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The Work of the Rev. B. Fay Mills in Montreal.

FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW :

IT will, I am sure, be a matter of true joy to God's people in the West, to know that we have had a special season of blessing recently in the Metropolitan City of the East. If there has not been as copious a rain as we desired, there have, nevertheless, been "showers of blessing," which have gladdened many hearts, and, in many cases, caused "the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose." It is true that all the Protestant Churches did not formally join in the movement; and some ministers did not sympathize with Mr. Mills' methods of work: Yet it is safe to say that there are few churches, if any, some of whose members did not receive an impulse in their spiritual life.

To begin with, it may be observed, that early last summer members of the Protestant Ministerial Association felt the need of special evangelistic services, to aid them in meeting, and, if possible, in turning back the tide of worldliness that was sweeping over our city. There was much prayer for the spirit of grace and truth and for "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." At the time of the Christian Endeavor Convention in July, a conference was had with Mr. Mills, who engaged to consider favorably their request, that he should come and conduct a series of evangelistic services in the city. Some twenty-five churches or so agreed to co-operate in the work, each becoming responsible for a proportion of the expenses necessary, and undertaking to render such service as would be required of them. For some time before his arrival, prayer was offered up daily for a blessing to attend his labors. And such prayer was heard and answered. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at, that blessed results flowed from the services. We shall briefly mention a few of them.

1. Ministers were themselves quickened. It was most comforting and inspiring to hear the old gospel preached by one, whose labors had been owned of God so greatly in other places. It was refreshing to hear another voice preaching the truth and pressing it home with new illustrations. Then it was almost heavenly for brethren of various denominations to sit side by side on the same platform, to dwell together in the unity of the Spirit for a brief hour or so, day by day. We all forgot our differences, for the moment, as we "sat at Jesus feet and heard His Word."

2. Believers were quickened in large numbers. Hundreds of believing women assembled daily, an hour before the afternoon meeting, to pray especially for a blessing upon the services which were to follow. These were attended by thousands daily, largely of the church-going classes. They drank in eagerly the waters of life, being moved by the new voice, and the telling illustrations, by which the truth was pressed home to their hearts. Many begin to feel anxious for their friends, and pray for them, and bring them to the services.

3. The young disciples of our homes and Sabbath Schools were impressed, and yielded to the appeals made by preacher and teacher to confess Christ without delay. Notably on one Sabbath, in many schools, the ordinary lessons were laid aside, and the teachers dealt with each member of their classes personally. Many teachers felt a new sense of spiritual power and responsibility, and were greatly blessed and encouraged.

4. The pastors of the French Protestant churches in the city and many of their people, received much spiritual blessing, in their attendance upon the evangelistic

services, which resulted in many being added to their membership. Moreover in two, at least, of our French Presbyterian churches, the young people have formed themselves into Christian Endeavor Societies, one of them numbering fifty persons.

6. It is encouraging also to know that numbers of Roman Catholics came to hear the evangelist, and not a few expressed themselves as deeply impressed by what they saw and heard. Lastly, it is cause for gratitude and joy, that many indifferent and unbelieving souls were aroused to a sense of their peril, and led to seek forgiveness of sin through Jesus Christ, the only Saviour. One or two incidents will suffice.

The first is that of a sceptic, who being struck by some thought expressed by Mr. Mills, reported by the papers, thought he would go and hear him. He went, and came away disappointed. He went again, and was impressed, and finally signed a card, to the end that he desired "to henceforth lead a Christian life." He affixed his name, but to the question "what minister or Church he preferred," he knew not what to say. He had met but one minister, and had only met him but once, in the way of business. He, however, put down the minister's name, who received the card in due course and went and called upon the man. He was quite cordial, and excused himself for taking the liberty of referring to him, adding, "I do not need you now. It is all settled. I have found Christ to be my Saviour, and have peace in Him. I do not see everything clearly yet, in regard to miracles, but I doubt not I will soon be able to accept them." He now worships God in the sanctuary.

A second was that of a drunkard. This man had a wife, and an adopted child. His home was miserably unhappy, because of his drinking and his idleness. Finally, he left the city, and nothing was heard of him for sixteen months, when he returned home, to find his wife seriously ill, and her pastor supplying her with food and fuel in her need. He looked wretched enough. His wife said to him: "There is no place for you here; you have made my life miserable for fifteen years, and you have neglected me entirely for more than a year." He promised to reform. He went to his pastor and signed the pledge. Just then Mr. Mills arrived. This man went to the services, was changed into a new man, "clothed and in his right mind." The other day he went to his pastor, stated that he had two good offers of work, and was advised to accept the better of the two. Already his wages have been raised, and his employer says he is just the man he wanted.

It is needless to say more. A work that produces such results is the work of God. Many of us did not agree altogether with Mr. Mills' methods and ministry. But in view of the good accomplished, we need not emphasize this, but give glory to God that he has been anew impressing upon the weak in faith, that the gospel is "the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth. It is true, no doubt, that many signed cards who were already Christians, but they did so, for the most part, because they were touched by the Spirit of God, and desired to live a more holy life. Moreover, these cards revealed to pastors who among their people were anxious about their spiritual condition, and enabled them to come face to face with them, and deal with them with a view to help them nearer Christ. It is our earnest hope that the "fruit may remain," and that the good work may go on, and that the Lord, as in early days, may "add to the Church daily such as shall be saved!"

MONTREAL, March 24th, 1894.

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