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Contributors and Correspondents.

ENGLAND.

CHILDREN'S MISSIONS IN LONDON.

"The Children's Special Service Mission," is one of those quiet, earnest agencies for good in which evangelists and unsectarian men in London and out of it are uniting so happily at the present day. Its origin is recent, but it is rapidly taking hold of the attention of the Christian public, and commending itself to their sympathies. Its great aim is to lead the Church of Christ, and Sunday-school Teachers, especially, to make more direct and earnest efforts for the present salvation of children. Its members believe, not only in sowing good seed in young hearts, but in reaping fruit from it, and seek to extend the same faith to others. Its origin I believe is traceable to the interest produced by a visit of Mr. Hammond, the children's Evangelist, to London, some fifteen years ago. Then the hearts of some of the principal workers were drawn to this form of effort, and services begun which have ever since been maintained with ever-growing satisfaction. The principal of these are two, the one in the south of London, at Surrey Chapel, (once Rowland Hills, now Newman Hall's) of which the Messrs. Tyler are and have all along been the leading spirits. Having been present one afternoon when the whole subject was discussed at last Millmay Conference, I was anxious to see for myself what I could of these special services for the young, especially where they had been longest in operation. At Surrey Chapel the regular meetings are held on Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings. At one of the latter I was recently present and beheld with great interest and satisfaction the quiet, earnest, loving, orderly manner in which everything was conducted. The place was a large school-room hung with the usual Scripture texts, maps, &c. The leaders on the platform were all young men, all engaged in business throughout the day, but they had evidently left that in the offices and ware-houses and were here with the most tender and affectionate yearning seeking to lead the little ones to Jesus. Among the children were their teachers, mostly young women, aiding in keeping order and otherwise promoting the object in view. The gathering numbered about a hundred and fifty—much smaller than it often is, especially in the winter. The exercises consisted of frequent singing of hymns, short prayers, reading of Scripture, with a simple Gospel address based upon the story of the Israelites' deliverance from Egypt, and the typical promise, "When I see the blood I will pass over you." The prayers were all very brief, sometimes silent, sometimes special in compliance with special requests, which the children were invited to put in during the singing of a hymn. It was very touching to see a little boy of eight step up to his kind friend and whisper to him that he wished to be prayed for, that "he might love Jesus," then a little girl asking prayer for her sick aunt, another for her brothers and sisters "that they might be brought to the Saviour," and another "that she might become more like Jesus." Exactly at the end of an hour those who wished to leave were allowed to do so and the rest (by far the larger part) remained for half an hour more of conversation and prayer, in which the children were dealt with personally as far as possible, being gathered in little groups apart by the teachers and leaders of the meeting. Then at the close of this following a meeting with young people of more advanced age and understanding, in which the exercises were of a very similar character.

The other Central Services are held in the North of London, in St. Jude's Elementary School, Millmay Park, in the vicinity of which the late Mr. Penfather, formerly President of this Mission, so well known for his high-toned Christian philanthropy, was rector. I need not describe the exercises here, as they closely resemble those just detailed, conversation being and all, with some additions to be noticed hereafter. The Superintendent of these is Josiah Spiers, Esq., "The Children's Evangelist," though since giving himself, his time, and his means freely to the work, he has been called to occupy a much wider sphere of usefulness. He was a certain extent enlisted in the work at the time of Mr. Hammond's visit, but more fully still when five years ago, on the banks of Llandudno, a beautiful watering-place in the North of Wales, he thought it over to him to gather the little ones and lead them to sing some hymns, and to read a text upon the sands, as some of the children may remember seeing the

incident graphically commemorated in one of the children's illustrated papers. Now the movement in his hands has taken the shape of a regular summer campaign, a succession of seaside services, for a week or two at each place, twice a day on the beach, when fine and commonly a third in the evening in some public hall. At the latter of these alone was the after meeting practicable otherwise they were much the same, as I had the opportunity of observing when present recently with much enjoyment at Eastbourne, a few miles east from Brighton. Sometimes the children with their little wooden spades form an amphitheatre of sand on the sloping beach with tiers of seats, in which they love to gather with their friends in congregations of hundreds, and sometimes even thousands. They show a great love for their kind friend Mr. Spiers, who in temperament, acquaintance with the truth, and powers of song and speech is admirably qualified for his work. Of course he needs assistance and receives it freely, and I have sometimes heard at one meeting voices from Australia, the United States and Canada, as well as Europe. The meetings are always happy and sometimes deeply impressive, and often things are learned afterward which tell of unseen workings of the Holy Spirit, very wonderful and beautiful. One father told me how his little son of twelve had for some time been very anxious about his soul, but had never felt sure of the Saviour, when one day a stranger told them of a lady who, in somewhat the same state, was visited by a minister who talked long with her, but could not get her to see that Christ was offering her salvation, and what she had to do was simply to accept the offered gift. When they went to tea, as she was filling the cups her friend expressed a wish for some tea and continued to repeat that wish more and more urgently though the cup was extended to him, and pressed upon him, till she saw the lesson he was trying to impress upon her, and without longer delay accepted Christ's offered mercy and became a happy believer. The dear little boy, as he listened, in turn found his difficulties and doubts vanish and happiness and peace flow in like a rising tide, and whereas the night before in his very dreams he was praying for mercy, that night he could hardly sleep for thankful joy, and since that, his father added, he has been a very different child indeed. In many such cases of hopeful and happy conversion, these unwearied workers find their rich reward. And not only do they aim specially at bringing the children to realize salvation, but most careful consideration is given to what will strike every thoughtful reader as a most important and yet most difficult matter, viz., *their after case.*

To take them at once into the full membership of the Church is felt in most cases to be undesirable. To leave them to make out for themselves as best they could would be a cruel and most unwise neglect. With the wisdom of the thrifty old Scotch farmer, with the prize flock of sheep, who, when asked the explanation, simply said, "I aye tak' care o' the lambs;" remembering, too, the injunction of the Great Shepherd, so solemnly given, "Feed my lambs," they have given a good deal of attention to providing what Mr. T. B. Bishop, honorary secretary of the Mission, calls "a Fold for the Lambs," in an interesting little pamphlet published by Morgan & Scott, which I would commend to any of your readers wishing fuller information. Several plans have been tried, of which the two principal are connected with the two Central London Services of which I have spoken. At Millmay the prominent idea seems to have been to secure a continued watchful fostering care of the young believers by committing them in groups of two or three (never more than five), to the peculiar care of some person of riper knowledge and experience, and frequently gathering them for purposes of mutual acquaintance and edification. These are known as "The Christian Instruction Class," and between them and the ordinary attendants at meetings, is an intermediate group known as the "Preparation Class," composed of the most earnest of the younger children, and placed under the care of carefully selected members of the "Christian Instruction Class," so that the latter have at once work provided for them in the service of their Saviour. These classes, which have not yet been a year in existence, number 189 in the first mentioned, under the care of 85 workers, and in the "Preparation Class" 181.

At the Surrey Chapel Mission the children giving evidence of faith in Christ are united for fellowship in "The Children's Christian Band," begun with 1870, since when 840 children have been admitted, 35 of whom have joined various Christian Churches. The need of such organization

was early seen, as the little ones when showing earnestness, especially among lads of the poorer class, were most severely and cruelly persecuted by their companions. By this Band it was sought to secure for them mutual sympathy, prayer, and kindred company, as well as, by regular meetings, fostering nurture.

Various modifications and combinations of these two principal methods have been tried elsewhere, such as "The Young Christians' Association" (100 members, one half of whom are over 15 years), connected with Mr. Wignor's services at the New Cross; the "Mutual Association of Believing Lads," and the "Christian Girl's Association," at Dr. Barraud's East End Juvenile Mission.

As to whether the results of these efforts are likely to be real and lasting, Mr. Tyler's account of the first hundred children admitted into the "Band," is, I think, most significant and hopeful. At the end of three years a careful enquiry showed that fifteen had joined the church and were most of them Sabbath-school teachers; thirty-eight were still in attendance upon the children's services, and were consistent in behaviour; the thirty-ninth attendant was the only one ascertained to be unsatisfactory; seventeen occasionally attended, being connected with other denominations; twenty-six had removed to a distance, or gone into service; four slept in Jesus. In all, sixty-six, with whom intimacy was maintained, were believed to be Christian children.

And now, in closing, I cannot but ask myself, Why should we not have some such work in Canada? I fear its Sabbath-schools on the one hand, and churches on the other, are not so complete separately and conjointly as to make it unnecessary, especially in the larger towns. I am satisfied that some measure or modification of it would be worth trying in the effort to "bridge the gulf" between the Sabbath-school and the Church.

CANADIAN ABROAD.

London, Sept., 1873.
P.S.—I find Mr. Spiers now in Liverpool, with two or three series of children's services on hand, which are being attended by large numbers and with much interest. When complete some further notice may be taken of them; meantime it is interesting to note that in London a "Children's Evangelistic Band" of willing and suitable workers has been formed for the winter's campaign. They are arranged in divisions, each with its captain, under whose direction they meet for prayer and conference, and go forth to hold meetings when invited. My last evening in London was spent at a more general conference of Christian workers, at the "Edinburgh Castle" Mission Hall, where Reginald Ratcliffe was the chief speaker. I wish I could give your readers some idea of the deep and widespread longing after revival which pervades the ranks of these men and women at present, but want of time and space forbid even the attempt.

Let me correct the account recently given of a child cured of spinal curvature. Its age was nine, and the instrument of the cure was Dr. Cullis, of Boston, of whose Asylum for Incurable Consumptives so interesting an account is given in the last number of the *Sunday Magazine*.

C. A.

Liverpool, Oct. 9, 1873.

Presbyterian Union.

EDITOR BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—In a letter written by Mr. McTavish, of Woodstock, which appeared in your last issue, exceptions are taken to certain of the terms upon which it is proposed that the different branches of Presbyterianism in this land should form themselves into one Church. Three things are objected to; the first of them being one of the subordinate resolutions accompanying the basis, and which is worded as follows—"That the practice at present followed by congregations in regard to modes of worship shall be allowed, and that further action in connection therewith shall be left to the legislation of the United Church." "This proposal will, if adopted, render permanent," Mr. McTavish says, "things of which he disapproves." He does not state what these things are; but it may be assumed that they are matters concerning which congregations have received liberty to act as they themselves may choose to determine; and, if so, no matter what may become of the above proposal, that liberty will not be interfered with. It is further objected to the resolution in question, "that it binds the Church to sanction it knows not what." In reply to this, it is sufficient to say that Presbyterianism practices no concealments. The freedom exercised in regard to modes of

worship means simply the freedom sanctioned or allowed by the negotiating Churches, and what that amounts to no one need have any difficulty in discovering.

Another serious charge has respect to a question bearing upon the subject of the Headship of Christ over the Church. The Union Committee are accused of having failed to implement the instructions given to them by the Assembly of 1872, which were to the effect that an endeavour should be made to secure from the Committee of one of the negotiating Churches a satisfactory statement on the above mentioned subject. The duty here specified was discharged, and from the manner in which it was performed, the Committee, as Mr. McTavish admits, received thanks and commendation from the Assembly. Authoritative documents were laid upon the table which showed clearly the position occupied by the Church as to the point in question. Let it be observed that the Headship of Christ over the Church, as the expression is here used, means to all practical intents simply the right and duty of the Church to govern its procedure by the word of God, free from all State control or interference. A brief quotation from one of the documents referred to will show in what light this matter is regarded by the sister Church. In the "Act of Independence," as it is termed, we find this claim put forth on behalf of the Supreme Court of that Church, namely:—"That the Synod has a perfectly free, full, final, supreme, and uncontrolled power of jurisdiction, discipline, and government in regard to all matters ecclesiastical and spiritual, over all the ministers, elders, Church members, and congregations under its care, without the right of review, appeal, complaint, or reference by or to any other Court or Courts whatsoever, in any form, or under any pretence." This—and there is a good deal more to the same effect—is surely strong enough to satisfy the most advanced assertors of Church authority and independence. What, then, it may be asked, is the obstacle to the cordial acceptance on all sides of a document containing so unmistakable utterances as these? The Act, as it appears, was framed and put in force soon after the troubles that culminated in the disruption of 1844; and the epoch which thus marks its origin causes it to be disliked by some. "It was regarded," Mr. McTavish tells us, "by the fathers of the disruption not only as not justifying the conduct of those who passed it, but as not even an honest document, and designed to mislead the people." What measure of truth there may be in this implied charge against those fathers we cannot say. It is human to err, and we ought not to wonder much if some of them did err in the way of forming rash judgments, hence periods of controversy and division in the Church have always been marked by a great deal of mutual mistrust and alienation. But those days are long past, and the time has now come when the least lenient judge of the motives of others should be able to weigh impartially a document such as this is, and to accept or reject it wholly upon its intrinsic merits. With the designs that entered into its origin we have nothing to do beyond exercising in relation to them the charity that hopeth all things. The past may be left to answer for itself, otherwise and elsewhere than here and now; it is the Church of the present that we have to transact with; and no one can feel that it needs any stretch of charity, or more than ordinary candour, to give credit for sincerity to the honoured brethren who profess, today, their adherence to that Act, and their acceptance of it, even as a term of ministerial communion. The only other point in the letter under review requiring to be noticed, is the charge that a change for the worse has been recently made in the fourth article of the basis. In its original form this article read as follows:—"That the Church while cherishing Christian affection towards the whole Church of God, and desiring to hold fraternal intercourse with it in its several branches, as opportunity offers, shall, at the same time, regard itself as being in such ecclesiastical relations to Churches holding the same doctrine, government, and discipline with itself, as those ministers and probationers from these Churches shall be received into this Church, subject to such regulations as shall from time to time be adopted." "In this shape," as Mr. McTavish states, "the article has already been before sessions and Presbyteries, and in this form it seems to command his approval, or at all events to escape his censure. As it appears, however, in the minutes of last Assembly, two words, noted above by their being put in italics, have been altered. The *such* is omitted altogether, and the *as* finds its place usurped by an *and*. The curious may look at the resolution in the light of these minute changes, which produce in Mr. McTavish's estimation a difference in meaning of quite a vital character. In its original form, he says, "the extent of the proposed relations with other Churches was defined and limited; as we have it now that is unlimited." And if, as he further states, the phrase unlimited or undefined relations has any meaning, what follows? Thus for one thing, that "all the sons of the Erskines and Gillespie, of Chalmers and Bayne, must be ready to take their places in the present Established Church of Scotland," and to confess that they have "either been knaves or martyrs by mistake." "If any one," he adds, "can adopt it—the article, to wit, in its new dress—without a feeling of humiliation, we ask if he is prepared to humiliate us who cannot do so, for

drive us from the Church?" Now, we beg to assure our excellent friend that he is quite mistaken in this instance as to his premises. The grievance which he thinks so weighty as to warrant ominous hints of secession, is not an actual one; it is, in point of fact, as shadowy as is the stuff that dreams are made of, having no more authentic an origin than is to be found in a clerical error, or a mistake of the printer. No change whatever has been made in the article, as may be seen by turning to the minutes of the last meeting of the Joint Committee, or to those of the last Synod of the Sister Church. That it should have come forth somewhat inaccurately printed in the minutes of last Assembly is a thing to be regretted certainly.

I close by expressing an earnest hope that Mr. McTavish, and the other esteemed and beloved brethren who act with him, may, on reflection, come to look more kindly on these union resolutions, which have met with such general and hearty concurrence in the Supreme Courts of all the Presbyterian Churches in British North America. The proposed basis has the merit of omitting nothing which the present one includes. It should be specially welcome to every office-bearer and member of the Canada Presbyterian Church, inasmuch as it is merely a return to the simplicity of by-gone days, days when each section of the now United Church was content to accept as its subordinate standards the Westminster Confession of Faith, together with larger and shorter catechisms, adding only, as is now proposed to be done, and precisely to the same effect, a brief explanatory note in regard to the power and duty of the civil magistrate.

Yours truly,

ROBERT URR.

Goderich, Oct. 17, 1873.

Query.

EDITOR BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

MY DEAR SIR,—I would like to ascertain through you on what principle the Rev. John Laing, late principal of the Ottawa Female College, is eligible for a call to one of the congregations of the Canada Presbyterian Church? I cannot find his name on the roll of any of our presbyteries, nor on that of our probationers. I cannot find either from our minutes of Assembly that application was made for his reception into our Church at the sitting of our Supreme Court in June last. What, then, is the relationship which he holds to our Church? Will you or some of your correspondents answer?

SERO.

Ventilation.

In ordinary cases, carbonic acid is what we have to get rid of. One twenty-fifth of one per cent is a normal quantity; five times that, or one-fourth per cent, affects a candle, as tested by the photometer. The human frame is apparently less sensitive, and we do not feel the presence of three or four times the normal quantity of this gas; although the organic exhalations that often accompany it may compel us to ventilate for the sake of comfort.

A man would expire a quantity of carbonic acid in an hour sufficient to impregnate a thousand cubic feet of air to the extent of one twenty-fifth of one per cent (.04 p. c.); but as the air already holds that amount in a normal state, he will, of course, expire sufficient to raise the percentage of two thousand cubic feet from .04 to .06, which we have stated to be the limit that ought not to be passed; therefore we must supply two thousand cubic feet of fresh air hourly per man. Donkin's estimate of the carbonic acid given off is one-half greater than the above; he therefore states that three thousand cubic feet per man are required. Do Chaumont concludes that our standard of purity ought not to be lower than .6; and, assuming Smith's estimate to be correct, we ought to add one-half to the number of feet stated by him, and demand that three thousand cubic feet per man be introduced hourly. This addition is made on account of the fact that the gases diffuse themselves very slowly and unequally, and when the draught is strong (as in a small room), not at all. If now we could change the air of a room at the rate of once every ten minutes, we should renew the air six times an hour; and each man, if allowed five hundred cubic feet of space, would get his three thousand cubic feet of air per hour. But the fact is that such rapid ventilation is not to be expected; and the least space that it is safe to allow per head is a thousand feet. To provide for the supply of three thousand feet per hour, so that the velocity of the current at the point of entrance shall not exceed five feet per second, forty-eight square inches of total inlet and outlet area should be provided. In cold weather we can endure much more than .08 per cent of carbonic acid; and this is an important point in our cold climate, when the air must be warmed before it is introduced.—T. Sterry Hunt, LL.D., in *Herald of Health*.

CRISIS OF INDIA.—The census of 1872 shows a population of 44,891 in Calcutta, 644,405 in Bombay, and 895,440 in Madras. In Calcutta there were 899,857 males and 147,744 females, or two to one. In Bombay there were 899,716 males and 244,698 females, or five males to three females. There were nearly 200,000 Hindus in Calcutta, and above 400,000 in Bombay, 181,000 Mahometans in Calcutta, and less than 185,000 in Bombay.