

Gospel is slowly shining in upon the thick darkness of the French Canadian population.—Some of the Presbyterian congregations have been visited with Revivals during the winter. Some have been sadly disturbed by the divisive efforts of "Plymouth Brethren."

Within the bounds of our own Synod we have seen much to warrant us to thank God and take courage: activity everywhere, energy in many quarters, remarkable revivals in some quarters.

Looking abroad upon the world—even the civilized and so-called Christian world—how much that is dark and terrible do we not behold! Wars—revolutions—turmoil—strife—infidelity—superstition—abject grovelling worldliness, prevail far and wide, and show what yet remains to be accomplished in bringing the world under subjection to Christ.

TROUBLE IN CHINA AND JAPAN.

God permits the enemy to gather strength and to wage long and bitter strife against His own kingdom in the world. It is ordinarily through much tribulation, after successive baptisms of blood, after much sowing in tears, that the Gospel takes root downward in the popular heart and bears fruit in the sight of all men in the holy lives of Christians. For some years past we have been in the habit of speaking of China and Japan as if all their anti-Christian barriers were taken out of the way, and as if the path were freely open for the entrance of the Gospel. It is true that in China the Gospel has made notable inroads: it is true that missionaries and colporteurs have traversed that Empire through all its vast extent; but still the country is essentially and overwhelmingly godless and heathenish. The massacre at Tientsin last summer was but one of many tragic incidents that reveal the cruel hatred of the people against the Gospel in all its forms. And the latest tidings from China are that the Imperial Government has made a demand upon the foreign Ambassadors that schools for the education of females be abolished; that the teaching to

male subjects of the Empire of all doctrines opposed to those of Confucius be forbidden; that missionaries be considered Chinese subjects, and that women shall not be permitted access to the Empire in the capacity of missionaries. It is also notified to the Ambassadors that the attendance of native women upon religious service is one of the occasions for the recent massacre of foreigners; and that though these events cannot but be deplored by the Imperial Government, compensation for their commission is absolutely refused.

This looks like a serious menace against mission work. If carried out, the edict would put an effectual stop to the evangelization of China. It may be, however, that it is issued mainly to gratify the people's prejudices, without the intention on the part of the Government of making it effective. In any event it shows how strong anti-Christian influences and feelings are, and how serious the opposition which the Gospel must encounter.

Japan is more thoroughly walled up against the entrance of the Gospel of Christ. Quite recently an edict has been published by the Government in the following terms:—

"1. The Christian religion, as heretofore, is a strictly forbidden thing. 2. Corrupt religions are a strictly forbidden thing."

A missionary writing on the subject says that it is twelve years since Protestant missionaries have arrived in Japan, and ever since they have been waiting patiently for the repeal or modification of the law. "It is a barrier which must either be removed or greatly modified, before the cause of Christ can make much progress in the land. In fact it binds our own hands. We wish to teach the people to be law-abiding citizens, but the very fact of our teaching them Christianity is trying to make them violate the laws of their land. It is right to teach people to violate a bad law; still as the people have nothing to do in the making of the laws here, it would require them to rise *en masse* before their opposition would induce the rulers to modify a law."