

# Missionary World.

## A NEW DEPARTURE.

We have previously affirmed the need of a new departure in missionary policy and missionary givings. In regard to the latter point, What should be the character and direction of the new departure?

1. It should be systematic. To give from impulse is better than not to give at all, but it is not the ideal way. As regards our earthly substance we are stewards, not proprietors. We are administrators of a trust, and if we desire to be found faithful stewards, there should be no hap-hazard work. Even in the collection of missionary funds the systematic plan is the best. To appeal to a congregation once a year, and take what may be spontaneously given, is to trifle with a solemn duty. Every Christian should first find an answer to the question, "How much owest thou unto thy Lord?" and then he should decide in what way the trust fund can be best administered—that is, how he ought to divide it among the various religious and benevolent objects within his reach, so much for missions, so much for the church, so much for the poor, and so on. To go upon the principle of giving something to a good cause "if we happen to have it" is not the right way of dealing with the Lord's money.

In the collection of funds the systematic way is by far the best. A simple illustration will make this plain. Some years ago what is known as the "Blake system" of collecting was introduced into some of our Sunday Schools. This system consists in giving to a scholar a small book, with space for ten names. The scholar is expected to find among his acquaintances ten persons who will give two cents a week or upwards as called upon. If one of the contributors, for any cause, drops off the list, the collector is expected to find another, so as to keep the list full. In one of our schools some thirty or forty dollars a year was collected by the old system of Christmas cards. When the Blake system was introduced, the sum went up in one year to over \$300, as the result of systematic collecting. It should be said that the superintendent of the school gave special attention to the matter, and it is probable that without his careful oversight very much less would have been accomplished; but it serves to show what can be done by systematic effort.

2. The new departure in regard to giving should be steadily in the direction of the Lord's tenth. This is, each one should, according to apostolic precept, "lay by him in store as God hath prospered him," and the minimum thus set aside should be at least one-tenth of the entire income. One-tenth for the Lord's service was the rule under the Old Testament dispensation, and if the same rule is not repeated under the New, it is not that we should give less, but that we should give more. In olden time the law prescribed the rule, but now "the love of Christ constraineth us" to a willing service, and to a more complete consecration. In talking over this matter with a minister a short time ago, he said: "I was taught, as a child, to give a part of all that I received to the Lord, and since I became a man I have always laid by a tenth of my income, and said, 'Now, that is not mine; that is the Lord's, to be used for His work.' In doing this I do not consider that I am giving anything; it is not mine to give; but whatever else I take from my remaining income, for religious or charitable uses, that is giving." In some respects it was a new view of the subject, and yet the brother was right. Up to the measure of a tenth we do not give anything, because the tenth is not ours to give; it is the Lord's.

A universal, or even a general, recognition of the principle that a tenth is the Lord's would revolutionize our whole church work, so far as finances are concerned. But it would do more, it would teach us the truth and the measure of the promise in

Malachi, "Bring ye the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it." If there be truth in this statement—and surely no Christian can doubt it—we have here in a nutshell the true remedy for hard times. Business is depressed and money is scarce because men have robbed God; but hard times will disappear when God is acknowledged and receives His own.—*The Missionary Outlook.*

We have received an account of the noble work carried on by Miss Reed, one of the missionaries to lepers in India, and the East. It is surprising to hear how much she can accomplish single-handed. The asylum stands on about one hundred acres of land, and there are also a few houses for less advanced cases, a hospital and dispensary, and a row of rooms for families, also a chapel, two caretakers' houses, and some houses for servants. It is altogether a splendid institution. At present she has several needs, comparatively small, which it is hoped will be supplied at once. The old call, however, is heard from many parts, "Come over and help us," Miss Harvey, of the Zenana Bible and Medical Mission, writes: "There is no home for lepers in Nasik, as there is in some places, where they can have the gospel preached daily, and have all the care and attention they need. We hope some day there will be one; the need is very great." To our sister's hope we add a heartfelt "Amen."

Out of 186 pupils attending the Waldensian schools in Florence, 114 are boys and 72 girls. There are 62 little children in the kindergarten, 50 in the first class, 34 in the second, 19 in the third, 10 in the fourth, and 11 in the fifth. Of the 186 pupils, 150 are Roman Catholics and 39 Evangelicals; in all 110 families are represented in the schools and are under the sanctifying influence of the gospel. The Sunday school continues to be the necessary complement of the daily schools. On week days Bible history is taught after a progressive method adapted to the various classes; at the Sunday school an appeal to the heart and conscience of our scholars is made, and from facts which they already know historically are drawn those grand moral lessons which must inspire all the actions of our life. Strong Roman Catholic opposition, and at the same time the difficulties of the financial position, render the work more arduous than it should be.

Some new illustrations of the friendly spirit manifested by the Russian Government towards the Bible Society, says a contemporary, has just been made public. An agent visiting the constructor of the West Siberian Railway at once received free railway passes for himself and a colporteur. He was warmly welcomed, too, by the Bishop of Omakives, who wrote for him a commendatory letter. The Holy Synod has, moreover, announced that it proposes henceforward to allow the Bible Society a discount of 20 per cent. on Scriptures purchased from it. This means, it is stated, a rebate of £450 on a recent order.

A missionary, writing from Hiroshima, Japan, says that there is increased attendance at the churches and a considerable religious awakening. Another missionary, writing from Kobe, says that there seems to be a general looking up in evangelistic work. Many who have been keeping their membership letters in their pockets are bringing them out, and uniting with some church. Some lapsed Christians are coming back, and a few inquirers are reported from nearly every part of his field.

Some missionaries have planted themselves in Bhut in the Himalayas, at a height of 11,000 feet, in the hope that by winning the Bhutiyas for Christ they may also win the Tibetans.

## Young People's Societies.

CONDUCTED BY A MEMBER OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S COMMITTEE.

### A GRAND BEGINNING.

Well done Lanark and Renfrew! \$1,006 for the schemes from its Young People's Societies this year, and the Convener of the Presbytery's Committee hopes for \$2,000 next year. A Presbyterian Young People's Home Missionary Society was organized last spring and is thus bearing fruit. Some of the societies embraced in it have been contributing for years, but they are feeling the stimulus of co-operation. The Presbytery reports 30 Young People's Societies, in all of which 18 are Christian Endeavor, 4 Junior Christian Endeavor, and the remainder Young People's Home Mission. The membership comprises 437 young men, 877 young women, 58 boys and 76 girls. Christian Endeavor Societies affiliate with the Presbytery's Young People's Home Missionary Society by adopting the clause providing for a contribution to Home Missions.

### A TREE AND ITS FRUITS.

Rev. Wm. Patterson, of Cooke's Church, Toronto, says, in the current *Knox College Monthly*, of his Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor, which is probably the largest in our Church, if not in Canada, having a present membership of 469, of whom 373 are active and 96 associate and which has been in operation since 1889: "The meetings of the society are distinctively religious, and the interest in them has never flagged, though they are held summer and winter. I suppose a society, like a tree, should be judged by its fruits, and the question may now be asked, 'What has the society done, and what is it doing?' The answer given embraces (a) an increased interest in Bible study; (b) the development of efficient Christian workers; (c) the recruiting of the ministry—five who were members of our society are now Presbyterian ministers in Canada, one of our members is a missionary in Africa, and twelve others are studying for the ministry; (d) a deeper interest in missions, with larger contributions thereto; (e) practical Christian work in the city; (f) help within the congregation, 'the society has always been loyal to the Church and willing to assist the pastor and session in every way that they could—I may say that seven of the members have been elected to the eldership; (g) through the earnest work of the active members many of the associate members have been brought into the Church and into active membership in the society.'

### WHAT A FARCE!

The greatest farce to be seen anywhere in Canada takes place every day at the O.P.R. crossing on Richmond Street, London. The Forest City has recently introduced a very fine electric car service, but the old regulations with the railway companies provide that the tracks are to be crossed by "horse car." The dignity of the law is upheld by stationing a horse at the crossing. Whenever a trolley comes along, this faithful animal is attached, and trots in front of it across the railway track. He is then unhitched, and waits for the next electric car, when the edifying spectacle is repeated. His entire work for the day is to jog up and down in front of trolley cars, but he never draws a pound.

Many a similar farce take place from week to week in certain Young People's Societies. All the forms are regularly observed, the regulations of the Constitution are apparently attended to; the members at stated intervals go the rounds of attendance upon the services, but nothing is accomplished. Minds are not quickened, social natures are not developed, and souls are not saved. About all that can be said of such organizations is that the routine is faithfully attended to. There certainly is a more excellent way.—*Rev. A. C. Crews, General Secretary Epworth Leagues.*

## THINGS THAT KEEP US FROM GOD.

REV. W. S. M'TAVISH, D.D., DESERONTO.

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There was a time in our lives when we said to Christ, "All of self and none of Thee." There was a time when, like lost sheep, wandering away, we loved not the fold, nor would we listen to the voice of the Good Shepherd. He invited us through His Word, by the ministrations of His servants who preached it, by the teachers who lovingly taught it, and yet His tender invitations were slighted as if unworthy of consideration. What kept us from God? Possibly no two of us were actuated by precisely the same motives, but in all likelihood, some one or other of the following things prevented us from taking that step which would have brought us into the right relation to our Heavenly Father.—

I. We were afraid we would have to give up all our pleasures. We came to this conclusion because our conceptions of the Christian life were all false and utterly unscriptural. We wrongly supposed that if we accepted Christ as a Saviour and openly declared our allegiance to Him, we would have to bid a sorrowful farewell to our joys and amusements. We regarded Christianity as a cold, gloomy, uninviting thing—something which we might accept when the joys of earth were growing dim, and when we were almost trembling upon the brink of the grave. We did not dream that religion was intended to give the fullest measure of enjoyment to her votaries, or that it enhanced our pleasures. It did not occur to us that religion tended to develop all that was worthy of development, and repressed only what was unbecoming and unattractive. We did not know then that if God closed up certain channels, He opened up others which brought sweeter and more satisfying supplies.

Are not multitudes to-day making the same mistake as we once made? Be it ours to show them that religion is a joyous thing, that if it curbs what is base and unlovely, it develops what is noble and manly; that if it dries up streams which carry filth into the soul, it sends in their stead, streams of joy which are neither dried up in summer, frozen in winter, nor scummy with putrefaction.

II. Possibly some of us were kept back from God by the fear of ridicule. How foolish that was! We looked only at the one side, and so we thought only of the sneering of some careless companion, or the jeering of some thoughtless schoolmate, or the mocking laugh of some older persons who constituted themselves public censors. How much better, however, had we only looked at the other side! How much more wisdom we would have shown had we thought that good men and angels and God all approved of our taking a stand on the side of Christ! We should have remembered that though evil companions might laugh, their laugh would one day turn to a moan, though they might sneer, their sneer would turn to a groan, and though they might deride, their derision would turn to weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

III. Possibly some of us were kept back from God because we held mistaken views of the plan of salvation. In common with many others, we had an idea that we would have to wait till we made ourselves better before we could be saved. We had not then learned the words, "If you tarry till you are better, you may never come at all."

In looking around us to-day we sometimes wonder why men are kept back from God, but when we look back and recall what kept us from Him we may well cease to wonder at others. Let us learn, therefore, to be very patient with the unsaved, and let us labor persistently to break down the barriers which keep men away from the loving Saviour.