

Our Contributors.

DOING ABSOLUTELY NOTHING.

BY KNOXIAN.

During the hot season we often read in the American religious journals that Dr. Somebody is suffering from nervous prostration and that he has gone to the sea side or the mountains, or across the Atlantic for perfect rest.

Nervous prostration is an American disease. It is supposed to be caused by over-work. More likely it is brought on by worry, or by an insane desire to get rich or great too fast, or by trying to do too many things at once instead of doing one thing at a time. Over-work hurts comparatively few people.

Englishmen seldom suffer from nervous prostration. The typical John Bull has so much respect for his nerves that he seldom uses them. Scotchmen have no nerves. Irish nerves are so elastic that even a rebellion does them no permanent injury. We Canadians are more like our American neighbors. We are becoming more shaky in the nerve centres every day, and before long nervous prostration may be our national disease. Nervous dyspepsia is already a common trouble and it is out of all sight the most villainous member of the dyspepsia family. There is only one creature more troublesome than a man who has nervous dyspepsia and that is a woman who has it. If many of our people take nervous dyspepsia confederation will be a failure. Nervous dyspeptics can never build a nation. The men who made Britain the greatest nation on earth did not know they had stomachs except when they were hungry.

Perfect rest may be the right thing for a man suffering from nervous prostration, but it is not the proper holiday treatment for a man in reasonable health who wishes to tone up. Doing absolutely nothing is hard work for a man of active habits. We have often seen men on steamers at summer resorts and other places of recreation who would have been much better at home. They sat alone lonesome as owls, walked around aimlessly, gazed into vacancy, consulted their watches frequently and gave other outward and visible signs that they were suffering. They were simply putting in the time and no doubt felt that time passed slowly.

To have a useful holiday one must do something. The best holiday occupation we know of is lying on the rocks close down by the edge of the Atlantic Ocean watching the waves roll in. Select a soft spot on the rock, stretch yourself out at full length with your face seaward, fix your eye on a wave a quarter of a mile distant and watch it until it breaks on the rock beneath you. A man who cannot enjoy that sight with the music of the ocean as an accompaniment has no capacity for enjoyment. He has no soul.

We have found boating on the Muskoka Lakes good holiday work. What we mean by boating is sitting in the stern watching a couple of good lively men work the oars. Last year we had a splendid crew on Lake Rosseau. It consisted of a Cincinnati D.D., a minister from Western Ontario and a Knox student. The Cincinnati man sat in the prow and gave tone to the proceedings. The minister and the Knox student rowed and a better pair of amateur oarsmen could not be desired. The student had worked long in the Muskoka mission field and had rowed between stations until he was almost a professional. Our business was to steer. We sat in the stern with a tiller-ropes in each hand, looked down benignly on our crew, steered the craft and gave orders about direction and speed in the most nautical tone we could command. Our boat always made good time. The pace was mainly owing to the scientific manner in which the boat was steered. We scarcely dare cherish the hope to have a crew like that one again. The minister and the Knox student had a stroke that Hauban would probably have considered good. The Cincinnati D.D. was a nice man and we have since seen that he writes a good magazine article, but for boating purposes he was chiefly ornamental. The Knox student could row round

and round him. When we saw that Cincinnati D.D. try to steer a boat we thought we partly understood why Lane Seminary is in trouble.

Interesting company is absolutely indispensable to a good holiday. There are of course abnormal specimens of the Adam family who wish to be always alone, but the average man does not hanker after solitude, nor does the average woman.

What is interesting company? It is company that interests you. Did any dictionary ever give a better definition than that? The weather is too hot to prepare a scientific analysis of the qualities that make some people pleasant companions and make others—well not specially magnetic. Perhaps we could not make an analysis of that kind even if the mercury were thirty degrees below zero. We doubt very much if anybody can explain why some people are magnetic and others repellent. Any way we are not going to try. The readers of this corner must think out some things for themselves.

People in any walk of life may be interesting or the reverse, but as a rule it will be found that we learn most from men who follow occupations quite different from our own. The best informed men we have ever met were newspaper men. For range and accuracy of information a first class editor easily takes the palm. As a living encyclopædia of useful knowledge we will match William Buckingham, of Stratford, against any man in this Province. But for his modesty and constitutional shrinking from contact with crowds Buckingham might easily have been one of the first men in this Dominion. We have often found first class lawyers, doctors, merchants, manufacturers and politicians instructive men to holiday with. They know many things that ordinary clergymen have little opportunity of learning and if inclined to talk a minister can learn a good deal from their company.

Commercial travellers are often very interesting and instructive men. They have a large amount of useful information about our own country.

A specialist is always interesting in his own line. More information can often be obtained from the engineer that drives a steamboat or the wheelsman who steers it than from many of the well-dressed pretentious people who sit in the cabin.

THE NEW HEBRIDES MISSION SYNOD REPORT.

New Hebrides Mission Synod met in the Mission Church, Anelgaubat, Aneityum, April 28th, 1894. Rev. J. Gillan, retiring Moderator, preached from Titus 1: 1, his theme being "A Servant of God." After the sermon the Synod was duly constituted.

Present: Revs. W. Watt, J. W. MacKenzie, J. Annaud, M.A.; R. M. Fraser, J. D. Landels, T. Smail, B.A.; J. Gillan, R. Lamb, B.D., M.D.

Owing to the necessary arrangements not having been made in the maritime service, the Synod did not meet during 1893.

Rev. J. D. Landels was appointed Moderator for the ensuing year. Messrs. Milne and Gray were absent, for reasons assigned and accepted.

The Rev. F. J. Paton, second son of the Rev. J. G. Paton, D.D., of this Mission and duly accredited missionary of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, specially designated by that church to occupy the station of Pangkumu Malekula, was present and cordially received, the Moderator and brethren giving him the right hand of fellowship.

Mr. R. M. G. McDowall, assistant to Dr. Lamb, was present, Dr. Lamb introduced him and in accordance with the wishes of the New Zealand Presbyterian Church, by which he was appointed; he was associated with the Synod, having a seat and vote, leaving his relation to the Synod to be considered if necessary at a future time; he was cordially received, the Moderator and brethren giving to him also the right hand of fellowship.

The business committee submitted its report which was received and adopted.

The Lord's Supper was appointed to be dispensed at 7.30 p.m., on Sabbath, the Moderator conducting the service.

The committee on a Native Teachers' Training Institution, appointed 1892, submitted its report. The convener, Mr. Annaud, moved the adoption of the same and submitted for approval the committee's recommendations. An amendment proposing the consideration of the report and its recommendations at a future sederunt was carried.

Messrs. Fraser, MacKenzie and Gillan were appointed a committee to draft a minute based on the report of stations.

On Dr. Lamb submitting the report of his station on Ambrim it was agreed that as he was leaving by the steamer hourly expected from Sydney, the Synod consider what steps can be taken to strengthen Dr. Lamb's hands and secure his retention in the Mission.

On motion made, the Synod resolved itself into committee of the whole.

On the House again resuming its sitting, the committee of the whole, appointed in the previous minute, reported as follows.—That after due deliberation and discussion it was agreed to recommend the following resolution.—That the Synod sympathize with Dr. Lamb and the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand in the loss sustained by them owing to the destruction by fire of the Mission premises at Dip Point, Ambrim; agree to the desirability of Dr. Lamb going to New Zealand, ask his committee to do all in their power to make it possible for Dr. Lamb to return to his work as a medical missionary, and if necessary to apply to the other churches or friends interested for pecuniary help. The report was adopted as the finding of the Synod. The recommendations were agreed to and Dr. Lamb instructed to furnish his committee with a copy of this minute.

The Treasurer in his report stated that a lady in New Zealand had sent the sum of (£100) as a donation to the New Hebrides Mission Synod, to be used by the Synod for any purpose connected with the Mission, not provided for by any of the churches. The Synod instructed the clerk to convey to the generous donor the warm thanks of the Synod.

The subject of the retention of the interest of the Insurance Reserve Fund by the Victorian Church, having been brought under the consideration of the Synod in a letter from Dr. Cosh, secretary of the "Dayspring" Board, the Synod instructed the clerk to write the Treasurer of the Victorian Church requesting him to pay over said interest to the "Dayspring" Board in Sydney to meet current expenses, in accordance with the express terms of the resolution of this Mission establishing the fund, viz.: "The capital to be drawn upon in case of accident to, or loss of the vessel, the interest to be used in meeting current expenses."

A letter from Varatia, a chief at Sesake Mai, was read, requesting that Mr. Macdonald be requested to resume oversight of the mission work at that place. The Synod, after careful consideration, did not see its way to accede to the request, but expressed the hope that the troubles anticipated may be averted. The clerk was instructed to convey this decision to Varatia.

Mr. Gillan, in accordance with the expressed desire of the Victorian Church, was appointed to the oversight of the mission station at North Santo.

The Synod having heard of the section of the "John G. Paton" Mission Fund, Great Britain, which has for its object the training and support of native teachers, and having also heard of the appointment of Mr. Fred. J. Paton, Malekula, as its treasurer, heartily approves of the scheme, and as Mr. Paton's request accepts the oversight of the fund, and confirms his appointment as its treasurer.

The Synod appointed Mr. Smail to prepare the Annual Dayspring Report, also the Native Teachers' Report. The Synod enjoined brethren to supply full reports of the work on their stations and forward them to Dr. Cosh by the last mail for this year. The Synod further enjoined brethren to supply Mr. Smail with information and statistics regarding native teachers.

May 1st, 1894, Messrs. Robertson, Macdonald, Michelsen, Lawrie and Leggatt having arrived per S.S. *Balmain* from Sydney, took their seats as members of Synod.

A minute of the Foreign Missions Committee of the Free Church of Scotland was read, appointing Rev. J. H. Lawrie to take oversight of the work on Aneityum and Futuna for a period of not more than two years during the absence of Dr. Guan on furlough and intimating the probability of another missionary from that church being sent out in 1895. Synod heartily welcomes Mr. Lawrie back to his work and expresses much gratification at the prospect of another missionary from the Free Church of Scotland being appointed to this group. A copy of this minute to be forwarded to the Foreign Mission Committee of the Free Church of Scotland.

The committee appointed, minute 12, handed in its report, which was received and adopted as the finding of the Synod. "It is with a sense of loss that we record the retirement from this mission of the Rev. Alexander Morton, Pangkumu, Malekula. Mr. Morton came to the New Hebrides in 1886, and settled at Pangkumu in 1887, among a purely heathen people, where he wrought with such earnestness, enthusiasm and promise of success, that it was with extreme regret to himself, as well as to his brethren of this mission, that the shattered health of Mrs. Morton necessitated their retirement from this trying field. We sincerely sympathize with him in having had to retire just as he was beginning to see buds of promise on Malekula; but we rejoice that he has been privileged to place the Gospel by Mark in the dialect of Pangkumu, in the hands of the Malekulans before his retirement. We trust that God's blessing may follow and rest upon him in his new sphere of labor.

The Synod also express its sympathy with the Rev. A. H. Macdonald, in that he has so soon been compelled by ill-health to retire from his lonely out-post at Belgaule, North Santo, where he was settled in 1890. During his short time of labor there the work gave much promise of success, and the people seemed very receptive. We pray that the Lord may direct him to a corner of the vineyard wherein he may suitably and acceptably serve the great Head of the church, and that He may speedily send forth a successor to occupy this important post. Copies of these minutes to be sent to the parties named and to the conveners of the Foreign Mission Committees of the churches interested."

The convener of Committee on Reports of Stations submitted its report and moved its adoption. An amendment was agreed to that the report be re-submitted, and that the court now hear reports of their stations from members who have arrived by S.S. *Balmain*.

Mr. Landels, the convener of the committee appointed on deaths of members of this Mission since last meeting of Synod, submitted its report.

MRS MICHELSEN, 1892.

In the providence of God, this Synod has to record its loss by the death of Mrs. Oscar Michelsen, the beloved wife of the Rev. Oscar Michelsen, of Tongoa. For a period of about 12 years, during which time the strongholds of heathenism gave way, she was at her husband's right hand, sharing with him the trials and privations which they were called upon to endure as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Being possessed of special qualifications which admirably fitted her for this work, together with a gentle disposition, she endeared herself to all classes, who now mourn their loss. To the bereaved husband, children and friends, we offer our deepest sympathy and pray that the God of all consolation will extend to them His blessing.

MRS. MACKENZIE, EFATE, 1893.

"The sad and painful duty devolves upon this Synod to record the decease of Mrs. Mackenzie, wife of the Rev. J. W. Mackenzie, of Erakor, Efate. She was spared, in the providence of God, for the period of 21 years to labor with her devoted husband, to whom she was a true help-meet. Her special gifts were used for the highest ends; she considered nothing too valuable to lay on the altar of Him who had given His life for her. This consecrated service was greatly blessed to the people amongst whom she labored, and to whom her memory is dear. Like a true mother in Israel,