

The Presbyterian Review.

Vol. XII.—No. 11.

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER 19, 1895

\$1.50 per Annum

OVER LAND AND SEA.

We are glad to learn that the Edinburgh Presbytery is repeating its arrangement of last year for an interchange of pulpits in the interests of foreign missions on the last two Sabbaths of this month. From the list before us it appears that special sermons on Foreign Missions will in this way be preached in forty-six churches within the Presbytery.

In connection with a Sabbath-school in Glasgow there is a Band of Hope, which meets every week. The other evening there was a competition in songs and recitations amongst the ragged urchins. One little girl recited, with feeling, "Little Jim," for which she was awarded a scarf. With anxious, quivering voice she asked the chairman of the meeting if she could get a woollen cravat instead. The strange request was granted, when she ran at once to her little brother, who was in the hall, and folded it round his neck. Her proud smile, and the face of the little fellow, beaming with gratitude, were worth seeing. A second wee lassie in the hall renounced her prize for the sake of obtaining a shirt for her little brother. The youngsters in the meeting appreciated fully the self-denial of the two girls, and cheered them lustily. The superintendent of that Sabbath-school thinks that the incident is worth a year's labor amongst the children, and we agree with him.

Scotch papers have long obituaries of James Fairbairn, who recently died. He was one of the most energetic and enthusiastic of Christian workers in Glasgow. He was superintendent of the undenominational mission in the Grassmarket, and twenty years ago had solved the problem of getting the poorest and worst to attend religious services. He was essentially the slum missionary of Glasgow, and went by the name of the Bishop of the Grassmarket. The scene in his hall there every Sunday evening was a sight which, once seen, could never be forgotten. The habitual criminal the thief, the drunkard, came to his mission, and many a one of this class was lifted up into a better life. His influence was such that he could enter the lowest dens without fears of assault, and his appearance at a street brawl was the signal for order and quiet.

There is at least one country in the world where it costs nothing to die. In some of the cantons of Switzerland all the dead, rich as well as poor, are buried at the public expense, says an exchange. Coffins and all other necessary articles are furnished on application to certain undertakers designated by the government. Everything connected with the interment is absolutely gratuitous, including the grave and the religious services. All classes avail themselves freely of the law.

In the canton of Glarus, strangers as well as citizens are buried at the expense of the State. The

grave, too, must be kept in proper condition for a term of ten years. The cemetery is the property of the community, and is placed under the care of a superintendent, who arranges for and conducts funerals, keeps a register of the graves, which are numbered consecutively, and sees that they are properly marked and kept in order. The coffins are to be made of pine wood and after a model prescribed by the authorities, who establish a uniform price for them. The graves follow each other in regular order, according to date of burial, in uniform rows, and the dead are all laid side by side without distinction as to standing in life or religious belief.

A committee from a certain church once went to a prominent minister with the request that he would help them to secure a pastor. He surprised them with the question at the outset, for he knew the history of their church, "What do you want a minister for?" When the members of the committee recovered from their embarrassment, they severally endeavored to answer the foregoing question. This question is one which churches on the outlook for pastors would do well to consider. Before setting out in search of a pastor a church should determine whether it wants a man who will preach a straight and fearless Gospel, or a sort of star performer who will "fill" the pews, or a man who is so exquisitely social that he will be in demand at all the dinners and teas, or as a financial expert who will make an income of \$1,000 yield a revenue of \$2,500. In this important transaction there ought to be the utmost frankness. Then a minister who goes to a church under the innocent impression that the people want him to preach the Gospel will not be rudely shocked when, for instance, he discovers that they had regarded him in the light of a financial investment.

"My husband is at the lodge," was the answer of the wife to our inquiry for her husband. "Will he be at home to-morrow evening?" we inquired. "I cannot tell, for he has meetings nearly every evening of the week," was her answer. "Secret orders and the home life," was the caption for our thoughts as we walked away. Here is a man with a good wife and an interesting family, of whom several are boys. He is under the fascination of the secret societies. The meetings are attractive to him as furnishing him company and something to think about. Not satisfied with one, he craves more. He goes out from his home, from the influence of his wife, from the companionship of his children, from the books on his table, from his highest duty, for the company of men, of whom many are without any religious principles, and some are of immoral lives. He makes for himself but little place in the hearts of his children, he builds but little into their lives. They form other companionships. The boys follow the example of their father, and seek their entertainment elsewhere than at home. The home is not what it should be; as years pass the defect becomes more marked, and after awhile the father finds that he has but little influence over his sons; unconsciously they drift away from each other. The father is at the lodge, and the boys are, he knows not where. Is it right?