

Our Contributors.

SOME ENTRIES THAT STAND A GOOD CHANCE.

BY KNOXIAN.

We clip a few more entries from the Blue Monday column of the *Homiletic Review*. If anybody asks why we publish these specimens of meanness in this corner, we reply to expose meanness. There is nothing that makes a mean thing look so mean as turning the flash light of public opinion upon it. We have long thought that the Gospel is more hindered by mean things than by things that many people cry out against as wrong. A mean Christian is a contradiction in terms. Smallness is one of the chief obstacles the Gospel has to contend against. We hear a great deal about amusements, about worldliness, about heterodoxy and a number of other things, but when did anyone hear a sermon against smallness, and yet smallness does the cause of Christ a thousand-fold more harm than many of the things that are constantly denounced by people who claim to be pious. Let anybody ask himself how much good the prayer of the following parishioner would be likely to do:—

The meanest parishioner I ever knew, and a brother who could offer prayer above any man I ever heard, was introduced to me September, 1890, who said he had a load of hay he wished to present to me. He hauled the hay, put it in my mow, went to the nearest store at which I dealt, bought himself a supply of goods, and had me charged with the hay at \$7 a ton, and had it entered against me on the store-book without my knowledge, until so informed by the clerk of the store one week after.

A man of that kind should never be asked to pray in public. His prayer would set people athinking about the hay. He was, however, quite as good as this New Hampshire man:—

In 1872 I was pastor of a church in a beautiful New Hampshire village. Among the members was an elderly farmer residing seven miles from the church. It was generally known that he had some fifteen or eighteen thousand dollars in bonds and other securities, besides a large well-stocked farm. At his earnest and repeated solicitations to preach on some Sunday afternoon in an old church near his home, I finally consented. It was an exceedingly warm Sabbath in July. I hired a horse and carriage, drove to the old meeting house and preached to perhaps a hundred persons. After the service the old gentleman invited me to call at his house. I did so, in the hope that he would pay my horse bill, or at least offer me a little food, for I had tasted none since breakfast. In both I was disappointed. As I was leaving, I asked him if he would give me two or three apples to eat as I drove back home. He produced four small russet apples. Knowing his penurious disposition, I said, "How much shall I pay you for these?" "I guess about three cents," was the reply. "I would give 'em to you, but it's getting late for apples, and they are mighty scarce around here."

We are happy to think that man was not a Presbyterian, for we believe there are no Presbyterians in New Hampshire. That apple man, however, has not much chance against this turkey man; at all events the turkey man will run him hard:—

It was during my first pastorate. A brother from the country wished to provide me with a turkey for Thanksgiving, to which I assented. A day or two before Thanksgiving he brought the turkey. He came just at our dinner hour. He sat down with us and ate very heartily, as though he enjoyed his dinner. As he rose from the table and left the house, I offered to pay him for the turkey, but he refused, wishing me to accept it as a gift. I thanked him and he departed. He went directly to the house of the church treasurer. They were just sitting down to dinner. He sat down with them and ate another full dinner and reported the turkey, asking for credit on the salary to the amount of its value.

The appetite of this man would suggest that he was an Englishman and probably an Episcopalian, while the thrift that secured two dinners and credit for the value of the turkey on the Church books points most distinctly to Scotch or Irish Presbyterianism. Perhaps he was a Methodist. Payment of salary in kind, smacks a little of Methodism. The one thing clear is that the fellow should not have been a member of any Church. Nor should this other fellow:—

On my second charge, the people to whom I ministered had the misfortune to lose their church edifice by fire one night after the weekly prayer service. The pew rental system prevailed in that church, and the fire occurred just prior to the beginning of a new church year. Although the pastor sympathized deeply with the people in their loss, and materially assisted them in rebuilding, the trustees found difficulty in collecting the usual salary of the pastor. One man was mentioned to me, who, because the church had burned and he had no pew, argued that he was under no obligation to pay salary, and that man was a member of the church and an officer in the Sabbath school. He attended the services held in the hall, and heard the Gospel preached. Was not this a peculiar species of meanness?

The church was burnt and the money was of course needed more than ever, but this member of the flock and teacher in the Sabbath school would not pay because he had no pew in the hall! Just fancy how a clever infidel could use a case like that against the Gospel. It was not much worse, however, than the following which is said to have taken place in Ontario:—

It was a time of religious awakening in a country village in Western Ontario, when, on a quiet Sunday morning, a young preacher was dwelling upon the brevity and uncertainty of life, illustrating and emphasizing his theme by reference to the very sudden death of a young lady in an adjoining township. As she was a stranger to his congregation, he mentioned no names. As he had what preachers call a good time, he thought he had left a good impression upon his audience; but he was destined to have a rude awakening. At the close of the service one of the brethren invited him to dinner, but he was unable to accept the invitation. As he turned away, his would-be host followed him, and very eagerly enquired as to the name and residence of the deceased lady. Like a flash, the questioner stood unmasked, and, with a look and gesture of disgust, the preacher said, "Go away." The man was a "tombstone agent" and wanted to use him to make a dollar!

This entry is Methodist all round. The expression "a good time," and the description of the tombstone man as "one of the brethren," show that. On the whole it is a pretty tough entry. The man who can sit at a revival meeting and calculate how he can make business out of the death of the young lady alluded to in the sermon is a formidable rival in any company of hardened hypocrites.

HIGHER RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

A larger number of question papers were applied for this year than on any previous occasion, showing a growing interest in the scheme and a broadening of its influence. In the Biblical department 909 were sent out: Junior, 425; intermediate, 337, and senior, 147. In the Doctrinal, 391: Junior, 165; intermediate, 135, and senior, ninety-one. In the History, 282: Junior, eighty-five; intermediate, 124, and senior, seventy-three—in all, 1,582. In some cases a larger number of papers were asked for than there was any likelihood of using, but, making a liberal allowance for these cases, there must have been good reason to prepare for 1,400 candidates. Usually about one-half of the expected number put in an appearance at the examination. This would give us answers from about 700. Instead of this we have received only 334, viz.: Biblical, 229—junior, 134; intermediate, sixty-seven, and senior, twenty-eight; doctrinal, seventy-three—junior, thirty; intermediate, twenty-two, and senior, eleven; history—thirty-two—junior, six; intermediate, eighteen; senior, eight. This unexpected decrease is amply accounted for by two causes: First, the day proved exceedingly stormy and the roads, in many localities, were impassable; and, second, the prevailing epidemic laid its heavy hand upon several conveners and presiding examiners, besides a large number of candidates. In the Essay department, where the weather and the influenza had less effect, there is a notable increase: Junior Essays, twenty-two; intermediate, seventeen, and senior, eight—total fifty-seven, as against thirty-nine last year. There is little doubt but that the same encouraging advance would have been shown in all other departments but for the reasons just mentioned. Fifty-five schools were represented.

Candidates are naturally impatient to hear the results, but do not consider the time necessary to procure them. One week at least must elapse after the examination before all the answers are received by the convener. It takes another week to sort them out and register them. Examiners, some of whom live in the North-West and British Columbia, must be allowed at least three weeks, and another week has to be added for the tardy ones. After the results are mailed they may not appear in print for a week, or even a fortnight, if they arrive after the paper for the next week has been made up for the press. Do not begin to get restless and bombard the convener with enquiries until the middle of April at the earliest.

One circumstance alone makes the examination just held forever memorable. Question papers have been sent to the Mission School at Ujjain at the request of Dr. Buchanan. Canadian candidates will be interested in reading the names of their Hindu *confreres*. All are in the Biblical department, and are as follows: Junior, Ramchunder, Sham Sundar, Gorand Prasad, Kanaya. Intermediate, Brijkrishore, Govind, Gungsaha, Kareem Bux, Champalal (these all will write in the vernacular, Hindi or Urdu), Panna Lal, Keshao Rao, Gamput (these will write in English). Senior, Herbert Sannoo (in vernacular), and Jaishankar (in English). The answers will be read and appraised by Rev. J. Fraser Campbell, of Mhow. Two essays are also promised, but they have not yet come to hand. That heathen children in India have entered into competition with Canadian Christians in an examination on the International Sunday School Lessons is an event worth recording in the annals of Missions. Their answers will be amongst the most remarkable manuscripts ever sent to this continent.

There is every likelihood that the committee will have the unpleasant experience of appearing before the General Assembly with a large deficit unless very earnest efforts are made. The following is a correct statement of our account at this date (February 18):—

GENERAL EXPENSES AND HIGHER RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

Amount paid out.....	\$ 486 49
Bills payable.....	399 32
Probable further outlay before April 30. say.....	100 00
	— \$ 985 81
Contributions received.....	445 48
Contributions still required...	\$ 540 33

Notices have been sent to schools that have promised contributions but have not remitted them; and those that contributed in the past but have not done so this year; and to all subscribers to the "Home Study Leaflet" who are in arrears. The \$540 have been allocated to Presbyteries in the ratio of their Sabbath school strength. It is hoped that there will be a liberal response before the year closes on April 30. The financial basis of the Scheme is becoming steadily more satisfactory. Since May 1st eighty-eight Sabbath schools have contributed for the first time. If old subscribers would renew their past donations nearly all the funds required would be in hand.

The "Home Study Leaflet" is growing in favour. It is now in use in several of our largest Sabbath schools, such as

Fort Massey, Halifax; Prince Street, Pictou; St. Johns, St. John; St. Andrews, Quebec; Chalmers and Erskine, Montreal; Erskine and St. Andrews, Ottawa; West Church and Central, Toronto; St. Johns and McNab Street, Hamilton; St. Andrews, Sarnia; Knox, Winnipeg; St. Andrews, New Westminster, and a large number of others. Many teachers have subscribed independently for their own classes. The monthly edition is now 4,000, and but few are left over. It has received the approval of such eminent Sunday school workers as Mr. Wm. Reynolds, Mrs. W. F. Crafts, Dr. Worden, of Philadelphia, Dr. Kellogg, of Toronto, and Dr. Harper, of Chicago. The committee regard it as an important adjunct of the Scheme, and believe that it is worth while for any teacher to make persistent efforts to induce reluctant scholars to use it. Where the weekly edition cannot be used the "Quarterly Review" sheet will be found very helpful.

The following circular has been sent to conveners of Presbyterian S. S. Committees:—

Every thoughtful person must have observed with much encouragement, yet with great solicitude, the phenomenal growth of young people's societies in our Churches. A new force has evidently come into action in our religious life, on the wise direction of which the future welfare of the Church depends. It certainly is not conducive to the solidarity of our ecclesiastical system, or to the conservation of sound doctrinal truth and healthy religious experience that so many of these Societies should derive their inspiration and their methods from sources wholly beyond the oversight and control of those who are appointed to watch for their souls as those that must give account. Without seeking to deprive any of the interdenominational comity which is so delightful a feature of the great Christian Endeavour movement, is it not well to draw our Presbyterian Societies into closer relationship with one another and with our Church organization? Other denominations have already moved in this direction. In Scotland, young peoples' guilds exist in the Free and Established Churches and are doing much good. In America, the Epworth League and the Baptist Young People's Union aim at the same object by characteristic methods.

The Sabbath School Committee have had the matter under their consideration, and concluded that the subject of a Young People's Guild would be more satisfactorily discussed in the Assembly if it was brought before it by overtures from Presbyteries than if first broached in a recommendation attached to a committee's report. It was informally decided that members of the committee in their individual capacity should see that proper overtures were framed and transmitted. You are therefore requested, in conjunction with any other members of your Presbytery who are specially interested in the question, to draw up a suitable overture and lay it before your Presbytery at its next, or a subsequent, meeting, but previous to date of General Assembly. The overture should be in very general terms and should petition the Assembly to remit the framing of a constitution for a Young People's Guild to a special committee, or to one of the existing standing committees, to report to the next General Assembly. This would open up a full discussion of the situation, and lead to definite action.

All interested in the religious welfare of our youth will watch the discussions with much interest.

T. F. FOTHERINGHAM.

SKETCHES OF TRAVEL IN EUROPE.

BY REV. E. WALLACE WAITS, D. SC., OF KNOX CHURCH OWEN SOUND.

A TRIP TO THE SOUTH-EAST COAST—HASTINGS—HASTINGS CASTLE—CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL, ETC., ETC.

On our way to Canterbury we must take in Hastings and St. Leonards. Arriving there on a beautiful autumnal day, we were in excellent spirits to see the sights. We went to the hotel and ordered dinner, the same to be ready against our return from a two-hour pedestrian excursion through the town and castle, a mile distant. I do not mean that we proposed to be two hours making two miles—no, we meant to employ most of the time in inspecting this ancient borough, the scene of so many struggles in early English history. Hastings is picturesquely situated on the Southern coast, in the county of Sussex, seventy-four miles from London, by the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway, and sixty-two by the London and South-Eastern Railway. Its interesting historical associations, its salubrious climate, its handsome buildings, and bold cliffs, the beauty of its walks and drives, and its magnificent parades, obtain for it its full share of visitors; and during the "season" a constant stream of fashionable life may be seen pouring through its streets and along its parades.

The best general view of the town of Hastings and St. Leonards is to be obtained from the sea—a continuous *facade* of buildings extending from the East Cliffs, on the east, to Bopeep, on the west, a distance of three miles, presents, perhaps, as fine an architectural sight as any in the kingdom, the foreground being thickly studded by the votaries of fashion, by equestrians and pedestrians, loungers and promenaders, listening to the bands, the pleasure boats and bathing-machines in full activity, which cannot fail to make a most charming and agreeable picture. It lies in two gorges surrounded by an amphitheatre of hills and cliffs on every side except the south. At the beginning of the century, when it first came into reputation as a watering-place, Hastings consisted of two main streets, but since then many new streets and squares have been added, and St. Leonards, at that time about a mile distant, is now connected with it by a line of terraces and parades, and forms its most fashionable district.

Hastings is the principal of the Cinque (five) Ports. The ports were especially taxed for the protection of the rest of the kingdom. Under Edward the Confessor, their ships and sailors were numerous and celebrated; it was in Edward's