

DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN MISSIONARY
SOCIETY OF THE CHURCH OF
ENGLAND IN CANADA.

EPIPHANY APPEAL, 1887

REVEREND SIR: It is our desire that this address from the Board of Management of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada be read, as a sermon or otherwise, in the hearing of every congregation in our dioceses on Sunday, Jan. 2nd, 1887, and that the offerings of the people on the following Sunday be given to Foreign Missions.

JOHN FREDERICKTON, Metropolitan.
J. T. ONTARIO.
H. NOVA SCOTIA.
J. W. QUEBEC.
W. B. MONTREAL.
ARTHUR TORONTO.
E. ALGOMA.
MAURICE S. HURON,
CHARLES NIAGARA.

DEAR BRETHREN,—

On Sunday next, the 9th day of January, throughout all the parishes and missions in this branch of Christ's Church, will be made our annual collections on behalf of Foreign Missions. And rightly, brethren, do we observe and celebrate the Holy Festival of the Epiphany, when we show forth our thankfulness not only with our lips but in our lives, by taking an actual and active part in the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles.

To take an actual and active part in Missionary work, is the bounden duty of every Christian Church and of every Christian. "Go ye into all the world and make disciples of all nations." That is the Great Charter of the Church. For that work the Church exists. That work she is bound to do. That work she has, as yet, but imperfectly done. And until that work is done, and thoroughly done—whilst two out of every three living in the world are still heathens—for any one who personally does nothing for the carrying out of Christ's command, and the accomplishment of Christ's purpose, to profess and call himself a Christian—to own Christ for his Master and his King is to own himself a disobedient servant and a disloyal subject.

Something we all of us *can* do to make disciples

of all nations. And something, therefore, we all of us *must* do. We cannot all go to preach the gospel to the heathen with our own lips, (though there is no reason why some should not go as well from this church in Canada as from elsewhere) but we can all in heart and mind accompany those who do. We can all help forward Missionary work by the effectual fervent prayer which availeth much. We can all of us give something, however little, for the sending forth and the maintenance of those who do get them out of their country, and from kindred, and from their father's house, and go to carry the gospel into the land whither the Lord their God sends them. We can do this, and we ought to do this. We ought to do this because our Saviour's command is upon us, and because it is good for our soul's health. Our soul's health requires that the religious emotions we have, (and amongst others this aspiration after the conversion of the world to the Christian religion which no real Christian can be without) should not be allowed to evaporate in sentiment, but should be gathered up into act and expressed in conduct.

The duty of aiding in Mission work is imperative. The benefit is apparent; and the opportunity is before us in this our annual collection. The need is always great, and never was it greater than it is now.

There are signs everywhere that the world is ripe for conversion to the Christian faith. In every quarter where trial has been made the prospects are promising. From every quarter we hear the cry, "Come over and help us." In India, with its 250,000,000 of inhabitants, where our responsibility is so great, those whose experience and character lends weight to their testimony, tell us that old beliefs are shaken, and old religions crumbling; that now, as certainly never before, is the time for the Christian army to enter in and take possession. In China, in Japan, in Africa—everywhere the way is open, if only laborers can be sent when the harvest is ripe. And if we will but send them, the laborers can be found. Only a few years ago, Bishop Patteson was felled to the ground, in one of the islands of the Pacific, with a Gospel message on his lips. And now we hear of Bishop Selwyn, surrounded by Christian converts, on the very spot where his predecessor was killed. When Bishop Hannington, but the other day, was put to death as he was pressing on to make disciples of the natives of Central Africa, volunteers, more than one, came forward for the

perilous post at which he fell. The race of Christian heroes is not exhausted yet, but still they come, "each stepping where his comrade stood."

And the success which attends him who stands in Bishop Patteson's place, will, in God's good time, attend him who goes to take up, and carry on the Banner of the Cross which fell from the dying hand of Hannington. Success indeed, immediate success, is but a secondary consideration. Duty and obedience to the Master's command, that is the first and great consideration. But still for the hardness of our own hearts, and to strengthen our feeble knees, it may not be amiss to recall the fact, that, whatever may be the vicissitudes of the battle, we fight a winning fight.

In the beginning of the century there were of Christian converts in all about 50,000. Now there are 1,500,000.

In this victory our Church has had her full share. One society alone, the Church Missionary Society, has now 90,000 native Christians, and over 4,000 European and native teachers. Another, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, while ministering faithfully and generously, —as we in this country have good cause to know—, to the spiritual need of emigrants, has never neglected the great work of carrying the good news to the heathen. And now she calls loudly for help from those whom she has helped, that she may respond to the cry that reaches her from all lands, and so "make disciples of all nations."

And we, what are we doing in this Canadian Church?

We have made a beginning. In the year 1885 we raised \$5,826. That was \$1,000 more than was contributed in the previous year. The amount is not much, but to increase is a hopeful sign.

For the work's sake, and for your own sake, we entreat you, brethren, that you be not slack in this matter; for the work's sake, for, with the dew of God's blessing upon it, the seed you sow, though it be but as a grain of mustard seed, may grow till it becomes greater than all herbs, giving shade and shelter to countless wearied souls; for your own sake, for in very truth this is a mercy that is twice blessed—that blesteth him that gives, and him that takes. He that gives but a cup of cold water shall not go without his reward. Self denial is a Christian grace, which all, to be Christians, must attain. We can deny ourselves, and ought to deny ourselves in many things; but in this matter of

giving for the spread of Christ's Gospel we have a test of the reality of our self denial about which there can be no mistake. Our money is to us the assurance of power to gratify our selfishness; and when we give up that for Christ's sake, then we know that so far, for His sake, we do deny ourselves.

And is it a great offering only that will bring again the back-flowing tide of blessings upon the giver's own soul? That is as the case may be. For you to obtain the reflex benefit of benevolence, your giving must reach the point of self-denial. Where that point is, no man can say for another; but each can very well know for himself. To reach it he must rise above the customary tribute to decency, and give, not what he can spare without feeling it, but enough to make him feel the inconvenience of parting with it. Reach that point, wherever it may be. If you have been largely blessed, give largely. If you have but little, give of that little. And never for a moment suppose that any sum, however small, if in the giving of it you reach the point of self-denial, is little in God's sight. In His estimate the widow's mite was an offering more splendid than the overflow of the rich man's superfluity.

Finally, brethren, remember that in the strenuous carrying out of Christ's great command and commission, there can be no such thing as failure—that be the results what they may, duty done is always a success. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand; for 'thou canst not tell whether shall prosper, either 'this or that, or whether they both shall be alike 'good.' The seed you sow is the word of God; and 'as the rain cometh down,' saith the Lord, 'and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.'"

NOTE.—It is recommended that the offerings for this purpose be sent at as early a date possible to the Secretary-Treasurer of each Diocese, to be by him transmitted to Mr. J. J. Mason, General Treasurer of the Society.

CHAS. H. NOCKRIDGE, D. D.
General Secretary.
Hamilton, Ont.