have to borrow all the time if improvements are to be made, and as the country increases in wealth the borrowed money can be paid back.

And besides, Mr. Chairman, whose fault is it if money has to be borrowed? I am a politician. I am not one of those timid people who always are afraid of losing their religion when they go behind the screen to mark their ballot. The reason they are afraid is because they vote for the wrong candidate. If they voted for—well I won't say—(Laughter) they never would lose their religion behind the screen. As a politician I have studied the reason closely why candidates are beaten. I have gone right down to the bottom of the question, and thought over it as intensely as a Ph.D. does over his "severe examination," and I have concluded that any given candidate fails simply because he has not more votes than his opponent. His failure is for want of votes. The Home Mission Committee fails to meet the necessary outlay simply because it has not enough of money. Send in the money, and there will be no deficit. (Cheers.) Send in the money and the Church will not be disgraced by calling home our missionaries. (Cheers.) Send in the money, and, if you can send enough, next year there will be a surplus instead of a deficit. (Cheers.) I am persuaded that the live men of the Church will come out and meet the emergency, as they have always done in the past. (Cheers.) What we want until next March is earnest work, and let every man who is not prepared to help at least keep out of the way. (Cheers.)

At the close of Mr. Paywell's speech, the meeting passed around a subscription list, and the whole sum allocated to the congregation of Orthodoxville was subscribed in a few minutes.

### IN NORTH-WEST FORMOSA.

A VISIT TO THE STATIONS OF THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN MISSION.

We commenced our journey down the west coast on Tuesday morning, March 29. Our company consisted of Dr. Mackay, myself, three students and the necessary bearers, as we went in sedan chairs.

Crossing the river a little below Tamsui, we jour-

neyed south, and in about an hour reached the chapel at Pat-li hun where we halted a few minutes. The chapel is built of sun-dried bricks faced with tiles and painted, the walls are two feet and a half thick, and Dr. Mackay says, "as durable as stone." Besides the chapel there are rooms for the preacher and his family and the missionary on his visit; the whole was built in one month's time. On the first day of the month the ground was bought; on the last day the whole was finished and ready for use.

I attended the service here one Lord's Day when there were 140 persons present. Another hour's journey took us up to the table-land south of Tamsui, from which we should have had a good view of the harbour but for the mist and rain. The table-land is covered with wild grass, excepting where the tea shrub has been planted. The people formerly tried to cultivate mountain rice, which does not require the fields to be covered with water, but it was so often a failure that they were wretchedly poor. Of late they have taken to the cultivation of tea, and each succeeding year sees the tea area extending, and the people in better circumstances.

Here and there fir plantations have been set out, and groves of bamboo grow beside every village.

A journey of three hours brought us to the end of this table-land, and we descended through a beautiful wooded gorge into a well watered plain, where rice fields and groves of bamboo and trees met the eye on every turn. We stayed overnight at Tho-a-kng, where a house is fitted up as a chapel. A crowd of people followed us into the chapel, but we soon came out again, and tooth-pulling was in order for the next half hour, during which about seventy teeth were removed. Dr. Mackay examined the teeth, the students and preacher pulled them; at times, three pairs of forceps were at work. The crowd surged backward and forward, every one wishing to see the operations. If a poor fellow groaned he was greeted with a loud laugh, if any feared to come up he was urged as if they expected to profit by his having his tooth drawn.

In the evening, fully 200 packed the chapel, and listened to the three students and Dr. Mackay. As each speaker rose, a piece of paper having two characters on it was placed on a frame, till at the close eight characters, one under the other, were on the frame. These were Sion-ti, Sin-than, Hok-sai, Thian-tong: "God, obey, serve, heaven." At the close, several play-actors came up to the platform, and said to Dr. Mackay that the doctrine was good and true, but, poor fellows, they do not practise it, yet they will resent anything said against it! They seemed to be well acquainted with Dr. Mackay, and he says he knows them all and sometimes goes on to their stages, where they make a place for him to pull teeth and preach. About thirty more teeth were drawn after the service, making about 100 for the day. As yet there are no baptized converts here, but there are thirty who desire to be baptized, and about 100 regular hearers. Five ancestral tablets were brought in, and given to Dr. Mackay to-night.

We went on through the plain near the sea next day, till we came about the middle of the afternoon to Hng-mo-kang, where there is a chapel. It is built of sun dried bricks plastered and painted, and has rooms for the preacher and his family and the missionary.

The preacher is that zealous carpenter I mentioned before. Dr. Mackay says he has an original, striking way of presenting and illustrating the truth. Here, as in almost every other place, persons came to have their teeth drawn; some little children had teeth that were growing into their upper lips, which of course gave them great pain. No native tooth extractor has now any practice in North Formosa; the people will not allow them to touch their teeth, but will wait weeks or months for Dr. Mackay. In the evening, about 150 persons attended worship, and some stayed till half-past ten o'clock, trying to learn two new Peppohoan tunes. The following morning we went on to Tek-chham, our numbers increased by two young lads from the village, upon whom Dr. Mackay has his eye, as likely to be future students and preachers; they came that they might learn thoroughly the new tunes, and teach them in their own village.

On our way I saw for the first time the native carts; these were drawn by three beasts, a water buffalo between the shafts and a bullock on each side. The body of the cart is about seven feet long, five wide, and two and a half deep. The wheels are made of