

PROEM

In 1870, seated on a hillside among the vineyards of Switzerland, amid scenes familiar to John Calvin and to John Fletcher's boyhood, the Canadian student, a disciple of the latter, discussed with a French student, a disciple of Calvin, the distinctive features of his theology as compared with those represented by Fletcher in the theology of Wesley.

"Eh, bien! And what has your Methodism contributed to the world's thought?" demanded the French Calvinist.

Both his knowledge and his command of French failed at this point. But a department of study thenceforward grew. What have all great religious movements given to the world? Have they been successive and progressive fountains of light?

The choice of the German Mission in Ontario as a field of labor had in it the element of self-sacrifice, but it was a mistake. It did the good service, however, of giving nearly three years of the educative influence of European travel and training, and the permanent advantage of access to German and French literature. But the underlying spiritual fact was that it was a choice made to forestall a possible call to foreign mission service. That was the one reservation.

In the fifth year of this service it became necessary to make the choice of another field. During this period there grew an increasingly unbearable unrest. Every avenue into harmony and rest in the old methods seemed to have been closed. It was not a question of sin in the ordinary sense, unless it was "the sin in believers," the divided eye,—

"'Tis worse than death my God to love,
And not my God alone."