

Under these circumstances we appeal again to the Churches for sympathy and co-operation. We propose to hold another Prison Reform Conference next autumn, and we wish every Church of the Province to be represented at this Conference. In the meantime, in addition to the appointment of a co-operating committee, the cause of prison reform can be promoted by the endorsement of the Ontario Prison Commissioners and by commending them to the favourable consideration of the Dominion Government and to all our legislators. Copies of these recommendations will be freely distributed at the approaching meetings of Synods, Conferences, etc., and they may be obtained from any of the officers of the Prisoners' Aid Association and at their rooms, No. 150 Simcoe Street.

A. M. ROSEBRUGH, M.D., *Corresponding Secretary.*

#### POINTE-AUX-TREMBLES SCHOOLS.

MR. EDITOR,—It was the good fortune of the writer to be enabled to visit the Pointe-aux-Trembles Schools not very long ago. The ride from Montreal, though cold, was bracing and pleasant, and was enjoyed not only by your correspondent, but also by the gentlemen whom it was his privilege to accompany. We were all, with one exception, from points considerably distant east and west of Montreal. We were received by the affable and courteous principal, Mr. J. Bourgois, with that politeness which is a prominent characteristic of his race. He has been for nearly twenty years connected with the institution, and much of its success and prosperity are due to his able management. He was just recovering from a severe and protracted illness, but was able to take us into several class-rooms in which scholars were assembled with their teachers. Questions in arithmetic, geography and grammar were asked by the visitors; and the promptness and correctness of the answers revealed the thoroughness of the teaching received by the pupils. After a short time spent in the various class-rooms, the pupils assembled in the chapel. Here they sang (in French) with sweet voices and in excellent harmony a few familiar hymns. Then they were questioned on Bible history and on some of the fundamental truths of the Gospel. Here also the answers given showed the care and patience exercised by the teachers to make their scholars thoroughly conversant with the saving truths of God's Word. These answers were indeed clear and comprehensive, and would have rejoiced the heart of the Convener of the Assembly's Sabbath School Committee. Leaving the chapel we visited the new building erected for the girls. Miss Vesrot, formerly French teacher in the Montreal High School, is head of the girls' department, and is both by nature and culture eminently qualified for the position. The building is substantial and commodious. Both in this and in the boys' the dormitories and, indeed, all the rooms, are models of neatness and cleanliness.

The writer has visited many institutions, not only in Canada but also in other lands, where the young are taught, but nowhere has he seen brighter intelligence shining on the faces of so many pupils, and nowhere did he so deeply feel the atmosphere of a school permeated by a true Christlike spirit. No one can visit the school and realize its importance as a powerful factor in the work of French Evangelization without thanking God for its existence and the noble work which it is silently but surely accomplishing. More than 3,000 French-Canadians have been already educated in it, many of them now occupying positions of trust and influence, as ministers, teachers, physicians, lawyers, merchants, etc. The influence exercised by those therein educated will not be thoroughly experienced in all its length and breadth in our day; and yet that influence is to-day felt in some degree not in Lower Canada alone, but also in the neighbouring Republic. The energetic prosecution of the work of French Evangelization by means of the Pointe aux Trembles School is a duty lying nearest to the Church. That work has been blessed by God in the past, and will be still further blessed, but just in the ratio in which it is remembered at a throne of grace and peculiarly aided.

NORWOOD.

#### MISSIONARY TACTICS IN JERUSALEM.

MR. EDITOR,—An important question as to best methods of Christian work among Jews in Palestine has recently been raised by the official utterances of two prominent men—the Right Reverend G. F. P. Blyth, D.D., Bishop of the Church of England in Jerusalem and the East, and the Rev. Abraham Ben-Oliel, head of the new Presbyterian Mission in the Holy City. Inadvertently on the bishop's part, and adroitly on the part of his able second, the matter has been brought before the public in such a way as to create a misapprehension that may work grave injury to the missionary cause in Jerusalem unless it is speedily rectified.

The question at issue concerns the relative value of preaching, teaching and argumentation, aggressively addressed to adults, as compared with systematic educational work among the children, supplemented by the services of missionary doctors and nurses.

Bishop Blyth in his "Primary Charge" (London, 1890), after referring to the schools ("greatly sought after and entirely filled"), the medical mission, the hospital and the inquirers' home, all maintained at Jerusalem by the London Jews' Society, proceeds to affirm:—

"What is really indispensable and would quickly fill all our institutions is aggressive missionary work. There is no Hebrew and no German missionary. There are daily Hebrew services and Sunday German services in the church, but no missionaries, men and women, to go systematically about amongst the thousands of Jews. Hebrew is a living language amongst Jews, and the staff is as incomplete without such a missionary as a carpenter's chest might be without a saw."

The Rev. Mr. Ben-Oliel, in a striking circular (Jerusalem 1890), declares:—

"1. There is no one among the missionaries Jerusalem, nor has there been any one for long years, that can preach the Gospel of the grace of God to the Sephardim—Spanish Jews—in the vernacular—Judeo-Spanish. . . ."

"2. There is no missionary in Jerusalem that can converse in Hebrew with the rabbis. . . ."

"3. There is no place where non-Episcopalian travellers . . . can worship God in the Holy City according to the simpler forms that they prefer. . . ."

"But now, thank God, the reproach has been wiped off. The Lord has called me to Jerusalem to supply those three crying wants. . . . There is now in Jerusalem an Upper Room, to hold eighty to a hundred persons, near the Jaffa Gate, . . . where all evangelical Christians may worship God, . . . and where the Gospel shall (D.V.) be preached in Judeo-Spanish to the Sephardim. . . ."

Elsewhere in the same circular, referring to the lack of "fully-qualified" missionaries, able to converse in Hebrew and Judeo-Spanish, Mr. Ben-Oliel remarks:—

"Those who know—and who does not?—that the London (Episcopal) Society for Jews has a strong mission in Jerusalem, at an expenditure of some \$35,000 per annum, will wonder at the existence of these glaring, crying deficiencies."

At a matter of fact the London Society maintains in its exclusive service the following mission workers among the different classes of Jews. The Rev. J. E. Hanner, who speaks Judeo-Spanish, Hebrew, Arabic, English, French and German; the Rev. J. Jamal, who speaks Arabic, English and some German and Spanish, and Mr. N. Coral, who speaks Hebrew, Arabic, Turkish, English, Spanish and Italian.

But the real question is not whether there are or are not Christian workers in Jerusalem provided with an adequate linguistic equipment for "aggressive" preaching and argumentation, but whether the practical results of such work render it advisable or even permissible to turn mission funds at all largely into this channel. Despite its sacred nature all missionary work is, and must be, in the first instance, a simple question of finance. Every society or committee, entrusted with contributions for the promotion of Christianity in any special field, is morally bound to use the fund at its disposal in the way that will accomplish the most genuine and permanent good. The experience of fifty years proves conclusively that systematic educational work among the children is the best way of assailing the almost impregnable citadel of Judaism. Removed while still young to a Christian school and home, both boys and girls not rarely imbibe a saving Christian influence strong enough to overcome the bitterest parental prejudice and opposition. Referring to the lack of a Protestant school for Jewish boys at Jaffa, Mr. Ben-Oliel justly observes, in the *Jewish Herald*, for February, 1890:—

"Could I open such a school . . . I believe that in a short time 300 or more boys would attend. And what a power and influence for good it would confer on the labourer! It would be sure to open every door and many hearts to its message."

Next to school work the hospital, administered by pious and faithful doctors and nurses, is the most effective means of reaching the Jewish race with success. No better service to the Jewish missionary cause in Jerusalem could possibly be rendered than making up the sum of \$25,000 needed for the new English hospital (for which \$12,000 have already been subscribed), and adding to this enough for a convalescents' home, where the truth might be presented at that most auspicious time when the Jewish hearer cannot but feel that returning health and perhaps life itself are largely due to Christian skill and kindness. Equally important and desirable is a new building for the boys' school on the spacious grounds without the walls, where the erection of a new girls' school has already been commenced. Special contributions for this object would be most widely bestowed.

Christian endeavour finds scarcely anything more impenetrable than the Jewish "heart of unbelief" fortified by the stony prejudices of years. While still in the plastic stage of youth, or when softened by suffering and soothed by kindness something may be accomplished. Otherwise a genuine conversion is almost a miracle. A most zealous, experienced and competent missionary laboured by preaching and argument among the Jews of Jaffa for the four-and-thirty months ending August, 1890. Everything was in his favour, but in that time he did not make a single convert whom he ventured to baptize. One desired baptism, but his request was wisely refused. The missionary who accomplished this result, during a ministry as long as Christ's, was the Rev. Abraham Ben-Oliel, who comes now to supply the "crying wants" of Jerusalem.

The writer is not personally in favour of either liturgy or episcopacy; but considerable experience with mission work in two hemispheres, and two months' attentive study of the situation in Jerusalem, satisfy him that the Protestant cause can be most effectively advanced in the Holy City by "staying up the hands" of the London Jews' Society, and strengthening and enlarging the educational and medical institutions which it maintains. The Jews are flocking hither by thousands. The field is "white to the harvest" as never before since the days of Christ. At least double the fund now annually expended here by the London Society (\$75,000 instead of \$35,000) ought to be poured into Jerusalem this year and next. And it would be if the Christian public realized the need and the opportunity. Beyond doubt this is a time for laying aside all questions of Church government and forms of worship and coming up as one man to the aid of Zion. Never were unity and concentration of effort more imperatively demanded. The new Presbyterian Mission is wholly wanting in the necessary equipment for school and medical work. The Jaffa career of its founder gives slight hope of his success in the almost hopeless task he has marked out for himself. (The Judeo-Spanish service after nine months—August, 1890, to May, 1891—is not yet begun, for lack of an audience.) As a pleasant social and religious rendezvous for non-Episcopal visitors to Jerusalem during the brief travelling season, Mr. Ben-Oliel's venture serves a distinct and useful purpose. As a missionary enterprise it merely absorbs funds for which wise and liberal givers can find far better recipients, for unquestionably the "golden texts" of the missionary work at Jerusalem are: "Suffer little children to come unto Me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," and "Jesus went about,

healing all manner of sickness," and whoever ignores these is foredoomed to failure.

EMERSON ALEXANDER STERNS.

Jerusalem, May 13, 1891.

#### A LETTER FROM THE PACIFIC COAST.

(Concluded.)

Presbyterianism has had a real boom this way by a visit of two so noted elders (Harrison and Wanamaker). Eastern people, especially Canadians, do not grasp fully or easily the situation of Churches on this coast; how they stand in the background; nine-tenths of the people—upper, middle and lower—as well as the "masses," or working people, taboo religion as only suited for old women or children. They have no use for it, save, perhaps, at a "Christening," a wedding or a funeral. Hence when any person of note comes along who needs any of these rites, it is a wind-fall, a "boom," not only to the particular Church and pastor, but to that denomination. The Episcopal Church, which is like its eastern sections in other respects, but has not the usual proportion here of the wealthy class, hence it is specially grateful for even small Providential favours.

When King Kalakaua happened to die here some time ago and whose obsequies were by that Church, as it so occurred, the clergy worked the boom for all it was worth to bring "the Church" to the notice of the public. It was the biggest boom they have ever had or are likely to have for many a day. For once the daily papers gave almost as much space to their ecclesiastical matters as to the weekly Sunday base ball games or the perennial slogging match. A somewhat noted actor who had acted here ten years ago and now quite recently has criticized the popular taste most caustically in the New York papers, showing that the ability to appreciate high-class acting had greatly deteriorated, that the most select audiences entirely missed the really fine points in the plays and men fell off their chairs in hilarity at low comedy. He said the chief industry as well as sport of San Francisco seemed to be prize-fighting.

A very amusing "clerical" mistake recently happened, touched more fully in the *Occident*, the most enterprising Church paper on this coast. The Presbytery of San Francisco has been in session for about a month as a judicial court trying Rev. John W. Ellis, D.D., stated supply of the tabernacle, for the appropriation of the Church funds and falsehood. The Rev. Narayan Sheshadrai, D.D., came through this city and visited the Presbytery and was voted the usual courtesy to sit as a corresponding member. The reporter of a pushing daily got badly mixed in the matter. Next day a portrait of the noted ex Brahmin was given and a long story worked up, the pith of which was that he was co respondent in the case (which had neither respondent nor co-respondent in it!).

Take an illustration of western consciences; the case has been decided against Dr. Ellis on both counts, but he was simply "censured," and will preach as usual next Sunday. A prominent pastor recently from the east who sat on the case protested in vain against such a light penalty, and urged suspension from the ministry for a year at least. There is an appeal to Synod from both sides of the case.

Dr. Briggs' inaugural address, though making such a stir in the east, has cut small figure on this coast, at least in the Presbyterian Church, as there were no "broad" or loose ministers or professors in the Seminary to champion his vagaries or heresies. In another Church there was the usual exultation by the "new departure," "larger hope" or advanced school of Semi-Unitarians. Some here who know Professor Briggs as their teacher in Union Seminary, while giving him credit for average ability and extensive knowledge of Hebrew and other subjects, were never able to discover in him any evidences of vital spiritual life or the work of the Holy Spirit, who is the only Teacher and Conservator of sound doctrine. However, it is pleasant to be able to report that the outlook in Christian work was never more hopeful. People see crime and sin rushing headlong, and are stirred to unusual efforts to stem the tide.

Most denominations, including the Episcopalians, are making advance efforts. Outside evangelistic aggressive work is being pushed more than ever in various old and some new lines in city, town and country. The Salvation Army, so long despised, abused and trampled on by the hoodlum element, is forging ahead of all other movements. As in Washington recently Mrs. Booth, of New York, was listened to in a drawing room meeting attended by Mrs. Harrison and other prominent ladies, so here the leaders of the Salvation Army were invited with the clergy to meet the President at a public reception, and were received by him with all courtesy. The Roman Catholic Archbishop recently in a public meeting of all classes and religious view strongly endorsed and eulogized the work of General Booth and the Salvation Army, both in its charitable and spiritual branches. There have been only two entirely new religious systems launched in this city the past few months, where the soil is so fertile and congenial for such things, viz. The "Koresban" and "The Commonwealth of Jesus," both from Chicago, and Communistic and Utopian generally. Of course the cranks, or those who fell in with the prophecy of floods fraud by Mrs. Woodworth some year or two ago, having returned from the mountains, were eagerly waiting for some new bubble to pursue, and being played out in the ordinary lines of religious effort, both themselves and others having made shipwreck of faith in them, and that craze having swamped their influence so that their usefulness was no more, if they ever had any—warmly welcomed this new avenue for usefulness to themselves. Two of the leading officials and lights of the Commonwealth of Jesus, the most plausible of the two humbugs, have found their way behind the bars in the city prison through internal feuds about women members and money. It seems there was not enough of either to go round all or "divvy up" evenly, so as to secure that brotherly peace and unity necessary to prevent almost fatal brawls in the house where all the members, officials and founder lived, having all things in common. Hence the police had to be called in by one faction or leader to protest against the other faction or malcontents, both sides breathing out threats and slaughter towards the other, and all being members of the new brotherhood that aimed to introduce the millenium by abolishing sin, poverty and misery.

San Francisco, May, 1891.