

KNOW COLLEGE STUDENTS' MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The annual meeting of the above Society was held in the College, on Wednesday, 13th inst., the Vice-President, Mr. Farquharson, in the chair. After devotional exercises the reports of some of the missionaries engaged in mission work during the summer were read and received. Mr. James read an interesting and encouraging report from Waubashene. These fields having been described in THE PRESBYTERIAN last year any description is now unnecessary. Mr. John Gibson, B.A., presented his report from Manitoulin, south side; Mr. Angus Robertson, from Manitoulin, north side; Mr. G. B. Greig, from Katrine and Lindsay, and Mr. John Jamieson, from Barry Sound. The remaining reports were left over till the next regular meeting.

The treasurer's report was very gratifying. Thanks to the kind friends of the Society who have so generously responded to the calls for aid in the pioneer work of the Society, it was not only free of debt at the end of the financial year but a balance of \$155 18 is in the treasurer's hands to begin the work of the present year. The contributions, however, of some of the fields occupied shewed a decrease, and hence the Society will require still to look to its friends in order to carry on the work efficiently.

After the reading of the various reports the election of officers for the present year was proceeded with. They are as follows: President, Mr. James Farquharson, B.A.; First Vice-President, Mr. John Mowat; Second Vice-President, Mr. A. G. McLachlan, B.A.; Recording Secretary, Mr. Joseph Builder, B.A.; Corresponding Secretary, Mr. M. McGregor, B.A.; Treasurer, Mr. Angus Mackay; Councillors, Daniel Stalker, B.A., James Ballantyne, B.A., Duncan McColl, B.A., A. B. Meldrum and Angus Robertson.

The stations of Davenport and Brockton are to be taken up by the Society, and assistance is also to be given to the gaol and Central Prison missions. The meeting closed in the usual form.

A subsequent meeting was held on Friday afternoon to hear an address from Rev. Mr. Robertson of Winnipeg, on the work in the North-West. At the outset the reverend gentleman spoke in high terms of the work of Mr. Farquharson, Rock Lake district, who was sent out by the Society in spring, and also of the work of Mr. Caswell, who was employed during the summer in the Palestine field by the Home Mission Committee. He spoke in glowing terms of the vast extent and unparalleled fertility of the vast North-West Territory, stating that no part of Ontario could be compared in richness to the Red River valley. With judicious land regulations the country will soon be settled, and with the railway to convey the grain from the west the country cannot fail to develop rapidly. Fort Churchill is almost as near as Quebec and for four or five months of the year steamers can leave Hudson's Bay. He confidently predicts a great future for this vast belt of fertile country.

The great majority of the settlers, composed for the most part of young people, are either members or adherents of the Presbyterian Church. There are settlers coming in from Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, and also from the mother country. He mentioned the case of fifty or sixty families who are coming from Belfast in the spring to form a settlement and expressed a great desire to have a missionary. One gentleman guaranteed £100 towards his support. The census of Westburn shewed the great majority of the settlers to be Presbyterian. In some of the Saskatchewan districts the Presbyterian element is fully three-fourths of the whole. Other churches are being aroused to the importance of the work in the North-West and vigorous missionary efforts are being made. The Methodist Church, although the number of settlers of that persuasion is not so great, has already more missionaries in the field than the Presbyterian.

The Episcopalians are also doing what they can to meet the wants of the people, but as their relations are principally with the Church in the old country, and but little help is received from Ontario and Quebec, they are gradually losing their hold. Their missionaries are for the most part from the old land and are not suitable for the work. They cannot get men to carry on the work, and there is a general disposition to aid and work in connection with our Church.

The Congregational body is also represented, but has only one minister, who is settled in Winnipeg.

We are not only called on to minister to our own people but others are looking to us. From the number of Presbyterian settlers the number of our missionaries should be largely in excess of all others. They are looking to us as their mother Church, that we should follow them with the means of grace, and the Church in Ontario should feel dishonoured if it failed to respond to the earnest and urgent appeal for help, which is coming from those who have gone out to seek new homes and have left their Christian privileges behind them. The reverend gentleman said he was not one of those who believed it made no difference by what denomination the Gospel is preached. While he hailed with gladness any endeavour to carry the Gospel to the people from whatever source, he yet believed in the grand features of our Presbyterian doctrine which has done so much in the past to develop intellect, to give moral and spiritual stamina, and make men worthy and loyal citizens, and with a view to the highest intellectual and religious development of the country it should be permeated and leavened with the good sturdy doctrines of our Presbyterian faith.

He stated that a good deal had been done to overtake the work, and the people of Ontario had responded generously to the calls that had been made upon them, but much of the field yet remains unoccupied and the work is increasing every day. He gave a detailed account of the work which is being carried on in different fields, in almost every case of the most encouraging kind. He mentioned that in the Saskatchewan Valley, where but a few years ago there were but five families, there are now six ministers labouring; and in South Manitoba district, where six years ago there was but one minister, there are now five. He spoke at some length of the Mennonites, who are in possession of the most beautiful and fertile tract in the Province, and stated it to be his conviction that if an efficient minister, able to speak their language, could be procured, a large number would be found to connect themselves with our Church. Their bishops are endeavouring to keep them in isolation and prevent them from learning the English language, but there is a feeling of unrest among them, and a great desire to mingle with the English-speaking population, and liberal offers are being made to induce English teachers to come among them.

In conclusion he spoke of the vast magnitude of the work in the great North-West and of the great field that was opened up to vigorous, zealous young men for earnest and faithful mission work. The work of the ministry should not be looked upon simply as a profession, to be entered for the sake of ease and comfortable position, and although in a new field there were hardships and discouragements, yet it was encouraging to build up a cause, to have something to do in laying the foundations of our Church, and in seeing the great work growing year by year. He closed with an earnest and eloquent appeal to the Society to endeavour to cultivate a true missionary spirit and expressed the hope that many who are now students would before long be ministers in the great North-West.

The address throughout was full of vigour, and was listened to with great interest by the students. A growing interest is being manifested in the mission work in the North-West and the decided opinion of many is that almost all of the graduating class of the present year will be willing to give themselves to this work.

Professor McLaren gave a short but pithy address, in the course of which he stated that he had at one time been asked to go as a missionary to the Red River settlement, and almost had the honour of being the pioneer missionary of the Church in that district. He also spoke of the great encouragements which the field afforded to vigorous and devoted young men.

M. MCGREGOR, Cor. Sec.

THE value of everything in life depends on its power to lead us to God by the shortest road.—F. W. Faber.

GOOD temper is like a sunny day; it sheds a brightness over everything; it is the sweetener of toil and the soother of disquietude.

DR. LYMAN BEECHER once said of a sermon which he had just preached not very much to his satisfaction: "I always holler at the top of my voice when I am not prepared." If this rule were adopted by all preachers, there would be not a little bellowing in the pulpit.

PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

THE VALUE OF A FEW DAYS OF SICKNESS.

It is not of protracted illness, nor of maladies certain to end in death, nor of seizures which leave behind them organic derangement or incurable weakness, nor yet of trifling ailments, that we would write, but of sudden and severe attacks which soon issue in recovery. The value of a few days of such sickness may be sufficient to compensate for the suffering and confinement endured. If this seem a paradox, it is but in the seeming.

The moral and spiritual effects of such a sickness may be of great worth. It enables many to break bad habits who never had the strength to do so before. Abstinence is then voluntary. Nature in most cases will not endure further abuse; the glutton loses his appetite; the pipe, the cigar, the tobacco and strong drink, are loathed, and the passions diminish in intensity. And hundreds of drunkards have risen from sick beds never to drink again, and many a slave to tobacco has been emancipated in the sick room. Many have returned "like the dog to his vomit and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire;" but the number of those who have escaped in the manner described is in the aggregate very great.

The reflections which come to a thoughtful mind, if free from delirium, are good. The sense of helplessness that comes upon a sick man is such a contrast to his usual self-confidence, that it is closely allied to a feeling of dependence, and brings back to him the spirit of a little child, without which he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.

How small his absorbing pursuits, his contentions, his animosities, his caprices, his vanities, seem now! His sins and errors increase in number and magnitude, and almost (happy if they do not quite) fill the perspective.

He appears insignificant as thoughts of a possible fatal end arise in his soul, and knows that, except to the narrow circle of his friends, "the morning after his exit the sun will arise as bright as ever, the flowers smell as sweet, the plants spring as green, the world will proceed in its old course, people will laugh as heartily and marry as fast as they were used to do." For "the memory of man passeth away as the remembrance of a guest that tarrieth but one day."

Then he turns to the hope of recovery, and makes wise and good resolutions. These may be forgotten, but their impress is never wholly obliterated unless the heart on which it was made should become wholly bad. Long ere this, as the days have passed slowly, he has reached true simplicity in prayer. If conscious of unrepented sin, the burden of his sigh has been, "God be merciful to me, a sinner;" if at peace, yet cast down, the upward glancing of his eye means, "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I."

It was the reflection which came to him in such a situation, Addison tells us in the "Spectator," which led him to compose during his sickness the hymn beginning:

When rising from the bed of death,
O'erwhelmed with guilt and fear,
I view my Maker face to face,
Oh how shall I appear?

But if there be unbroken confidence, and the mind be kept in perfect peace, who can estimate the preciousness of a test of faith so triumphant?

The social and domestic influence of a few days of serious illness is often a benediction. How the husband's old love, if it had roughened or grown less demonstrative in the attrition of life, glows and warms as he sits by the bedside holding his wife's hand, and learns from her helplessness how helpful she has been to him; and with what absorbing tenderness does the wife anticipate her husband's slightest want when she sees him weaker than their babe! While the clasp of the hands in marriage meant less than the glances parents exchange as they sit silently by the couch of a son or daughter, wondering whether this sickness is unto death. Nor is there anything more touching than to see how the boisterous boy, who had no mercy on fatigue or headache, but stamped about the house, hushes and softens as he comes in from school, and tremblingly asks if papa or mamma is any better? Under some circumstances a week's sickness has been an angel of peace to an almost estranged family, and a new era has been dated from its visit, and in