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Edited by Rev. Wm. Inglis.

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CHURCH EXTENSION.

THE Church Extension scheme which has for some time past been in more or less efficient operation in Toronto might with great advantage be adopted not only in the different cities of the Dominion but throughout the whole country. Some such plan is needed to help forward the steady and systematic progress of the Presbyterian Church throughout Canada. It is the natural and necessary complement of our Home Mission scheme. In too many cases in the past new congregations have been started from mere personal pique or as the result of very unworthy and very unchristian sectional quarrels, so that as long as there has been no squabble, and matters have gone on comfortably, the old arrangements have been maintained, though everything may have pointed to the necessity of a "new departure" being taken. Church disagreements have no doubt often been over-ruled for good and have resulted in church extension as well as ultimately in a large measure of spiritual blessing being secured. But they are not desirable as instrumentalities for the advancement of the cause of Christ, and are not to be reckoned on as likely to accomplish all which ought to be done. Nor is it well to leave the work to merely local and individual effort. Much has also in this way been accomplished, but if these local exertions had been encouraged and promoted by general sympathy and timely assistance, it is safe to say that still greater and more blessed results would have been secured.

This is what has been aimed at by the promoters of the Toronto Church Extension scheme. They do not think that the multiplication of Presbyterian churches should be left to the possibility of a quarrel, and by and by of a "split," in any of the existing congregations. The city grows, and they believe that Presbyterianism should advance *pari passu*. In order to this, they aim at securing church sites in eligible localities, starting Sabbath schools as the nuclei of future congregations, and in due time assisting and stimulating local effort by grants for building purposes. Such a plan carried out with wisdom, energy and liberality will do an immense amount of good in the city, while a more general scheme for the whole Church might be devised and carried out with even still greater benefit. If instead of individual ministers or elders being subjected to the labour, and frequently to the great mortification attendant upon a "begging expedition" for some particular church or manse scheme, there were a general church extension fund, out of which, after all the circumstances and necessities of each case had been examined, grants could be made on condition of so much being raised in the locality, a great deal of personal annoyance would be saved, great encouragement given to many struggling yet hopeful enterprises, and a great step taken towards binding the whole Church into one united, living, and homogeneous whole. A little timely help, with wise counsels and brotherly sympathy, would in the past have put life and energy and hopefulness into many small and struggling preaching stations

which, for want of these, have dragged out a miserably languid and unsatisfactory existence for years, and are to-day less likely than ever either to get or to give much spiritual advantage from either their existence or efforts.

If, in short, our Church in Canada is to be the power for good it ought to be, and may easily become, there must be an ever-growing and practical manifestation of the fact that the interests of each congregation are the interests of all, and that nothing short of a vigorous, systematic and liberally supported aggressive system of Church extension will either meet the wants of the country or satisfy the aspirations of all the true friends and adherents of that grand old Presbyterianism which in the past has done so much for the advancement of truth and righteousness and liberty, and is to-day, as in the years gone by, so efficiently and so extensively leading men to stand most erect and fearless in the presence of their fellows, while they bow with the deepest reverence and submission in the presence of their God.

CHEAP AND WHOLESOME LITERATURE.

SOME twenty-five or thirty years ago, a pamphlet was published under the title "The power of the Press—is it properly employed?" In that pamphlet very terrible details were given shewing that the amount of wholesome secular literature circulated, combined with all that could by any possibility be called Christian, bore a very small proportion to what was distinctly and even ostentatiously corrupt and debasing both in its tone and tendency. Some few of the foulest and most injurious periodicals were proved to be more widely circulated, especially among the young, than all the fairly decent and respectable newspapers and magazines put together. Since that time the power of the press has increased many fold and, we should hope, is relatively more on the side of truth and righteousness than it was then. But will any one say that its influence for good is anything like what it ought to be or anything like what it might be made, if all true friends of the race were doing their best in this department of effort? The enemies of Christian morality are using the press with giant energy and unstinted liberality in order to secure the triumph of their views. On the other hand there is no doubt a praiseworthy amount of effort being put forth to supplant and destroy the evil by supplying the wholesome and the good in a more attractive fashion and at a cheaper rate. The authors and publishers of standard English works have long stood in their own light by issuing only expensive editions for the few, instead of securing popular patronage by such popular prices as could put the best English literature within the reach of all. They are slowly but surely coming to understand the mistake they have made, and in not a few cases are now acting on the good principle that the "nimble dime" is greatly better than the slow-going dollar. We wish all could see this and could be induced to act upon it, for it would do the world a great amount of good, while it would also put a greatly increased amount of money into their own pockets. The people wish to buy, and, upon the whole, would prefer wholesome, high-class literature. "Trash" possibly will always be more or less in demand, but it will be less and less so as the really good is procurable in more attractive forms and at more moderate rates. The state of the copyright law and the limited character of the field may prevent our Canadian publishers going extensively into this work. If so, it is a pity. In the meantime astute and far-seeing individuals in the States are recognizing the want, and supplying it. When such books as "Farrar's Life of Paul" can be had for twenty cents, and much nicer and more attractive editions for fifty, with other and equally important works at similar rates, there is little reason why the humblest cottage homes of our country should not be supplied abundantly with the very best works both of the present and the past.

THE CHATAQUA LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC CIRCLE.

WE have been asked to explain in a few words what is meant by the Chataqua Literary and Scientific Circle. It is a society for the promotion of reading and study among the people who are too old to attend school and whose education may have been neglected in their earlier days or who desire to review the studies of their youth. It was organized in the

summer of 1878, and began with a membership of seven hundred, who all pledged themselves to a four years' course of reading and study as laid down in the programme. Since that time the circle has greatly widened, till now, we believe, the membership is upwards of 17,000, representing all denominations of Christians, a few Jews, and some sceptics. They are found in every State of the American Union, in all the different Provinces of Canada, and in Great Britain and the Sandwich Islands.

The aim of this society is to promote habits of reading and study in the different departments of Science, Art, and Literature in connection with the routine of daily life, so as to secure, to those whose educational advantages have been limited, benefits which could not otherwise be reached, and to develop habits of close and connected thinking.

The course is so arranged that, it is understood, forty minutes reading and study each week day will enable all students to complete the books required for the year. We have no doubt that such a plan, carried honestly and persistently out, will be found exceedingly profitable. It gives definiteness, system and stimulus in the great work of self-improvement, and that is what very many need who are fretting themselves over the foolish neglect of past years, and at the same time losing the present by vain regrets that they have to such an extent lost the past. The time spent in vain, foolish, and weakening self-condemnation, if rightly and honestly improved, would have made thousands happy, intelligent, active-minded, and well-informed persons, who are to-day, as they were years ago, weak, planless, ignorant, and unsuccessful wishers for knowledge which will never come by inspiration, but which a very moderate amount of intelligent and systematic labour would have long ago secured.

AMUSEMENTS.

WE very willingly allow "Delta" a few last words on the subject of dancing, the discussion on which he started some considerable time ago. It is not at all our desire to prevent any from saying what they think on this or any other subject, but our space is limited, and too much of one thing is not for edification. We repeat what we have already said more than once in reference to the whole matter of amusements, that Christian people are never to forget that there is not one law for the pulpit and another for the pew. If a certain course of conduct is becoming in the occupants of the latter, it can't be improper in those who speak from the former. So that if anyone would feel shocked and scandalized at his minister being found in certain places and doing certain things, it may surely be taken as a clear indication to him that he should apply the same standard of judging to his own conduct and to the amount and kind of liberty he claims as his own by right. It does not, of course, follow that any sort of conduct is right and proper because clergymen may sanction it in others, and follow it themselves, nor will anyone be justified in certain courses because he would be quite pleased to see his minister lending his countenance to these both by precept and example. Everyone knows that at certain seasons of great spiritual declension, clergymen have been shamefully prominent in all the follies and excesses of the "world" and that too many members of their flocks have loved to have it so, and have thought it pleasant to be kept in countenance in their debauchery and folly by "his reverence." It will be a sad time for Canada should such a season ever come round in her religious experience and history. Jolly, fiddling, dancing, fox-hunting, carousing clergymen, are not pleasant subjects for contemplation, and most of Presbyterians hang their heads in shame as they read such lives as those of Dr. Carlyle of Inveresk, and a good many others which could be easily mentioned. The present age, however, is too earnest, and the general tone of religious sentiment and feeling too high, we trust, to make the reproduction of such scandalous characters possible, not to say common. But a great way short of this there is the kind of vague, half-defined feeling on the part of too many religious professors, in this and other countries, that the ordinary "member of the Church" may claim and exercise an amount of liberty which would never be accorded to the "minister" and which that "minister" or "clergyman" could neither claim nor exercise without provoking a tempest of indignation and scorn from those very persons who "do the same things," and