

regards the preaching, one suggestion I would offer, and it is an important one—that the person, offices and work of Christ be opened up more fully for the attraction of sinners and the edification of Christians. It is taken for granted, that these themes are already known, but surely the fulness that is in Christ is not exhausted. It is also a fact to be borne in mind that we have a rising generation who need to be instructed in the first principles of the Gospel, if character is to be built up and the truth maintained. It is true there are no lack of invitations to come to Christ, but it is also true that the excellencies of Christ are not spread open for the edification of hungry souls so fully as could be wished. If Christ is not lifted up in this way, it is not wonderful that men are not drawn to Him. That this was done in Reformation times, the works of the divines of that period fully testify, and we know what stuff the men of that age were made of.

Another departure from Reformation practice I would note and emphasize, because it is to be feared it is becoming widely spread, namely, the doctrine that the ruin by the fall was not complete, substituting in its stead the figment that, there is still something good in fallen human nature, which only needs development in order to satisfy all the Divine requirements, and on which the Divine eye can look with complacency. As a necessary result the law of heredity is being preached, the atonement is pushed aside, and the convicted sinner left to work out for himself a righteousness of his own.

It is to be feared we are getting into an æsthetic state, in which fine churches, fine music, large and appreciative congregations, and all the paraphernalia of the oratorio, are becoming the chief attractions of our Sabbath services. The truth seems to be that music bulks most largely in the services of our principal churches at the present time. First, an organ recital before service, then during the service, three or four times organ and choir alone, with perhaps one or more trained singers, and then a quick march after the benediction is pronounced, when the congregation is dispersing. Such certainly was not the practice in Reformation times and I do not think would have been tolerated in Apostolic times. I write in no spirit of hostile criticism, but in sorrow, because the deadening effects are only too apparent. Never was prayer more needed than now, not in words which men's wisdom teacheth, but in the power of the Spirit. If stereotyped prayers will the better prevail with God, by all means let us have them, but in my judgment this is doubtful.

PRESBYTERIAN.

FRENCH EVANGELIZATION— THANKS.

MR. EDITOR,—Will you allow me to thank, through your valuable paper, the pastors of the Toronto churches, as well as those of Hamilton, Strabane and Perth, for the brotherly manner in which they received Dr. Obiniquy and myself during our missionary tour lately in Ontario.

During our visit we were permitted to deliver forty-two addresses before large and sympathetic audiences. We returned to Montreal fully convinced that the people of Ontario are interested in the important missionary work of the Board of French Evangelization and that they need only to be told of its requirements, of its progress, of the decided influence it exerts upon the destinies of our whole land, to be led to give liberally towards its maintenance and enlargement. As pastor of St. John's Church, Montreal, I desire to thank the many friends who have given us their contributions to help us to complete our building. We have before us a work of great magnitude, of paramount importance and of far-reaching influence. We pray most earnestly that God may so touch the hearts of the Christians of Montreal that they will come to our aid so as to permit us to devote our time and strength to

the work of saving and edifying souls, which will more than tax all our energy.

Several friends from Toronto have sent us anonymous contributions which we have not been able to acknowledge. All these are carefully entered. God knows the givers and owns their gifts.

CALVIN E. AMERON.

105 Ste. Famille St., Montreal, Que.

[This note of thanks, it is right to say, has, on account of pressure on our columns, been delayed for some time. —EDITOR]

THE AGED MINISTERS' ENDOWMENT FUND

MR. EDITOR,—Being required to raise a large amount of money to assist ministers families in poverty, I was led to present an overture before the Presbytery of Toronto, in 1882, to raise an endowment of \$100,000 for the Aged Ministers' Fund as the amount given by the Congregations was quite inadequate. This was carried by the Presbytery and agreed to by the next General Assembly in London in 1883. At the Assembly of 1887 the amount was raised to \$200,000; and the amount to be paid to retired ministers after 40 years or more of service to be \$300 instead of \$400 as previously fixed by committee. The Rev. William Burns, who had been very successful in raising an endowment for Knox College, was appointed agent to collect this endowment, but owing to the hard times during the last five years he has not been able to raise the amount as yet.

Some of the pioneers doing mission work 50 years ago did three times the ordinary work done by young men now, and yet only received \$400 a year which, with keeping a horse, was worth only about \$300 a year. Then salaries were so small for many years that they could not save any money, yet last November the amount paid from the Fund was much less than the year before so that they scarcely knew how to pay their way. There is much need not only to complete the Endowment but also for Congregations to contribute a much larger amount if the aged ministers are not to be left to suffer. Some of these men could have made large amounts by dealing in real estate but they did not think right to do so; and Professor Hume Breron in his life of John Knox says it is shameful for ministers to turn aside to do secular work, and the Divine Word says that they who preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel. It is evident from the Scriptures that it is God's will that his servants, Jewish and Christian, should be properly supported.

Toronto.

ROBERT WALLACE.

REV. DR. ARMSTRONG'S LECTURE

MR. EDITOR,—Permit me to express my gratification at the promised appearance in your columns of Dr. W. D. Armstrong's lecture on "Biblical Criticism" delivered at the recent conference at Knox College. It is an excellent presentation of the discussion going on at present regarding the literary structure of the Scriptures. It will help to clear away much misapprehension now existing in the minds of many of our best people, as well as put to flight groundless fears to which extreme statements of Conservative and Radical men may have given rise regarding the whole subject of higher criticism. Every layman and certainly every minister in our church should read Dr. Armstrong's lecture which is the fruit of wide reading and careful and well-balanced thinking.

G. M. MILLIGAN.

Toronto, Feb. 10, '96.

A PERTINENT QUESTION.

MR. EDITOR,—I would like to ask what seems to me to be a pertinent question with respect to the nominations now being made by Presbyteries for the vacant Professorships of Knox College. When the name of a gentleman now resident in Britain or the United States is submitted, are steps taken to ascertain whether that person would if elected accept the position? This matter has been under consideration for about two years and it would be absurd to present to the Assembly the name of anyone who would not be likely to give the offer a favorable consideration.

PASTOR.

MEXICO.

INFLUENCE OF EVANGELICAL MISSIONS

No one at all familiar with the history of Mexico can fail to see that a remarkable change has taken place here in the last twenty-five years. With the fall of Maximilian and the complete triumph of the Laws of Reform, which brought liberty of speech, press, and worship, Mexico began her modern national life. After three centuries of servitude and fifty years of almost constant revolution, the Mexicans achieved their political and religious independence. Juarez, a pure-blooded Indian, and not only the noblest character of his race, but one of the great political figures of our age, was a friend of evangelical missions. He did much to aid Protestantism when it first entered the country. The early missionaries to Mexico found in him a warm friend. He granted them special favors, and helped them secure property for their work. Shortly before his death, Juarez urged his political friends to protect evangelical missions, and expressed the opinion that Protestantism would help to solve the problems of his distracted country and be an important factor in its progress and development. His words were almost prophetic. Since that time a rapid transformation has been going on in Mexican society, due chiefly to the influence of foreign missions.

Education is now appreciated, the people are daily becoming more liberal and approachable, a spirit of tolerance prevails, and on all sides are manifest traces of the silent but powerful influences exerted by the gospel through missionary effort. It would be difficult to find a town in the Republic of Mexico, however remote, that has not felt this influence. I will present only one instance of a hundred that might be given. I once passed through the mountains of central Mexico, three days' travel from any railroad, and where native races alone are found. Our Indian guide led us through a native village of thatched huts. We rather feared the people, and had no intention of making ourselves known. An old man approached us and asked for a Bible. He said, "As soon as I saw you I knew you were missionaries." No missionary had ever visited that district before. This experience could be duplicated in the most out-of-the-way places in any State in the Republic. The whole country seems to be in expectancy and waiting for the gospel. What may be called the indirect influence of the gospel is everywhere apparent, although the people here do not fully realize it, or its manifestations are the following:

1. The tolerant and conciliatory tone of the Mexican press. Public and newspaper men often speak in the highest terms of the beneficial influence of the gospel. Many who are indifferent to all religions see in Protestantism an element of new life for the country.

2. A willingness to see our good points in all departments of life and to copy them is apparent. One of the most interesting sights I ever witnessed in Mexico was that of 10,000 school children brought together to celebrate the Mexican Arbor Day. A Protestant paper first suggested this custom and urged it upon Mexicans as a means to beautify their country. Protestant schools were cordially welcomed to take part in the ceremony.

3. The spirit of union and association so rapidly extending in Mexico is another fruit of the gospel. The doctrines of Christ draw men together. As in most Catholic countries, literary and social circles were unknown here until the principles of evangelical charity and social equality began to be felt. Such societies are now numerous throughout Mexico.

4. Every year the demand for the Bible increases. In 1894 the American Bible Society employed fifty colporters, who traversed Mexico in every direction. Thousands of Bibles were given away, and 29,000 Bibles, Testaments and portions were sold for over \$8,000. This shows that Mexicans want the gospel and will pay for it.

5. Gospel truths are making themselves felt even in the Government schools, where all religion is prohibited by law. Students are inquisitive and buy our books and tracts. The Government college of the State of Guanajuato has for its motto the words of our Saviour, "The truth shall make you free." Whether they realized it or not they have crowned Christ as the Great Teacher. God grant that they may all soon have that truth that will make them free indeed. —Rev. S. W. Siberts, Ph.D. (Methodist Episcopal), Queretaro, Mexico.

Christian Endeavor.

WHAT IS INVOLVED IN LOYALTY TO CHRIST?

REV. W. S. M'TAVISH, B.D., DESFRONTO.

Mar 1st - Luke 22.

In every age the Christian finds something that puts his loyalty to the test. In the early Church, believers were persecuted by the Jews; a little later they suffered indignities at the hands of the pagans, and about the time of the Reformation, they were tortured in many and shameless ways by the Roman Catholics. How did they stand the test? Many were loyal and sealed their testimony with their blood; others denied the Lord that bought them. During the persecutions under the Roman Emperor Diocletian, there were some who were called Thurficati. These were disloyal to Christ, for, at the commands of the heathen, they offered incense to pagan divinities. Another class was called the Libellatici. These were not loyal to the Master, because, while they secretly professed to be His followers, they bribed the magistrates to give them certificates to the effect that they had offered sacrifices to the heathen gods. There was still another class known by the name of the Acta Facientes. Those who belonged to this class were likewise disloyal because while they did not pay respect to the heathen deities, they took oath to the effect that they had done so. We all admit that these classes were placed in very trying circumstances, and our sympathies go out towards them as we read the story of their lives.

Are we tried by any such tests to-day? Thank God, in this country the days are past when men can be so persecuted because of their religious views. We may, however, be severely tried in other forms. The tendencies of evil in our age and in this country may not be so coarse or brutal as they were in the early centuries of the Christian era; and yet, though they may be more refined, more subtle, more crafty, they may try us very sorely. We are apt to glorify the confessors and martyrs of the past, while we forget those around us who are manfully standing up for the right in the face of strong and crafty opposition. We admit, of course, that great courage was required to brave heathen persecution, to meekly bear with taunts and reproaches, but we should not overlook the fact that many Christians to-day have to encounter a species of opposition that puts their loyalty to the test.

Loyalty to Christ, however, demands that we obey His commands without questioning and without hesitation; that we follow Him through evil report as well as good report, and that we help to spread abroad a knowledge of His name in the face of any opposition, however bitter. It demands that we go wherever His Spirit appears to lead; that we acknowledge Him even though others deny Him; that we seek the good of His Church and people; that we strive in the face of the most adverse circumstances to build up His Kingdom; that we stand up for what we believe to be right, no matter how many may be against us, and that we make the advancement of His glory the great object of our lives. It demands also that we profess Him in the presence of His Church; that we do whatever we think He would like to have us do, and that we refrain from doing what we consider would be displeasing in His sight.

Peter and John gave a proof of their loyalty to Christ, when, after having been warned by the Jewish council not to preach in His name again, they said: "We ought to obey God rather than men." The boy who kneels down when retiring for the night and prays in the presence of a godless, scoffing room-mate gives a proof of his loyalty to Christ—indeed, this is a test which some have shrunk from. The young man who declines an invitation to a gathering because his conscience does not approve of what might be done there, gives a proof of his loyalty to the Master.