

"THE TWO APPLE TREES."



FARMER, walking through his orchard one day, had he understood the language of "Trees," would have heard the following discussion between two "Apple trees": "All I hope," said one to the other, "is that, when they come round pruning us, they will leave me alone; I can get on just as well without, and, perhaps, bear as much fruit as those who are pruned, and, for my part, I would rather have all my branches around me, even if they are dead, than be trimmed and cut away like a skeleton." The other tree quietly remarked, "I do not agree with you. For my part, I hope I shall be freed from my dead branches; they take all one's strength away." As chance would have it, that spring, when the farmer went round to examine and prune the trees, he passed over the boastful apple tree. Its more humble friend, however, was carefully trimmed and pruned. Summer came round, and the fruit began to ripen; the boastful apple tree bore only a few poor apples, whilst its neighbor had abundance of good and luscious fruit. The farmer passed through his orchard again, this time with a friend, who happened to notice the contrast between the two trees. "Yes," said the farmer, in reply to his remark, "that tree with all those beautiful apples is the best in the orchard; as for the one near it, it is a poor, miserable tree, and will have to be cut down."

Alas! how often it is so with the Christian soul who cares not to prune the thought, and cut away the bad actions, which, if left, will deaden all spiritual life, and bring no fruit to perfection, and in the end will cut it off from eternal life.

GROWTH OF CHURCHES IN CANADA.

ACCORDING to census returns just issued at Ottawa, there are 10,480 churches through the Dominion. Nearly 32 per cent. of these belong to the Methodists, 17 per cent. to the Presbyterians, 17 per cent. to the Roman Catholics, 16 per cent. to the Church of England, 12 per cent. to the Baptists, and 6 per cent. to all others. During ten years the Baptists have increased the number of their churches by 324, the Roman Catholics by 299, the Church of England by 415, the Methodists by 322, and the Presbyterians by 411. During the past ten years the Church of England appears to have been the most active in providing places of worship for the people, the Presbyterians come next, the Baptists third, the Methodists fourth, and the Roman Catholics last.

Territorially considered, the Church of Eng-

land in the eastern provinces has provided 337 additional churches, and in the western 78. Methodists have provided 227 in the eastern, and 95 in the western. Presbyterians have provided 302 in the eastern, and 109 in the western. Roman Catholics have provided 257 in the eastern, and 49 in the western. Thus the Methodists have established 42 per cent. of the total additional number of churches in the western provinces; Presbyterians, 32 per cent.; Church of England, 23 per cent.; Roman Catholics, 17 per cent.; and Baptists, 6 per cent. Of the total increase (1,828), 408 belong to the western provinces, equal to over 22 per cent. One-fifteenth of the population have one-fifth of the increase in the number of churches. In the five eastern provinces there is one church for every 455 persons, and in the western provinces and the territories there is one church for every 500 persons. In churches the denominations have kept pace with population in Manitoba, British Columbia, and the Territories.

AUSTRALIA.

The Australian Board of Missions has this year published an enlarged report, with illustrations. Mission work, in common with other philanthropic effort, has suffered from the financial embarrassments of the Australian colonies. Some progress is, however, recorded, especially in the evangelizing of the aborigines. The Bellender Ker mission to the 5,000 Myall blacks, who throng the slopes of the great mountain ranges of Northern Queensland, now possesses a good acreage, cleared, fenced, and planted with sweet potatoes, pine apples, coconuts, and orange and lemon trees; whilst a substantial mission house of timber and iron, with schoolroom, store, and a carpenter's and blacksmith's shop, have been built. A number of children have been brought under instruction, and the elder blacks show their confidence in the mission by camping, in large bodies, close to the establishment. The founder of the mission, Mr. Gribble, died lately, and his work is continued by his son. It will be impossible to maintain it without additional contributions in aid of the work. The additions to the staff of the New Guinea mission include the Melanesians, who have been constant communicants at the pro-cathedral of Brisbane, and a young layman from Sydney. A second mission station has been started by Mr. Kennedy, whilst Mrs. Copland King remains in Bartle Bay. The Board of Missions also carries on work among the Chinese immigrants in New South Wales, and the Kanakas, or Pacific Islanders, in Queensland.