

TERRITORIAL MISSIONS IN THEIR BEARING ON POPERY.

WE subjoin the following interesting statement from the Rev. D. MacColl, of the Bridgegate Territorial Church, Glasgow, which we are sure will be read with interest. The mass of the Territorial Churches are planted in districts where Romanism prevails, and this is part of the "whole lump" of moral degradation and neglect, which, by wise and kindly dealing, will, we trust, ultimately, by the Divine blessing, be "leavened" by such instrumentality. Thus we shall witness again the glorious triumphs of the Reformation repeated. The perception of this in the future will no doubt invest all Home Mission efforts with a new charm in the estimation of the Christian and patriot, for all souls are precious, and it is out of this mass that most of our social and moral evils flow.

The peculiar machinery of Rome, viz., female agency—but without her monastic vows—may no doubt be effectively employed for this purpose. Christian females may also be trained as nurses, so as both to earn an honest and ample livelihood, and to obtain access to many spheres of the greatest spiritual influence. All this is most worthy of study and development. Meantime, we invite attention to Mr MacColl's valuable statement:—

GLASGOW, 20th April 1866.

MY DEAR DR BEGG,—In answering your request for some details as to the training-classes I am carrying on, I may say that for years I have been striving to develop the idea of a Christian Church according to the primitive model, formed of disciples, after the idea of the Gospels, and into a church, after the idea of the Acts. First a church was grown from the seed, and then others propagated from the stock. In a district where, in 1854, I was ordained to a church with 100 poor members, there are now three churches, with an aggregate of 2300 members, 100 office-bearers, 150 Sabbath-school teachers, 400 visitors; besides churches and missions planted in various other districts of the city and parishes round. All this Christian life and activity is largely exercised among a Popish population, and there are various visible modifications in the original aspect of things. I don't think a fraction of the intermarriages and baptisms of Protestant children by priests take place now that took place twelve years ago. We can visit and hold prayer-meetings peaceably in any part of our district; we are gradually making visible the actual Christian life and benevolence of hundreds of humble people; and we are gradually getting the opportunity of speaking quietly to people once violently prejudiced. I have never lost sight of Popery since I entered the Wynds, and I have never ceased to expect a reformation. But I expect reformation will be based upon revival, a reforming, because of another spirit awakening and changing.

Now, having got the rough work of building so far done, or in process of being done, I have been for these two years working at all the sources of congregational life and power. Among other agencies, I have a female training-class, from which teachers, Bible-women, nurses, matrons of reformatories, will gradually go forth. I have just set up a male training-class. The one is under a governess, the other under a tutor. The nurses go into a medical hospital for a year or two. Evangelistic services are now carried on, not only to influence the careless, but as a training-school for qualified Christian office-bearers. The day-school and evening-classes in connexion with factories and foundries are part of the widening scheme.

Now, you see, my method has been first to get an army, but to do some real fighting even by their drill—to recruit from the enemy, and conquer them by their own. I find it of little use to talk about what one is going to do, but of great use to talk about it when it is done and can be done again. And I am deeply persuaded, from experiments already made, that we can meet Popery best with the old weapons of the Reformation—the preaching and practice of the gospel. Only we have been to a large extent, if not wholly, *fighting out of range*. Our great work should be to

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get near those who are within the lines of the man of sin, for only then can we save them. But we cannot approach them to any extent *except through our own lapsed masses*. We must take the Master's method, first the lost children of the house of Israel, then Samaria and the Gentiles.

Now, I do not disparage, but highly value, the information of what Popery is doing, as well as the training of men in the principles and practices of Romanists; but I believe that greater public interest, even in these departments, would be secured by gradually getting our whole Church organisation engaged in such a work as must infallibly, sooner or later, bring all Christian workers into contact with Popery.

I fear that this is not a communication that can be of any use to you. There are many points on which I would like to touch had I time; but I am really anxious to see your Committee on Popery turned to some practical purposes that have not, I think, bulked largely hitherto, and certain prejudices removed from minds that would be of the greatest service once they were engaged.—I remain, yours most truly,

DUGALD MACCOLL.

The Rev. Dr Begg.
