

PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

VOL. II.

TORONTO, JULY 29TH, 1886.

No. 83.

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY BY
The Presbyterian News Co.,
 TORONTO (Limited),
 INCORPORATED BY ROYAL CHARTER.
 O. H. ROBINSON, Manager.

THE ARK OF GOD.

My startled eyes see a city rise
 Up from the Jordan banks.
 The sky above it is clear and blue,
 The air is sweet with the breath of morn,
 Its walls are strong and its guards are true,
 The siege or attack it laughs to scorn.
 I see its army's glittering ranks,
 I hear its warrior's challenge cries.

And at break of day a strange array
 Unfolds to my wondering ken.
 A long procession passes by,
 I see in its midst the ark of God.
 I know that this host with courage high,
 Through the waves of Jordan in safety trod.
 I hear the tramp of armed men,
 And the trumpets' call for deadly fray,
 But never a voice through all the way.

The cycle rounds with the circling year,
 The days of old are the Now and Here.
 Beset by foes upon every side
 Still the hosts of God sweep their mystic march
 By buttress and tower, and pinnacled arch
 Of many a Jericho's walls of pride,
 And still behind the rallying ranks,
 The Jordan flows over all its banks.
 Retreat is death—and the work we do,
 Seems an idle march as in days of yore;
 No victory gained, no conflict through
 But timing footsteps o'er and o'er.

But courage, hearts I be brave and strong I
 Ye bear in your midst the ark of God.
 The path your feet have travelled long,
 The bleeding feet of the martyrs trod.
 Soon shall be ended God's week of years,
 The spell of silence shall soon be given,
 The victor cry banish all your fears,
 "Shout, for the city to you is given!"

From the sunset shore comes the rallying word,
 The Father of waters has caught the cry;
 New England hills have the challenge heard,
 And in answering echoes made reply.
 The world moves on—our God is true;
 Without Him never a sparrow falls.
 The triumph-hours of the past review,
 Count the Jerichos' fallen walls.

—Land A Hand.

THE UNHEALTHY CRY FOR ENTERTAINMENT.

The following remarks of the New York *Christian Advocate* respecting a growing evil in the Methodist Church are very timely and are equally applicable to all the Christian Churches:—

Many years ago much too little was done for the young people in the Methodist Episcopal Church. Now the desire to "entertain" young people has become morbid, and absorbs the greater part of the energy of the Church. Comparatively little attention is paid to devising plans of genuine Christian work apart from social entertainment.

What is needed is that the pastors of the churches devise plans of Christian work for young people, and depend upon them for its being performed. Oftentimes young people go to persons whom they respect, and who are not too old to sympathize with them, and speak of their religious experience, saying that they are not at all satisfied with the way that they are drifting along; that they want to do something in the church besides attending debating societies, getting up fairs, preparing for exhibitions and readings and concerts, selling tickets, superintending excursions, etc., and besides going to prayer-meeting or class-meeting once a week. The lyceums [literary societies] are valuable for social life and intellectual growth, but it is possible for a person—young or old—to be constantly at work in things that centre in the church, and lose sight of the very object for which the church was created.

The cry so often heard: "We must get up an entertainment for the young people; they must have a chance to work for the church," is a somewhat incoherent and contradictory cry. Get up an entertainment for the young people that they may have a chance to work for the church!

This is not the kind of church work that young people who have been transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit, and wish to live a Christian life, need or desire. They need and long for solid, soul-stirring work. It is a suggestive and alarming fact that the prayers and remarks of many young people in young people's prayer-meetings, unions, and Christian associations, exhibit no growth in spiritual knowledge, no increase in facility either of thought or expression upon religious subjects; no grasp of those truths which lie at the foundation of religious life and character, and are the elements of all convincing and persuasive exhortations. The hymns for which they exhibit a preference are often "light as a puff of empty air," floating on the tune and not moving the soul, but simply titillating the nervous system and the sensorium.

Hence, the most embarrassing thing that can happen to some prayer-meetings where this spirit predominates is to have any manifestations of *genuine spiritual power*—not awe in the presence of God, but utter confusion and perplexity results.

While an exclusive devotion to the popular sort of church work does not feed the souls of such young people as are converted, and they languish and starve under them, it prevents those who have been religiously impressed from taking any advance steps, and causes multitudes to affiliate with the church and congregation who never become genuine workers for Christ.

When young persons are soundly converted, they are not only willing to work, but anxious to do so, and instances have occurred within our knowledge where young people a few weeks after they had attained a genuine religious experience have gone to entertainments, read, recited, waited on the table, laughed, talked, and gone away disgusted with the affair in general and with themselves in particular for having had anything to do with it. But they never so feel when they have been doing solid, substantial, soul-stirring work for the church.

What will the end be when the coming generation, whose most faithful training in the work of the church (?) has been to devise some yet unheard of thing imported from Japan, or Kamchatka, or Madagascar, or contrive, by the ingenuity of amateur actors, to draw the largest crowd, shall come into control?

Let it not be fancied that this is the voice of a croaker who forgets that he was ever young, or of one who proposes a yoke upon natural spirits which would transform youth into an unnatural imitation of the gravity of old age. It is rather a warning cry suggested by the perception of undue absorption of the youth of the Church in certain things, and the consequent neglect of every thing which goes to make the bone and sinew of a vigorous and fruit-bearing Christian.

It is our conviction that the great work now required of pastors, in connection with youth, and of Sunday-school teachers and officers and Christian parents worthy the name, is to devise means of conscientious, heart-reaching work for the Church, which in its reflex influence upon the heart and life of those who perform it will be a means of moral and spiritual growth rather than a source of pleasure similar in kind to that which is sought by "lovers of pleasure more than God."

THE DUTIES OF ELDERS.

AS SET FORTH BY THE COMMITTEE OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF THE UNITED STATES.

THE overture of the committee on term service of deacons, presented to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, north, just closed at Minneapolis, was as follows:—

"The office of ruling elder in the Presbyterian Church, next to that of its ministers and pastors, is the most important agency for the spiritual power and growth of this branch of the Church and Kingdom. It seems to us that its efficiency in the past years is not commensurate with its grand opportunities, or with the present demands of the Church, over which the Holy Ghost has made us overseers. It has been the subject of much earnest enquiry among us in our elders' separate prayer-meetings at this meeting of the highest tribunal of our Church, to determine in what way dormant energies of the ruling elders may be quickened to new life, so that some of the churches under their influence may not only be kept alive when they are almost ready to perish, but also that others of them may be greatly enlarged and strengthened and made glorious to the Master's service.

"After prayerful consideration the elders have adopted the following resolution which we send to you, and earnestly hope it may secure your approval and be acted upon with Christian zeal and a thorough appreciation of the responsibilities which the ordination vows you have assumed demand of your heart and hands.

"Resolved, that it be recommended to the ruling elders of churches connected with this General Assembly, that elders' associations be formed in each presbytery, to be composed of the elders of the churches in such presbytery, or such of them as can be conveniently called together, to the end that watch and oversight may be given to the temporal and spiritual welfare of all the churches within the bounds of such presbytery, that Sabbath services and prayer meetings may be sustained, the benevolent operations of our General Assembly enlarged and promoted, and the elders be encouraged to give more attention to the meetings of their respective parishes.

"Resolved, that we earnestly recommend and urge upon each elder of our several presbyteries the purchase and careful and prayerful study of the book entitled 'The Elder and His Work,' that thus greater efficiency and power may be given us for the Master's service."

The following is a summary of the discussions in the elders' daily prayer meeting touching the duties and responsibility of the presiding elder in the Presbyterian Church.

First—A consistent life and godly walk before all men, and so preaching by example the Gospel we profess.

Second—Punctual and prompt attendance upon Sabbath services, Sunday school and week day prayer-meetings, and taking such part therein as God shall give us opportunity.

Third—Making personal acquaintance with every member of the church, visiting the families, reproving with meekness and prayer, if need be, exhorting and entreating in order that the peace of the church may entirely be preserved and its graces abound.

Fourth—To promote regular, systematic and proportionate contributions to the several boards of our church.

Fifth—Punctual attendance at all the meetings of sessions, and rare that at every meeting of presbytery each church be represented by one of its elders.

Sixth—Lastly, looking beyond the bounds of our own churches to ascertain the constitution, circumstances and wants of the other churches in our presbyteries, visiting them as far as we can, exhorting the elders of weak and destitute churches to maintain the ordinances of God's house, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said it is more blessed to give than to receive.

Mission Work.

OUR WORK IN INDIA.

REPORT OF REV. W. A. WILSON, NEEMUCH.

As the work in Neemuch has been but recently begun it is too soon to speak of results. Any report must relate chiefly to modes of working, and to prospects. Last June, work was begun by Halaram, a catechist from Indore, who opened a school in the city and in a short time gathered a large number of boys. On two young men professing a desire to become Christians, the great majority of the boys took fright and fled, and the attendance fell from 115, to less than 20. But the average has risen again to about 30. There are many prejudices and superstitions to contend with in a new field. A promising school was also opened in Mandesaur, a large city of 20,000 souls, on the railway 30 miles from Neemuch, in the direction of Indore. Jugalkishor, a young man who had joined the Mission, was put in charge. But his health was not sufficiently robust to resist the heathen influence around him, and his duties became necessary. For lack of a suitable man to take his place the school has been closed. To meet the great need as there was no medical dispensary either in the camp, or in Neemuch city, the mission council sanctioned the opening out of a small dispensary in old Neemuch. In August last it was opened under the charge of L. Kidd, M.R.C.S., London. The dispensary has hitherto met with good support from the Parsee community, but as the Government opened out a dispensary in the camp a few weeks ago our revenue may be affected. Since August, 841 patients have been admitted and 2301 have been treated. The subscription has amounted to Rs. 278-4-0. There is great need for a medical missionary here, and we hope one may soon be found offering himself for the work. A part of a native shop has been rented in the Cantonment bazaar, where Delaur Masih, who on account of his health was transferred from Mhow to Neemuch, keeps for sale a small stock of Bibles, tracts and books; he also visits the railway station at train time, when he sells tracts or talks with the people who gather there in large numbers.

For lack of suitable teachers little has been done in the villages in behalf of education. An experiment is being tried in Hajana, a large village close to Neemuch, where we are nursing a small school under the care of a Mahomedan, who professes to be seeking light.

Sabbath services are held both in Neemuch, and in the camp bazaar, as these places are about a mile apart; weekly services are also held in the bazaar. These are well attended by the heathen who listen attentively. Our little upper room in Neemuch is sometimes crowded, while in the camp large numbers gather and stand in front of the verandah, which we use as a preaching place. A glib, and not over-scrupulous Mahomedan has commenced preaching in opposition to us in the streets. No doubt his opposition will but awaken a deeper interest in the new religion. A few excursions have been made into the country, and the Gospel has been preached in some of the villages. We hope to give special attention to jawad, a large walled city about nine miles from here.

A Bible class for the helpers, and any inquirers who may attend, is held every Sabbath morning. From fifteen to twenty beggars regularly assemble at the bungalow on Sabbath mornings, who, before receiving pice, must listen to a short sermon. We have frequent visits from young men, Brahmans and others, who come to talk on religion. There are thus abundant opportunities for sowing the seed. We can but sow, and pray that the dew from above may descend. Several professed inquirers encouraged us for a while, but they were only stony ground hearers. Of some others we have more hopes, as they seem to be really struggling with religious difficulties. Many indeed, acknowledge that Christianity is true, but they shrink from the consequences of professing it. To be baptised, and to join the flesh-eating Christian society, means to lose caste, and with caste, the loss of the all

they can as yet appreciate. But the way is being prepared for the coming of the Kingdom. Day by day almost before our eyes God is, by the advance of western civilization, losing the grip of caste prejudices, and when the fetters fall, many will arise and openly call on the name of the Lord. Some faint hearts here are even now longing for that time, when they may come out on the Lord's side. A weekly prayer meeting in English is held in the bungalow for soldiers and others who desire to attend. A service is also held once a month in the barracks for Presbyterian soldiers, the chaplain from Mhow also giving a monthly service.

God is thus giving to us abundant opportunities for making known the truth, and as one remembers one's inability to use them, the cry is "who is sufficient for these things." Would that many might feel constrained to "come to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

THE Rev. James H. Lawrie, in the *Free Church Monthly*, gives the following interesting description of the dress of the native Christian women in Ancityum:—"The pandanus leaf skirt worn by the women of Ancityum is of the same style now as it was thirty-five years ago, when the island was wholly heathen. At that time the dress of the women was far in advance of the men as regards covering; from a South Sea island point of view, the women were then decently clothed. In the matter of dress, however, the natives are rigidly conservative; while they have taken out their huge turtle shell earrings, and do not now paint their faces, the only addition to the old-fashioned skirt is a loose, coloured cotton gown as a covering for the body, and on Sabbath days a hat or a handkerchief for the head. The method of making the skirt is simple and interesting; each native female is the possessor of several pandanus trees, which are jealously guarded as family property. When a skirt is to be made, a bundle of long leaves are gathered; the prickles are removed with a sharp knife made from a reed or from a split bamboo; each long narrow leaf is chewed separately to extract the juice and to soften the fibre. When a sufficient number of leaves are chewed, say about ten dozen, the bundle is placed in water for four days and afterwards hung up to dry; each leaf is again scraped and carefully smoothed with a sharp shell; the whole is then neatly plaited on to a strong cord made from the inner bark of a tree. The native skirt, when finished, forms a heavy fringe reaching below the knees; four of these are the usual number worn at one time by full-grown women."

AM I TO BLAME?—How does the Church meet the command of her Lord, and the demand of the world? After praying for half a century that doors of access and approach might be opened, now, when in every land the Gospel may be freely proclaimed, what is our attitude? We answer, that *no enterprise of the Church is sustained with so great a difficulty as Foreign Missions!* This argument and appeal, and even the logic of events, fail to arouse us to send the missionary or even to give money, in any adequate ratio, to the scope and need of the work. Even the sum asked for the most economical maintenance of the work now doing is more than the Church will supply, and retrenchment becomes needful when it will not do even to remain stationary. Missionaries cannot go because there is no money in the treasury. The Church is *not in profound sympathy with her Lord in His work among the heathen!* If we were heartily praying for the coming of His kingdom, and watching the signs of the times and the signals of his providence, could we allow Foreign Missions to move backward or even stand still.—A. T. Pierson.

THE Rev. A. A. Fulton with his sister, Dr. Fulton, of the American Presbyterian Church, have recently established themselves in Kiwang-Si, the last Province in China, to yield to missionary effort. He emphasizes the value of medical skill in securing the favour of the heathen and a foothold for the missionary. He doubts if the Province could, without the aid of medicine, have been opened for years. We wish the most abundant success in the work to this brave brother and sister in their remote outpost. Let the Church universal give thanks that every Province in this vast empire is at last occupied, and continue instant in prayer that year by year they may be more fully occupied till the gospel is at least brought within reach of the millions of China.

We notice the announcement of the death of Mr. W. Young, long ago a lay-agent of the London Missionary Society in Amoy, China. He was the first missionary to write hymns in the spoken language of the people. Before his day all the hymns were in the "literary" style, and quite unintelligible to the uneducated. He had rare talents for hymn-writing, and some of his hymns are still in use by all the churches in the Amoy district, and by our Christian brethren in North and South Formosa. Since his hymns were first sung and published all the Christian hymns are written in the vernacular.