

day, after years of conflict with the difficulties and privations of first settlement in the bush, than when they commenced life. It is true there is much reason for thankfulness even in this heavy affliction; things are not so bad as they might have been; yet not less severely will their losses be felt by the many sufferers. We must not forget that many of our people, those who have contributed to the support of ordinances in our stations in the past, are among the sufferers. From this it must be evident that the resources, in some of the stations at least, will be to a certain extent lessened—not perhaps this year, as in some of the stations we know the year's finances had been arranged before the fires broke out; but it need not be a matter of surprise if for a year or two some of the stations, at least, be less able to contribute than in the past. I may also state that those who have suffered most severely are in the fields occupied by the Students' Missionary Associations, and therefore there is all the more need that those who have an opportunity to contribute to the funds of these Associations do so liberally. Is there not also in their peculiar circumstances a strong reason why they should not be left destitute of Gospel ordinances during the coming winter? No more opportune time could occur for pressing upon those who are thus deprived of their earthly comforts, those richer heavenly blessings which the Gospel of Jesus Christ alone can bring them.

While we have in these afflictive dispensations of Providence reason given us to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, we have no less reason for gratitude to the great Head of the Church for the measure of prosperity vouchsafed to us. A feeling of thankfulness for the interest taken in their spiritual wants was generally manifested, as also a desire to do what they are able for the support of ordinances among themselves; coupled with this, a spirit of hopefulness for the future was found to exist which was quite marked. How far the untoward circumstances above referred to may have damped the spirits of the hopeful remains to be seen.

We trust that arrangements for

WINTER SUPPLY

may be made on a much larger scale than ever before. We want, and must have if the field is to be overtaken, at least eight men, ordained missionaries and catechists, for the winter months. And this will not be thought an exorbitant demand when we take into account that these eight will occupy the ground wrought by *fourteen* labourers during the summer months. If we fail in this the work must suffer severely, and virtually a year be lost in the advancement of the cause.

The thanks of the Presbytery and of the Home Mission Committee are due to the Missionary Associations of Knox and Queen's Colleges, for the very efficient aid they have given in carrying on the work in these districts, the former having five and the latter one Missionary in the field during the season, occupying in all twenty-two stations. But for their aid many of these stations would as yet have no existence. Also to the Ladies' Aid Association of St. Peter's Church, Rochester, for the kindly interest taken in the work originated by them last year in the Township of Franklin. Might we be allowed here to suggest their action in this matter as an example to some of our wealthy Canadian congregations who may not be conscious of doing all they might for the spread of Christ's cause in our land? By giving attention to a particular field a definite object would be kept in view, and their interest in the work as a whole might thereby be deepened. There are many points in this wide territory where work of this kind might be carried on—points which neither the Presbytery nor Committee can reach under present circumstances. Applicants will have fields assigned to their care in the order in which they apply.

Nor must we forget the very practical evidence of interest in our work here given by the Presbytery of Guelph, in sending a labourer for six months to this field. We can assure the brethren of that Presbytery that Mr. Knox's labours have been very highly appreciated by those among whom he had laboured, and we have every reason to believe that much good has been accomplished. In connection with the Students' Missionary Associations, I would suggest that the Treasurer of these Associations be asked to forward to the Clerk of Presbytery, in time for insertion in the returns to the Assembly, the amount of moneys re-

ceived by them from the respective fields during the preceding summer. I observe, in looking over the returns for past years, that these stations appear to great disadvantage, as virtually contributing nothing for the support of ordinances among themselves, which fact also leaves the returns in a very imperfect condition.

I cannot close this report without embracing this first opportunity of thanking the Committee for their kindness in granting me, at their meeting in April last, three months' leave of absence. As this report indicates, I did not, for various reasons, avail myself of the leave granted. Among others, I felt that the interests of the work demanded my attention; and though my health was very unsatisfactory at the outset of my work in May, yet by a judicious conserving of physical strength, I am happy to say that I have quite recovered my former state of health.

ROBERT SOUTH.

One of the finest passages in Professor Phelps' volume on the "Theory of Preaching" is the following notice of Dr. South:

"Probably one of the most notable examples of a really powerful mind, which was often crippled in the pulpit by its fear of fanaticism, was Dr. Robert South. A man of more brawny force of intellect never stood in an English pulpit. He has scarcely had his equal in command of that Saxon English which gives to speech power over the masses of his countrymen. In his delineation of the weak points of human nature he was the peer of Shakspeare. He deserves to rank among the most racy of English satirists. His casuistical sermons indicate a marvellous insight into human motives. He adhered stoutly to the Genevan theology, a theology which has always held sway in England when the pulpit has been eminent among the practical forces of the age. To the court of the second Charles he might have been what John Knox was to that of Queen Mary. He was courage incarnate. He read prayers at Westminster on the day of the execution of Charles the First, praying for his Majesty by name. He had the intellectual resources and the temperament of the reformer at his command, at a time when England ran wild in its reaction from the rule of the commonwealth, and needed just such a mind as his at the head of the English pulpit to stay the torrent of corruption which was flooding the Church.

"Yet with this singular adaptation of resources to opportunity, he missed it as fatally as if he had been an imbecile. The sermons on which his fame as a preacher chiefly rests breathe scarcely a hint of apostolic appreciation of the crisis in which he acted. Indeed, some of them hardly suggest the possibility of their having been instrumental in the salvation of souls. Why? It is not for the want of sound evangelical themes from pungent texts. Some of them are among the imperial themes, such as President Edwards would have used in the 'Great Awakening.' It is not for the want of practicality of aim in his discussions. Many of them are replete with application to real life as he read it. What is it, then, that takes religious life out of so many of his sermons, and gives them the title which modern criticism has applied to them of 'week-day sermons?' Why are they read now as standards of literature, rather than of the evangelical life of the pulpit? Robert South was for more than fifty years contemporary with Richard Baxter. Why did South leave for posterity the sermon against Extemporaneous Prayer, and the sermon in memory of Charles I., the 'Royal martyr of blessed memory,' while Baxter left the 'Saint's Rest' and the 'Call to the Unconverted?'

"I answer, South was corroded by his enmity to Puritan fanaticism. His pulpit was eaten through by that dry-rot. South, the preacher, shrivelled into South, the courtier. The prince of preachers became the most servile of courtiers whenever he stood face to face with the spirit of the age. That spirit saluted him and gave him great opportunity; and he rebuffed it with ridicule and invective. Thenceforth his eye was closed upon the future of England. While prophets and apostles were moving in the air he could see no other revelation in the heavens than that Cromwell was 'Baal,' and Milton a 'blind adder.'"

He that knows how to pray has the secret of safety in prosperity, and of support in trouble.—*Jay*.

PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

A FIVE-MINUTE SERMON TO CHILDREN.

BY REV. JAMES HASTIE, LINDSAY.

[Subjoiner is a report of a five-minute address to the children of the congregation, lately delivered in St. Andrew's Church, Lindsay, just before the regular sermon. The plan adopted by Mr. Hastie is so to shorten the usual sermon on Sabbath mornings as to allow a five minutes' address to the children, without protracting the service to an undue length. It is found to be both profitable and interesting. These children's sermons are given regularly in the Lindsay "Post," and we are sure our young readers will thank us for occasionally transferring them to the columns of THE PRESBYTERIAN.—ED. C. P.]

"No man cometh unto the Father but by Me."—John xiv. 6.

Everybody thinks that heaven is above them, and that to get there they must rise higher than the place they now occupy. This notion seems well founded, for when Christ was leaving this world, we are told that He went up to the top of a mountain with His disciples, and then went up to heaven in a cloud; and His return is spoken of as coming down to earth.

Now the text tells us that the only way to get to our heavenly abode is by the help of Jesus. To make this plain let me give you a fable:

A number of young folks were one day walking through a dark forest. They knew not the way, nor did they care very much, so happy were they laughing and singing and telling stories. They hoped to come out somehow all right and reach home. Suddenly the sky grew dark and they knew not where they were going. Then one of the boys stumbled over something and fell far down, out of sight into a deep place. His companions thought he was surely killed, and they would never see him again. But their fears soon gave place to joy when on looking down they saw he had not fallen to the bottom, but had caught hold of a bush half way down and was clinging to it. "Hold on and we will save you," they shouted. Quick as they could they made a rope; but alas! it was made of poor stuff called *self-righteousness*, which had no strength at all. It looked all right, and seemed as if it would never break. Soon as they dropped the end to him he seized it with all his might and let go his bush. But they had not lifted him more than an inch or two when lo! the rope broke, but luckily he seized his bush once more. "Oh," he shouted, "the rope is broken. Give me something stronger. Be quick, for my hands ache dreadfully."

Then they made another. This one seemed very good, and they said it must hold. It was made of a stuff called *morality*. "Now," said they, "take hold of this and we will draw you to the top." But scarcely had he begun to rise when it snapped like the other, and if it had not been that he held on to his bush he must have gone to the bottom and been killed. While they were making the third rope the poor fellow turned his eyes downward, but could see only darkness. He then heard a kind, sweet voice from below saying, "Fall, fall, I will save you; let go, I will catch you." His friends at the top did not hear this voice, so busy were they at their third rope, which they made of a material close by, called *good resolutions*. Throwing this rope down they said, "Now we have a rope you can never break. Hold on now; we will soon get you to the top. It's the last rope we can give you."

So they pulled with all their might, but like the others this one snapped too. But as the poor boy hung there by his bush, with little strength left and his hands so sore, the kind voice again said, "Fall, fall, I will save you." "But it is dark and I cannot see you," said the lad. "Trust my word and see. Let go at once," said the voice. Just then the bush itself gave way, and as he felt his strength all gone he faintly cried, "Lord, save me or I perish." Then oh! unspeakable joy, when suddenly he found himself safe in the arms of "Him who is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Jesus," and he was carried up safe to the top.

That, my dear young friends, shows what are some of the wrong ways to get to heaven, and what is the right way.

What do we mean by "good resolutions" and by "morality," and why cannot we get to heaven by