

HOME AND FOREIGN MISSIONS NOT OPPOSED TO EACH OTHER.

MR. EDITOR,—From time to time we hear or read statements regarding the missionary work of our Church in which the Home and Foreign fields are compared and contrasted to the detriment of one or the other, and often, we fear, to the positive injury of both. We often wondered how such one-sided impressions of our work should get abroad. Our missionaries, generally speaking, in the home fields are believers in, and ardent supporters of, Foreign missions while our foreign missionaries rejoice in the progress of the work at home and contribute liberally towards its maintenance.

We can readily understand Dr. Robertson and Dr. Cochrane emphasizing the importance of that part of the Church's work which is specially committed to their care and appealing to us for a more liberal support. Neither are we surprised when our Foreign Mission convener and secretary direct our attention to the condition of the heathen in distant lands and strive to enlist our sympathies in the Church work of sending to them the blessed gospel of our Lord and Master. We expect this of them, they recognize it as a duty and apply themselves to it with commendable diligence. The responsibility of propagating such unfortunate impressions as those referred to, evidently rests upon others who make use of the press or platform to air their peculiar bias, and pose as champions of either Home or Foreign missions.

A forcible illustration of this took place at the recent Christian Endeavor Convention in Brantford, when at a rally of Presbyterian Endeavorers, a prominent minister of our Church, speaking on the subject, "How shall we bring our forces into line for united effort for missions?" made a number of statements, which, if believed by the young people present, were calculated to leave an erroneous impression regarding our mission fields, the character and work of our missionaries, and the wisdom of our Home and Foreign Boards.

The time of the meeting, after the addresses were delivered, was taken up largely in the consideration of important resolutions, so that no time was left for discussing the address to which reference is here made. I wish simply to mention some of the positions taken by the speaker and endeavor to answer them, or at least to offer a few words of explanation which may render them less harmful.

In supporting an appeal for a deeper interest in Home Missions, the speaker stated (in substance, if not in the exact words): 1. "That the Home Mission Committee barely escaped a deficit while the Foreign Mission Committee had money enough and to spare." It is encouraging to know that both escaped a deficit, but if the Foreign Fund made a better showing than the Home Fund, is the cause not to be found in the large bequests made during the year to the former rather than to any falling off of interest in the latter? Are not both boards equally willing to wisely expend all the funds placed at their disposal.

2. "That the foreign missionary gets a furlough of one year in seven while we never hear of a home missionary getting such a rest." Now, we do not deny the statement, but surely a few words of explanation might have accompanied it, especially to an audience of young people, some at least of whom might not take into consideration the enormous tax upon a missionary's vitality by exposure to a tropical climate. Such furlough is deemed a necessity by the medical advisors of the Board and its necessity has been painfully demonstrated by the missionaries who were reluctantly compelled to return to their native land in order to save their lives as well as those who have been called to their rest from their distant field of labor.

We have not heard that our Home Mission Committee has advocated such a furlough on behalf of our home missionaries nor have we heard of our home missionaries asking for it. On the contrary they claim it to be their happy lot to live and labor in the healthiest climate under the sun.

3. "That foreign missionaries on being sent out are furnished with a complete 'outfit,' while we never hear of the home missionary being thus furnished." The necessity of this was claimed to be as great in the one case as the other. The convention was thus left to choose between blaming the Foreign Mission Committee for giving the outfit, or blaming the Home Mission Committee for not giving it.

4. "That the foreign missionary's wife keeps half a dozen servants, while the home missionary's wife has to do her own drudgery."

It is a fact that many of the wives of our home missionaries get along without a servant either through choice or necessity, and the same is true of the wives of many of our Ontario pastors. Surely no one would blame a home missionary if he should employ a servant, he is the best guide of his own needs and resources. Why then in the name of common justice should we question the wisdom of a foreign missionary employing as many servants as he required, in order that his wife might be enabled to give more time and energy to that work to which both have devoted their lives? This seems clearer when we are informed that even half a dozen servants in China or India would cost no more than one in the North West.

5. The speaker then gave a view of the hardships of the home field and stated that three missionaries had been driven insane, through being so far removed from the fellowship of their brethren and that seventy-five had removed to the United States because the people had failed to implement their financial engagements.

If the above statements are correct, they do not speak very favorably for the surroundings of the three unfortunate brethren, and go far towards convincing us that much of the praise given to the Presbyterians of Manitoba and the North West on account of their liberality and devotion has been misplaced. The period covered by this exodus was not stated—probably it was intended to cover the whole history of our work there. Some delegates were going away with the impression that this had taken place during the past year. I am inclined, however, to the opinion that the statements are not strictly correct, especially the latter. It may be true that some have left for that reason but is it not equally true that others may have left the older provinces and gone to the North West for the very same reason? If the roll were called of all who took a part in the pioneer work of Manitoba during the early part of their ministry, quite a number would reply from Ontario and other parts of Canada as well as from the States.

Some are known to have gone to Dakota, mainly because a large portion of their congregations had left Manitoba to settle south of the line. Let us hope, however, that in the near future, when the reign of oppression shall be over, these temporary exiles may return to Canada and bring their pastors with them. It seems probable that if an investigation were made, a great variety of reasons would be brought forward for these removals. Surely, then, nothing is to be gained by throwing suspicion either upon these men who have left us or upon the congregations to whom they ministered. If we are to bring the forces of our young people "into line for united effort," it is not to be accomplished by such representations of the field opening up before them; but rather by keeping before them the fact that our Home and Foreign Missions are one, that when properly understood there is no schism, and that it is their duty and privilege to pray for both, to contribute to both, and to use their utmost diligence in these exercises in order that they may be the better fitted for higher

service. May there be many in the ranks of our Endeavour Society who shall hear the Master's call to hold forth the Word of Life in our Home or Foreign field and who shall answer: "Here am I, send me."

DELEGATE

ELDER'S SECOND REPLY TO REV. DR. McMULLEN ON THE ELDERSHIP.

MR. EDITOR,—In reply to Rev. Dr. McMullen I may say that I am neither a Congregationalist nor a Quaker, but, as I sign myself, a Presbyterian "Elder." I believe in a stated ministry and in associated and supervisory government by Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods and Assemblies; but I do not believe that our Courts as at present constituted and regulated are necessarily perfect or incapable of improvement. On the contrary the world has made progress and gained experience in the science of government since their institution of which I think it is our duty to avail ourselves. Furthermore there is a feeling abroad in the Church that the administration of its affairs has not been as disinterested as it ought to have been, and that but scant and tardy justice is meted out to congregations in their unfortunate and all too frequent conflicts with the ministry.

The exclusive and exceptional privileges which the clergy enjoy and by which they have been enabled to override Sessions and overwhelm Presbyteries, is a travesty upon responsible government and has tended to alienate the sympathy of the people as it has robbed them of power and representation.

I consider the abolition of these privileges and the improvement of the popular representation the only permanent corrective of these abuses, and I attach importance to the Elder-moderatorship question only as it affects this greater one.

I advocate no change in the relative functions of minister and elder other than in matters of government. This is my position and these are the considerations which led to my challenging the doctor by asking for the Scripture for his extraordinary contention, that by ordinance of Christ, elders were irrevocably excluded from the governing offices of the Courts, irrespective of any consideration of "personal fitness."

How far his letters are to be considered a reply it will be for each reader to judge for himself. Probably we shall differ in opinion according to our sympathies and leanings. To me he scarce seems to have treated the subject seriously so little have his letters even the semblance of a reply. He quotes three passages of Scripture, the first in support of a standing ministry which has never been questioned, the second in support of Apostolic Eldership which is irrelevant as the office is extinct, the third in support of government by eldership which was also unquestioned and which so far as relevant supports my contention. If "government has all along been the function of the eldership," then a minister cannot participate unless he do so as an elder. Assuming that he can do this, then the doctor proceeds to make the further assumption that he does so in supremacy to all others. The assumption is, I submit, contrary to the whole spirit of the gospel, and is in accordance with a spirit of ecclesiasticism which has been the bane of Christianity ever since the Apostolic era.

I am glad to learn that the doctor's views are by no means generally entertained by our ministry. The diversity of opinion upon this and upon kindred subjects shows upon what flimsy and indefinite foundations such far fetched doctrines are based.

There can be no doubt about the rights of the people and no mistake in increasing their facilities for self-government. How this should be accomplished is a matter for careful consideration, but I would suggest a term service for both ministry and eldership, the increase of eldership representation, possibly by giving congregations representation according to membership and the abolition of all disqualifying distinctions in matters of government.

ELDER.

Christian Endeavor.

OBEEDIENCE TO GOD—WHAT DOES IT INVOLVE?

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No one can read carefully the opening chapters of the Bible without being impressed with the fact that obedience is very strongly insisted upon. Adam was told to be obedient. God graciously condescended to enter into a covenant with him, but, as our Shorter Catechism says, it was on the condition of perfect obedience on the part of Adam. So often is this subject of obedience touched upon in the Scriptures that one finds references to it on almost every page, and if we take a Concordance we shall see that the word "Obey" and its cognates occur very frequently. In his "Keys to the Word," Dr. Pierson gives "Obedience" as the key-word of the book of Deuteronomy. It is not difficult to understand why obedience should be so strongly emphasized. If pupils refuse to obey their teacher they will make no progress in their studies. If subjects cast off the authority of their rulers we may look for confusion, anarchy and every evil work. If soldiers do not obey their commanders there is mutiny, and the battle, which might have been won, is lost. Every general should be able to say as the Centurian did: "For I am a man under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it." If children scorn to obey their parents the house is turned into a bedlam. If, in the relations between rulers and ruled, between superiors and inferiors, obedience is so necessary, one can readily understand why it should be insisted upon when man's duty to God is set forth. God is our creator, Preserver and bountiful Benefactor, and as such He has the right to command us, and to demand obedience to His laws. He has, besides, endowed us with the power of choice; He has made us responsible moral agents; and He will bless us only when we recognize His authority and yield ourselves implicitly to His guidance.

The obedience we render God should be exact, prompt and cheerful. A boy in school may be told to study his grammar, and he may choose to write instead; but though he may do remarkably good work with the pen, yet the excellence of the writing will not atone for his disobedience. His obedience is not exact. Or, he may take up his grammar, but as long as his eyes are on the place, his lip is curled with scorn. Again he is at fault for his obedience is not cheerful. Or, he may take up his grammar, but only after he has amused himself with something else for several minutes. Once more he is blameworthy because his obedience was not prompt. Perhaps King Saul would have offered a very large sacrifice of the sheep and oxen which he had taken from the Amalekites but the largeness of the sacrifice would not have covered the sin committed in sparing what he had been told to destroy (1 Sam. xv. 22).

Obedience to Divine law involves success just as the opposite involves failure. Those laws in themselves are good; they are framed by One Who can make no mistake; His object in issuing them was to advance our highest and best interests, but if these laws which were so wisely devised for such a worthy purpose are respected, and if the commandments of God are obeyed they will promote our truest welfare. Success has been defined as usefulness here and hereafter; and we can be useful only when we walk in the way of God's commandments, accept His invitations and close with His overtures of mercy. "He that keepeth the commandment keepeth his own soul" (Prov. xix. 16). "Obedience is the crowning grace of the follower of Christ—say it is the very essence of holiness." "O that my ways were directed to keep Thy statutes. Then shall I not be ashamed when I have respect unto all Thy commandments" (Ps. cxix. 5-6).

Dr. Pierson says the following seven principles of obedience are to be found in Deuteronomy. (1) The Fatherhood of God and His Proprietorship in His people. (2) The duty of separation unto Him and His service. (3) Worship to be localized and centralized. (4) All idolatrous relics to be destroyed. (5) All idolatrous acts to be treated as treason against God—punished as capital crimes. (6) All ethical relations to be regulated by God's law. (7) The brotherhood of man implied in the Fatherhood of God.