

## Pastor and People.

### HOME MISSIONARY HYMN.

Saints of God! the dawn is brightening,  
Token of our coming Lord;  
O'er the earth the world is whitening;  
Louder rings the Master's word—  
"Pray for reapers  
In the harvest of the Lord."

Feebly now they toil in sadness,  
Weeping o'er the waste around,  
Slowing gathering grains of gladness,  
While their echoing cries resound—  
"Pray that reapers  
In God's harvest may abound."

Now, O Lord! fulfil Thy pleasure,  
Breathe upon Thy chosen band,  
And, with Pentecostal measure,  
Send forth reapers o'er our land—  
Faithful reapers,  
Gathering sheaves for Thy right hand.

Ocean calleth unto ocean,  
Spirits speed from shore to shore.  
Heralding the world's commotion;  
Hear the conflict at our door—  
Mighty conflict—  
Satan's death-cry on our shore!

Broad the shadow of our nation,  
Eager millions hither roam;  
Lo! they wait for Thy salvation;  
Come, Lord! Jesus! quickly come!  
By Thy Spirit,  
Bring Thy ransomed people home.

Soon shall end the time of weeping,  
Soon the reaping time will come—  
Heaven and earth together keeping  
God's eternal Harvest Home:  
Saint and angels!  
Shout the world's great Harvest Home.  
—By "A Lady of Virginia."

Written for THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

### COUNTRY AUXILIARIES.\*

BY MRS. ALEX. McFARLANE.

When our President asked me to prepare a short paper on the benefits of meeting together in country auxiliaries, I consented for various reasons. (1st) Because it is so discouraging not to try to do what we can to help those who are expending their time and energies in trying to make these meetings a success. (2nd) Because it is long since I determined to try to do any duty which God in His wise providence placed upon me, although it might be with not very great satisfaction either to myself or others; and also because my effort might encourage some other inexperienced one to try, and consequently the burden of the work be borne by the many and not by the few already overworked ones.

That women in the country may be able to meet together once a month it is necessary that they overcome some difficulties, and this in itself is a benefit. Of course most of you know that for women in the country to meet together, means not only an hour or two as it is with those in the city, but a whole afternoon. This is not a small item when there may be just one pair of hands to do the general housework, including the laundry work, baking, butter-making and sewing, for, it may be, five or six of a family. This makes one endless round of toil for the noble women who are heroically trying to do their part on the farm, and we do not wonder that, until they are interested in our meetings, they do not feel like taking time to go. If once interested they will make time, for "where there is a will there is a way." No doubt we have all experienced that with a definite object in view we can accomplish much more.

Of course it would cast a reflection on the propriety of attending even a religious meeting to leave the home in disorder and confusion; consequently for days before, the work is so planned and executed that when the day of the meeting has arrived, everything is in order and the happy housewife has the benefit of knowing that she has overcome one difficulty and consequently is better prepared to meet the next one courageously, and that may be to cross three or four miles of prairie on foot. This is not unusual, and surely nothing but the

love of Christ and zeal for His cause would enable any woman to persevere under this difficulty from time to time. I am afraid it would test some of us pretty well. To the credit of the farmer be it said, she rarely has to return on foot, for by the time he has taken one meal without her, almost unconsciously he is driving across the prairie to bring her home. Hence another benefit, "Love lightens labor," and she enters her home glad and happy, not to rest for awhile on a couch or in an easy chair, but to take up the endless round of work where she left it, but with a lighter heart for having been absent from it for awhile and with so much to think about, and talk about, which breaks the monotony of the usually quiet country life.

With many in the country, too, they have the difficulty of preparing their lessons without many helps. When the subject is a Bible lesson this may not be a great misfortune, for we have to trust more to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and He is His own interpreter and can make it plain. I might just mention an illustration of this. At one of our meetings in the country one of the ladies said she had turned to her Bible over and over to get a text bearing on the subject, but failed. She saw she was "leaning too much on her own understanding" so she took it to the Lord in prayer, and just as she was starting for the meeting she opened her Bible, when a most suitable text presented itself.

We think we are socially benefited by meeting together in these country auxiliaries. Doubtless many of us have felt at times so depressed in spirits from various causes that nothing but a keen sense of duty would impel us to go; but the path of duty is always a safe one to walk in, and we have gone forward, relying on the promise that "I will perfect my strength in thy weakness." And have we not felt the cloud beginning to rise as the genial farmer meets us at the gate, to take our horse (if we have one), or to bid us welcome with the shake of the hand that he alone knows how to give. Still it rises as we meet the kindly greeting of his wife at the door, and by the time we have exchanged greetings with all present, the last vestige of the cloud is lifted, and we are in a happier frame of mind for taking part in the lesson. Who has not experienced this and been reminded of the beautiful words of Cowper:

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;  
The clouds ye so much dread  
Are big with mercy, and shall break  
In blessings on your head.

Socially, too, we meet on one common level. Whether dressed in satin or cotton (satins are scarce), we each feel we have a right to be there and we each take an interest in the other, and who has gone from one of these meetings feeling that she was not wanted there and was not the better for being there? I have not met one yet.

We are benefited by the study of the lesson, whether it be a mission field or a Bible lesson. If the former it recalls and refreshes in our minds, people, places and things, partially, if not altogether forgotten, and gives us an insight into the social and religious standing of that field, of the advancement that has been made by the Gospel of Jesus being preached in it, of what the devoted missionaries have had to suffer in bearing the good news to it, and of the great change which nothing but the Old, Old Story can make in enlightening these darkened places of the earth. If it be a Bible lesson, who has not been benefited by the study of it? And if the lesson be only imperfectly studied at home, when we meet together and discuss it, each one taking some part, if nothing more than repeating a text bearing on it, that text may bring out some point which has not yet been discussed, and which may have to be left for further study at home. As a result we get the most out of each lesson. And who can tell the benefit it may be, not only to ourselves but to those around. These truths impressed on our minds may prove a blessing indeed, not only in health and prosperity, but also

in times of adversity, sickness and death, for—

" 'Tis religion that can give sweetest comfort while we live;  
" 'Tis religion can supply truest comfort when we die."

The benefit of this Bible study is felt in the community by the absence of gossip and evil speaking of others, by the willingness of each to help the other in times of need and in many other ways. It is also felt in the congregation. Those who prepare these lessons know something of the effort the minister has to put forth to prepare his sermon; consequently can more fully sympathize with him and appreciate what he says.

We are benefited also by our failures in these meetings, and are encouraged to make stepping stones of them to better things. If we should each give up when we thought we had not done as well as we would like in taking part, our meetings would soon come to an end; and when we make mistakes or have caused another pain, we try not to do so again.

Being at one of these meetings in the country lately, we were a little surprised when at the close of a very interesting meeting, the President asked for a few short prayers, there were but two where I know we might expect five or six. In conversation with one of the usually quiet ones I asked if she knew the reason why. She said one was just waiting for another and thus lost the opportunity. For herself she said she scarcely slept that night for thinking of it. Another told me she regretted it too. If that President is here she may take courage. I trust she will not have that cause for discouragement again. Surely any of us can say a few words in prayer. God does not hear us for our finely finished sentences, but as we express the real desires of our hearts.

The invariable answer I got as I asked different ones what benefit these meetings had been to them, was that the study of the lessons had been a great benefit; the study of subjects which otherwise they would not have studied; and they had been a great help in their Christian life. Doubtless there might be many other benefits mentioned, but my paper is, I think, sufficiently long.

Some may say, Why not contribute more largely if they receive so much benefit. Perhaps if those who would ask this question were to visit many of the homes of these helpers, and knew of the sacrifices they make to give ever so little, they would be ready to say, "She hath done what she could." We do not think the funds are the main object. The following extract from a little poem in THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN might be suitably quoted:

"Two cents a week and a prayer  
'Twas the prayer perhaps, after all,  
That the work has done and a blessing brought,  
The gift was so very small."

Two cents a week and a prayer  
A tiny gift may be;  
But it helps to do a wonderful work  
For our sisters across the sea."

I will close trusting that each of us may feel benefited by our meeting together at this time, and that we may go home prepared to do our duty faithfully in the small corner in which God has placed us. As the little hymn says:

"You in your small corner  
And I in mine."

Dugald, Man.

Written for THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

### THE LOWER AND THE HIGHER LIFE.

BY REV. JOSEPH HAMILTON.

One day in the Royal Aquarium in London, I was interested in watching the fishes as they darted hither and thither with so much force and freedom through a large glass tank. But I noticed that they never rose above the surface of the water. They seemed to know instinctively that the surface was the boundary of their world beyond which they could not pass. So when the fishes neared the surface they would always

turn and dip down again. There was no life for them above the surface of the water, and they could have no idea of a higher and different kind of world from their own. But we know that there is a higher world, and higher types of beings living here in the air that could not live in the lower world of water. And just so, we may live in the physical domain of earthly things, unconscious of that higher, spiritual, divine life of those who live and breathe and move in the spirit. There is this difference, however, between us and the fishes, that our possibilities are not so fixed and final as theirs; we can rise, as they can not, from the lower condition to the higher.

Toronto.

### PRAYER IN THE PULPIT.

That there is a good deal of inappropriate and incoherent prayer offered in the pulpit, is a fact which devout and thoughtful Christians have opportunities of knowing when they worship in their churches on the Sabbath. Indeed, some ministers seem to make special efforts to avoid all forms of direct prayer, and indulge in rambling reflections, introspections and disquisitions on Providence and mankind in general, giving the Lord minute information on the moral state of the world, and suggestions as to the methods He shall employ to put things in proper order.

Ministers who thus pray in their pulpits overlook the fact that they are there to voice the common wants of an entire congregation, as well as some special needs and wants of some which may have come to their knowledge. Their own personal subjectivities, whether uttered in flowing oration or incoherent ramblings, do not meet the occasion, and are therefore inappropriate and out of place. Often their form is more that of an address to the congregation than of a prayer to God, and suggests the remark of a Boston paper in an account of a memorable occasion many years ago, that "Edward Everett made the most eloquent prayer ever offered to a Boston audience."

Such prayers—if prayers they may be called—do not utter the desires and longings of devout, spiritual worshippers. They cannot anticipate what their pastor may happen to say in the pulpit, nor follow him with minds and hearts in his uncertain utterances; and hence this part of the service is often more of a performance or the mere listening to an address, than real worship in which all can devoutly unite and fix their hearts in supplication to God.

In order that this part of the service may be such that all can unite in it to edification, pastors should make it a subject of careful study. To offer prayers that will express the wants of an entire congregation is as important a part of a pastor's ministrations as the preparation of sermons; and yet, many pastors who are very careful in the preparation of their sermons, give little or no attention to the preparation of their public prayers. It seems a severe reproach to state the fact that such pastors are more respectful to their congregations than they are to God.

Pastors should make special efforts to acquire the grace and habit of uttering appropriate forms of prayer for all public and private occasions in their varied ministrations among the people. This is an important duty which many neglect.—*Lutheran Observer.*

Yes, the people lack faith; not that individual faith which creates martyrs, but that social faith which is the parent of victory; the faith that arouses the multitudes to faith in their own destiny, in their own mission, and in the mission of the epoch; the faith that combats and prays; the faith that enlightens, and bids men advance less in the ways of God and humanity.—*Mazzini.*

If keeping holy the seventh day were only a human institution, it would be the best method that could have been thought of for the polishing and civilizing of mankind.

\*A paper read at the annual meeting of the Winnipeg Presbyterial W.F.M.S.