

MISSION WORK IN VILLAGES.

WHEN one looks at a village in its relation to the great work of Christian Missions, the whole field, yet to be covered with a knowledge of the truth, is seen in miniature, and the Power that is going to be successful in accomplishing most speedily the larger work is the one that must be exercised to promote the cause of Christ in the smaller.

For four summers I have been somewhat closely connected with Mission Work in villages; and at the close of each season have been led to the same conclusion as to the best means to be used, to raise the moral tone, and purify the atmosphere of those smaller centres of business in the country. The first great difficulty is how to properly manage to keep the children away from bad companions, and yet allow them sufficient freedom, and out-of doors exercise, to build up healthy bodies, fit temples for the intellectual faculties and also for the Holy Ghost to dwell in. It is quite possible for a different state of affairs to exist in a city or town. There a family of even ordinary means may select a home in a part of the city where the grosser crimes are not committed, and thereby secure companions for the children, that know nothing of the haunts of secret sin.

It is very different in the village. The children know and frequent all the street corners. They are too often found about the village hotels, first to gaze in childish astonishment at older boys and men gambling, drinking and swearing, next to venture a step further to do the trifling act of picking up the stump of a cigar and in the end receive the impression, that because creatures that God intended to be men do such things, they may also do them. Thus we often see the first step taken, and the youth soon breaks into a run down to ruin. I asked a Christian mother a few months ago, to tell me of some of the difficulties she had to encounter, in training her children in a village. She answered: "I never let them out of the yard at all, you see the influences of the street companions are ruinous to my children. Their father is dead and I am afraid even to let them out, they would soon be beyond my control." This is rather a sad fact, and yet there are many anxious mothers whose experiences are quite