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NOV.

1896.

# CHURCH AND HOME



The Magazine of the Presbytery of St. John

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# CHURCH and HOME

The Magazine of the Presbytery of St. John.

Vol. 1.

ST. JOHN, N. B., NOVEMBER, 1896.

No. 11

WOMAN'S sphere in the service of the Church is a subject that has given rise to the keenest discussion. We do not pretend to define it, but that her influence is one of the most powerful agencies for good none will deny.

We do not believe that woman is equal to man, and further, we do not believe that they should be placed in comparison. There is a difference in form and temperament, and surely the Almighty meant, we do not say difference, but distinction, when He created them male and female. There are duties that belong to man and there are duties that belong to woman, in their own sphere each is supreme. There is a delicacy of feeling and sensitiveness of disposition that mark a true woman that we do not look for in man, and there is a boldness and vigour that we associate with manhood that we never apply to woman. No hard and fast line need be drawn as to what either the one or the other can and must do; both are of service in helping forward the Kingdom of Truth.

Usually it is the mother's tenderness and patience that have the deepest impression on the young mind, and are remembered long after words of instruction are forgotten. There are chords in the human heart that will only respond to a woman's

touch, and why should the Church refuse to sanction what is so abundantly fruitful in good works? Why should we not have associated with the regular officers of the Church women who could administer charity and attend to much of the visitation that cannot be well performed by either minister or elder?

THE Churches of every denomination for some time back have shown a commendable interest in the welfare of the young. In our denomination every congregation has a Sabbath School and a Bible Class. In many of our pulpits special addresses to children are given regularly. Young People's Societies, whether Christian Endeavour or Literary Societies, have in many cases been formed. A Committee has been formed by the General Assembly to look after the interests and take oversight of these Associations. The young people thus receive a great deal of attention at the hands of the Church.

Yet the outcome is not satisfactory. There are very few of the large number who leave our Sunday Schools every year who actually find their way into the membership of the Church. There is no column in the statistical return to indicate how many drop out of the school every

year, but the experience of our City Churches go to prove that a large number of our senior scholars do cease to attend school and do not connect themselves with the Church. We have an elaborate system in our Church for developing the welfare of our young, but it seems as if there is a weak and imperfect part lying between the Sabbath School and the young communicants' class. It is here usually that the Bible Class is supposed to come in. This class is usually taught by the minister, yet there seems to be a faulty connection, as far as our imperfect statistics show, between it and the Sabbath School on the one hand and the young communicants' class on the other. It is supposed to fill up the gap between the two, but apparently it fails in the effort. The reason of this, in many cases, is not far to seek. The minister gets his pupils by an intimation from the pulpit, and no special machinery exists for drafting into his class the older scholars from the Sabbath School. These are allowed to remain as long as they please with favourite teachers, and whilst some do join the minister's class, others hang about the Sabbath School, and drop off one by one and are lost sight of. At the other end, the Bible Class has not a very vital connection with the young communicants' class, as it varies from year to year, and young men cease to attend it, just about the time when the responsibility of joining the membership of the Church could be hopefully pressed

upon them. They join the class when they are above fourteen years of age, and leave it, generally speaking, when they are about nineteen. They don't care for sitting with those they regard as boys when they have reached the last mentioned age, and either join some advanced class, which is usually taught outside the congregation, or lapse into partial indifference to the Church.

Now the cure for this yearly loss may not be easily found, but it ought to be earnestly sought. There is a leak somewhere, and it ought, if possible, to be discovered and stopped. It is a sad statement to make, still it is true, that the Church somehow fails to keep hold of all those who, at a very tender age, put themselves under her kindly care. Some, to prevent this lapsing, have been advocating the necessity of what is called "early communicating." Such would have our young people join the Church when they are quite young, say fifteen or sixteen instead of twenty or twenty-five, as is the general age at present. Certainly young people at that age are more directly under the eyes of teachers and ministers in the Sabbath Schools and Bible Classes. There is no reason why they should not then be admitted, if they give the office-bearers satisfactory reason to believe that they have an intelligent grasp of the vows they are taking upon themselves, and have nothing in their walk and conversation to negative the profession they are making. Good might result from having

the duty of communicating pressed upon young people at an earlier stage than is the habit at present. But apart from this, much might be done to prevent this loss to the Church by a thoroughly graded system of education, efficiently wrought.

If each Session held itself responsible for the oversight of the young, and carefully kept a roll of their names and ages, and saw to it that they were in attendance on the Sabbath School up to fourteen years of age, and were then drafted into the Bible Class, much good would result. Too much is left to teachers, who are apt to work for their own hand, and too little is done by Sessions for the general well-being of the congregation. In other words, the education of the young must be carried on with more system. A plan for taking in all the young and keeping them at their education must be matured and carried out by the Session, who are the overseers of the flock. Just as attention is paid by Sessions to the attendance on ordinances of members in full communion, so must they also see to it that the young, whose spiritual education they have undertaken to superintend and forward, take advantage of the Sabbath School and Bible Class. We are too apt to leave the care of such matters to the Sabbath School, or some other Society, and think that we thus escape our personal responsibility. But if we are to regain our lost ones, and keep those we have, we must trust less to machinery and more to our

own personal exertions, for the advancement of the welfare of our young.

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The attention of W. F. M. S. Auxiliaries is called to the following communication on "Christian Work in Armenia," by Professor J. Rendel Harris, who has been doing relief work in Armenia for some time.

#### CHRISTIAN WORK IN ARMENIA.

I must not delay to write and tell you how increasingly interesting our work here is becoming, and how wonderfully the way is being made before us. We are much impressed by what we see here, both as regards the conflict between civilization and barbarism and as regards the religious emancipation of the people from their ancient superstitions. We are staying here at the American College, which has been doing a great work in this part of Turkey, and is naturally much hated by those who are fanatically inclined amongst the Moslems. It is an unspeakable comfort to be landed in this oasis, where one can enjoy for a little while the comforts and conveniences of western life. Will it sound strange to hear that in Aintab I played tennis with the professors and students of the college, and that last night we had some passages from the "Messiah" sung for us? If it surprises you, it is equally strange to us, who were quite unprepared to find how fast things have been moving here in the last few years. No wonder the authorities are alarmed, as they see the old order passing away, and feel their supremacy disintegrating from day to day. But enough of this; I only want to impress upon you the fact that Armenia is very little understood as far as

relates to its place and civilization, for the simple reason that its place is changing so rapidly. You must imagine us then as living in a beautiful American house in the midst of the college grounds. We look across the valley to the American hospital and the Girls' seminary behind which is the city with its minarets. On the left the old Arab castle, which appears to be rebuilt from an earlier structure of the Crusaders. If that is right, as I think it is, the view comprises the obsolete chivalry of Western Christendom, the decaying barbarism of Islam and the rush of advancing progress from beyond the sea. A singular combination. One moment the eye rests upon the burnt ruins of the massacre of last Nov., the next upon the towers and parapets which tell of the battles of the mediaeval world, and side by side the splendid buildings which represent the missionary impulse and the philanthropy of the nineteenth century.

But what I want to tell you most of is the remarkable religious phenomena that are before us here. The first results of all these horrible massacres has been to draw together the various bodies of Christians, and to accomplish a religious unity such as no council could ever have found a basis for. I think I mentioned in one of my previous letters that an Armenian Protestant pastor in Constantinople had said to me, in view of the reconciliation that was going on between the Protestants and the old Armenian church, that it would not be long before the evangelical preachers would be occupying the old churches. But I certainly hardly expected to see this so soon fulfilled, still less to be myself a small factor of the fulfillment. But here in Aintab the thing is an accomplished fact; and when I tell you of it, you will, I am sure, be astonished

and praise God. Yesterday my wife and myself preached to audiences of about 11,000 people, and this alone is sufficient to make the day one of the most memorable in our lives. The way it came about is something like this: it is the result of three operating factors. First, the solidifying influence of an awful persecution; the same cause which brought in the early Christian church, the so-called heretic, before the same tribunal, and often resulted in the canonization of the heretics along with the orthodox (as in the case of Perpetua and Felicitas, and other well known martyrs), has been at work here; and the Christians have been wonderfully drawn together by the trials through which they have had to pass. As one of the pastors said to me to-day, "We were like pieces of cold iron, but this persecution has welded us together." The second cause which has been at work is the sympathy of Western Protestant Nonconformity. The Armenians know very well how much of sympathy has come to them from the old English and American Evangelicals, and they have drawn their own conclusions. They say, "We understand the Protestants now, and know they are not heretics." And thirdly, since the alleviation of the sufferings of the people has largely flowed through the hands of the native Armenian pastors, working with the old Gregorian Armenians, the two poles of religious thought and life have been brought into such contiguity that sparks of material love have been passing all the time. No doubt other higher influences have been at work which do not admit of classification under firstly, secondly and thirdly, because they are above all, through all and in all. Well, one result of this upheaval in Aintab has been that the Protestants (including the college professors and native

preachers) have been preaching the gospel in the old Gregorian Church, and in the very midst of the old Gregorian ritual. The people, too, in the very midst of their sorrows, have turned their attention to religion in a way that has probably never been known before. All the churches are crowded, generally twice a day, and the people will sit for hours listening to the consolations of the kingdom of God. Yesterday, as I said, was our great day. Dr. Fuller, president of the American College, has been invited to preach at the Gregorian High Mass, and he obtained permission for me to come and share the privilege with him. It was the first time he had ever had the opportunity, and the first time I had been in anything of the kind. The service began before daybreak, and, as the ritual is extremely long, and without any preaching occupies about two hours, you can judge what it would be like with a couple of Protestant addresses intercollated in it. I was out of bed by ten minutes after five, and after a cup of coffee and a bit of bread we were soon on our way to the church, where we found the service already well advanced. But what a sight! From end to end of the building a sea of heads; the men stood, of course, as there are no seats, but only carpets on the floor, and I need not say that the capacity of a building is vastly increased when the people stand, or when they sit close packed on the floor; away in the galleries and behind lattice-work was a throng of women, and a glance overhead at the lantern showed that a crowd of women were also listening on the roof. I suppose there must have been three thousand people present, and they say that another thousand was in the court-yard and unable to get into the church. When the first sunbeams fell on this crowd

within the church, with their red fezes, blue jackets, and striped shirts, it made a fantastic sea of color that is not easy to describe. The service is much more extended than most masses of which I know anything. The main features of the eucharistic method, however, were not difficult to recognize. The Nicene Creed was recited by the whole congregation, and the kiss of peace was given, usually by turning one's cheeks to one's neighbors, first to the one side and then to the other, but without any actual contact between the lips and the face. The procession of the priests, as they brought the elements from one altar to the other to place them in the hands of the celebrant, was very interesting. The approaching priest recites from the psalm, "Lift up your heads," &c., and the celebrant enquires, "Who is this King of Glory?" and so on, the elements being placed on the altar. But I need not enlarge further on this ancient ritual. Indeed I do not understand it as well as I could wish (speaking as an archæologist). In the midst of the service one of the clergy read a paper of subscriptions for the poor, usually in the form of thanksgivings or requests for prayer, and it was very interesting to note that no less than four donations were made in thankfulness for the safe return of the American doctor (Dr. Shepherd) from Zeitun. One person added, and for the safe return of the English consul who has been prayed for by the people in the great church. When it came to the time for the sermon, Dr. Fuller was introduced and preached to the people extempore; and they listened with breathless attention, and often by a murmur of sympathy or by a responsive "Amen" expressed their approval of what was said. I was back in Antioch by this time with Chrysostom. Then

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came my turn to say a few words. After this the service continued; the elements were elevated, portions of blessed bread were distributed amongst the people, and finally the first chapter of the Gospel of John was read (in the old Armenian, I think) and so the liturgy concluded. A short service was then commenced in commemoration of the dead, but by this time we were tired, it was eight o'clock, and most of the people were leaving. So we came back to the college with thankful hearts for the opportunity we had enjoyed of speaking of the Kingdom of God to a people who do not generally hear anything on that point, beyond the obscure intimations of the ritual. At noon the great church was crowded again, but this time three thousand women had the floor, and my dear wife was the celebrant of the mysteries. I must leave her to give her own impressions of that remarkable service. The afternoon was appointed for services in almost all the churches, and I promised to come and help them at the first and second Protestant churches, beginning with the latter; and then going on to the former. As there was likely to be a great crowd, services was also arranged by the Protestant pastors in the old Armenian church. Not to allow the brotherly kindness to be all on one side, the first hour of

the service in the Second Protestant Church was given up to the Gregorians, who were allowed to bring their altar with them, and set it up, with a censer and other necessaries, in front of the Protestant pulpit. And when they had done their evening service the Protestant worshipped again. Here, again it was a wonderful sight; the open galleries and a small part of the main floor was reserved for women; the rest was filled with a dense mass of worshippers, who filled the building long before the appointed hour, and would, to judge from their interest, have willingly staid all day. Professor Papiasian led the service and expounded the Scriptures; he then called upon me, for whom he interpreted most beautifully; and when I had done we slipped off to the other church, and left him to preach to the people on his own account. The First Church is a splendid building with a waggon roof on wooden pillars—no galleries. This time the women sat on one side of the floor in a place reserved for them. Here there must have been again three thousand people; and how they listened! First of all their pastor (educated at Yale University, in America) preached them a closely reasoned discourse on the necessity of progress in the interpretation of Christianity, and then I had my little say, and so





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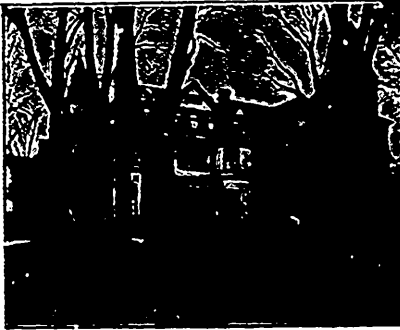
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we ended. My own mind was full of blessed astonishment at the things I had seen and heard. In the evening we had a meeting with the students in the college, to whom my wife and I both said a few words. The people of whom I have been speaking to you are as good material as any similar audience you could gather in England. Alas! that they should be destroyed.

### Sabbath Observance.

At every Synod meeting two questions always force themselves prominently into notice. These more than any other, require tolerant and dispassionate handling, yet between them they manage to excite a vast amount of heated discussion. One of these is Temperance. The other is Sabbath Observance. They are staple subjects at all our conventions. The great liquor question is always with us. Not a day passes without some reference to it from pulpit or platform. Sabbath Observance is more intermittent in its outbursts. Some strong minded convener has stirred the waters of the Presbyterian or Synodical geyser and Sabbath Observance emerges with an explosive noise, terrible at the moment, but reassuring when its origin is known. It is a sound and nothing more.

The advocates of total abstinence make a better showing in this logomachy than do the supporters of the Jewish Sabbath. The former have a clearly defined principle before them which is quite capable of justification. The latter seem to have lost their reckoning completely. Hardly two of them can agree either as to what ought to be done on Sunday or what ought not to be. Some of them indeed are so inconsistent that they have been known on occas-

ion to consult their own comfort and convenience and without hesitation disregard their own precepts. The prohibitionist may be right or he may be wrong, but he is at least consistent. Intolerant he often is in seeking to compel all others to conform to his self imposed rule, but he does not allow himself the liberty he denies to others.

In the matter of Sabbath Observance we want something more than weak jeremiads and vague prophecies. Church Courts should remember that in order to legislate wisely and well, would-be law-givers must thoroughly know the question under discussion and also be able to ascertain their own minds on the subject. Yet what an endless variety of opinions exists regarding the preliminary point as to whether or not the regulations of the Jewish Sabbath are binding on men of modern ideas. When however it comes down to concrete examples contradictions become so numerous that confusion is worse confounded. Leaders of the church countenance musical services, the running of electric cars, the opening of libraries and museums, while others condemn them. When the orthodox clergy are so divided what can the general body of the people do but smile and follow their own opinions?

Some of our ministerial guides tell us that we are far behind our forefathers in the matter of Sabbath observance. They declare a startling but true fact. Those of middle age, who spent their youth in country districts especially, can well remember the minuteness with which the too often dreary Sunday was regulated. The blinds were carefully drawn down. It was a sin to let in the brightness of God's sunshine. No walks were allowed amidst the the endless beauties of nature—that too was a snare of the evil one. It

was even scarcely proper to carry a cane on that day—an umbrella was more in keeping with its sacred character. We are far, very far, from that now, whether for weal or woe

It is but natural that change should have taken place in men's views of such things. In olden times men were content to live quietly at home. Long hours of labour, the scarcity of books and newspapers, forced the people to be content with the few classics generally to be found in every house. Sunday was really for them a day of rest—a day for sitting by the fireside with an old calfskin covered folio to nod over unless indeed some point of Calvinistic doctrine had to be defended against some ungodly innovator. The gathering of men into towns and cities, the development of the migratory and travelling spirit, which is one of the characteristics of the age, has altered this. Sunday observance on the old lines can no longer be regarded as a settled thing. Public opinion alone can insure a general regard to regulations imposed by traditionary exegesis, and public opinion has declared adversely to the old fashioned ways of Sabbath keeping. Church Courts should therefore strive to meet the spirit of the times and cease from furbishing up the rusty tools which did duty in a past now gone forever. Necessity and mercy mean much or little according to the bias of the individual whose conscience is the rule and guide. Whatever the body of the people, or any large portion thereof, desire is certain sooner or later to be allowed. Only one good sound rule at present stands out clear and distinct from the general haziness, and that is that nothing should be permitted to be done on Sunday which would prevent another man from enjoying his well-earned rest from lab-

our. Only the most imperative necessity could justify what is forbidden emphatically by the Christian law of love.

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### St. Stephen.

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The first of a series of six sociables to be given by the Presbyterian church in St. Stephen was held in Elder Memorial Hall on the twenty-ninth of October. These sociables have for their object first the bringing together of the congregation, that they may become better acquainted, and new members made to feel at home. No admission fee is charged, but boxes are placed near the entrance to receive whatever contribution each person feels inclined to give. The congregation is divided into six districts, and the families in each district are responsible for one entertainment during the season which extends over six months. The entertainment given on October 29th consisted of instrumental music, singing, recitations, and a few tableaux representing the titles of books, which were guessed by the audience; after which refreshments were served. The evening was a success both socially and financially. This congregation has lately purchased a piano for their hall, and Miss Whitlock, one of the members, has kindly offered to give instruction in singing to as many of the young people as care to receive it. Already a large number are availing themselves of this very liberal offer.

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### Shediac.

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On Friday Oct. 30th, the Parish S. S. A. association held its semi-annual convention at Knox church.

The Secretary reported the afternoon session better attended than on

any previous occasion, which was encouraging; taking a very disagreeable day into consideration. The field secretary was present and aided by his earnest address to teachers, and general suggestions, the exercises were felt to be very helpful. The union Normal Class which for various reasons has been neglected, was re-organized; and by the blessing of God we hope for some useful work both in this class, and in the home department class, which, in connection with Knox church, has already been taken up.

The evening session was not as well attended as could be wished, but the exercises were ready and cheerful, and, taken as a whole, the convention showed an increase of Sabbath School interest.

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#### W. F. M. S. Notes.

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At our Presbyterian meeting in Moncton the columns of CHURCH AND HOME were thrown open to us. Very few auxiliaries have availed themselves of this kind offer.

Would it not be a good idea for each of our auxiliaries to appoint one of its members as correspondent of CHURCH AND HOME. It would be her duty to send items of interest concerning her auxiliary and the congregation to which she belongs. She might be able to procure and send some good papers bearing on our work. Why not ask and answer questions in these columns?

Can we not provoke one another to love and good works?

How many of our societies have written to the new auxiliaries? To those reported at our Annual Meeting, or formed since, we should not be slow in extending our cordial welcome. We are glad and thankful to hear of such energetic women being added to our Presbyterian.

Let the auxiliaries know it. Send them a letter right away.

WELCOME TO OUR RANKS—A hearty cordial welcome to Calvin Church, St. John; Lakeside, Carleton County; Chipman, Sussex and Pisarincó auxiliaries. May you one and all be blessed and prove a blessing.

As auxiliaries, what are we doing towards raising the \$400 for Home Missions? St. James has succeeded. This auxiliary has, since May, raised fifty dollars for Home Missions and ten dollars for Foreign Missions. If each of our auxiliaries made a similar effort far more than four hundred dollars would be contributed. Let us do our *very best*. Until we have done so we are in a measure responsible for the silent Sabbaths and closed Church doors in our Presbytery. While we are asked to give four hundred dollars, three thousand is really needed in our Presbytery and \$17,000 in our Synod.

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Mr. Archibald, who was laid down with fever, has so far recovered that he has been able to return to his home in Halifax.

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A W. F. M. Society has been organized in Pisarincó, with 13 members, and a large interest is already manifested in the missions of our Church.

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An auxiliary of W. F. M. Society was organized in Sussex by Mrs. Dodge and Mrs. Stewart.

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The Welsford auxiliary has sustained a severe loss in the death of Miss Maggie Henderson, who had been a faithful and efficient Secretary.

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We are pleased to report that Rev. A. J. Lods is meeting with wonderful success in his work among the French Catholics. As many as fifteen families have identified themselves with his mission, others are discussing the situation. In one station the people are preparing to build a church.

Rev. A. S. Morton has declined the call to Shediac and Scotch Settlement.

Our mission in Portland and Rothesay is progressing very favourably under the ministrations of Rev. C. E. Irwin.

Presbytery has directed that all Session Records not already attested be presented for examination at its January meeting.

St. Martins, Cross Roads and Gardner's Creek have contributed \$250 for the services of the catechist, as well as making liberal contributions to the Schemes of the Church.

At the regular monthly meeting of the Carleton Y. P. S. C. E. Rev. A. S. Morton gave an interesting address on mission work in Trinidad.

Rev. Mr. Irwin was offered an appointment to Pisarinco, but on consideration intimated that for the present he would rather remain in Portland and Rothesay.

The Home Mission Committee were empowered to deal with all the catechists' reports, and, if these were satisfactory, to approve the same and forward them to the Halifax Board.

Fairville and Grand Bay have enjoyed the services of Rev. A. S. Morton for two Sabbaths. Presbytery would be pleased to welcome Mr. Morton and give him a place among our ordained missionaries.

The Clerk was instructed to issue the usual Presbyterian certificate, to the students who had laboured in the Presbytery, only when notified by the Superintendent of Missions that their reports had been received and were satisfactory.

At the November meeting of the W. H. M. S. of our Presbytery, which was held in Carleton Church, it was agreed to grant \$50 to Mechanics Settlement, \$100 to St. Martins and \$100 to Rothesay. CHURCH AND HOME would heartily thank the Society for its liberality and the help it has given towards the maintenance of regular supply in our weak and scattered fields.

Rev. J. R. Macdonald was appointed to labour in Fairville for another year, on recommendation of the Home Mission Committee. Mr. Macdonald, however,

decided that he would not accept the appointment and has gone on the probationer's list. He is at present employed in Miramichi Presbytery.

Applications were received from Richmond and Sussex congregations for leave to alter the date of their annual congregational meetings. The leave asked for was granted. Richmond congregation elects its trustees hereafter on the last Thursday in October, at 2 p. m., while Sussex congregation meets on the last Wednesday in January, at 7:30 p. m., for the same purpose.

St. Paul's Church, Fredericton, has raised \$150 additional for Home Mission purposes. This money was obtained after an appeal from the Superintendent, and is to be independent altogether of the usual contributions to the Schemes of the Church. It is proposed to apply the money to some field chosen by the subscribers, in order that an ordained missionary may be located there. The Presbytery desires to place on record its appreciation of the liberality of St. Paul's, and to extend to the congregation its hearty thanks for its kindly and generous remembrance of the needs of our Home Mission fields.

CHINESE MAXIMS.—Let everyone sweep the snow from his own door, and not busy himself about the frost on his neighbour's tiles. Great wealth comes by destiny; moderate wealth by industry. The ripest fruit will not fall into your mouth. The pleasure of doing good is the only one that does not wear out. Dig a well before you are thirsty; water does not remain in the mountains, nor vengeance in great minds.

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