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## ONE PART OF "WOMAN'S MISSION."

WE have no special inclination for the discussion of "Woman's Rights," as that phrase is generally understood, nor does it seem that we have any special call in that direction. We are sufficiently old-fashioned to believe that woman has "a peculiar sphere," that there are certain departments of the world's work for which she is not specially adapted and in which it would be even a cruel kindness to allow her to engage, but we cannot but at the same time acknowledge that that "sphere" has too often been very improperly limited, and that she has often been, for one reason or another, excluded from work for which she was specially adapted and in the performance of which she was in the highest degree likely to excel. Where the right line is to be drawn and how the proper division of labour between the sexes is to be assigned, we shall not at present inquire. All we wish to do now is, in a few sentences, to emphasize one or two generally acknowledged points in reference to woman's work, woman's sphere and woman's power.

A very large number of good women in Christian countries have almost as much power as they could reasonably desire, and the amount of work that is laid to their hands is correspondingly extensive, if they will only do it. In the whole range of Christian and benevolent effort woman has always found herself in her own proper sphere and at her own appropriate work. We by no means say that these are all to which she may properly put her hand. Very much the reverse. Multitudes of women have to support themselves and those who are dear to them, and the opportunities for their doing this are often all too limited, and often unreasonably so. But apart from this, how many who have not to toil for daily bread might find scope for all their energies, with means of usefulness as extensive as they could desire, without their neglecting one home duty, or being charged with travelling in the slightest out of their appropriate spheres. Not a few are doing this earnestly, quietly, perseveringly and successfully, and many more might follow suit with great comfort to themselves and great benefit to the Church and the world. Who are readiest to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction? to tend Christ's sick? to soothe Christ's sorrowful? and to feed and clothe Christ's poor? We need not answer. Wherever Christianity has had most power, there have women been found most active and most earnest in such work. In distinctly Christian effort for the advancement of the good, the best cause, it has been and is the same. The Church in whose work women have been cold, inactive and uninterested, has always been in a poor backward state, for woman owes most to the Gospel and she has generally rendered most in return. In what particular ways she has done this we need not specify, for in almost all her influence has been felt and her work made manifest. Of course, some have always been ready to sneer at every kind of woman's Christian activity and have been always forward to hint that it has been engaged in by the sacrifice of domestic duties and the neglect of pressing family claims. It was not surprising that Dickens should have done this by setting forth his Mrs. Jellyby as the type of all female supporters of Christian Missions, for this was only the natural result of the shallow indifferentism and selfish worldliness by which, as his life and letters shew, that great novelist, but far from great man, was uniformly characterized. Others, however, who ought to have known better, have said the same thing. We do not deny that it may be possible to find now and then, not the full-blown Mrs. Jellyby, but some who more or less resemble that celebrated personage in some of the less offensive of her peculiarities. But will any one who has the slightest regard for truth, say that these are anything but the rare exceptions? or that zeal for, and active effort in, benevolent and Christian work necessarily or commonly imply neglected children, a slatternly house and a spiritless or dissipated husband? We should hope not. When such cases occur they are of course to be deplored and condemned, but the few rare instances of the kind are not to be generalized as if descriptive of the many who find they

can attend to the one set of duties, not only without neglecting the other, but with that other thereby discharged with even increased energy and success. How many spend far more time in planless indolence, injurious gossip or befrivolizing novel reading than their sisters do in earnest Christian work, while all the while they are thanking heaven that they have "not a mission," and are equally ready to proclaim that they find it quite as much as they can do to attend to the affairs of their own households. These households have, of course, the first claim, but it does not follow that they are always duly attended to by those who rather pride themselves in saying that they do nothing else. It is possible they may, but it is just also possible that sometimes they may not. One has not to judge another. It is for each Christian woman, in view of the increased demands for individual activity and effort which the condition of the Church and the world is rendering so imperative and so pressing to settle with herself whether she is doing all she could with justice to other evident and imperative duties, and therefore all she ought. Sure we are that many are finding themselves healthier, happier and more hopeful through their increased activity in Christ's work, while the Church and the world are also reaping an ever growing benefit from their labours of love, their contagious zeal and their widening religious influence. Such associations, for instance, as that the proceedings of whose yearly meeting will be found recorded in another column, are exercising a far wider and more beneficial influence upon the Christian life of the Presbyterian Church in Canada than most might be inclined to believe, and if the Christian women of our denomination in general go into such work with ever growing zeal and in ever increasing numbers we shall see greater things accomplished for Christ's cause than have been yet witnessed, things at which we may be inclined to marvel, but for which we shall all have abundant reason to give thanks! In the present state of society women may sometimes, we repeat, think that they are hampered in their efforts and prevented from even attempting much which they believe they could easily and successfully accomplish. But even as things are, were all the Christian women of Canada properly and zealously active, as some are, could they not effect what would almost amount to a revolution? We believe they could. Could the drinking customs of the country stand out against them? No, indeed. Would Church work be so languid? Would mission work be so hampered either for money or men, if they put forth all their power? We cannot believe that they would, for we use no flattering words when we say that that power could scarcely be over-estimated, were it only duly and generally put forth.

## NATIVISM.—JUSTIFIABLE AND THE REVERSE.

WE have no sympathy with "know-nothingism," as that is usually understood, and no desire to say a single word in its defence. It is certainly absurd enough for people to lay claim to any greater amount of wisdom or any greater right to speak with authority because they have been a few years longer in a country than some others, or even because they are "natives," rather than "imported." The difference of a few years in one's settling in any new land can be of very little consequence either in one way or other for it is quite possible to be even a "native" and yet intolerably foolish; just as one may be an immigrant and yet possibly wise as well as useful and influential in no ordinary degree. All this and a great deal more in the same line may easily go without stating, and it is equally beyond all reasonable question that in all such colonies as Canada, for instance, and all such countries as the States, the "imported" population has contributed in a very great degree to make these places what they are, both materially, socially, intellectually, and religiously.

But while all this is beyond reasonable contradiction, and while the true policy in every case is embodied in the phrase, "the implements to the man that can use them," whoever was his father, and from whatever land he may have come, there is something to be said on the other side, not in support of exclusiveness in favour of natives or with a view to underrate the importance of immigrants, or to put any barrier in the way of their advancement and success, but to keep it from being imagined that the "imported" article must necessarily be the best, and that "provincials"

who have never known or seen any land but that in which they live, are, as a matter of course, to regard themselves, and to be regarded by others, as of quite an inferior calibre compared with those who hail from this old land and that, and who have had the varied experiences and advantages of a voyage across the seas. There has been only too strong a tendency in this direction, and it is one whose force is not yet quite exhausted. Too many have indulged in absurdly exaggerated praises of their native lands, as if loyalty to the countries they had left required something very much like the disparagement of that to which they had come. So far this may be an amiable weakness—leaning almost to virtue's side—but it has too often become rather monotonous and absurd from its very excess. People as they have listened to the hyperbolic nonsense often uttered apparently in perfect honesty have been tempted to wonder why such lands were ever forsaken or such a state of exile ever endured. The tendency of this excessive regret for and admiration of the forsaken and the past, with the corresponding contempt for the adopted and the present, has often been injurious in no common degree. It has hindered the amalgamation and advancement of the "mingled people" in the new land. It has kept many from seeking with cordial enthusiasm the good of the country in which their lot has been cast. It has made, in Canada for instance, little snips of England, Scotland, Ireland, etc., with regretful references coming continually up to the manners and customs of the long ago and the far-off as standards, instead of there being uniting, pervading, and animating feeling that all are Canadian here. Now this may be amiable, but it comes to be by and by neither pleasant nor profitable, nor is it to be wondered at, if, with the rising race who know no land but Canada, it should sometimes be characterized in harsher terms. The sensible man who has cast his lot in this Dominion, however much he may fondly remember his native land, will seek as speedily as possible to identify himself in thought and sentiment and feeling with the country of his adoption, will seek its good, be proud of its present, and hopeful of its future. Instead then of its being a matter for regret that there should be incessantly displayed a spirit and tendency peculiarly Canadian, it is what both in Church and State ought to be cultivated and developed in every legitimate way. All peoples in new lands and with new surroundings will, if true to themselves, naturally and necessarily be distinguished by marked peculiarities, and characteristics distinguishingly their own. They will not be mere colourless, washed out copies of anything either in the old world or the new, and the growth therefore of "know-nothingism" of this kind, and to this extent, ought rather to be gloried in than deprecated and condemned. Its extent and assimilating power will rightly be taken as the gauge of a country's progress and consolidation, and any intimation, therefore, of its presence in Canada is to be hailed as a token for good, and encouraged in all legitimate ways.

One very marked symptom of its gathering power, as well as one great factor to its onward progress, is in the Church in all its branches becoming decidedly "native" in its organizations, traditions, and office-bearers. In this respect, also, there is a nativism not only pardonable but in the highest degree to be commended. In the first stages of a country's progress, imported preachers, like imported lawyers and doctors, are evident necessities. But the wise and far-seeing "imported" pioneers will be the most anxious to secure as speedily as possible a native supply that shall be "racy of the soil." The experience of all the past shews that no Church has ever struck its roots widely and permanently in any country where this has not been the case. The two things have acted and reacted on each other. The more prosperous and spiritual the Church, the more abundant and the more energetic the supply of ministers from her own sons, and the more the ministry has become native, and at the same time properly qualified by grace, and properly equipped by education, so much the more marked has been that Church's progress, and so much the more consolidated her power. It is so everywhere, in old lands and new, in heathen lands lately Christianized, and in Christian lands again tending to something like heathenism. As the general tone of piety rises, so do the candidates for the ministry increase and so are the means for their support correspondingly supplied, and *vice versa*. The living spiritual Church grows its own ministers, and supports them as well. When