

THE CHURCH AT HOME AND ABROAD.

SEPTEMBER, 1890.

ECHO LAKE.

Our readers will not find the name of this lake on any school atlas, nor in any encyclopædia. It is a pretty reality nevertheless. Just now, for a few weeks, the editorial headquarters of THE CHURCH AT HOME AND ABROAD are established near it. In a quaint, old-fashioned mansion, in a chamber whose one window looks out upon apple trees, maple trees, green meadow and blue sky, these paragraphs are written. A short walk—"350 yards," saith an inscription near a gateway—takes us through a pleasant meadow, then down a steep bank, amid leafy shrubs and trees, to the margin of *Echo Lake*. No steam-engine sends its shrill whistle over its surface or vexes it with splashing paddles. Your eye easily sweeps the whole circuit of its shady shore, encompassing an area of thirty-five acres. Near the shore, for a considerable distance, the broad leaves of the water-lilies floating upon the surface, enlivened here and there by open blossoms with their beautiful white and gold, testify to the moderate depth of the water; but farther away, in the central portions, it is said to be very deep. "How deep?" It is not easy to answer this question by leaning over the side of a skiff and looking down. One man told of letting down a line some hundreds of feet without reaching the bottom. "Was the line wet?" asked another. "Yes? Then its own weight would keep it sinking and coiling long after the plummet

reached the bottom." This man claims to have measured more accurately by dropping a weight attached to a line previously dry, and to have found it about sixty feet. Surely that is deep enough to suggest solemn possibilities and the wisdom of tempering our pastime with sober caution.

How many deep places there are in science, especially in theological science, down into which we look with assurance, yet with reverent awe, unable to see the bottom or to reach it with our sounding-lines! It is science. We *know*, but there is a limit to our knowing, as surely as we *see*, while there is a limit to our seeing. When all theologians and all other scientists remember this, we shall have less dogmatism and, if fewer, more unquestionable, dogmas.

For three weeks I have heard neither the loud rumble of wheels upon stone pavements nor the scream of a locomotive. The stillness is broken only by songs of birds, the lowing of cattle and other rural, gentle sounds. Yet this is by no means a solitude. Other houses are not far away, to some of which (boarding-houses like this) loads of passengers pass in vehicles which move almost noiselessly along the smooth, stoneless road. The almost whispering tinkle of a modest bell daily announces one of these vehicles bringing the mail, and we welcome

CONTRIBUTED ARTICLES.

INSTITUTIONAL MISSION WORK.

GEORGE P. HAYS, D.D.

[This instructive article was kindly written for us at Paris, June 17, 1890, while its writer was on his return from Palestine.]

The Presbyterian Church has always sought the establishment of Christian institutions in the countries where it has put forth missionary effort. With this in view, it has organized churches and schools more than any other denomination, except the Congregationalists. Originally the Presbyterian and the Congregational churches were united in the support of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. That Board has always laid great stress on its educational department, and it is not therefore strange that the Presbyterian Board, starting separately somewhat later, should follow up the same plan, which as an integral part of the American Board it helped to adopt. Whether this method of organizing Christian education and Christian institutions is the best is in some minds a matter of considerable doubt. Not a few hold that preaching, and not teaching, is the work of the missionary, and that therefore the best results will be accomplished by constant preaching to adults and to children. In many recent books and periodicals the assertion is made that these pupils of the missionary schools will go back into their native homes, and promptly lose all the benefits of their school training. An American Episcopal minister, a few years ago, visited the Girls' Orphanage at Nazareth, and then returned to America and published a book, in which he ridicules the notion that any serious good can permanently come out of that work. So attention is often called to the great advantage of scattering the gospel by preaching tours in new districts; and the defence is set up that, if persons are converted in these preaching tours, they may safely be left to themselves, for the

promise of preservation and Christian growth will make it sure that they will not fall away.

Our recent tour brought us into reasonably intimate contact with the work of the United Presbyterian Church in Egypt, the English Church in Palestine, our own mission work in Syria, the Covenanters' mission work in Latakia and vicinity, the Congregationalists' work in Constantinople and the general organization of the Church in many countries of Europe. The trip was so brief that, of course, conclusions derived from it should be expressed with considerable modesty. Nevertheless the experience in these mission churches and in those of adjacent regions may count for something. The English church work in Palestine did not seem to us to amount to very much, except in the direction of girls' schools. These were so entirely aimed at one sex, and had so little in the way of church organization beyond them, that, so far as our impression went, the good done was to a large extent lost by being left without sufficient subsequent attention. Schools without churches and ministers in churches without coherent organization and mutual support and helpfulness will not make a permanent reformation of society. To do good in such countries will require patient and persistent work, and it is the long, steady work that shows the results. In Egypt our United Presbyterian friends are slowly growing up an Egyptian synod, and they have been at it now long enough to begin to deal with their second and even third generation. In the midst of that motley band of people their converts and church officers and churches are beginning to know each other and appreciate the value of each other's sympathy and support.

Precisely the same is true of our mission

work, with its headquarters at Beirut, and the mission work of the Congregationalists, with its headquarters at Constantinople. From these centres missionaries have gone out and established adjacent missions, and from these missions natives have gone out and preached the gospel in adjacent towns; and so a coherent native population has been developed, until now their schools, their churches and their evangelists are scattered over a large territory, with a certain unity and self-helpfulness that is of the highest importance. The pupils from the day-schools here and there get into the high schools and acquire a higher education, and the picked ones out of these high schools get into the ladies' seminaries and the colleges at Constantinople and Beirut, and then go back into their old homes, not to sink down into the habits of their fathers, but to be a help in elevating the whole community where they have their subsequent homes. Very many of the women teach in their native towns. For the men there are mainly but two openings. One is in the line of preaching under the employ and direction of the missionaries, and the other is the practice of medicine in the midst of their own people. We came in contact with these schools and teachers and physicians hundreds of miles away from the educational headquarters in Beirut and Constantinople. It is certain that their influence is telling largely far beyond the immediate vicinity of the missionary headquarters. In Europe both these plans are being considerably tested. Many of the churches of Europe are under state patronage and control. As a result, they have no coherent unity, and are not made to become self-reliant and trustful of each other. One German minister expressed deepest distress on account of the helplessness of the Church in the presence of the power of the state to override the wishes of the churches and the ministers. In the appointment of professors in the educational institutions, the advice of the ministers and churches is asked, but it need not be followed. In some conspicuous cases it is not followed. In some countries they organize two bodies. One is an

official synod, which is composed of anybody that bears the proper relation to the state; and that official synod is the only one which the state recognizes. Then those who are earnest and evangelical, and who desire the kind of organization which belongs to a non-state church, organize an efficient synod. It is true that this is only for mutual conference, and its plans may be carried out by the official body, or they may not; but its existence shows the need felt by the members for some really competent organization, that shall be able to maintain and promote the institutions of the Church.

It would be discourteous to refer to a considerable number of missionary movements with which we came in contact, which sought to do missionary work without missionary organization or schools or settled churches. In one or two cases these movements had been extant for a long time, and had been faithfully and laboriously prosecuted. We may be mistaken as to the reason of their unfruitfulness; but it looked to us as if they had failed to gather and harvest and husband the fruits of their labors from year to year. Certain it is that measured alongside of those missions which laid great stress and value on educational and pastoral work, the result of these peripatetic missions looked very small. In all the missions to which reference has been made in this article, such as Egypt, Syria and Turkey, a great work has been done in the preparation of text-books in the different languages. These text-books are used far beyond the schools of the missions; and while they do not pretend to be religious text-books, yet it is certain that wherever they are used, antichristian books are out and text-books with a religious flavor are in the hands of the pupils and teachers. A text-book on natural philosophy, arithmetic or physics may not indeed have much religion in it, but it may have a great deal of irreligion in it. If prepared by religious men it will have a certain religious influence which is of the highest value. The text-books issued from the publication house in Constantinople may not at first sight seem to be much different from the text-books issued elsewhere in the Turkish language,

and yet their value as text-books is slowly but surely winning a way for them in most important sections of the Turkish empire. The same is true of text-books in the Arabic language issued from Beirut. If the money expended in colleges and schools had done nothing more than create an educational demand for such text-books, that would be a great work. That was a keen reply of a missionary, when starting for a new field, and being asked what he was going to do, he replied, "I am going to start three schools." In reply to the question, "Why start three schools?" he answered, "I will start ours. In self-defence the Mohammed-

ans will be compelled to start a Mohammedan school. In order to keep up, either the Greeks or the Roman Catholics, and probably both, will start schools. Then we will have four." This pressure of the Christian missions on the other religions to start schools in self-defence has reached such a pitch in Baalbec that the Moslems have started a *female seminary*. What use a Mohammedan would have for a girls' seminary does not at first sight seem clear, but it is here given as a last and conclusive proof that the benefits arising from our mission-schools are far beyond the actual educational work done in the schools themselves.

OBSTACLES TO SELF-SUPPORT IN SYRIA.

REV. F. E. HOSKINS.

It is a cold, rainy day, and I am shut up in a cold room in the native hotel, collecting my thoughts by the light of a single candle.

In a recent conversation with the Mudir el Mal, or treasurer of the government here, he told me that this district treasury pays \$100,000 yearly to the state, after paying all its own current expenses, such as salaries, soldiery, etc. Not a penny of this reaches the general government, since the state government pays 100,000 Turkish pounds to the Bedawin, who for this consideration allow the pilgrimage to pass safely toward Mecca. B— has seventy-two small villages around it, and from these villages this large sum of \$100,000 is exacted. The manner of raising it is this: A certain sum is required of each village, say £500. The privilege of collecting this amount is disposed of by auction in Constantinople, and a man frequently pays £700 for the privilege of collecting £500 for the government. You can easily imagine who has to pay the piper: the poor fellahin peasants have a sorry time. Now how does this collector reimburse himself? for his generosity to the government is not wholly disinterested. The toil of the year is over, and the grain lies on the threshing-floors. No man dare carry home a measure of grain before

the government has secured its tithe. As soon as threshed and winnowed it is piled in a neat heap, and an officious underling of the collector stands ready to print a series of seals from a huge wooden seal all round the heap and along the ridge, so that not a pint of grain can be removed without his knowledge. Days roll by; the collector is busy and delays his coming. The early rains threaten to fall upon the wheat. The village sends a deputation to the tardy collector, "Come and we will give you more than a tenth." Still he delays. Another delegation is sent, and a larger offer is made. The wise collector excuses himself, until in their fear and need they offer a fifth and even more, and then the collector comes! Not many years ago the land for miles around each village was owned in common, and the village was divided into as many feddens or portions as there were families in the village. These portions rotated, so that each family had a chance to cultivate the favored strips. Each family got all it could, and did nothing to improve the land, for why should they hedge or ditch or manure a piece of land that they could not have again for many years!

Finally the land was divided up permanently, and each man found himself made rich by the privilege of mortgaging his own