

multiplicity of meetings could scarcely have been avoided, unless the session of the Conference had been very greatly prolonged. To say nothing of the question of expense, it is questionable whether very many of such persons as composed this Conference would find it possible for them to give a month or six weeks to such an assembly, all of which would have been needed if all its meetings had been meetings of the entire body, and that there had been, say, only two meetings in the day. Something may be said, too, on the side of the restrictions imposed upon Conference by its promoters. They were, doubtless, the result of careful deliberation. It was, probably, found that some of the older and most important of the great missionary organizations were not prepared to send delegates to a body, the composition of which it was impossible to foresee, if it was to exercise even *quasi* legislative functions, and pass resolutions by which they would be even morally bound. And whether any of the Churches are prepared just yet to even so far limit their freedom of action as to make it necessary for them to consult any such standing committee as that which Dr. Pierson thinks ought to have been appointed, either in respect to the work which they are to undertake, or the manner in which it is to be conducted is to be doubted. The papers read and the substance of the discussions which took place during the sessions of this great Conference have happily been published in permanent form. They deserve to be carefully read and studied, especially by all such as are interested with the management of the missionary organizations of the Churches; and let us hope that all such will have the grace to follow the hints and suggestions which they contain, so far as they commend themselves to their sanctified judgment.

As a curious difficulty which confronts Christian missionaries in heathen and Mohammedan lands, may be mentioned the attitude which they have sometimes to assume toward runaway slaves. To give them up to their possessors would be, in many instances, to hand them over to torture, or even to death, for no other crime but the desire to be free. On the other hand, to afford all such an asylum would not only be impracticable, but would bring the missionaries into such direct and deadly conflict with the slave-owning class, as to make it next to impossible for them to carry on their work with any hope of success. None but those who have studied this subject carefully have any idea how difficult a problem it presents. This, however, is one of the last of the great barriers in the way of the world's evangelization, which, by the wonderful working of Divine Providence, is being taken out of the way. Henry Drummond, in an interesting article

in the current number of *Scribner's Magazine*, on slavery in Africa, remarks that "the greater Governments of Europe are just now combined in joining, not the usual alliance to enrich themselves, or diminish the risks of war to those they love and guard, but an offensive alliance to save the land of a stranger, who has no claim but his utter helplessness." It is remarkable that, while the nations are united in the attempt to rid Africa of the curse of slavery, all the Churches, including the Protestant and the Catholic, are laboring side by side for this common end. The light is breaking, and the dawning of a brighter day for Africa is at hand.

#### GIRLS' HOME, PORT SIMPSON, B. C.

WE have received the following encouraging report from the Rev. Thos. Crosby, which, we doubt not, will be read with pleasure and interest:—

The work in the Girls' Home, under the care of Miss Knight and Miss Hart, has gone on satisfactorily during the past year, and we have realized God's blessing upon our efforts to do good to the needy ones committed to our care. The children have made good progress in school, many of them having shown marked ability. With the exception of a few of the younger ones, all can speak and read English well, and write a letter that would compare favorably with those who have had far greater advantages. In domestic work, sewing, etc., they are quick to learn and prove themselves quite capable of becoming industrious and orderly.

In spiritual things no great profession has been made, but we see no cause for discouragement, as those who are old enough to realize the value of eternal things, show by their lives that they are striving to do what is right. Their minds are stored with Scripture truths, which must sooner or later bring forth a rich harvest of blessing to themselves and glory to God.

At present we have twenty girls and four boys in residence, a larger number than we can conveniently accommodate in the building we now occupy. For some time we have refused admission to all but cases of pressing need, as we could not take more without endangering the health of the children by too much crowding. We greatly need a new building, as our present one is unsuited in many ways, and also worn out to a great extent. God has been wonderfully kind in preserving the health of the children, which we look upon as a special providence, as with our present accommodation it would be a serious disaster should sickness break out among them. If we had a larger and more convenient house, we could combine a boarding school with the orphanage, as many have sought admission who need the training and discipline of the Home, whose parents are able to support them, and would willingly do what they could to help us. Up to this time we have refused many such, as there were needy ones that we could not turn away, and yet the needs of those refused, although different, are just as great, as the parents, though kind and indulgent to