

## THE HOME MISSION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND.

The January number of the *Missionary Herald* of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, is chiefly occupied with Home Missionary intelligence of a very interesting character. The Rev. Mr. Kerr, a missionary at Dromore West, County of Sligo, says of the Schools:—

"They are the John Baptists of the Gospel in Connaught, preparing in the desert a highway for our God. The maxim of John McDonald, 'preach and teach—teach and preach,' is applicable to Connaught as well as to Calcutta. There must be teaching as well as preaching; but the one must not supersede the other. Under my superintendence there are at present six schools with eight teachers, two males and six females. The daily attendance at all is now nearly 300—most of them Romanists by birth. It was, we doubt not, under the controlling power of Him who doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, that the pioneer of the Connaught Mission, Mr. Brannigan, opened the first Mission school in the West. It was the same controlling power that led the founder of the industrial school system, Dr. Edgar, to open his first school, for the training of the future mothers of Ireland in habits of industry and order. The original Mission-schools are now superintended by Mr. Allen; and principally through Dr. Edgar's schools, supported by the 'Belfast Ladies' Association for Connaught,' of which he is President, a new element has of late been introduced. Industry is now taught in all the schools in this district. Each of these, in its own place, is doing its work well—the Industrial, Scriptural, and the Mission-school—and there is no collision between them. The one is the helpmeet of the other. The schools, it is at once evident, have a twofold object in view—to fit the rising generation of Connaught for the life that now is, and for that which is to come. They who would truly benefit Ireland must give her two boons—the Gospel, and the means of employment. Nothing else will ever satisfy her cravings. The numberless remedies of statesmen are of no avail. Like the open grave Ireland swallows all these, and the unsatisfied appetite still cries, 'Give, give.' Ah, no!—nothing but the Gospel and the means of employment will avail. Give these, and you stop the wail of our wretched land, and you elevate her to her true position among the nations of the earth. Strange that most of the Mission-schools are not supported by the Irish Presbyterian Church, but by Christian people in Scotland and England!"

The Rev. Dr. Edgar, a distinguished divine of the Irish Church, and founder of the industrial system has, as Honorary Secretary to the Board of Missionary Directors, addressed a powerful appeal to the Ministers, Elders, and Members of the Church, in behalf of this most important department of her work. No Church can be in a healthful state, however zealous and liberal in sending the Gospel to the distant heathen, while she neglects her appropriate home-field. And as we know of no Church which, from its circumstances, has such a call to be a Missionary Church as our own, we therefore give in full this admirable appeal. With very slight variations, it is most applicable to the Ministers, Elders, and other members and adherents of the Presbyterian Church of Canada:—

"BRETHREN,—The day, for a collection on behalf of our Home Mission, is at hand. We trust that for this, and every good work, you are prepared.

"How very little does God ask of us—how very generous is His return! Honour the Lord with thy substance, and the first-fruits of all thine increase, so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine. He asks but a little of that which perishes, and He improves it to the conversion of souls, the enlargement of His kingdom of righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. That souls might be saved, God gave His Son to reprove and the Cross; Jesus gave Himself to death and the grave; but to you it is merely said—Let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him. If God has given nothing, He asks no return. Yours, brethren, is the Presbyterian Church in Ireland—a small sphere of labour in comparison with the sphere of Christian enterprise; but very large, if measured by all that we have yet done. Two hundred years of Presbyterian effort in Ireland are over—how many millions of Romanists are unconverted still! We have facilities for Missionary work above all that our fathers enjoyed—half the kingdom can be crossed now with less toil than it cost many of our forefathers to attend their own place of worship.

"Our Home Mission field is under our eye; and each man may satisfy himself what work is to be done, what work has been done, and what are the qualifications and faithfulness of the Missionaries employed. The Missionaries employed are our own, reared and educated under our own eye, distinguished by their worth, activity, and zeal, and all of them volunteers for the self-denying, lonely, and arduous sphere of their choice.

"Whatever has been their success, God has, at least, afforded them opportunities of usefulness which lay both them and us under heavy responsibility. They have an access to Roman Catholics, to which at home we are strangers; they have thousands of Roman Catholic children committed to their charge; and many Roman Catholics, at the most interesting and hopeful period of life, well instructed in Scripture knowledge, attend their preaching.

"While the Pope is dividing England among his priests, as the feudal invader divided a conquered country among his officers, Popery in Kerry, Burr, and Connaught, is warring fast; its priests are sinking in the estimation of their people, and all their despotism cannot drive poor little children from Scriptural schools.

"Let others talk of what Parliament can do, or will do, to arrest the march of Popery, our barrier against its progress is Scriptural truth—we lay the Bible across its road—we send forth our soldiers of the Cross, with the sword of the Spirit and the armour of evangelical truth; for we are sure that the Man of Sin will one day be destroyed by the sword of Christ's mouth, and consumed by the brightness of His coming.

"Our land has too long been a land of darkness, and therefore a land of crime; the system known as the masterpiece of the father of lies has here head-quarters—and no wonder that falsehood and perjury prevail. The priests of a false religion set an example of Sabbath desecration; the religion they profess exalts the superstitious holiday above the Christian Sabbath, and perverts the day of God's appointment for instruction and impression into an opportunity for deifying a selfish priesthood, and riveting the fetters of slavery on a duped and down-trodden people. In proportion to the Scriptural character of our Church, the Divine authority of her government, the purity of her creed, the suitableness of our system for carrying on Mission work, and above all, the overwhelming power for reformation of the evangelical truth which we preach, we are bound to extend to the South and West of our country the blessings of the same Presbyterianism which, in the North, leaves employment so scant for soldiers or police, leaves tenantless so many cells of gaols, gives to property, and to the very soil on which Presbyterianism thrives, transcen-

dent security and value, and lifts up Ulster in noble contrast with Romish Ireland, crushed by poverty, drowned in superstition, enslaved by priestcraft, the prey of crafty traders in spurious patriotism, and the puzzle and unsolved problem of every politician, who, without the Bible, endeavours to raise the slaves of Romanism to a level with the men who derive their morals and religion from the Book which, through the persecuted Puritans, gave England all its liberty, and, through the martyred fathers of the Covenant, made the land of Knox and Argyle the land of the free.

"For spreading the truth which the New Testament teaches, and the church government which the New Testament sanctions, each Presbyterian is deeply responsible; for each Presbyterian has an allotted sphere of influence, and of duty too. Who are they that prize the truth of the New Testament and the Church of the New Testament; who are they, while other systems are tottering, other systems are exhibiting weakness and nakedness; who are they that prove their love for the system which gave our fathers purity, and peace, liberty, and glory?—they, assuredly, whose generous heart, and active hand, contribute to the Church of their fathers an honest share of the spirit and the means of maintaining the ground she has so nobly won, and pushing her conquest into the regions all around, of ignorance, bondage, and crime.

"Christians in other lands have admired your successful labours in the South and West. Scotland and America came generously to your help; they will again, as they nobly helped before; but, at present, we can make available the services of neither. We are thrown this year on our own resources, and we must fairly test what our own resources are. The rich are not numerous among us—at least the rich whose all is dedicated to God; but the men are, we trust, numerous, who are the sinews of the Church as well as of the nation, men of principle and worth, who feel God's service to be liberty, and who look upon all that they have as lent by the Lord. To such we look, on such, by grace, we depend; we have tried them often, and never in vain. Before such we trust the claims of our Home Mission will be brought with all the light and power which the pulpits of our ministry can so effectively command; and in the spirit of hope and prayer we wait the issue."

## THOUGHTS AGAINST ALLOWING CANDIDATES TO SHORTEN THEIR THEOLOGICAL COURSE.

The last number of the *Home and Foreign Record of the Presbyterian Church, U. S.*, has an excellent article under this head. Notwithstanding its length, we transfer it to our columns. It is every way applicable to our case. Although no attempt has been made to reduce the full tale of years in our theological course, yet it has been practically diminished, by drafts upon the time which should have been devoted to study. While we are satisfied that those who have the management of Knox's College have correct views on this subject, and deplore that an imperious necessity has led them to yield to the importunate applications of congregations for students' labour, we know that many of our pious people consider the pressing wants of the country a sufficient reason for abridging the term of study. The following article exposes the evils of such a system—one whose pernicious effects will soon be felt, if a remedy be not speedily applied. It is to be hoped that our Church will not only see to it, that her candidates for the ministry be allowed to finish the prescribed course, but that the other duties in