

family worship afterward was not only a tightening of the buckle for himself, but was a gracious means of safety to his household.

One of the greatest dangers in these days is that too many children are growing up—even in nominally Christian families—with sadly lax sentiments in many vital directions. They have loose views about God's day and God's Book, and very loose practices as to attendance upon God's worship. They start out in life with a broken buckle and when the stress of temptation comes, they are easily thrown to the ground. Fathers and mothers owe to their children as well as to themselves the duty of tightening the saddle-girth.

Not only do families suffer from laxity in parental government and godly parental training, but I fear that some congregations suffer from laxity in the teachings of their ministers. No Church is very likely to rise higher than its own pulpit. If the shepherd of the flock holds loose doctrines; if he is so 'liberal' that he gives away, or throws away, vital truths; if he lets down too many bars that the Bible wisely puts up, then it is no wonder that the flock wanders off into the ways of worldliness. There is no danger in these days of excessive strictness or of 'puritanical' principles or practices. The danger is just from the opposite direction. Would it not be a wise thing if some pastors, who see that their Churches are being overtaken and demoralized by worldly temptations, should call a halt and tighten their buckles?

The incident at the head of this brief article has a very close application to the maintenance of a vigorous, happy, and useful Christian life. The very word 'religion' is derived from the Latin word that signifies 'to bind fast.' True religion means the being bound fast to the Lord Jesus Christ in constant dependence on him and obedience to him. How to keep up a healthy spiritual life is the daily problem with every Christian. The parable of the buckle gives a hint. True piety is never self-sustaining. We only can 'do all things through Christ that strengthened us.' Without him, nothing; with him, everything. Therefore it is that our Bible exhorts us with prodigious emphasis to 'pray without ceasing.' When we relax in this vitally important duty, the enemies will soon overtake us, and overmatch us, and leave us in the dust. Brethren and sisters, tighten the prayer buckle.—North-western 'Christian Advocate.'

Missionary Prayer Meetings.

A Few Suggestions.

Many times I have been asked by earnest pastors and workers at home, How can we best help the missionaries on the field, when we meet together to pray and praise?

Since it is a real difficulty with some, I venture to make a few suggestions to guide any who may be seeking light.

Firstly. Let me urge upon each and all the great need to be more in prayer for the native Christians. Out of the many missionary prayer-meetings I attended, when at home, the native Christians were only remembered in two or three gatherings. Most faithfully the missionaries were brought to God, and prayer and praise given for any news of direct blessing, etc.

Secondly. Plead with God that the power of the Holy Ghost may come upon the native churches. We desire to see this, so that from these mission centres in heathen lands may go forth men and women of faith to reach their brethren and sisters who are still in darkness.

Thirdly. Pray that we as missionaries may always find our spiritual refreshment and stimulus in God. We often miss the stirring and helpful contact that many of the home conferences and conventions afford the weary souls; and unless we are much with God, down we go.

Fourthly. Plead especially that the passion for souls may not be lost. Contact with heathenism is awfully deadening, so we need your prayers on this line very much.

Fifthly. Ask that we may not trust too much to our fellow-workers. It is possible to rest in the arm of flesh too much, and in God too little. The only 'full satisfaction' is in the Triune God. Our loving Father never

fails. 'Jesus is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever,' and the Eternal Spirit changes not.

Lastly. Plead that each one may be kept happy and faithful. The joy of the Lord is to be our strength. The work will often depress and discourage. The heathen and Christian members will perchance disappoint the brightest hopes. But to remember that we are sent of God, that the seed sown is living eternal seed, and that Jesus himself is coming again, will make many a dark day bright and change defeat into victory.

C.I.M., Chefoo, N. China.

Religious Notes.

The 3,600 Christians scattered over the planting districts in the Tamil Cooley Mission form 34 congregations. There are 60 schools with 2,500 children under instruction. During a great part of last year, the Rev. R. P. Butterfield had charge of the Central District in addition to the Northern. Writing of the work in this latter district alone he says:

'One feels the difficulty of impressing on the minds of sympathizers at home the vastness of one single missionary "district" compared with a home parish. Taking the pastoral work, for example, in this district, there are about 1,200 baptized Christians, who in themselves would form a very respectable sphere of work at home. But then these Christians have to be sought and visited over an area as great as the county of Norfolk. Then there are about 1,060 scholars, which number would make that of many a national school look small. These again are not in one or two big schools, but scattered over the same area, in twenty-six schools. But both these departments of work, important as they are, fade into insignificance before the great task of evangelization which is being daily carried on in our efforts to reach the 234,000 Tamil-speaking people who inhabit this part of Ceylon.—C. M. S. Gleaner.

Says the 'Christian Endeavor World': 'We have just received a most interesting report of the condition of the societies of Christian Endeavor in the Baltic provinces of Russia from the Christian Endeavor travelling secretary, Rev. Robert Bahtz. At the present time there are 28 Christian Endeavor Societies in these provinces, which will be greatly multiplied when quieter times come to us. On account of the revolution we can hold our Christian Endeavor conventions only under the name of 'spiritual concerts.' The Russo-Baltic Christian Endeavor Union has held three conventions and two schools of methods for the instruction of Christian Endeavor workers. It is recognized that the Christian Endeavor Society has come to Russia at the right time, as an instrument of the Lord to comfort the people and heal the wounds of sinners. The society is a pledge of brotherly love among Lutherans, Baptists, Brudergemeinde, Stundists, and others.'

Our Labrador Work.

SOUTHWARD BOUND.

Making as little delay as possible, we once more left for the south, with three volunteer workers to help in the development of what we might call the settlement growing up near Cape Bauld. Two were Harvard men—part of the now famous crew of the launch—and one an Irish landlord who has most generously decided to give us a winter's work at his own expense. As he has seen life in many parts of the world—served through the Boer war, and been ranching in Colorado—his knowledge on many subjects should be very valuable, and when we left this hospital again on our last trip north, he was busily engaged with 'a crowd,' mostly, however, of our own boys from the orphanage, opening up our peat bog—draining, cutting, road-making—a work in which his knowledge of the Irish industry, makes his assistance especially valuable. Here were our other two schooners. One with freight from St. John's. One landing lumber for friends across the harbor. The 'Lorna Doone,' an ex-Gloucester banker, looking splendid with her graceful lines and tall hardwood spars.

The volunteer medical officer had had about

twice as much work as he expected to see, and had still in hospital some bad cases, one poor fellow, with a bad gunshot wound through the arm, just above the elbow, whose life was in the balance in the effort to save his limb. Only one case had not done as well as we hoped. A clubfoot operation on a jolly little fellow, who was a hopeless cripple when he came, and whom we had hoped to have seen running about well by now. One gratifying incident, however, occurred the day after our arrival as a trifling offset to this great disappointment, though we still hope for at least an improvement on the old condition. As I was returning to the hospital from the peat work, axe over my shoulder, a group of fishermen met me saying one of their number had a bad eye and wished to consult me about it. The man came up and stood silently while I looked at his eyes. His right eye showed no reaction to light or accommodation, and I promptly asked him if it gave him any pain. As he tried to protest he had no pain whatever in it, I noticed a strange twinkle in the other, and then he burst out laughing. He proved to be the young man whose eye we had removed in the far north, and to whom my colleague had just fitted the eye we had promised him when we sent him back to his schooner some six hundred miles to the northward.

The child we had brought from the wretched home in the straits in the spring was also entirely metamorphosed, and his own father would hardly have known him. Nor would he have recognized in himself the hitherto submerged individual, for with the trifling outfit we gave him in the spring, when we relieved him of the burden, alas, of a blind wife and a rickety baby, he had been phenomenally successful with fish. He has over fifty kintals of fish to his own name, and has not only paid the advances, but was a man of means with a winter's diet, with money coming to him, and a renewed ambition and hope, which probably was the asset he really needed most of all.

Alcohol had been working its fatal results in our absence. At the large lighthouse, three young men, not satisfied with the beverages of their brethren, who have far harder work to do, had indulged in alcohol provided by the government for purposes connected with the light. Two had died, and one was still suffering from a kind of blindness. Sir Creighton Brown recently said at a banquet in England of medical men: 'Alcohol was a good thing in its place.' His speech so greatly encouraged the use of alcohol as a beverage that already this far country is being flooded with notices of whiskeys with extracts from his speech to commend the use thereof. These add to his pronouncement that at that banquet ninety-four percent of medical men were not abstainers, that if only this particularly seductive variety were used, not a man of the lot would abstain. To those who hate and fight the liquor traffic as we do among our splendid men, such a pronouncement, advertised as Sir Creighton Brown's will be, is a weapon for evil in the enemy's hands that we have most deeply to deplore. We are at once sending for copies of the really scientific view of the question expressed in the new and admirable handbook by Sir Victor Horsley and Dr. Spurge.

W. T. GRENFELL, C.M.G., M.D.

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