

Missionary World.

A HOME MISSION FIELD.

BY O.

Anyone who has had the questionable pleasure of riding aboard the Ottawa and Parry Sound train from Emsdale to the Parry Sound end of the construction which was then at Rankins', during the months of March or April last will, no doubt, be able to understand with what feelings of relief one hails the Parry Sound stage which is bear to him to his destination.

The injunction given to your informant was to proceed to the Conger mission which lies in the district of Parry Sound. On arriving at the house of the only elder—one of the faithful few whose dwellings are to the students laboring in these parts like oases in the desert, information was received as to the extent of the field and the best manner of working it.

This field lies east and south of the town of Parry Sound and includes parts of the townships of Foley, Christie, Conger and Humphrey. The chief occupations of the people are lumbering and farming, although during the past summer many found much-needed employment at the construction of the new railway.

The mission comprises five stations:—

Edgington, Parry Sound Road, Conger, Front Lake and Christie Road. The two first having weekly and the other three fortnightly service which necessitated four services every alternate Sabbath.

Edgington is a comparatively new station, means of grace having been first given by Mr. J. C. Smith, B.A., who preached the Word to the two or three Presbyterian families then in that part under a heavy fire of ill-feeling from those who claim to be followers of Him who said, "Love one another." The lookout here for the future is hopeful, for although not a rich people, it has now a very comfortable new church, not as yet, however, completely out of debt, which was built in the summer of 1894 and opened by Rev. Professor Campbell, of Montreal. In connection with this Church a new station was opened this summer at Orrville, a village which has but recently sprung up on the line of railway about one and a half miles distant and in which there were two licensed hotels and no service of any kind, so it was deemed advisable to hold Wednesday evening meetings in an unfinished hall, thus carrying the fight into the enemies' territory. We pray that these meetings may have been, through the Holy Spirit, a means of blessing to those who were callous and indifferent with reference to their own eternal welfare.

Parry Sound Road.—Here service was held in the school house and although the congregation is small, yet for the most part its members warmly espouse the cause. The meetings were greatly augmented during the summer months by railway men from the camps near by, who as a rule were very attentive and conducted themselves with a decorum such as would oftentimes put to shame those who walk in higher spheres of life. In some of these camps good literature was distributed which was received from Orillia Sunday School and others.

Conger, the appointment from which the field derives its name, is a new district where the settlers previous to Mr. Gould's labors on the field, having been sent there by the K. C. S. M. S., went out hunting and fishing on Sunday, but since then they are largely a church-going people. A little log church is the place here to which the tribes go up. This is a comparatively strong mission, having the largest membership of any station on the field.

The Christie Road and Front Lake stations are small but interesting, each containing some families whose consistent lives show forth to the world that they have not bowed the knee to the Prince of the Power

of the Air, but adore the God of their fathers. These stations require more attention in things pertaining to the highest good of the community and of the individual than they have had heretofore.

God in His good Providence has been pleased in the past to give this field as the vineyard for cultivation into the hands of valiant men—champions for His cause—men such as Rev. Wm. Gauld, B.A., now of Formosa; Mr. John Russell, now laboring among the Indians in British Columbia, and others who were not content simply to maintain the footing they possessed, but were strong in the aggressive, recognizing themselves as agents in God's hands for the pulling down of the strongholds of the Evil One. The work done by them was effectual, as is testified to by the changed lives of many who, through their instrumentality, were brought from darkness into light; yet a large amount of labor still requires to be expended. The community is still permeated with much evil. Many hearts as yet know not the Saviour who died for them; nevertheless, we have great cause to thank God that there are houses throughout the district in which an altar has been raised, not to the Unknown or Unknowable, but to the God who hears prayer and who inhabits the humble hearts of His redeemed.

The needs of this and many other fields similar to it ought to be an incentive toward more earnest prayer, more systematic liberality on the part of all God's people, for the harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few.

JAPAN.

Rev. J. B. Porter, Kanazawa: Just before leaving home I attended the meeting of Synod at Nagoya. I consider it one of the best meetings of that body I have ever attended. From beginning to end the Synod showed that the thoughts and purposes uppermost in the mind of all the members were for the advancement of the Kingdom of Christ. It was rich in the evangelistic spirit. Two afternoons of its session were devoted to practical subjects in connection with the work; the first afternoon considered the best methods of conducting and developing the prayer meeting, and the second, the subject of preaching, its methods, difficulties, discouragements and encouragements. The Independent Board of Missions organized last year made a very encouraging report, and the Synod voted to raise 3,000 yen during the coming year, and to undertake work in Formosa. The Board was enlarged from twelve to twenty members. Two missionaries were chosen to be members of this Board. These were Dr. Anderson and myself. I am inclined to think the estimated 3,000 yen will be raised during the coming year.

As I think I have repeatedly written you lately, I consider the outlook for the Lord's work in Japan very encouraging. The spirit of the whole Synod towards missions and missionaries was cordial, kind, and with the earnest desire of co-operation. There was no reason why they should have put two missionaries on their Independent Board, if there had been any other feeling than that of confidence in us.

Native Christian populations under the Turk have been, during this generation, steadily increasing in numbers, wealth and intelligence, simply because they eagerly strive for a share in the civilization of their more fortunate brethren of the West. The Moslem is by his religion absolutely shut out from any such share. Everywhere he is losing ground and growing poorer, while the Christian is growing richer and wiser than he. He has to witness the despised Christians rapidly outstripping him in every respect. It is this which fills him with fury, and prompts him to those acts which we are so apt to regard as the most insane policy he could adopt. The Armenians are among the most industrious and inoffensive people in the world. Their habits of thrift have made them in commerce and in finance correspond in the East to the Jews in Europe. They have been prospering too much, and as many of them have caught some of the spirit and incentive to progress of Europe and America, the word has gone forth from the old conclave of Islam's real rulers, the Ulema of Constantinople, that the Armenian is to be suppressed in true Moslem fashion.—Dr. William H. Thomson in *Harper's Magazine*.

Young People's Societies.

CONDUCTED BY A MEMBER OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S COMMITTEE.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

This column is undertaken in the interest of the Young People's Societies of the Presbyterian Church in Canada and of the work of the young people generally. Its aim is to help the young people to be better Christians and better Presbyterians, and to do better work for Christ and the Church. This aim, which is of very wide scope, embraces such items as the following:

(a.) To quicken the spiritual life of our young people;

(b.) To increase their knowledge of the doctrines, polity and history of our Church, and their interest in its work;

(c.) To improve methods of conducting meetings and carrying on work.

(d.) To deepen the missionary spirit and to stimulate to practical effort in the congregation and for the great Schemes of the Church;

(e.) To promote unity of feeling and effort (e.g., within Presbyteries) on the part of Societies now existing, and the organization of new Societies where none now exist.

(f.) To foster a spirit of true brotherhood towards "all who in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus."

The column is in addition to the space already occupied in the interests of the Young People's Societies of Christian Endeavour which now holds the leading place amongst the Young People's Societies of the Church.

It is distinctly understood that the General Assembly's Committee is not involved in any responsibility for the contents of the column, save for such matter as may be furnished directly by the committee.

The conductor of the column invites the hearty co-operation of Synod and Presbytery Conveners and of the officers and members of all the Young People's Societies of various sorts throughout the Church. He will be especially gratified to have fresh information as to what Societies are doing and how they are doing it, also of the organization of new Societies. He will cheerfully answer questions and will be glad to have brief papers, such as are read on the topic at meetings, sent to him. Address, "Care of the Editor of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN." The column will be given up to the young people. The more they make it their own the better pleased will the conductor be.

"The chief purpose of the Christian Endeavor prayer meeting, as of all Christian gatherings, is worship. In every Scripture, and spoken word, God is to be worshipped. All that is done in the meeting is to be done, not to our credit, but to His glory. We are not to make fine speeches to men; we are to speak so as to honor God. Our prayers are not to be so short and frequent as to please human ears, but so sincere as to be heard of God. Songs are not to be sung merely because of their melody or brightness, but because they express our heart's prayer and praise to God. We need to give more attention to the Godward side of our gathering and less to the manward side."

The above is from the *Presbyterian Christian Endeavor Manual* for 1896, a solidly bound and neat pocket volume of about 100 pages just issued by the Presbyterian Board of Publication, Philadelphia, and sent us by Mr. N. T. Wilson, King St. West, the Ontario agent of the Board. The *Manual* gives the Christian Endeavor Prayer meeting topics for 1896, with daily Bible readings and hints for addresses on each topic. It also embraces the Junior Endeavor topics and daily verse. Hints and suggestions on the working of Christian Endeavor Societies, prepared by W. T. Ellis, one of the editors of the *Golden Rule*, form a valuable part of the book. The question, "To what do Presbyterians give?" is answered by a brief statement of the work of each of the Boards of the Church. The four pages which make up this part of the *Manual* are, of course, of no special use to Canadian readers, beyond giving a hint of what might be done by our own Boards and Committees. Printer's ink pays; and a concise account of what each of the Great Schemes aims at, what it is accomplishing, and what money and workers are needed, put into the hands of all the Young People's Societies, would help both to broaden and deepen their interests in the work of the Church.

THE PERIL AND POWER OF AMBITION.

BY REV. W. S. MCINTYRE, B.D., TORONTO.

Jan. 12.—Luke ii 42; Deut. xiii. 21-24.

There is a species of ambition which is vain, proud, selfish and altogether to be despised. Doubtless Shakespeare had it in mind when he said, "Fling away ambition! By that sin fell the angels; how can man, then, the image of his Maker, hope to win by it?" The man is in a perilous position who gives away to an ambition which is selfish and unworthy. One or two considerations will make this clear.

I. Such an ambition makes one indifferent to the feelings of others. If other men stand in the way of one who is prompted by an unworthy ambition, he would not scruple to wound their feelings or to trample upon their rights. History furnishes so many illustrations of this that it is scarcely necessary to mention particular examples. If the man who is actuated by an unholy ambition can gain the object he has in view, he will laugh at the credulity of others and congratulate himself upon his own shrewdness. Gibbon says that in Mohammed's last days, ambition was his ruling passion and that he secretly smiled at the enthusiasm of his youth, and the credulity of his proselytes. Even the disciples of our Lord were sometimes actuated by an unworthy ambition, and thus it was that at the supper-table, when they were observing the Passover for the last time with their Master they disputed among themselves which of them should be the greatest. How selfish they were! And how indifferent their ambition made them to the feelings of their Master. Regard for the rights of others is always sacrificed on the altar of an unholy ambition.

II. The cherishing of a selfish ambition leads to forgetfulness of God. God, anticipated this on the part of the children of Israel, hence the very solemn admonitions which we find in Deuteronomy against pride and self-seeking. Agar wisely asks that God would not give him riches lest he should deny his Maker (Prov. xxx. 9). When Jezebel waxed fat he kicked (Deut. xxxii. 15). Ambition led Wolsey to serve his king far more zealously than he served his God.

III. Unworthy ambition brings its own punishment. "Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall." The story of Nebuchadnezzar's life is full of warning. Many a man finds, as Wolsey did, that after he has been swimming on a sea of glory far beyond his depth, his high-blown pride breaks under him, and that then he is left to the mercy of a rude stream that must forever hide him.

But there is a worthy ambition and this we should cultivate most assiduously. The ambition which moves one along in the right direction may become a real power for good. It should be our ambition to work out the best that God has implanted within us making it minister to His service, and for His glory. We may well ponder the words which Jesus spoke on this subject to His disciples, "Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant; even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many."

A word or two from Meyer on this subject may properly close this paper. "If it is properly curbed and kept, ambition plays a useful part among the motive-forces of human life. It is a bad sign when a lad or a man has no desire to improve his position and get on. In all likelihood he will always lie with the rest of the rabble at the bottom of the hill, without the desire or power to stir. And it is well to cultivate a holy ambition to be all that God can make us; to grasp all the possibilities that lie within the reach of faith; and to apprehend that for which we have been apprehended of Christ Jesus."