

## BRITISH COLUMBIA.

DR. COCHRANE'S REPLY TO MR. JAMIESON.

MR. EDITOR,—The Rev. Mr. Jamieson of New Westminster, has seen fit "to make some comments" on the report of my visit to the churches in British Columbia. In his opinion "it contains mistakes"—"it is a misleading report"—"its statements about New Westminster have no proper basis to rest upon," and are "as ungenerous as they are unjust."

The documents and information upon which my report is based, are the property of the Home Mission Committee, and until I obtain liberty to make them public, I forbear replying at length to Mr. Jamieson's letter. Should this liberty be granted me, I shall easily show that "conflict of opinion and action on the part of individual ministers belonging to the rural churches represented, has hitherto militated against progress." In proving my statement I need go no further than make extracts from Mr. Jamieson's own letters to the Home Mission Committee, and letters addressed by him to prominent gentlemen in Victoria and elsewhere, and to letters sent me by Mr. Dunn, of Langley, complaining bitterly of attacks made upon him and other ministerial brethren, and referring to jealousies, rivalries and quarrels of opposing churches. Perhaps it may be necessary also to reproduce letters sent to the public press, showing a state of matters that can but faintly be described as "a conflict of opinion and action." My great difficulty in drawing up the report was to avoid details, or allude in the most remote manner to estrangements and differences, which, if made public, would have a most injurious effect, not only upon our cause in British Columbia, but upon religion at large.

As regards New Westminster, I adhere to every word I have printed in the report. My information is based, not simply upon the Assembly's statistics, but the deliberate statements of office-bearers of St. Andrew's Church, New Westminster.

In going to British Columbia my sole object was to obtain facts for the information of the Church in Canada and the Church in Scotland: not to prepare a report that would please Mr. Jamieson or any one else. I feel that in the main I have succeeded in accomplishing a most difficult task. The report (with the recommendations of the Committee) was sent in the middle of October to all the ministers and prominent office-bearers of the churches in British Columbia, as well as to Dr. Gray and the members of the Colonial Committee in Scotland, and it is only on the second day of February that Mr. Jamieson has found time to point out "a few of its mistakes."

I greatly regret that Mr. Jamieson has seen fit to write as he has done. There is no one more sensible of the work done by him in former years in behalf of our Church, when alone he laboured in a widely scattered and destitute field, than I am. But this does not meet the question, which presses upon the Home Mission Committee, that St. Andrew's Church, New Westminster, with its thirty-eight members, costs us \$1,200 per annum, making the stipend—with the amount paid by the Church and the grant made by the Penitentiary—\$2,300 and manse.

The Rev. Daniel Gamble, of the San Francisco Seminary, and recently missionary in Idaho, has also, it appears, after a seven months' residence in Victoria, as temporary supply of Pandora Street Church, given his opinion of the report. Of his criticism I take no notice, beyond expressing the hope, that as he increases in years, he will write only of what he knows.

In order that your readers may have before them the portions of the report objected to, may I ask you to publish them as a sequel to the communication.

WILLIAM COCHRANE.

Brantford, March 17th, 1883.

## NEW WESTMINSTER.

The Rev. Robert Jamieson was appointed to British Columbia nearly twenty-one years ago, by the Canada Presbyterian Church. British Columbia was then and for many years afterwards, under the care of the Foreign Mission Committee. The same Committee also appointed the Rev. Wm. Aitken, who preached in different localities from 1869 to 1871, and the Rev. Daniel Duff, who laboured chiefly among the miners at Cariboo. Mr. Jamieson who for many years the only missionary over a wide district, preaching at Langley and other places, until in later years, when additional missionaries were appointed by the Church of Scotland, his labours were restricted to New Westminster and the immediate vicinity. As the reports of St. Andrew's Church, New Westminster, have been for years published in the Home Mission Report, it is unnecessary to refer to them in detail. From the Report submitted to the last General Assembly, (and which may be taken as the

present state of the congregation) we learn that the membership is thirty-eight, and that there has been little or no increase for some years past; that the Sabbath school is attended by thirty children and six teachers, and that in addition to the \$800 paid Mr. Jamieson, the congregation contributes to the principal schemes of the Church. Mr. Jamieson has for some time been in an infirm state of health, which has prevented him doing the amount of work of former years, and which indeed is necessary, in a field which ought to be able to support a minister, with far less assistance than that now given by the Committee. (\$1,200.) In proportion to the membership the church stands well, but there seems no good reason why in such a place there should not be a much larger congregation gathered in. Mr. Jamieson feels that he needs a change, for a longer or shorter period as the Committee may decide, in the hope of recruiting his energies. The whole matter was talked over with Mr. Jamieson, and afterwards with the office-bearers of the church, without, however, any definite conclusion being arrived at, as to what was best for the minister and all parties concerned. Mr. Jamieson and his office-bearers at first entertained the proposal of a six months furlough, but since my return to Ontario, this has been given up. Under date September 5th, Mr. Jamieson writes: "I decline now to make application for the proposed furlough for six months" mentioned in the Committee's address to you. Instead, I have respectfully and earnestly to request the Committee to allow me to exchange in the spring with any minister who may be sent out, so that I may take the work in Nicola Valley and surrounding districts for six months. Such a change, and residence in that climate, with the almost constant travel required to overtake the work, will, I trust, enable me to discharge my duties more efficiently in this place for some time longer. I have also to request the Committee to make the grant as liberal as possible for this year at least, to give me time to make some disposal of my family."

The present condition of Presbyterianism in the Province is not cheering. Much good has doubtless been done, but the results do not appear at all in proportion to the moneys expended in past years by the Church of Scotland and the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Nor is there much room to hope for any change until one strong, united and harmonious working Presbytery is erected, that will take the oversight of destitute and outlying districts, and endeavour to supply them with the means of grace. The existence of two separate Presbyterian Churches in the Province, with to distinct Presbyteries, ought not for a moment to be entertained. This would simply perpetuate on a larger scale which has hitherto militated against progress in the past, involving a needless expenditure of means, and continuing a conflict of opinion and action on the part of individual ministers, belonging to the rival churches represented.

## SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

## INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

## LESSON XIV.

April 8, 1883. PHILIP AND THE ETHIOPIAN. { Acts viii. 26-40.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"He went on his way rejoicing."—Acts 8: 39.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—"God guides sincere seekers."

CONNECTION.—Others could now carry on the work in Samaria. Note that the apostles (with perhaps the exception of Jerusalem) never remained with any permanence in one place. It was good then, as it is now, to teach the Church not to depend on outside human aid. The real character of Simon was now exposed, and though he would be an enemy he would not be any more a danger to the Church. And God had a special work for Philip in Judea.

NOTES.—Gaza, strong: capital and stronghold of the Philistines, in the south-west corner of Palestine, toward Egypt; a very old city (Gen. 10: 19); taken by Judah (Judges 1: 18); its gates carried away by Samson; the place of Samson's imprisonment and death; taken by Solomon (1 Kings 4: 24); by Pharaoh (Jer. 47: 1, 5); destroyed 96 B.C.; rebuilt; destroyed by the Jews A.D. 65; again a chief city of Syria in the reign of Titus; now called *Ghuzzeh*, and has about 15,000 inhabitants. Ethiopia, *burned faces*: that is, blacks, a country of Africa, south of Egypt, and probably included the present countries of Nubia, Abyssinia, etc., as its extent was great in ancient times; the Hebrews called it *Cush*. Candace, a general name for the queens of Ethiopia, as Pharaoh was for the kings of Egypt. Azotus, Greek word for Ashdod (castle), one of the five cities of the Philistines (Josh. 13: 3), about three miles from the Mediterranean, south of Joppa, and about half-way from it to Gaza. It was noted for the worship of Dagon (1 Sam. 5: 1, 2); was destroyed by Uzziah (2 Chron. 26: 6), and again by Tartan (Isa. 20: 1); Jews found wives there (Neh. 13: 22); was taken by king of Egypt (Jer. 25: 20); destroyed by the Maccabees (1 Macc. 5: 68); visited by Philip; is now a poor village. Cesarea, a noted town on the road from Egypt to Tyre, and south of Mount Carmel. It is forty-seven miles in a direct line, and sixty-eight miles by road, from Jerusalem. In the days of Herod it was a magnificent city, as its ruins now show. Wild beasts and reptiles are its only inhabitants now.

I. STUDYING THE WORD.—Ver. 26.—Angel . . . spake: probably the frequent appearance of angels was intended for confirmation of the Gospel, as well as direction to the first Christians. Jerusalem unto Gaza: there was more than one road. The more southerly through Hebron, and then west, toward the coast, was the *desert* road. Gaza was then, as now, a considerable city.

Ver. 27.—A man of Ethiopia.—For five centuries the Jews had been more or less scattered in many lands, and thus *something* of the knowledge of God would be carried

abroad. This man (whether a Jew we know not, tradition gives his name as Judich,) was a worshipper of the true God, had just accomplished what was perhaps a life-long desire of his heart, to worship at Jerusalem.

Ver. 28.—Sitting . . . read Esaias: he had probably bought a parchment or papyrus copy of Isaiah, and was eagerly scanning his new treasure. Test, if you have never tried it, the good effects of reading and praying aloud when alone. A few days ago I read *Hebrews* in a clear, distinct voice, and never before got so much good out of it!

Ver. 29.—Go near: how the Spirit told Philip we know not; not so probably by a voice to his outward ear. Note, if we are careful to obey the Spirit *every time* we do know His will, we will more and more become skillful in recognizing His voice in what people call "impressions."

Ver. 30.—Heard him read: some Christians, surprised reading the Bible, would hastily close it, as if they had been doing wrong! This man did not. Understandest thou? with our western notions it scarce seems polite thus to speak to a stranger. But it depends greatly, *very greatly*, on the tone and the manner.

Ver. 31.—Except some man should guide me: the man was humble and teachable. The Spirit had been leading his *thoughts*, just as surely as He had been leading Philip's *steps*. Both were equally willing. Come up and sit with him: here is much selfishness in travelling. I never "picked up" anybody on the road but the pleasant conversation repaid me. This man, in his reading, wanted some one to "give the sense" (Neh. 8: 8).

II. THE WORD EXPOUNDED.—Ver. 32.—The place of the Scripture: he pointed out in the roll, or again read, the passage which so deeply interested him. As a sheep to the slaughter: turn to Isa. 53: 7, and note the variation of words. This man was reading the Greek version ("Septuagint"). Two thoughts in this passage: (1) Christ's non-resistance, but (2) principally his being (like a lamb brought to the Temple) a *sacrifice* for sin.

Ver. 33.—His judgment was taken away: justice was denied Him. Who shall declare His generation? either "Who shall declare His descent and origin?"—it is divine, and from everlasting—or, "Who shall declare His posterity; for He is cut off in His youth?" The latter question is answered two verses farther on in the original prophecy, Isa. 53: 10. Probably both ideas are intended in the word "generation."

Ver. 34.—Of whom speaketh the Prophet this? the Jews now say it means the people of Israel. But this is absurd. How could a people bear others iniquities? Many said then that it meant Isaiah himself or Jeremiah; but God says "Man cannot redeem man!" Ps. 49: 7.

Ver. 35.—Began at the same Scripture: It is wise, and most effective, to use present thoughts or circumstances to enforce truth. Here Jesus was expressly meant, and so He was urged upon the enquirer.

III. THE JOY OF BELIEVING.—Ver. 36.—A certain water: a fountain, or less likely, a running stream. Not much water on this route. What doth hinder me? having been instructed up to this point, he was now willing and anxious to take upon himself the full profession of Christianity.

Ver. 37.—This verse is omitted in the *Revision*, and in all the best critical versions. It seems an early commentary introduced into the later copies. The principle is, however, true, that the eunuch had no right to expect baptism till he expressed his trust in Jesus as his Saviour.

Ver. 38.—Commanded the chariot to stand still: he had a "driver" and most likely other servants mounted following. Went down both into (or unto) the water and baptized him: in the modern Greek Church they kneel in the water and, leaning forward, dip themselves (or at least their heads) three times in the water. We either sprinkle or immerse, as circumstances arise.

Ver. 39.—Spirit . . . caught away Philip: he was, by God's power, hurried away—he would not be able to explain how till he found himself at Azotus, the ancient Ashdod. He went . . . rejoicing: the man was glad (and who is not?) when he found One to answer for his sins! No doubt this was the introduction of the Gospel to Ethiopia, where it is found (but very corrupt) in Abyssinia at this day.

Ver. 40.—All the Cities: from Azotus, where Philip found himself, he proceeded northward, preaching in four or five cities, Ekron, Joppa, etc., till he got to Cesarea. That was afterward his home (Acts 21: 8), and likely his family were there at this time. What good news he would have to tell, of how the Lord had blessed his labours.

## PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

1. Lonely journeys are good times for *thought*, and *thought* is the Spirit's inlet!
2. We can do much good speaking to strangers; and (as in anything else) we obtain perfection by practice.
3. Jesus was the Lamb of God, the sacrifice for the world's sin. Have you, before God, *pleaded* His sacrifice?
4. Never be afraid of asking help to understand things. "Whoso seeketh findeth!"
5. God will bless the statements of His own Word to our salvation, if we thus seek to be blest.
6. Steps in the history of the eunuch, heathenism, worship of God, study of the Word, Christian help, faith in Christ, public profession, joy, usefulness at home, heaven.

## Understandest Thou what Thou Readest?

THE sinner, under genuine conviction, has no self justifying or God-condemning plea to make.

THERE may be feeble Christians, but there can hardly be strong, growing Christians who stately sit under the preaching of error.