

that the Rev. Jno. Fraser was designated to this field by the Presbytery of Edinburgh. Mackay received intimation that a minister was to be sent to them.

The day before his arrival they were holding one of their afternoon retreats. Murdock was in trouble over the seventh chapter of the Romans and turning to Alexander said, "What does Paul mean when he says, 'we are dead to the law of the body of Christ that we should be married to another.'" Alexander paused and then said, "Murdock, you are always wading beyond your own depths and mine. No one can explain that chapter but a minister." Do you not know that that is the most difficult chapter in the New Testament? "John," said he, turning to Mackay, "Can you throw any light upon this passage?" John confessed that the apostle's argument was difficult to follow and that it ill became an ignorant man like him to attempt an explanation. He suggested, however, that they should resort to prayer and that as there was a minister coming this week from Edinburgh they should ask the Lord to direct his servants attention to this passage. In this way we shall obtain light. This they did never doubting that their request would be granted, for theirs was a child-like faith.

Mr. Fraser arrived the following day. The people gathered into the church that night, and the following night, and continued until long past midnight in prayer, praise and the hearing of the word. It was a time never to be forgotten. The people were actually refusing to leave the church and not until the new minister entreated them to go to their homes and rest their bodies did they yield. About two o'clock in the morning they started singing as they went—singing the Psalms of David. Now, it is

"With thy tender mercies Lord
We early satisfy,
again, it is,

When Zion's bondage God turned back
As men that dreamed were we,
Then filled with laughter was our mouth
Our tongue with melody.

And, again, when they came to the cross road where they parted for the night it was touching to hear in the woods at the break of day the precentor chanting the lines of their parting song:—

Now blessed be the Lord our God
The God of Israel
For he alone doth wondrous works
In glory that excels.

This was their doxology. How it echoed among the mountains! It awoke the birds to their morning song—and indeed all nature—the streaks of day in the dappled east, the rippling waters that hurried by, the morning air that carried the refrain across the plain—a l seemed to join with those worshippers in singing "Praise ye the Lord."

On Saturday evening the congregation returned in great numbers. The minister conducted a short service and dismissed the people saying, that in as much as he was a young man it was necessary that he should go to his study and prepare for the Sabbath day. The congregation yielded although they saw no reason why a minister who was full of the Holy Ghost should be spending his time studying sermons. The minister without much difficulty found his text, divided and sub-divided it, thought it over and laid it aside. He then began to reflect upon the wonderful way in which God protected and guided him since he left the threshold of his old home in Scotland and of the still more wonderful things he had seen and heard since he came to L——, Not since the days when he was present at

the revival in Dundee under the preaching of McChene and W. C. Burns did he witness anything that approached the mighty work that was going on around him. Years afterwards I heard him allude to this in one of those outbursts of impassioned eloquence for which he was noted. "Oh, for a repetition of those days," said he, "when men and women and children bowed in holy and reverential adoration before the majesty of God's word. I would gladly give this right arm for such a glorious sight again."

Meditating on these things on that Saturday evening he fell into a sweet sleep and awoke at the break of day. The solemnities of the day were immediately upon him. He turned to the sermon he sketched the night before. It was not the same, or, more correctly, he was not the same. At any rate the sermon was not suitable. The inspiration to preach from that text was gone, and it was the only sermon he had. How could he face that eager, anxious, hungering thirsting people without bread? The thought was appalling to the young preacher. He opens his Bible. The leaves turn over with a gentle rustle. It is vain. No message comes to him. In despair he throws himself upon his knees and cries for heavenly aid. He pleads in vain. The heavens are as brass—the earth like iron. The people are gathering from near and from far. They are out for an all day service. Expectation runs high. The men are dressed in their best. The women wore "muchies" in place of bonnets and carry their shoes in one hand until they near the church, when they put them on. In the other hand is carried a Psalm book in which there is inserted a small bouquet, composed of a branch of "Old Man," a few leaves of "Sweet Mary," and a single stalk of "Sweet William." The young men and maidens are solemnized. The children are subdued. Occasionally a yoke of oxen is seen drawing a cart in which is seated an aged couple who are unable to walk such a long distance. All are happy except one and that one is the preacher, who above all others should be happy on such a day. But he is not. His is misery incarnate. The people are saying: "I was glad when they said unto me let us go into the house of the Lord." He is saying: "O that I had the wings of a dove that I might fly away from the presence of that spirit-filled congregation and be at peace." But he could not. He must face the solemn duty to which he is called without flinching. He enters the house of God. With difficulty he makes his way through the dense throng to the pulpit. He walks like a man who bears a solemn responsibility. There is an unusual amount of reading, praying and singing that morning. The preliminaries are extended in the hope that a message might come. It was in vain. No message came. At last he took the Bible reverently in his hand and praying for the guidance of the Spirit, determined to preach from the first passage that opened to him. This happened to be one on which he had spent a great deal of time in earnest study. It was, in fact, a favorite passage, why did it not occur to him before? But it did not and it is vain to ask the reason why. He then entered upon an exposition of the passage and preached as he never preached before, making the application as he went on with tremendous force. For a whole hour he brought out things new and old. It was a time never to be forgotten. Some were weeping under conviction; some were smiling for joy. At last the preacher paused, and leaning over the pulpit at the foot of which sat the three aged elders, their

faces leaning upon their staves, said: "I am not through with this passage yet. But we will sing a verse or two, the change will be refreshing. This is not the text from which I intended to address you. It was taken from me and this one given to me in its place." Then the precentor chanted:

Oh, send thy light forth and thy truth,
Let them be guides to me.

The congregation drank the sermon as parched lips drink from a clear fountain. And they continued to drink until the shades of evening were gathering around them. What the results were, eternity alone can reveal but this much it is safe to say that no man in this generation witnessed a more impressive service.

Next morning John MacKay called upon the minister. His face beamed with heavenly joy. There was a warm shake of the hand and then a pause. The minister broke the silence, "I saw something yesterday," said he, that made me wonder. "I noticed," he went on to say, "that when I announced that I lost my text and that a new one was given to me that the three elders looked at each other and smiled," "oh," said the elder, "that is easily explained. We met in the school-house on Wednesday evening for prayer and the study of the Word and meeting with a difficult chapter on which none of us could throw any light, we prayed that the Lord might direct his servant's attention to it. On that passage you preached all day and that was the reason that we smiled."

—Cardinal, Ont.

Sparks From Other Anvils.

The United Presbyterian: This is a legend that the room in which Mary poured the ointment on the feet of Jesus never lost its perfume. This legend suggests a great truth. Kindly words and deeds abide in memory. The speaker and the hearer, the doer and the receiver are made happier. This is the secret by which we may become "as perfume poured forth."

The Christian Guardian: The missionary impulse is the renewed life of God in the redeemed soul. And, though we know not how it may be when the earth is filled with the knowledge of the glory of God, for the present the very life of the church depends upon the realization of the missionary idea and spirit. The church, and as well, the individual, will be saved ultimately through service.

Christian Endeavour World: The best cure for blues is the gold cure—the face that catches a glint of the radiant, thorn-scarred Face while the hands are lifting up those that are stained and foul, and the feet are treading among the vileness of sinful creatures.

Zion's Herald: Earth, heaven, society, religion, recreation, labor, freedom, devotion—all these things that we once considered opposites, unfriendly to one another, are united, in the life of this age, into a fuller, grander, broader, more sufficient type of life. The more we can use earth in the right way, the better and more fully shall we appropriate heaven. Consecrate, not exclude or do away with—that is the principle that underlines the growth of the really great individual life of to-day, using all things, abusing none, turning all the streams of activity and influence into divine channels. The age has learned that God can put men to higher and larger uses when they live according to the principle of consecrated appropriation, rather than that of narrow, ing exclusion.