

SLEEPLESS ACTIVITY.

Instruments are employed to carry on His work. He works in them and through them. "The Lord gave the word, great was the company of them that published it." When they set out on their mission He energised their feeblest efforts. Their weapons, not carnal, were mighty through Him, to the pulling of strongholds. The Acts of the Apostles, the first Christian Church history puts it beautifully thus: "They went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them." The former treatise (Luke's Gospel), tells us of all that Jesus began to do and teach. In the Acts we find the continuance of that doing and teaching; in the Apocalypse, its completion and consummation.

In this sleepless activity Jesus wishes us to be followers of him as dear children. Hence He associates us as labourers together with Himself. Except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain. Yet, the watchmen must be at their posts, in the spirit of Habakkuk when he said, "I will stand upon my watch and set me upon the tower"—as if on the alert to catch each communication from the commander in chief, or to see "foemen creeping through the gloom, or fire bursting out among the straw roofed cottages and then, to shout out the short, sharp alarm, that wakes the sleepers to whom slumber were death. Hence, He who has been appointed a leader and commander to His people, goes on to say "I have set watchmen upon the walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace, day nor night. Ye that are the Lord's remembrancers keep not silence."

Our voices shall be heard in heaven, blending with His, and on earth beseeching the rebels in His stead, to be reconciled to God. With God and man we are expected to plead, and if we hold our peace, when He looks for us to lift up our voices like a trumpet, "mischiefs will befall us."

3. There is this additional "mischiefs," that our brethren may perish.

These Lepers might have said, "It is none of our business." "We have been outlawed. We have long wandered in wretchedness, let us now 'eat, drink and be merry.' In no such selfish channels do their feelings flow. They feel for their distressed brethren and chide themselves for their seeming delay. We are so linked as children of the common family, made of the one blood—and with one blood to redeem us too, that we should look, not to our own things merely. We cannot stand aloof. The calamities of others entail mischief on ourselves. We should feel with Esther, "How can I endure to see the evil that shall come upon my people? How can I endure to see the destruction of my kinsmen?" Surely, the fate that awaits the myriads of our fellows who stand in worse jeopardy every hour than these helpless Samaritans, should lead us to cry aloud and spare not, as we hurry (for the King's business requireth haste) to save them with fear, pulling them out of the fire; and draw from us that ancient prayer "From all hardness of heart toward our suffering, miserable brethren, Good Lord deliver us."

LET US GO AND TELL.

IV. This brings us, in the fourth place to the duty suggested: "Now therefore, let us go and tell."

1. Let us go, for these perishing ones need the glad tidings. Where there is no vision the people perish. They perish for lack of knowledge, the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. Is ignorance here bliss! Then envy the drivelling idiot or mind-less maniac, who dances in his chains, or looks out listlessly on vacancy, or victim of some strange hallucination, counts a stick a sceptre, a chair, a throne, and who deems himself "monarch of all he surveys." If ignorance is bliss, then envy the child who plays beside the coffin of his mother, and is proud of the habiliments of mourning donned because nearest and dearest are gone. In both cases, the ignorance intensifies our sorrow.

Better let them remain as they are, was an old way of speaking with reference to the heathen. They are contented; why disturb them? They are sincere in their belief. Why shake their confidence in it? It is enough, with reference to this mode of speaking, to say, that if Jesus had felt thus, He never would have left heaven, and if the apostles had acted on this principle we never would have got the Gospel.

2. Let us go, for we have that which is the only Panacea.

They are labouring in the fire. We have the only extinguisher. They are ready to perish with hunger. We have the Bread of Life. They are dying of a disease the most virulent and vile. We have the sovereign remedy. They are drowning in the black sea of sin. We have the life boat. Hearts of adamant we must have, if this consideration has no weight with us.

3. Let us go, for if we do nothing, others may not. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might. The question is not "Lord, what shall this man do?" but, "Lord, what wouldst thou have me do?" Indeed, if in a spirit of holy adventure, individuals amongst us, like some of our beloved sons of the prophets say, "I go a fishing," others catching their enthusiasm, as the college movement has shown, may be induced to say, "We also go with thee."

All over this continent a pure Gospel is faithfully preached. "Let us go and tell" is very generally observed. As regards the United States, reliable statistics recently published bring out that the number of Christian congregations in 1887 was 112,000 as against 71,000 in 1872; the number of ministers in 1887, 83,000 as against 50,000 in 1872, and of communicants 12,000,000 as against 7,000,000 fifteen years ago. I have not by me the Canadian figures, but dividing these by ten would probably give them. At the beginning of this century in the neighbouring Republic they had only one communicant to fifteen of the people; now they had one to every five of the people. Surely, in this respect, this day is to us a day of good tidings. The Presbyterian Church is not "little among the thousands of Israel." We know how large and strong it is in its recognized home and headquarters, but we do not know perhaps as re-

liable authority informs that there are now more Presbyterian congregations in France than in Ireland, and more in Wales than in either. There are 1,500 Presbyterian congregations in the Netherlands, 2,000 in Hungary, while the Church is well represented in Belgium, Bohemia, Moravia, Spain, Italy and Switzerland. The principal Dutch Church at the Cape of Good Hope, is Presbyterian, and in Australia and in New Zealand, in Persia, India, China, Japan and the New Hebrides, there are either growing Presbyterian Churches or flourishing Presbyterian missions, while in the United States and Canada there are 13,000 congregations connected with the Church.

MAN FISHING.

Fathers and Brethren, this is a day of good tidings to our Church as regards spiritual success. Some of you taught anew the art of man fishing and the right side of the ship by Him who surprised the hardy toilers in the days of old, rejoice in miraculous draughts. Special evangelistic conferences and services have been blessed. Unusually large additions have been made to several communion rolls, as the fruit of regular pastoral work, and the labours of workmen needing not to be ashamed, on whom the Church's imprimatur has been set, who have been "doing the work of an evangelist, and making full proof of their ministry." There are fishers of men amongst you, to whom we may say as does the poet of "sweetness and light," just passed away, to the Saxon fisherman of his brilliant vision:

"O Saxon fisher, thou hast had with thee,
The Fisher from the lake of Galilee."

Such presence we need more than ever, in fulfilment of the promise, "Lo! I am with you always," if we would escape the "mischiefs" attaching to the "holding our peace" and "go and tell" the message entrusted to us.

ANNUAL REVIEW.

We had a day of good tidings at Winnipeg a year since, of which we retain sunny memories, when our annual resume gave us forty-two Presbyteries, (covering an area of between 3,000,000 and 4,000,000 square miles) 889 ministers, 277 missionaries, six colleges and five foreign mission fields, with 136,000 communicants, a net increase of 9,000; high \$300,000 raised for missionary, educational and benevolent purposes; college buildings and endowments amounting to \$1,400,000 (more than trebling the figure of the Union in 1875), and a total revenue of \$1,500,000. The high thirty missionaries in our six foreign mission fields, besides a dozen "elect ladies" have been faithfully carrying out the resolution, "Let us go and tell."

TIDINGS FROM THE NEW HEBRIDES.

The news of the year from our foreign stations makes this to us a "day of good tidings." "The last heathen now has joined us," writes McKenzie, of Fila. Efat repeats Aneiteum as described on the memorial tablet in memory of the sainted Geddie. Robertson waits to us the "glad tidings" from once blood-stained Erromanga, of the "Light of God's holy Word shining in, at least thirty villages," of having "shipped 3,300 pounds of arrow root this year (1887), the largest amount ever contributed by the Erromangans in one year for the payment of books;" of a liberality on the part of the natives that may well put us to shame, and of "two sons of the murderer of John Williams serving as leading teachers, one of the adult, the other of the infant class, within a gunshot of where Williams bled to death forty-nine years ago." Annand has found a fine fulcrum for the Gospel lever on Tangoa Islet, within a few rods of Santo, with its score of thousands and more, the stronghold of the New Hebrides groups where our solitary sentinel signing in weakness, "Who will bring me into the strong city?" yet with strength made perfect in weakness, and the blessed banking of the "all power in heaven and earth," singing cheerily "through God we shall do valiantly." The convention between Great Britain and France, providing for the withdrawal of French troops from the Islands, has dispelled the cloud that for a season has darkened the horizon there, and makes this yet more to our beloved missionaries a "day of good tidings" and all the more imperative the obligation, to "go and tell."

TRINIDAD.

Good tidings too from Trinidad. Two hundred and three baptisms during the year—eighty-five children and 118 adults—making a total of 1,400 baptisms since the founding of the mission; 371 communicants in good standing, of whom seventy-six were added during the year. The mission to the Coolies of the West Indies founded by John Morton in 1867 has of late extended to Demerara and St. Lucia, and will gradually reach other islands, and tell yet more and more on the vast continent of India, whence the Coolies come.

CENTRAL INDIA

Also sends us "good tidings" where (at Indore) in 1875 our own Fraser Campbell first planted the standard of the cross, with his partner, the worthy daughter of him who was the father of our educational system in Nova Scotia. Our five missionaries there, with our five lady missionaries, two of them medical, "one is not"—have, in the face of formidable difficulties, now being rapidly removed, done a solid foundation work—but "one is not"; a son, as his faithful wife was a daughter, of Acadia—she taken first, and he so soon after, to where the sun shall not light on them nor any heat.

"Lovely and pleasant in their lives"
"And in their deaths not divided."

"Tidings" too from our missions to the

INDIANS IN THE NORTH-WEST

Where we have ten missionaries assisted by five male and two female teachers, labouring diligently amongst the 3,500 of the 30,278 Aborigines that are scattered through our North-West. The feet of Hugh Mackay in the great lone land (with his hard-working associates) are beautiful as those of George Mackay (his cousin) in the distant East, "on the mountains" and the valleys of beautiful

FORMOSA.

Dr. Mackay now ranks among the great missionaries of the world. His success since his appointment in 1871 has been phenomenal. John Jamieson since 1883 has proved a true yoke fellow with two native pastors, thirty-eight native preachers, as many preaching stations, fifty-three elders, forty-five deacons, nine stone churches, twenty-nine chapels; 316 baptisms during the year and a total baptized membership of 2,546. Also a well-equipped college for theological students, a school for girls and an excellent hospital at headquarters. The rousing letters and cablegrams from our apostolic brother at Tamsui have given to our Church time and again "a day of good tidings." The special feature in our missionary history during the past year has been the

HONAN MISSION.

Honan, which means south of the river (the Yellow) is in North Central China, high 10,000 miles away from us, 600 miles in a straight line, north-west of Formosa, with an area of over 65,000 square miles and a population of 15,000,000. The flooded area is as large as Ireland. After the great famine which desolated this with other portions of Northern China, taking off from 9,500,000 to 13,000,000, the people were wondrously won by the kindness of the Christians—"The sympathies and charities of the Christian world, as called forth by this terrible calamity were more effectual in making acceptable the distasteful presence of the foreigners within their cities than had been the united influence of two wars and a half century of trade, diplomacy and social intercourse." The remembrance of this softening after the famine and the hope of its repetition after this flood, influenced Jonathan Goforth (suggestive symbolical name for a missionary) to carry out at once the resolution of my text, "Now therefore let us go and tell," accompanied by his heroic wife, who besides herself has laid \$3,000 of her means on the altar. They have had their preliminary baptism by fire, as the Annands by water, but they are cheerful and hopeful, doing good as they have opportunity, sowing beside all waters, believing that the bread they cast on the waters will be found after many days.

Dr. Smyth, who is now with us, is ready to depart (with his wife) for the same distant destination thoroughly furnished for the work. We rejoice in his presence and that of the other beloved missionaries who have returned from the fields of their bloodless conquests to tell how that the Lord hath done great things for them whereof they are glad.

THE KAREN CONVERT.

We should be stimulated to carry out the resolution, "Let us now therefore go and tell" by the thought of Him who hath said, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations." Can there be any plea more persuasive than is embodied in our marching orders? When Ko-chet-thing, a Karen convert, visited America, he was "urged on a certain occasion to address a congregation in respect to their duty to send out and support more missionaries." After a moment, we are told, of downcast thoughtfulness, he asked with evident emotion, "Has not Jesus Christ told them to do it?" Oh! Yes! I was the reply, but we wish you to remind them of their duty. "Oh! no! (said the Karen) if they will not obey Jesus Christ they will not obey me." Should we not with like simplicity of faith to that of this swarthy stranger from the jungles of Burmah, count the command of the Master of paramount and permanent obligation?

THE HISTORIC EIGHTY-EIGHTS.

This day is to us a "day of good tidings" in other respects which appeal at once to our piety and patriotism. 1888 is fragrant with historic memories. 1588 witnessed the destruction of the Spanish Armada and extinguished Sixtus Fifth's expectation of supplanting Queen Elizabeth by Philip II, and the true order of Jesus by the false. "Thou didst blow with thy wind: the sea covered them; they sank like lead in the mighty waters." 1688 ushered in "a day of good tidings" to our beloved father-land, when the wind that detained James, at Harwich, wafted William to Torbay, and the gloomy "Hanging Time" (as it was called) of eight and twenty years was followed by the glorious Revolution. Three centuries ago, God's wind kept from us an imminent danger. Two centuries ago that wind brought to us an immense deliverance. A century thereafter, the blossoms and fruit which the revolution bore were nipped by the frosts of a gloomy winter that came back again. It was the iron age of our Church. On the floor of her General Assembly in 1796, Foreign Missions were voted down! How different the spectacle which 1888 witnesses! All the churches realizing as never before, that if they "hold their peace" "mischiefs will befall them," and that "Now therefore let us go and tell" is not mainly their bounden duty, but their "best policy"—that if they "put missions in a corner, they will be put in a corner themselves." This thing is not done in a corner. At this very moment in the metropolis of the world, Protestant Christendom is in solemn council: the greatest missionary conference in the world's history is being held, to ponder and pray over the question, how best to win back the world for Him whose right it is. Could a contrast greater be conceived than between the scene in Edinburgh in the latter part of the eighteenth, and that in London during the closing years of the nineteenth century!

OUR PRINCIPLES AND POLICY.

In the "Truths most surely believed amongst us" of which we cannot now speak particularly, nor is it needful in your presence. Fathers and brethren, we should find a further stimulus to carry out the resolution, "Now therefore, let us go and tell." These are founded on the word of God and agreeable thereto, and systematically arranged and luminously expounded in the recognized standards of our Church. They have received the sanction of the "goodly fellowship of the Apostles and the noble army of martyrs." In their favour, God's hidden ones witnessed a good confession. The Reformers, before the reformation, testified of these, and as for the giants of those days themselves they preached none other Gospel. So with