

Contributors and Correspondents

CHINESE MISSIONS.

Rev. W. McLOREN,

My DEAR BROTHER,—The moments and hours of another year must be reckoned with the past, and I observe they witnessed great changes in the far west, many of which will be for the advancement of the cause of Jesus in all lands. It is encouraging to notice that not a few have taken place in Canada. The erection of college buildings—the appointment of Professors, and the consolidation of the work generally under the blessing of Jehovah will doubtless assist in promoting His glory throughout the earth. Here, in northern Formosa, far removed from fellow laborers, nothing has impressed my mind more than the faithfulness of the Lord. The enemy has been aroused and as of old has been active night and day in endeavoring to crush the Lord's work in its beginning. To accomplish this, Mandarins, Literati and soldiers especially have combined their efforts.

In the numerous villages which dot the country inland, men and women have been beaten and shamefully abused on account of attending service on the Lord's day. A convert who lives about a mile from here was asked a few months ago to assist in purchasing articles for idol worship. He replied that he could not consistently do so, as he no longer bowed before things made by men's hands. An evening or two afterwards the same party followed by 80 armed men went to his dwelling—broke the door—beat his wife, mother and sister—dragged himself about the room and finally left him for dead. The house of another worshipper at Chinnuih was entered by 40 soldiers who ransacked the whole place—snatched an infant from its mother's arms and trampled it to death. At Go-ko-kin, one of the first who cast away tablets and idols was ordered by the owner of the house in which he lives to cease going to the chapel or else he would drive him out of the house. The convert replied, "You can do that and much more, but to drive me from the true God you and all your host can never accomplish." It is truly a matter for thankfulness that these men. "Look joyfully on the spoiling of these goods." It is unnecessary to multiply cases as I have referred to one in connection with each chapel. Is this mode of procedure on the part of the enemy new or strange? By no means. Have they succeeded in their attempts to overthrow the kingdom of Jesus? They have not, and can not because they do not possess the power. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." "Go ye therefore." It is true many who attended at first are afraid to do so now, but they had not the root of the matter in them. The attendance is good every Sabbath despite these efforts and a few have shown a steadfastness which, (as far as man can judge) point them out as the followers of the Lord of Hosts. The enemy issued a placard in which they represented me taking out the eyes and hearts of the people and sending them to England to manufacture opium out of them. I am convinced they have been exerting themselves to induce me to abandon this field, but by the help of Jehovah, Mandarins, Literati, soldiers and all the Devils from the infernal pit cannot accomplish that object. No. "If God be for us who can be against us." Is this the time to relax our efforts and give vantage ground to the foe? Surely not. It is just the time when we should stand firm without conceding one step. It is the time we should double our efforts and labor on in strength of the Lord Immanuel. Therefore your last letter is the source of exceeding great joy. All your communications cheer my heart and I have been waiting to hear about another labourer for some time past. I could not believe that Canada's sons would stand indifferent and I am delighted to hear from one of them who is ready to leave all behind for the sake of our Lord and Redeemer. Dr. Fraser's letter breathes of the true spirit, and he states that Mrs. F. is as willing as himself to obey our Master's voice. May the Lord comfort their hearts, bless their souls, keep them near Himself, and in his own time bring them safely across lands and seas to those ends of the earth for His name sake. Dr. Maxwell has not been on the island since my arrival, and is at present in England, and on that account I have despatched a courier overland to Tai-wan-foo and Taoko to get the information about medical and domestic outfit which Dr. Fraser desires from Dr. Dickson and Mr. Ritchie. There is abundance of work waiting him if it is God's will that he should enter this field. You are aware that since May, last year, we have been carrying on hospital work, and that the foreign community contributed liberally to its support. We opened the

hospital May 5th, and from that time until the close of the year, 593 new, and 435 old patients received medical attendance. In addition to this I have attended upwards of 800 in the interior and succeeded in curing and relieving scores of them. This gives us a total of 1428 who received attendance and heard the gospel. All things considered I think the hospital work has been quite successful. The Dr. unfortunately, has been unwell since he arrived, and for three, four, and five weeks at a time has been confined to his bed, so that the burden of the work fell on my hands. He is unable to speak to the patients so that every day I am in Tamsui. I attend the hospital. The truth is the Lord has been very gracious, otherwise nothing could be done. On the whole I think the church was guided aright in sending those two devoted Mission Ladies to India. "The field is the world." Doubtless they will be followed by the prayers of God's people. I rejoice to know that you remember Northern Formosa. May the Lord in heaven bless abundantly your labors in Knox College, and may many come forth from its halls filled with love to the Lord Jesus and ready to go into all the world and preach His everlasting gospel. Remember me kindly to Mrs. McLaren and family, and to all associated with you in the College.

Ever yours, sincerely,

G. L. MacKAY.

China, Formosa, Tamsui, Jan. 20th 1874.

HOME MISSION WORK.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN

It is gratifying to find that in the midst of the apparently endless discussion on that Basis of Union you offer space in your columns for missionary intelligence. On the strength of this invitation I purpose giving a few facts in relation to Home Mission Work in the Peninsula, between Georgian Bay and Lake Huron, comprising the north part of the counties of Grey and Bruce. This peninsula was partially ceded to the Government by the Indians about the close of 1850. Settlement was commenced the following year. The congregations of Big-bay and Lamark, the only Presbyterian congregations in the Peninsula north of Owen Sound, the result of the labor of Students, but after they were placed on the probationers list of vacancies, they were brought so near their dissolution that when they were induced, last June, to proceed to call a minister, Rev. C. C. Stewart of Owen Sound, gave it as his opinion that if their call were declined these congregations would be lost to the Church. I was inducted into the charge of those congregations on Aug. 28th, 1873. Though the pastoral duties have discharged in the most ordinary way, the regular attendance on Sabbath worship has been more than quadrupled, and there are four places of worship in process of erection. There is a prospect that at no remote date this field of labor will form two self-sustaining charges. North of Brooke, an Indian village adjoining Owen Sound, there is only one place of worship, viz., an English Church at Wier-ton, in the peninsula. I have succeeded in uniting and making myself acquainted with the condition of the greater part of the peninsula. Though the Wesleyan Methodists, Bible Christian and Episcopalians, have done a good work in supplying those destitute settlements with the means of grace. As in many places the great majority of the people are of Presbyterian proclivities and are waiting for ministers of their own denominations to come among them, none of those denominations have succeeded to any great extent in establishing themselves. If the C. P. Church could only send in a sufficient number of missionaries, there is no doubt but it would take the lead of all denominations in these regions.

It is not meant that we should in any way seek to interfere with the operations of our brethren of other denominations, but simply that we should seek to do our share of the work, and when a majority of a community are members and adherents of the Presbyterian Church and desire Presbyterian preaching, this should be considered a Gospel call, and as urgent as if made out in the most approved form and maintained by all the Presbyteries in the Church. When I visited the Upper Ottawa some time ago, I conversed with a number of lumbermen, and I was frequently asked why it was that the Presbyterian Church sent so few missionaries into those regions. I was told of many places in which the majority of the lumbermen were adherents of the Presbyterian Church yet were dependent on the Methodists and other denominations for preaching—now the members of the C. P. Church are neither less wealthy nor liberal than those of other

churches nor are the ministers less zealous and efficient. All that is wanted is an efficient Home Mission scheme and the claims of the Church properly laid before the people. Though the present H. M. Scheme possesses many excellences, it appears to require considerable modification to adapt it to the present wants of the Church in the changed condition of the country. Hitherto the principal part of the mission work of the Church appears to have been done by Students during college vacation. The zeal of those young men is certainly worthy of all praise, they have done the Church much valuable services, but much of their labor has been lost for want of being followed up. To bring a Church through its transition state from a weak Mission Station to a self-sustaining congregation requires a more permanent mode of supply than can be furnished by students. A congregation can at the best be supplied only half the time, and the students are generally changed yearly. It is scarcely necessary to say that the probationers scheme, the only system of supply in the Church, besides the settled ministers and students utterly fails to answer this end. The stated supply system is employed in the American Presbyterian Church to accomplish this work. This system was extensively employed by both the old and new school branches before the Union. It is equally proposed in the United Church. The most conservative ministers I have ever met with of the old school branch contended that it was indispensable, and its utility has long ceased to be a debatable question. It is due to this system that the Presbyterian Church has made much rapid progress in the West. At the close of 1864 there was in the State of Kansas only 24 ministers and 37 churches. There was last January 110 ministers and 168 churches, of that number there are only 11 self-sustaining, and these were like all the others the work of ordained missionaries employed under the stated supply system, and were for a time dependent on the Home Mission Fund. The congregational Church though strong in the New England States, the United Presbyterian Church and the Dutch reformed Church though strong in the middle States have all failed to firmly establish themselves in the West, neither for want of means, nor of missionary zeal in their ministers, but because they failed to adopt their system to the circumstances which surrounded them in the West. The opinion which I have formed, from a little over four years experience as a missionary in the West, and nearly two years painful experience in connection with the probationers scheme of the C. P. Church is, that if the American Presbyterian Church, like the above named churches and the C. P. Church had failed to adapt their system to their circumstances, there would not have been one fourth the number of churches west of the Mississippi that there is to-day. Since the confederation of these Provinces the C. P. Church finds itself placed in the same circumstances in relation to Home Mission work as the American. Though the labor of the students has been highly successful and satisfactory, it is utterly impossible that they can overtake the missionary work of the Church. What over the friends of the probationers scheme may claim for it in effecting the settlement of ministers, I think few will claim for it, that it is adapted to missionary work. When employed in weak churches not fully prepared to call ministers, its tendency appears to be to scatter, rather than gather together and prepare them for pastorates. What is wanted in the C. P. Church is a judicious stated supply system, it is not intended that this system should in any way take the place of regular pastorates, but simply to carry on the work so nobly begun by the students; to do what is vulgarly called the making up, and preparing missionary stations, and weak churches for regular pastorates which should be the object in all our Church schemes. This is the intention of this scheme in the American Church, and if some congregations are so well satisfied with it that they adhere to it too long, it is not the fault of the scheme but simply one of the abuses to which every system is liable.

It is not necessary to import an American scheme, for there is in the C. P. Church at present the elements of a better system. Its provisions are to be found in the General Assembly, ancient Ordained Missionaries, Presbyteries are authorized, by this provision, to employ ordained missionaries by the year or half year to labor in any mission stations or weak congregations within their bounds. This has been tried to a considerable extent in the Montreal Presbytery, and Dr. McVicar President of the Montreal College, has declared its results to be highly satisfactory. Its advantage over the American system is that

it is more directly under control of Presbyteries, and equally more strictly Presbyterian. Its advantages to the Church would be the following—weak congregations and mission stations would be under regular pastoral care till fully prepared to call ministers. When so prepared their stated supply would most likely become their Pastor. The experience of the American Presbyterian Church is that settlements brought about in this way are generally the most happy as the parties have had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with each other. If licentiates were required to labor a year as missionaries with the permission, if desired, to preach about four Sabbaths as candidates in bona fide vacancies, instead of travelling six months in connection with the probationers scheme, much valuable missionary work would be done which cannot be done under the present system. The advantage to ministers and probationers would be the following, a minister could apply the \$400.00 per annum which is allowed to Missionaries, for his own benefit instead of having the greater part consumed in travelling expenses. Some ministers have told me that their entire pay was thus consumed, and they could save nothing. For my own part by strict economy I succeeded in raising nearly one half after paying my travelling expenses. I would much prefer taking charge of a Mission Station at \$200, per annum, and labouring with my hands as Paul did, to make up the deficiency than to travel those weary rounds again. There would be the satisfaction of having an opportunity of doing some good, and it is one of the most painful features of the probationers scheme that no such opportunity is given. The chances of settlement would be much better, besides the chance of working up his own Mission Station and becoming its pastor, building on his own foundation instead of another man's, the four Sabbaths to bona fide vacancies as suggested above, is a much greater number of opportunities, than can be expected under the probationers scheme if my own experience is my criterion. I travelled over one and a half years without being sent to a bona fide except when Gaelic was indispensable, ministers received from other countries and other churches could be immediately and profitably employed, many more ministers would be likely to unite with the Church if there was any ready way of being employed. I know of some myself who have been deterred by our mode of employing ministers, and others who have left the Church and the country for this same cause. As all these ordained missionaries would be members of Presbyteries, the cause of missions would be brought more prominently before Presbyteries, and the whole Church would become more missionary in its aspect.

MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

"My people doth not consider."

DEAR SIR,—Nemo's letter on "Our Chinese Mission," in your issue of April 10th, is very good so far as it goes. I only regret it stops so short. More remains to be told. He complains, and justly too, of the little knowledge our people have of the mission work in our church, and seems to give as the reason, the little amount of earnestness manifested by our committee and missionaries, and want of information which ought to be furnished by them. He points out well the reasons that remain with them, but says nothing about those that rest with the people themselves—their duty, but not the people's. Now, while there is the duty of the one, there is also the duty of the other. As in a congregation, there is the duty of the people as well as of the pastor. It is the part of the minister to preach the word, but it is also the part of the people to hear that word. All the duty, any more than the fault, does not lie on the one side. I do not wish to vindicate the conduct of the one by that of the other.

What you express in your editorial regarding it, I am sorry to admit, is too true, viz: "That the vast majority of the people know next to nothing about what is being done or attempted." This is true, not only in regard to the mission work, but also in respect to the schemes and workings of our Church generally.

I am often grieved, I might say pained, as well as ashamed to meet with many people in our own beloved Presbyterian Church who know no more about what is being done in it than if they did not belong to it at all, or had no need of knowing anything about it. What is worse, "O'w'it not in Gath!" many of them can hardly tell you what is going on in the congregation of which they are a member. I do not exaggerate. Did I not know it (and knowledge indeed) to be the case I would be loathe to believe, much less publish it. It is only with the hope of inciting our people to inquiry, and to seek acquaintance with these things that I speak of it now, or in

this way. This should not be. Every member of any, and every church, should know something of what our church is doing both at home and abroad. But what do we find? They do not know, neither seem to care or try (I would not say wish, yet it looks like it) to know. They do not even read the "occasional scraps," as Nemo calls them, in the Record. Simply because so few of them take it. Look at the number of families (80,306), and communicants (51,612) connected with our church, and the small circulation (8,000) of the Record compared with these. Very little over one fourth of the families to whom it goes. And if we take from that several ministers, who are, no doubt, acquainted with these things, and which go to make up that 8,000, it will be less than that. Now, although the Record may not be exactly what we would wish to see it, as a church intelligence, or give us nothing more than "scraps" of news, yet it is such as the church (hence ourselves who compose the church) has provided for us. And let us all know what it does contain. By thus giving it a better support, and wider circulation, it no doubt will improve, and we will not be entirely ignorant of what the church is doing.

I say with Nemo, "let our committee write, let missionaries write, be always writing," but, on the other hand, I would say to the people, read, be always reading. Let all who can, write. Let all who can, read. There is no use for us to write if people don't read, and seek for such information as is to be got, however little. They must seek if they are to find. Knowledge is to be gained only by seeking it. Let the people cry out, "Who will show us any good?" and, I have no doubt, they will find plenty—"O send out thy light and thy truth," and I don't think they will have to cry long in darkness. "Darkness" will no longer "cover the earth, and gross darkness the people," respecting such important matters.

It is really too bad that our good people should take so little interest, and be content with knowing little or nothing about what should interest them most, and is of the greatest moment to them—the salvation of souls. This is the church's work. This is what she desires to accomplish. Shall we then, her members, be regardless and remain in blissful ignorance of what she is doing to accomplish it, simply because we will not take the trouble to seek and find it out from the information afforded? Surely not, if we be the true disciples of Christ. "Israel doth not know" because "my people doth not consider."

With the hope that many may be stirred up to know what God is doing in our beloved Zion, and that I shall thus become "a wise-reprover upon an obedient ear."

I am, yours truly,

AN OBSERVER.

April 28th, 1874.

Rev. Duncan Morrison's Reply to "Elder."

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—On my arrival last week, my attention was called to an article in a recent issue of your paper,—March 13—animadverting on certain statements reported as mine, made before the Presbytery of Edinburgh, on the 31st December.

In that article, signed "Elder," by some one who lacks the courage of putting his own proper name to what he says, I am charged with the sin of ignoring the C. P. Church, and speaking of my own Church as if there were no other in existence. Now, any one may see, even from the inaccurate report of my speech, very much abbreviated, that I never said or meant anything of the kind. What I said was that until I came to Owen Sound (1866) our people were destitute of religious ordinances—that they were far away from Guelph, the seat of the Presbytery within whose bounds they were situated,—and from the nature of things could secure but little supply. I was speaking of my own people to my own brethren in the Presbytery of Edinburgh, and in so speaking I did not feel that I was ignoring the C. P. Church, or the Baptist Church, or the Methodist Church, or any man's Church, and I am sure that no one that heard me on the occasion referred to, felt that I was exposing myself to such an ingenuous attack as that which has been made upon me, in my absence, and under a false name, in the columns of your paper; and I am sure also that those that know me best, and my manner of life for many years will be slow to accuse me of any such spirit as that imputed to me, or believe that I would willingly utter one word of misrepresentation. Your space will not permit me to comment upon the insinuations, and correct charges of that letter, and the miserable spirit which it reveals; but you will allow me to say that it has occasioned me much surprise, and not a few wonder that you should have given it a place in your columns. In these days when good men of every Church are seeking the things which make for peace, and are drawing more and more closely together, we are hardly prepared for such an article, fitted as it is to fan the flames of bigotry and strife. Let me remind your correspondent that the true Elder does not greedily seize upon an inadvertence, or rush to the newspapers with the view of injuring a brother. He does not backbite with his tongue, or readily take up a reproach against his neighbor. And let me remind him further that there are six things about the Lord doth hate year seven are an abomination to Him:—a proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,—(hands that would stab a man in the dark, an heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift to run into mischief, a false witness, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

I am, yours &c.

DUNCAN MORRISON,

Minister Knox's Church,

Owen Sound, 28th April, 1874.