

Ontario General Agency
CHRISTIAN AT WORK ASSOCIATION,

M. S. RICHMOND General Agent.

OFFICE, SHAPTESBURY HALL.

Toronto, 187

DEAR

I have the honour to announce my appointment to the General Agency of the "Christian at Work Association" for this Province, and at the same time to ask for your active co-operation in the good cause, with the object of which I presume you to be already well acquainted.

The one at present claiming our attention is the vast amount of pernicious literature that, in the shape of weekly periodicals and magazines, as well as the thousands of vile novels, are like a flood overflowing our land, and we are sorry to be compelled to admit, is finding its way into nearly every Canadian home, even of those who profess the name of Jesus—ruining the morals of our sons, and associating our daughters with scenes of folly and the habits of vice, which in almost every instance is made as alluring as the author's ability will allow—the effects of which may be gathered from the able address of J. M. Talcott, of Providence, R. I., before the Y. M. C. A.'s convention at Poughkeepsie, N. Y., last July.

Mr. Talcott's twenty-six years of experience in connection with the reformatories and prison life make him an authority on the subject, and believing you to be deeply interested in this our common cause, we take the liberty to re-print it from the reports of the convention :

"I have had the care of hundreds of children since my connection with reformatories, and have made a careful estimate of the literature used in the families whence these children came. Less than five per cent. of the boys and two per cent. of the girls have come from families where a religious paper was received regularly. One mother came last week with a large bundle of papers, and asked me, "Can I leave these papers?" I said, "I will look at them." I opened the bundle, and as soon as I saw the heading of the papers I said, "No; you love that boy and don't want him ruined. Look at this paper." "Why," she replied, "I did not know they were such papers as this; he has been taking them for over three years." It was the influence of those papers that caused him to commit the crime for which he is now imprisoned.

We cannot enter too earnestly into this matter. As I go into family after family, I take up their papers, and point to those poisonous paragraphs which destroy both soul and body; and Christian young men may accomplish a great work of this kind. This literature has been most influential in filling our reformatories with boys and girls, as well as our prisons with older persons. For six years I was connected with the State's prison; since then, for twenty years, I have laboured for the young, feeling that reformatories were needed to save them from the prison."

Mr. Talcott's observations, though perhaps more extended and surely more careful, has been and is that of every Christian. Therefore, seeing the danger, and feeling the responsibility we owe to our families and the world, we are endeavouring with all our might to obey the divine injunction, "Overcome the evil with good." This is the most practical way. "It is something to take away the evil food from the table, but vastly more to take away the evil appetite from the soul." And although we know this, and claim to be a Christian people, the number of the prominent leading journals that are published in this country and the United States, in the hands of active living Christian men, are so shamefully small, that they can be counted sooner than the letters of the English alphabet; while the circulation of only two of the leading sensational weeklies of New York are vastly greater than all of the religious press of the continent.

Christian, bestir thyself, for thou hast a work to do here, and the Good Master would not that thou shouldst wrap thy robe around thee and pass the evil by on the other side, lest it be said of thee, like some of the Tekoaites, "But the nobles of Tekoa put not their necks to the work of the Lord."

The appetite for something sensational is (though never satisfied) well fed by flaming articles in the morning paper, appearing under the head of "murders, robberies and police reports." Why is it that these things occur? Simply because, in our reading by our fireside, in

the family circle and alone, we become eye-witnesses to the crime that is stalking through our land; and our children grow acquainted with the manner in which all of the worst murders that have startled the world, the most daring robberies that have been perpetrated since the world began, have been accomplished. Worse than all the rest, all these crimes have been taken as the ground work of some high toned romance in which the names of unknown dukes and unheard of earls, with their fair ladies, perforce must figure.

And another class comes trooping up which makes such as Claude Duval and his compeers heroes, and the outlawed bandit turns out a patron saint. These things should not be, yet they are. We find such books and story papers, as they are often called, scattered broadcast over the land, and in too many libraries that desire to be called respectable.

Now we desire to supplant this kind of reading matter, and are accordingly publishing *The Christian at Work*, both in weekly and monthly edition, which we sell at cost; and to make it as good as it can be, we have secured the pens of such men as Dr. T. De Witt Talmage, whose sermons appear in every number; also, Charles H. Spurgeon, of London, England, and Horatius Bonar, of Edinburgh, Scotland, together with many other of the best religious writers of the day. We also furnish three of the finest Oil Chromos ever offered by any paper, that will sell themselves and paper too. We propose to place a copy of *The Christian at Work* in every home in our land, and we want help to do it; therefore we have taken this liberty, and would ask you to get us as many subscribers as you can; but if you are not in a position to do this yourself, have the kindness to place us in communication with some suitable persons. I will be most happy to send sample paper and circular of terms, on application, to any address. We must arouse public sentiment, for while the good man of the house slept, the enemy sowed the tares.

Hoping to hear from you soon,

I have the honour to be, &c.,

M. S. RICHMOND,

General Agent.

[OVER.]

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