

## Our Contributors.

PUT THE MONEY WHERE IT WILL  
DO MOST GOOD.

BY KNOXIAN.

Within the next few weeks between one and two hundred student missionaries will go to the Home Mission field and begin work for the summer months.

Our Church has at least two peculiarities—all our divinity students preach and our preaching staff is about a hundred larger in summer than in winter.

All Churches that amount to anything have some peculiarities. So have all men. The Presbyterian Church in Canada has just as good a right to indulge in peculiarities as any other Church has; and if our theological students all preach before they are licensed that is our own affair. We have heard ministers denounce preaching before license who preached very lean, thin sermons themselves, long after they were licensed.

The fact is, student preaching never was a question that the Presbyterians of this country could afford to discuss. The Church had to do it or die. The founders of our beloved Zion were brought face to face with a condition rather than a theory, as President Cleveland would say. They made the theory bend to the condition; and the future historian of the Church, though not half so sensible a man as Dr. Gregg, will say they did right. The alternative presented in many places, and for many years, was student preaching or no preaching at all, and the Church wisely said the students should preach.

The day may come when the whole question will have to be reconsidered; but if the population of the North-west increases as fast as we all expect and hope, most of us will be in that part of the Church where preaching is not needed when the hour for reconsideration arrives.

There is, however, another Home Mission question which we think will stand some discussion. Should stations be organized into congregations simply because the number of people connected with them seems to be large enough to warrant organization, provided a supplement can be obtained from the Augmentation or some other fund? We say, no. Most distinctly, no. Most emphatically, no. Quality should be taken into consideration as well as numbers. A Presbyterian congregation cannot be made out of any kind of people, no matter how large the number may be. Presbyterianism implies self-government: and self-government implies intelligence, self-control, patience, tact and business ability. It does not by any means follow that even a fairly sized building filled with people contains these qualities. We have all seen crowds that had the minimum of intelligence, and no self-control, no patience, no tact, no capacity for the management of affairs. To make a Presbyterian congregation out of people of that kind is an utter impossibility. The material out of which Presbyterians are made is not there. The stuff won't make the article, no matter how you work it. Our system requires brains, and where there are no brains there can be no Presbyterian congregation worthy of the name.

A community composed mainly of excitable people who shout and "slop over" and go into hysterics about nothing at all is no soil for Presbyterianism. No Presbyterian money should be spent on people of that kind. Soft, gushy material, does well enough for some Churches; but it does not suit for ours.

A trotting community never make good Presbyterians. By a trotting community we mean one in which a large portion of the people trot to everything from a hanging to a protracted meeting. A whole General Assembly working the whole year round, could not make solid Presbyterians of trotters. The thing cannot be done; and no Church money should be squandered on trying to do it.

Some communities are shallow and trifling. They have little knowledge and colossal conceit. Each man must have his own way. They have never mastered the

fundamental principle of self-government—that majorities must rule, within certain limitations or self-government is an impossibility. There is not much use in trying to establish a Presbyterian congregation in a community of that kind.

The pioneers of Presbyterianism in this country know very well what an immense difference there is in communities. Start an organization in one place and it is a success from the word go. The people elect their officers and the officers do their work and the machine runs so nicely that the pioneer feels like giving thanks every time he visits the new organization. Start another in a different kind of a community, and very different results follow. In some cases the organization languishes until it has not vigour enough to die. In others the brethren and sisters work at the old problem, "who among us shall be greatest," until they have neither time nor energy left for anything else. They are so busy pulling one another down that they have no time to build up the cause. Communities have a character just as men and women have; and some have a kind of character that to make them Presbyterians successfully is an impossibility.

Does somebody say, if that be true then Presbyterianism is not adapted to all kinds of people. Our reply is the gospel as Calvinists preach it is gloriously adapted to all kinds of people; but the Presbyterian system of Church government cannot be worked by all kinds of men. Preach the glorious gospel to everybody, but don't give elaborate machinery to men who cannot work it. The Indian on the Saskatchewan should have the gospel preached to him, but it does not follow that all Indian stations can elect elders. The Chinamen on the Pacific Coast should have the gospel preached to them; but it may be some time before many of them are qualified to become deacons. Every dozen white men that can be gathered together from the Atlantic to the Pacific should have the gospel preached to them; but many a dozen could be gathered who have not in their ranks material to officer a Presbyterian congregation.

Presbyteries, we think, in organizing congregations and asking Church money for them should take quality into consideration as well as numbers. The money and the work should be put where they will do most good.

### THE YOUNG AND CHRISTIAN MISSIONS.

BY GEO. W. ARMSTRONG, LONDON, ONT

How can the young be interested in missions? What do we understand by missions? The simplest definition I know of is "Doing good." The greatest missionary that ever trod the earth, our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we are told "went about doing good," and we are also told that "He hath set us an example that we should follow in His steps," and if we did we should be largely imbued with the true missionary spirit.

My subject implies that the children in our Sabbath Schools and other institutions though so largely privileged, are not sufficiently possessed of this spirit and the purpose of this paper is to suggest how more interest can be created and developed in the great field of Christian enterprise. I would suggest:—1st that a most effectual way of accomplishing this purpose is to get all the children under gospel influences and savingly acquainted with Christ and His salvation.

The first impulse of a converted person whether old or young, is for active service in the harvest field of Christ. They want to do something to bring others into the same happy relationship to God in which they find themselves. There are many instances of this recorded in Scripture. On the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, his almost first inquiry was "Lord what wilt thou have me to do." The woman of Samaria, the first female missionary, when she had come in contact with our Redeemer at Jacob's well, went back to her own city and published abroad "Come, see a man who told me all things that ever I

did. Is not this the Christ?" In the first chapter of John's Gospel we read, "One of the two which heard John speak and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, we have found the Messiah, which is being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus." A genuine "home" missionary.

Now, if we can get our young people to bow in humble reverence at the foot of the cross, we shall soon see their young hearts inflamed with holy zeal for the glory of God and the good of man; which will display itself not only in active personal service, but in the consecration of all their faculties and powers, both of mind and soul to this great and glorious work of Christian missions. Fellow teachers let us all try by supplication and faith to bring our scholars to Christ.

2nd. Teachers may largely influence their scholars in the cause of missions by directing their attention to the noble self-sacrificing deed done by missionaries.

The bulk of children delight to read about heroic deeds and exploits of daring; of battles both on land and sea; of travels and adventures and other such narratives. Great as have been the acts of heroism in military and naval warfare, the missionary field can produce instances of valor and noble moral courage to match anything recorded on fields of carnage and blood. Where can we find a greater hero than Paul? A greater warrior than Luther? A greater courage than John Knox's? Where greater sacrifices than those of Livingstone and Moffatt in Africa? Where more self-denying zeal than that of Dr. Carey and Dr. Duff in India? Where greater patience in seasons of loneliness than that of Thomas Wakefield among the Galla Tribes? Where greater fortitude than that of Dr. McKay in Formosa? Where more self-consecrated zeal than that of Joseph Annand, or Dr. John G. Paton in the New Hebrides? Or of the brothers Joseph and Charles New, one on the West coast and the other on the East coast of Africa? The names of our moral heroes on the mission field are legion for they are many.

I saw in the public prints not long ago a case of a boy of fourteen or fifteen years being brought before a Justice of the Peace for certain reckless and wicked conduct, which imperilled the life or limb of others. It was ascertained that he had been reading the life and adventures of Jesse James and such other accounts of freebooters and law-breakers in sensational dime novels, and under the influence and inspiration of their ignoble deeds he set out to emulate them. (The publishers of such books should share the punishment of the victims of their publications). So it is, the young mind is affected by the character of the books they read and the lives they study, and if we as teachers would influence our scholars to acts of Christian heroism, we must direct them in the choice of books and set before them the truer nobility of Christian sacrifice for the good of others not so highly favoured as themselves.

3rd. Our scholars may be influenced in the cause of missions by the teachers themselves being posted on missionary subjects and missionary stations, and by being familiar with the names and doings of the missionaries on the various fields of labour.

We are all, or ought to be, acquainted particularly with our own denominational missionaries and their stations. These may be at home among the Indians, or on the foreign field. If when word comes from any of these fields of labour we can tell our scholars the details, depend upon it, we shall incite their interest and influence their sympathies and thus cast a seed into their young and tender hearts which sooner or later will bear fruit. How is it possible for us to influence them if we are in ignorance ourselves. Can the blind lead the blind? The study of the missionary field is in itself good mental exercise for both teachers and scholars.

Every Sabbath School should have in a prominent place on its walls, charts and maps illustrating the moral and religious state of the world. Let the scholars see

what a vast proportion of the earth is still enthroned in moral darkness and what a stupendous work needs yet to be done before the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our God and His Christ, and depend upon it many of our scholars will be led to consecrate themselves to the work of evangelizing and we shall hear many of them crying out, "Here am I, send me."

4th. The fourth and last suggestion I shall submit is that we may influence our scholars in the great work of missions, if, by our example as well as precept, we encourage them by showing that we ourselves are deeply interested in the work. Example is more potent than precept, and an active life tells with tremendously greater effect than merely oral utterances.

How many of our teachers engage in practical mission work beyond the hour spent every Sabbath within the walls of the School? There is a mission harvest field in every city and town in this fair Dominion. Sin and wickedness; crime and destitution; profanity and drunkenness are to be found in every land. What are we doing in a practical way to grapple with the immoral tendencies of the present day?

Whilst there is so much heathenism at home, at our very doors, surrounding our Sabbath Schools and our Churches there is a work for all to do, and if we would influence our scholars in the work of missions, we must, by our example, show them the way.

No doubt some have heard the story of the young man who called upon the late C. H. Spurgeon, and stated to him that he felt that he had a call to the foreign missionary field—a work to do for God among the heathen. Mr. Spurgeon listened to him with interest and patience and when he had finished his story handed a Bible to him and said, "Go, take your stand at the corner of the street there, and call upon men to repent." This did not suit the ideas of the would be foreign missionary, and he replied that he felt his call was to the foreign field; Mr. S. rightly told him that Englishmen had souls to save as well as Africans, and that if he were ashamed to proclaim the Gospel to sinners at home, he showed that he was not qualified to go abroad.

Fellow teachers, let us show our scholars by our example that we have the interests of souls at heart, and this, by the grace of Christ, will cause them to feel a deeper and still deeper interest in the progress of the Redeemer's kingdom, and may be the means of causing some of them with whom we come in direct contact to shape their lives for usefulness both at home and abroad in the distant fields of Christian missions.

### A SCOTCH MEETING-HOUSE FIFTY YEARS AGO.

[CONCLUDED FROM MARCH 15TH.]

The sacramental seasons were great occasions. The Thursday before the Sacramental Sunday was set apart as a "Fast Day," when the people assembled for worship and heard two sermons. Sunday was what the children felt to be a "sair day"—for the length of the services sorely taxed their powers of endurance. The services began at 11 a.m. After the usual preliminary devotions, there was the "Action Sermon," which was very elaborate, and fully longer than on ordinary Sundays. Then after prayer and singing came "the debars" or "the fencing of the tables," in which the minister set forth the character of those who might worthily partake of the Lord's Supper, and warned off all others. Plain things were sometimes said in these "debars," and loose livers reddened under them. Then came the observance of the communion, not simultaneously by the congregation, but by relays of members. When the communicants had taken their seats at the tables, which were literally tables covered with white cloths, the elders went round and gathered from each the little bits of lead which served as a token of admission. Before and after communicating there were special addresses given by the presiding minister. When the first relay were retiring the people