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## Contributors & Correspondents.

### FOREIGN MISSIONS.

(For BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.)

We notice that the General Assembly of our Church have decided to establish a *Foreign Mission*, properly so-called. The Missions of our Church at Red River, in the valley of the Saskatchewan, and in British Columbia, though called Foreign Missions, belong, in reality, to our Home Mission work; and will soon all be under the care of the Home Mission Committee. China is the field that has been chosen. The Rev. Mr. Mackay is the Missionary to be sent.

We think that the Assembly of our Church have acted in wisdom in deciding to engage in what is, in reality, Foreign Mission work. We believe that the Assembly have acted in obedience to the command of God, as given in His Word, "Go ye into all the earth, and preach the Gospel to every creature;"—and also in obedience to the call of God as given in his wonderful providences—in deciding to establish this Mission. That command, "Go ye into all the earth," still stands unrevoked, and shall remain in force as long as there are lost and ruined men to be gathered into the Kingdom of God. During the last few years God has opened up lands that have been hitherto barred against the entrance of the Gospel of His Son. Spain, Italy, and China have of late become accessible to the Gospel Missionary. Marvellous have been the providences by which those lands have been made willing to allow the Gospel to enter. In fact, there are but comparatively few lands from which the Missionary is excluded by the action of the people themselves. By opening doors for the entrance of the Gospel, God bids his Church to go in and possess these lands for Emmanuel.

Objections have been raised—and raised by Christian people—against the establishment of this Mission; but we believe they all fall to the ground when viewed in the light of the example of the early Church, in the light of divine providence, and in the light of God's revealed will. One objection that we hear urged against the commencement of this Mission is the want of means at the Church's command. "We have not sufficient money in the treasury," says the objector, "to warrant us to engage in so expensive a Mission." One of our colleges is in debt, some of the schemes of our Church are suffering from lack of support, and many parts of our land are new and needy. In short, the need at home is so great that we cannot think of giving of our means to send the Gospel to the heathen, even though they are dying without a knowledge of the plan of redeeming grace.

We grant that the lack of means at the command of the Church is an apparent difficulty in the way of this grand undertaking. But it is only an apparent difficulty. And faith in God has overcome many a difficulty, a thousand times as great. To begin to evangelize the heathen is a work of faith. To lead people to exercise faith in God is the end of our exhortations and of our preaching. And now let the Church herself do what she is beseeching sinners to do—trust God—and he will provide the means to carry on the work that she has begun in faith.

Let us ask did ever the time come in the history of any church, when there was no apparent difficulty in the way of now establishing a foreign mission? The answer must be given, "Never." There were men in the Church who saw as they thought insurmountable obstacles in the way, when the Secession Churches of Scotland a century ago were considering the propriety of sending out their missionaries to America. These objections were urged perseveringly. But the missionaries were sent; and missions were established among the goodland hills of Pennsylvania, and in the wilds of Kentucky. And the result showed that these churches acted in wisdom, in the spirit of the Gospel. There were apparent hinderances in the way when the United Presbyterian Church began to send out her men to Nova Scotia, to Canada, and to other parts of the world. The Free Church

of Scotland had apparent difficulties before her, when she began her foreign missionary work, which has now become so extensive, and has been so greatly blessed, so we may add has every church had apparent difficulties in the way of such work.

We believe that the Canada Presbyterian Church is both able and willing to maintain a Foreign Mission, in addition to her Home Missions. For our Home Mission must never be allowed to languish. It is the home field that must support the foreign. If home missions faint and fail, foreign missions must languish and die. We feel persuaded that the establishment of a Foreign Mission will not diminish the Church's interests in, or lessen her contributions for, her home work. We feel assured that the opposite effect will be the result of such a work. Our Church can carry on her Home and Foreign Mission together. We have a membership of about fifty thousand. If the members of our Church would contribute at the rate of seventy-five cents or a dollar, a year, each, the amount realized would be sufficient to meet the expense of both the home and foreign work.

Another objection that we hear urged against a Foreign Mission in connection with our Church is this: "We have unconverted men in our land—we have heathen at home—you need not go to India or China to find them." It is an undoubted fact that we have multitudes of such men in our own land. We have many that never enter a place of worship, or open the Bible. We have men who to all intents and purposes are heathen—worse than heathen,—and who shall be beaten with more stripes than the heathen. The fact that we have such in our land should lead every Christian among us to be a home missionary, and to work for the conversion of the careless, the benighted and the ungodly, at home. But the fact that we have such in our land, of itself, is not a sufficient reason why we should not engage in foreign mission work. The unconverted at home have the Gospel within their reach; but will not accept the offer of life at our hand. Shall we withhold the bread of life from the starving millions of heathen lands, because we cannot get the so-called "heathen at home" to partake of the feast of fat things that has been provided without money and without price? If carrying the Gospel to China or India removed it from our own land, and left us in the shadow of death, perhaps we might hesitate then to send it. We can help to send the Gospel to China without impoverishing ourselves.

Other churches have commenced Foreign Missions, when as yet there were unconverted in their own lands. The Apostles were not permitted to remain in Jerusalem, until the unconverted there were brought to Christ. The Churches of Scotland did not wait until all the ungodly of that land were converted before they sent out their foreign missionaries. If the London Missionary Society had waited until all the heathen of that city had been converted, it would not yet have planted Missionaries in twenty-one provinces of India, or in seven of the larger cities of China. Let us remember that God may be giving us a call to send out our men, while there are many at home, who know not Jesus and his salvation.

Some object to Foreign Missions in as much as they think all such missions a failure. But we do not think that any throughout our Canada Presbyterian Church object on this ground.

We trust, now that the work has been begun, and that our Missionary has gone to his distant field of labor, that our people will be liberal in the support of the Mission. Let us remember that this is the Lord's work; and that every Christian has his part to do. Let us remember what Christ has done for us, and ask ourselves what we can do for him.

J. B. V.

It generally takes twenty years of training to eradicate the word "nice" from a woman's vocabulary. The "Falls of Niagara, the Psalms of David, and the progress of the human race," says a fond father, "were all nice to my eldest till she got married."

A Hindu, on one occasion, said to a missionary: "Reviling our gods, criticising our Shastras, and ridiculing our ritual, will accomplish nothing, but the story which you tell of Him who lived, and pitied, and came, and taught, and suffered, and died, and rose again—that story, sir, will overthrow our temples, destroy our ritual, abolish our Shastras, and extinguish our gods."

## Scientific and Useful.

**ANTIDOTE FOR POISON.**—A farmer writes: "It is now over twenty years since I learned that sweet oil would cure the bite of a rattlesnake, not knowing it would cure other kind of poisons. Practice, observation and experience have taught me that it will cure poisons of any kind, both on man and beast. The patient must take a spoonful of it internally and bathe the wound for a cure. To cure a horse it requires eight times as much as for a man. One of the most extreme cases of snake bites occurred eleven years ago. It had been thirty days standing, and the patient had been given up by his physician. I gave him a spoonful of oil, which effected a cure. It will cure bloat in cattle caused by fresh clover. It will cure the sting of bees, spiders and other insects, and persons who have been poisoned by ivy."

**IMPORTANCE OF PURE VIRUS.**—Several cases have presented themselves to our notice (says the *Medical and Surgical Reporter*) where serious results have followed what seemed to be pure vaccine virus. In one, a child four years old was attacked with an eruption of pustules over the head, back, face, and arms, with fever, loss of appetite and debility. On this topic Dr. H. T. Babusen of North Carolina, writes us: "I have the greatest horror of impure vaccination, because I myself am a sufferer at this time to the extent of a crippled elbow-joint and swelled lymphatic glands from a re-vaccination performed on me eight years ago, while a prisoner of war at Point Lookout, Md. Doubtless ordinary caution had been used to procure good virus, and I have never blamed any one for my misfortune, but it has taught me very effectually the lesson of caution."

**CANCER CURE.**—A correspondent sends us the following as his successful method of dealing with a cancer:

"I wish to tell you how I cured my cancer last summer without pain or money. Eight years ago a cancer came on my nose. It grew slowly for several years, the last two years it grew very fast. It became frightful. It had begun to eat out my left eye. I had paid hundreds of dollars, and had employed doctors far and near without finding relief. Last summer I drank wild tea, putting the tea grounds on my cancer every night as a poultice. In six weeks my cancer was cured. I am sixty-two years old. I have given this remedy to several that had a cancer, and know two that have been cured since. I believe wild tea grows over the country generally, always on high land."

**CONFIRMATION OF A THEORY.**—The advocates of the hypothesis that this continent was peopled by immigrants from the shores of Asia, by way of the Aleutian Islands and Alaska, will find encouragement in the telegraphic report of the arrival at San Francisco of some Japanese seamen whose junk was disabled on their own coast, but who were carried by the ocean current twenty-five hundred miles to the island of Adabo, off the Alaskan shore. One of the chief obstacles to the reception of the theory has heretofore been the admitted fact that at the early period when the settlement must have been made the arts of ship-building and navigation were too little advanced to furnish the means of making the ocean passage. A Japanese junk, however, belongs to the embryonic stage of these arts, and such a vessel, disabled by shipwreck, can hardly be supposed to have possessed sailing qualities above the reach of the most unintelligent ship-builder. The length of the voyage, under such circumstances, requiring considerable tonnage in order to carry the necessary provisions, has also been made an element of objection. But these shipwrecked Japanese were nine months in making the transit at the mercy of the winds and waves, and though twenty-three out of twenty-six starved to death, the survivors exceeded the number originally planted in the Garden of Eden, and provided that one of the three was a woman and another a priest, the continent being found unoccupied, we do not see any extreme difficulty in supposing that they might have increased and multiplied, overflowed upon the main land, and finally found their way southwards into Mexico, Central America, and South America, as the ancestors of the Aztecs and the Incas are conjectured to have done. The conjecture has at any rate received indisputable assistance from the incident.

—*Journal of Com.*

**STEAM.**—It is quite surprising at a time when almost everything is done by steam, to know how few people have any correct idea of what steam really is. Let

the question, "What are the bubbles which rise through boiling water filled with," be proposed to a number of people of all ages and conditions in life, and a large part of them, three out of four, if not nine out of ten, will answer at once, "They are filled with air." But how air enough to fill so many and such large bubbles ever got into the water, it is quite plain they have never taken the trouble to think. And these same persons will tell you, with equal promptness that the white cloud which comes from the nose of the boiling tea-kettle, and whistle of the iron horse on a winter's morning, is steam. Now, both these common notions are wrong. The truth is, the bubbles are filled with steam, which is water changed by heat from a heavy liquid mass to a light, gas-like fluid, just as invisible and quite as light as air. The white cloud is watery vapor. It was once steam, it is true, but not now. It has already returned to water, whence it came. Such is the nature of water, that, when an atom of it, lying at the bottom of a kettle or boiler, is exposed to 212 degrees of heat, it is instantaneously changed to steam, and becomes nearly two thousand times as large as it was before. As Satan, in the garden of Eden, crouching in the form of a toad at the ear of sleeping Eve, sprang instantly into the stately proportions of a gigantic man at the touch of Ithurel's spear, so the tiny particles of water, under the magical influence of heat, suddenly leap from their humble form into great hissing bubbles of steam. These, on account of their lightness, quickly begin to struggle upward out of their watery bed. This great expansion and rapid rising readily explain the violent agitation of boiling water.—*From Oliver Optic's Magazine.*

### A DYING NATION.

The accounts of the famine in Persia, which continue to arrive in greater detail, bid fair to treat the world to a spectacle of a calamity the like of which has not been witnessed, in historic times at least,—the sudden extinction of a nation by want of food. This has really been the fate of the great States which once lined the valley of the Euphrates, and it is a fate which has for centuries been threatening some modern States,—Spain, for instance. Man has stripped the soil of trees; the absence of trees has brought droughts; droughts have slowly diminished the productive powers of the ground, and finally destroyed them,—the population, in the meantime, dwindling in numbers and vitality. Spain had forty millions of people in the time of the Romans, and flowed with milk and honey, it is now an arid region, only half of it under cultivation, with only sixteen millions of inhabitants, and, if modern science had not come to its aid, would probably go the way of Babylon. Persia was one of the most powerful States of antiquity, and even in the fourteenth century was able to support the army of Tamerlane, who marched without commissariat or baggage during a bloody contest. It is now almost a wilderness, with a population of about two millions,—about half of them nomads, which is rapidly perishing from famine brought on by three years' drought. The worst of it is, that owing to the absence of either common roads or railroads, it seems to be impossible for the charity of the rest of the world to reach the sufferers, so that there is really a strong prospect of the total depopulation of the country. The moral of this horrible story is,—look after your trees.—*Nation.*

In every congregation there are a few persons who are always at church, whether it shines or storms. There are others who only get there when all conditions are favorable. They must feel well, free from headache, fatigue, worry or anything disturbing, and the skies must be bright, the wind from a particular direction, and the roads dry and solid. Given a throb of uneasiness, a stormy cloud, a little too much dampness, and their pews will be vacant. In this variable climate they consequently do not get to church very frequently, and when they do, they are so much strangers as hardly to feel at home. Now, all know this is very wrong, and yet it is scarcely ever found fault with. But between the faithful and faithless there are the hosts of lukewarm, upon whom dependence must always be uncertain. If ministers were to be kept from their pulpits by these trifling hinderances that keep others from their pews, preaching would only be an occasional thing in most congregations. And yet it is just as much the duty of the people to be in their pews, as of the pastor to be in their pulpits.—*Idid*

## SMALL POX—EFFECTS OF VACCINATION.

This loathsome and dangerous disease is at present very prevalent in the United States and Canada. A number of cases, several of them fatal, have been reported at Montreal, Ottawa, and Toronto. We would urgently advise parents and guardians not to neglect the vaccination of those under their charge, as the effects of this precautionary measure are unquestionably exceedingly beneficial. Vaccinate at once!

The small-pox has been very virulent in Philadelphia, and has spread rapidly during the last month or two. There have been 1,879 deaths from disease during the past year, of which 562 occurred in November, and 1,041 in December. In other cities where it has appeared it has been unusually fatal in its attacks. It has visited most of the principal cities of the North and West, but has not so far appeared in the South. Every body who has not already done so should get vaccinated, and thereby protect themselves against the disease, in the event it should spread in this direction. One of our exchanges has the following in regard to vaccination:

"The value of vaccination as a preventative of small-pox, though questioned by many, seems attested by statistics. When small-pox was raging as an epidemic in London in 1843 observations were made by the physicians on the children belonging to national and provincial school work-houses, etc. Some of the children had never been vaccinated, the great majority had in various ways and degrees. Of over 1,000 children without any marks of vaccination, 100 died of the disease. While of over 1,000 children who had evidence of vaccination only 178 had any trace of the disease. In regard to the amount of vaccination it was found that of children having four or more cicatrices only 0.22 per cent. died, and were secured with small-pox. So the best vaccination proved thirty-fold more protective than the worst, and the worst was twenty-seven times better than non-vaccination at all."

"The study of 15,000 cases of small-pox at the London hospital shows that the unvaccinated died at the rate of 37 per cent, and the vaccinated at the rate of 1 per cent, the mortality amongst those with four scars being only 0.22, while that among those with only a single scar was 7.37. A comparison of the statistics indicates that a well vaccinated person runs only one-seventieth the risk which is taken by those who refuse to avail themselves of vaccination. The courageous Lady Montague, who first introduced vaccination to be made upon her daughter, is vindicated by the records of the history and progress of the disease since then; and the great army of doubters who hold aloof from vaccination, on account of their superstitious or insufficient knowledge of facts, are left the consolation of knowing that their course greatly increases the risk they would otherwise run."—*American Exchange*

## LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION.

A gentleman advertised for a boy to assist him in his office, and nearly fifty applicants presented themselves to him. Out of the whole number, he, in a short time, selected one, and dismissed the rest.

"I should like to know," said a friend, "on what ground you selected that boy, who had not a single recommendation."

"You are mistaken," said the gentleman; "he had a great many. He wiped his feet when he came in, and closed the door after him, showing that he was careful. He gave up his seat instantly to that lame old man, showing he was kind and thoughtful. He took off his cap when he came in, and answered my questions promptly and respectfully, showing he was polite and gentlemanly. He picked up the book which I had purposely laid upon the floor, and replaced it on the table; while all the rest stepped over it, or shoved it aside; and he waited quietly for his turn, instead of pushing and crowding, showing that he was honest and orderly. When I talked with him, I noticed that his clothes were carefully brushed, his hair in nice order, and his teeth as white as milk; and when he wrote his name, I noticed that his finger-nails were clean, instead of being tipped with jet, like that handsome little fellow's in the blue jacket. Don't you call these things letters of recommendation? I do, and I would give more for what I can tell about a boy by using my eyes in ten minutes than all the fine letters he can bring me."—*Little Corporal.*

A Boston woman refuses to permit her husband to go on a fishing excursion, "because he was very apt to get drowned when he went upon the water; and, moreover, he did not know how to swim any more than a goose."

**FIFTEEN HUNDRED HOMES DESTROYED.**—It is stated that the houses of 1,500 members of Presbyterian churches in Chicago were destroyed in the great fire. Out of one congregation of over eight hundred, all except five families were burned out of their homes, and not one business man in the congregation had either store or office left in which to transact business, or meet customers or friends.

The story is told of a negro who prayed earnestly that he and his coloured brethren might be preserved from what he called their "upsettin' sins." "Brudder," said one of his friends, at the close of the meeting, "you aint got the hang of dat ar word. It's besettin', not upsettin'." "Brudder," replied the other, "if dat is so, it's so. But I was praying da Lord to save us from the sin of intoxication, and if dat aint an upsettin' sin, I dunno what am."