

lack of interest shown by Presbyterians in Indian missions in the older provinces of Canada. I tried at first to take that meaning out of his words, but when he says "without qualification that our Indian missions 'never seem . . . to have been conducted with that vigor shown in other missions,' the reference must surely be to the only part of the country where the Presbyterian Church has established Indian missions.

In view of these facts, there is not much pathos left in our anonymous friend's lament about this "expiring race" being "allowed to perish for the lack of knowledge." Leaving out British Columbia and the unorganized territory of the far North, there is not a reserve of ten families which is not occasionally visited by a missionary, and there is not a reserve of a hundred families which has not a resident missionary. It is true there remains much yet to be done, and I hope the Presbyterian Church will have a full share in the forward movement. She has by no means exhausted her power to help, but at least she has made a beginning and she has realized in some measure the urgency of the need.

I have no wish to charge "L. A. C." with intentional misrepresentation. Indeed, I assume he is a friend of missions. If he is, it will be little comfort to him to think that he has dealt a cruel and utterly unjustifiable blow at a part of the church's work which is worthy of its highest confidence. The false impression has gone abroad; it has found a lodgment somewhere and the best and speediest reparation he can now make will fail to overtake and neutralize entirely the effect of the falsehoods for which, however unintentionally, he is responsible. I am, dear sir, yours, etc.,

ANDREW B. BAIRD.

Winnipeg, Jan. 26, 1894.

VACANCIES.

Sir,—I said in a former communication that if vacant congregations would exercise a little more common sense in seeking to secure a minister most of them would not be vacant long. Why did I pass this critique upon a body of men who are supposed to possess an average amount of intelligence and business capacity? Because many congregations act as if they did not possess much intelligence or business capacity. But it is only fair to say in their defence that the fault lies as much in the machinery we have to use as in the use made of the machinery.

Take one case as a sample of many. A congregation is declared vacant, and Presbyterians instruct them to take steps to secure a pastor with all convenient speed. The moderator of session pro tem. lives several miles away, and has no opportunity of hearing any of the men who preach. The first or second man heard gives almost universal satisfaction. Every one is delighted, and many remark, "We would gladly have that man for our minister." But, what is done to give the people an opportunity to turn their compliments to practical account?

Monday morning the elders go to their several occupations and do nothing about it. The managers ditto. The moderator of session takes no action either, for the session has not asked him to take action. This excellent preacher gets his fee, goes away, and thus ends his visit to that congregation.

A fortnight later another preaches who is about as acceptable as was the other, and the same thing happens in regard to him. Everybody is pleased. The elders go about their secular affairs Monday morning and do nothing about it. The moderator is inert because he has not been asked to move. And so this good man, number two, is allowed to go. For six months, for twice six, this thing goes on. Men come and men go, several of whom were well fitted for the place, but no action is taken, till matters become desperate in the congregation—attendance falling off, Sunday School suffering, young people drifting about—then suddenly the last man who preached is called, and why he? Mainly because he happened to be the last man heard. Had he preached during the first month or two of the vacancy he would not have been called.

Now, if the interests of that vacancy had been looked after in a prompt, business way,

would not one of those suitable men who preached early in the vacancy have been settled and the many evils of an empty pulpit would have been prevented?

Well, what is the remedy? One simple remedy would be to have it agreed upon at the outset that once every month the voice of the congregation shall be taken in regard to those three or four men already heard. To do this, it would not be necessary to moderate in a call at this stage. On a given Sunday, say the first Sunday of the month, let all communicants and all adherents place a card on the collection plate containing the name of the minister they prefer, signed by themselves. The elders would count these votes, and did the vote warrant it, the moderator could be requested forthwith to proceed with moderation. Should the ballots show that no one received a large vote, the hearing of candidates would proceed for another month, when a ballot would again be taken in a like manner. By this simple expedient the people would have an opportunity every month of expressing their mind. It would involve little or no trouble or expense, and in many cases early settlements would be secured. Give the people a chance to speak.

One other point may be named here without discussion. Why take two Sundays to read an edict for moderation in a call, and two Sundays more for settlement when a call is accepted, where two services are held on Sunday, and the edict is read morning and evening, and every one is apprised. Surely one Sabbath's notice is enough in such a case. Fifty years ago before railways, and telegraphs and telephones, and type-writers were in use, and men moved slowly, slow movements in church procedure were unavoidable. But, surely, a little more expedition should now be put into our methods for securing and settling ministers. So thinks

ONLOOKER.

AN EARNEST APPEAL TO THE YOUNG MEN OF OUR CHURCH.

Sir,—Since the publication of D. Robertson's earnest appeal on behalf of the missions of Manitoba and the North-west Territories, I have been much distressed. A residence in Manitoba, of several years, tells me very plainly that our missionary superintendent has not exaggerated the situation. With No. 1 hard wheat selling in the forties, farming does not produce much surplus of money, and consequently the farmer and country merchant are obliged to withhold the support they hitherto have given to the church. We must keep these facts before us and do something to keep this branch of the work of our church from suffering during the year upon which we have just entered.

As one of the young men members of a church which has already made a fair record in the work of missions in the North-west, I would so much like to help in agreeably dissipating the fears of those on whom the burden of this work falls. And more than all do I desire to see brought to a successful issue, some plan that will meet our present difficulty, and thus please Him whose work and cause it is.

I therefore earnestly appeal to all the young men, members and adherents of our church, from Halifax to Vancouver, asking them to step in right here and fill up what is lacking. It is understood, of course, that many are already contributing towards this fund, therefore, I would limit the sum asked from each one, to one dollar. Now, if all between the ages of 20 and 30 respond to this appeal, I am sure that there will be no lack of funds to carry on this very important work. It is suggested that the remittances be sent by post-office order, direct to Dr. Wm. Reid, Toronto, the remittance specifying the use to which his dollar is to be put.

If the hundreds and thousands of the ages just quoted, respond to this appeal in the spirit in which it is made, they will perform an act not more than their duty, but yet one which will be creditable to them, and which will result in untold blessing to others, and come back in blessings upon themselves.

DOMINION.

CHINESE IN WINNIPEG.

In your issue of the 17th ult., under "Meeting of the Foreign Mission Committee (W.D.)," it was stated that there were in Winnipeg seventeen Chinese under instruction, each one having a Christian teacher. This school, which for some years has been carried on in connection with Knox Church congregation, was originally begun by Mrs. Isabella Watt and is now under the superintending care of Elder James Thomson, who is a real pastor to the Chinese boys—looking after, guiding and directing them in many ways. The school has now thirty-nine on the roll, with an average attendance of thirty-five, with thirty-four regular teachers—it being found that the best results are obtained by each teacher—devoting his undivided attention to a single pupil. Seven of this class have been admitted to the ordinance of baptism and the Lord's Supper. And their lives have been, so far as we can know, worthy of the vows they have taken. The teachers are particular in looking after each one that does not put in an appearance on Sunday, and God is blessing their faithfulness.

Yours sincerely,

FREDERIC B. DUVAL.

OBITUARY.

Some of our older readers, especially the early missionary pioneers of the Niagara Peninsula, will remember Elder James Findley, of Crowland, in the County of Welland. Few who knew him could forget his large Scottish heart, his broad Scottish tongue, and his warm Scottish hospitality. Immigrating from Scotland and settling in Crowland in 1845, for half a century he ministered to the necessity of saints—yea, and of sinners too. Every wayfarer was welcome to a savory plate and a soft pillow, in Elder Findley's house. Often urged to enter municipal and political life, he steadfastly refused. But for nearly half a century he was an elder in the church at Crowland. And many a heart was sad—beside those of his own large family—when the good old elder fell asleep. He passed away on the 1st of November in the 91st year of his age. "The memory of the just is blessed."

COM.

They tell us that in Scotland is a battlefield on which the natives of the soil and their Saxon neighbors once met in terrible conflict. No monument marks the scene of the bloody fight. All over the field grows the beautiful Scotch heather—except in one spot. There a little blue flower grows abundantly. No flowers like them are to be found for many a league around. Why are they there? The reason is this. Just in the spot where they grow the bodies of the slain were buried, and the earth was saturated with the blood and the remains of the unhappy victims. The seeds of these flowers were there before. As soon as the blood touched them, they sprang up. They developed. And every blue flower on Culloden's field as it bends to the breeze, is a memorial of the brave warriors who dyed that heathery sod with their crimson gore. So it is with character. The seeds of action lie deep beneath the surface—seeds of heroism and the seeds of crime. The seeds of lofty deeds yet unperformed—or of sensualities, frauds and treacheries yet unperpetrated. These principles or germs of action, lie dormant. They may remain latent for years—for a life-time—may, in fact, never be developed in this lower world. The seeds of the blue flowers at Culloden would, probably, have lain there undetected to this day, but for the trickling about them of human blood. That called them forth.—*Rev. Theodore Cuyler, D.D.*

Congress Ways and Means Committee's Report: The American people have decided, as free men must always decide, that the power of taxation has no lawful or constitutional exercise except for providing revenue for the support of the government. Every departure from this principle is a departure from the fundamental principles of free institutions and inevitably works out gross inequality in the citizenship of the country. For more than thirty years we have levied the largest part of our federal taxes in violation of this vital truth, until we have reached in the existing tariff an extreme and voluminous system of class taxation to which history may be challenged to furnish any parallel.

Christian Endeavor.

GIVING OUR BEST TO GOD.

REV. W. B. McTAVISH, B.D., ST. GEORGE.

Feb. 25.—Mark xii, 28-31; 41-44.

Abel, though he had no written law, gave his best to God. The Israelites who lived after the law was given, were expected to give to God the first-born of their children and the firstlings of their flocks (Ex. 13). This was demanded of them partly to remind them that their first-born were spared on that night when the first-born of the Egyptians were slain, and partly to remind them that God had certain claims upon them. Matthew Henry says, "God, who is first and best, should have the first and best, and to Him we should resign that which is most dear to us and most valuable. The first-born were the joy and hope of their families, 'therefore they shall be mine' says God." David reasoned wisely when he concluded that he could not serve God with that which cost him nothing. It is to be feared that many reason neither so wisely nor so well, for they wish to enjoy the greatest possible blessings at the smallest possible cost. But David felt as we should feel, that God is worthy of our best. He has created us, preserved us and showered blessings without number upon us, therefore He deserves the best we can give Him in return. Our best in any case is but little, and even when we give it we but restore to God that which is His own.

The text suggests that our love must be given to God. We are to love Him with all our hearts, with all our souls, with all our mind and with all our strength. Now love is a personal affection. We may dread an event, we may fear a danger, we may hope for a favor, but we can only love a person. When we are enjoined to love God with all our hearts, souls, mind and strength, it is expected that we shall set our affections upon Him, consciously, willingly, intelligently, ardently.

But if our love to God is what it should be it will manifest itself toward man. When we love the Father we shall wish to show kindness to His children. Indeed when we truly love our fellow-man that love is the result of our love to God.

As God's love to us prompted Him to make sacrifices for our sake, so our love to Him will stimulate us to do the same. When we remember that God has given His best gifts to us we are constrained to give Him ours in return. Indeed, that affection is hardly worthy of the name of love which does not make sacrifices—sacrifices of money, time and talents. The poor widow who cast two mites into the temple treasury did so because her heart was overflowing with love. Her offering was not large in itself, but it was large for her. The proper way to reckon the value of a gift is not by its intrinsic worth but what it cost the giver. Estimated in this way her offering was a very valuable one, she certainly gave her best to God. How often missionary collectors hear from the lips of the well-to-do the words, "I suppose I can give the widow's mite." But they don't give the widow's mite. If they did their purses would be lighter and so would their hearts. "The only people who are not made better by giving are those who do not give enough."

The woman who poured the ointment on the head of Christ made a great sacrifice, but because her love to him was so great, it must find expression. She adopted the mode which commended itself to her and though some thought she was extravagant, she did not, neither did the Saviour. Many bring earthen jars to Christ but keep the alabaster for themselves. They give Him a few sleepy minutes about bed-time when He should have the best of the day. They give Him a few years at the end of life when He should have the bloom of their youth and the strength of manhood.

Those, however, who give their best to Him are greatly enriched. "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." "The liberal soul shall be made fat." "The heart grows rich in giving."