

## AGED AND INFIRM MINISTERS' FUND.

Editor Canada Presbyterian: Your issue of the 10th instant contains a letter over the signature of "Senex," in which the committee charged with the administration of the fund is grossly misrepresented. To me it is a matter of surprise that one who can descant so freely on the claims of Christianity, can be guilty of such unchristian misrepresentation—not to speak of his mean innuendo regarding our efficient secretary. I am surprised that he did not append his name. When he does that, and a Christian man ought not to be ashamed to vouch for his convictions, I will answer all his charges and insinuations; but not till then.

Permit me to suggest for your consideration whether it be wise and right, from the standpoint of The Canada Presbyterian, as a Church paper, though a private enterprise, to allow persons under fictitious names to use its columns to make statements calculated to injure the Church or one of its funds. Yours truly,

J. K. MACDONALD, Convener.

Toronto, May 15th, 1893.

## THE BEAUTY OF WORDS.

The richness of Elizabethan English, the freedom and delight with which men sounded and explored the charming intricacies of a tongue that was expanding daily into fresh majesty and beauty, must have given to literature some of the allurements of navigation. Mariners sailed away upon stormy seas, on strange, half-lit errands, haunted by the shadow of glory, dazzled by the lustre of wealth. Scholars ventured far upon the unknown oceans of letters, haunted by the seductions of prose, dazzled by the fairness of verse. They brought back curious spoils, gaudy, subtle, sumptuous, according to the taste or potency of the discoverer. Their words have often a mingled weight and sweetness, whether conveying briefly a single thought, like Burton's "touching with the loadstone of love," or adding strength and lustre to the ample delineations of Ben Jonson. "Give me that wit whom praise excites, glory puts on, or disgrace grieves; he is to be nourished with ambition, pricked forward with honours, checked with reprehension, and never to be suspected of sloth." Bacon's admirable conciseness, in which nothing is disregarded, but where every word carries its proper value and expresses its exact significance, is equalled only by Cardinal Newman. "Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and study an exact man," says Bacon; and this simple accuracy of definition reminds us inevitably of the lucid terseness with which every sentence of the "Apologia" reveals the thought it holds. "The truest expedience is to answer right out when you are asked; the wisest economy is to have no management; the best prudence is not to be a coward." As for the naïveté and the picturesqueness which lend such inexpressible charm to the early writers and atone for so many of their misdeeds, what can be more agreeable than to hear Sir Walter Raleigh remark with cheerful ingenuousness, "Some of our captains garboured of wine till they were reasonable pleasant!"—a most encouraging way of narrating a not altogether uncommon occurrence. And what can be more winning to the ear than the simple grace with which Roger Ascham writes of familiar things. "In the whole year, spring-time, summer, fall of the leaf, and winter; and in one day, morning, noontime, afternoon, and eventide, altereth the course of the weather, the pith of the bow, the strength of the man!" It seems an easy thing to say "fall of the leaf" for fall, and "eventide" for evening, but in such easy things lies the subtle beauty of language; in the rejection of such nice distinctions lies the barrenness of common speech. We can hardly spare the time, in these hurried days, to speak of the fall of the leaf, or use four words where one would suffice, merely because the four words have a graceful significance, and the one word has none; and so, even in composition, this finely coloured phrase, with its hint of russet, wind-swept woods, is lost to us forever.—Agnes Repplier, in the "Atlantic Monthly."

## CRIMINOLOGY.

From The Week.

The report of Mr. Moylan, Dominion Inspector of Prisons, published not long since, contains some very serious statements in regard to the character and history of young criminals, alleged to be imported into Canada after a very insufficient period of training and testing in reformatories and other institutions in Great Britain. The matter is one of great importance in relation to the moral welfare of the Dominion. If it could be made clear that a large percentage of the boys and girls brought into the country through the agency of charitable individuals and institutions relapse into vicious or criminal courses, there would remain little question as to the necessity of taking some effective measures to prevent such contamination of our population by the constant influx of a polluted stream. The views presented in Inspector Moylan's Report are quite in accordance with those held by many citizens and advocated by some of our newspapers, on what are supposed to be scientific principles. The tendency of the day is to lay great, possibly undue, stress upon the ineradicability and persistence of inherited traits and tendencies. We are constantly meeting with dissertations the aim of which is to impress the public with the comparative hopelessness of contending against the influence of native impulses and of early associations. The impression is conveyed that it is rather the exception than the rule when one of the boys or girls who have been rescued from the gutters and underground dens of London and other great cities, and, after months or years of training in some charitable institution, transplanted to Canadian soil, so far overcomes the inborn and inbred corruption as to lead an honest and industrious life.

The question is one of fact and can be settled only by a careful study of the history of a sufficiently large number of the waifs to warrant an induction. It is not sufficient, when from time to time we hear of some lapse from right paths of one of the Barnardo boys or one of the MacPherson boys, to jump to the conclusion that nothing better is to be expected. For our own part we have not yet seen any reliable statistics to warrant any such generalization. In the isolated instances in which individuals of the classes referred to have turned out badly, the fact has too often transpired that harsh and cruel treatment on the part of those into whose hands the unfortunates have fallen has had much to do with their failures. It is in the nature of the case difficult if not impossible for those who have, with true Christian charity, constituted themselves guardians and benefactors of the waifs, to watch over them with any degree of efficiency when they have become scattered from end to end of this great Dominion. Experience seems to establish as a humiliating fact, that the percentage of those who cannot be trusted with virtually irresponsible power over children not their own, or other helpless fellow-beings, is astonishingly large. Here is one of the great but probably unavoidable evils of the system of child immigration.

It would of course be too much to expect that as large a proportion of the children thus transplanted from the very worst environment into Canadian homes would turn out well, as of the children native to the soil and brought up carefully under virtuous influences and amidst favourable surroundings. But there seems good reason to believe that the ranks of the great army of criminals are recruited much more largely from the waifs of our own cities than from those coming to us from over the sea. This is easily explained from the fact that the latter have received a valuable training in the various "Homes," such as, in too many cases, has not been enjoyed by the wretched products of our own defective civilization, and from the further fact that the immigrant children are in so many instances transplanted to the healthful surroundings and influences of country life, while in the case of the neglected natives no one of the right stamp has any such power to dispose of them after the most approved fashion.

Some statistics given by Warden Massie the other day, as the result of an analysis of origins of those now in his charge at the

Central Prison, in this city, are instructive in this connection. From this report it appears that, as the result of a careful enquiry made on Sunday, February 5th, of 357 prisoners in that institution but four were from the Barnardo homes and but two from Miss MacPherson's homes. A very few had been assisted to this country by other charitable individuals or agencies. There were in all three from Ireland, three from Scotland and nine from England, who had been assisted, but how many of these had been brought out as children, or had had previous training in institutions for the purpose, does not appear in the report before us. Five others, age not stated but probably adults, Warden Massie was led to believe had been in prison in the old lands before emigrating, but those do not affect our present purpose. Mr. Massie stated that the record of Miss MacPherson's boys sent to Canada showed that 95 per cent. had done well after coming to this country, and of Quarrier's, sent from Glasgow, 97 per cent. had done well. He further estimates that of the 20,000 or more children brought to Canada from the streets of English cities, during the last twenty years, probably ninety-five per cent. have done well. It is questionable whether the same can be said of a larger percentage of all the children born and brought up in Canada.

The question is one of theoretical as well as practical interest. At least it is highly necessary that such facts as the foregoing, if they can be established, should be given their full force in connection with scientific investigations. We have before us, as we write, a new work on Criminology, of considerable interest and value, by Mr. Arthur Macdonald, Specialist in Education as related to the abnormal and weakling classes in connection with the United States Bureau of Education, Member of the Anthropological Society, etc. The book treats of the subject from the physical as well as the psychological side. Our space is too nearly exhausted to permit of the fuller reference which we had in mind to make. We can only say, touching the bearing of the curious facts which it collates with regard to the relation between certain abnormal and defective craniological peculiarities and certain types of criminality, that several questions arise and demand fuller investigation before we are necessarily shut up to fatalistic conclusions, concerning the hopelessness of transforming born criminals into honest citizens. The author himself, let us hasten to explain, draws no such inferences or conclusions, so far as we have observed, but confines himself, in the true scientific spirit, to collating the facts and setting them before the reader. The questions to which we refer are these: Suppose it to be an ascertained fact that those who have developed a certain peculiar type of criminality are invariably found to have certain peculiar craniological features, it is evident that before we can be warranted in drawing the conclusion that those unfortunates were born with an irresistible propensity for crimes of the particular class in question it will be necessary further to show: first, that they were in every case born with that peculiarity of craniological formation; second, that it is in no case the consequent rather than the antecedent of criminal indulgence; third, that all criminals of that particular genus have similar brain, or rather skull formations; and fourth, that all who do exhibit those craniological peculiarities have given way to the criminal propensities supposed to be indicated. The existence of exceptions of either kind would go far to invalidate the general conclusion. Mutatis mutandis, the same remarks will hold good in respect to other physiological peculiarities, such as those of a pathological or physiognomical character, etc. The conclusion happily is, so far as yet appears, that we may, with due deference to all the established results of scientific inquiry, still retain the largest faith in the power of right training under proper moral and religious influences, to overcome, in the great majority of cases, the tendencies however strong implanted by heredity and early environment, and to transform the most unpromising "gutter snipes" into honest and industrious citizens; and further, that the morals of our country are in far greater danger from the neglected and viciously brought up youth of our own land than from those who have had some years of good training in the Mother Country.

## Christian Endeavor.

## TARRYING NEAR TEMPTATION.

REV. W. S. M'TAVISH, R.D., ST. GEORGE.

MAY 21.—Prov. 23:30-31; Matt. 26:47.

It is said that Dr. Johnson liked a good hater. The Christian should be a good hater—a hater of sin and even the temptation to sin (Deut. 7:26). He should hate the devil and all his works. As the wicked one never gives any intimation as to when or how an attack is to be made, the Christian must be on the alert, and if he really hates sin, that disposition will make him watchful. He will not tarry near temptation. The reformed inebriate should hate with a perfect hatred that which once dragged him down, and if he is wise he will not go where he can see others quaffing the poison which was once the bane of his life. Indeed, it is likely he will feel constrained to say:—

"Tell me I hate the bowl;  
Hate is a feeble word—  
I loath, abhor, my very soul  
With strong disgust is stirred,  
Whene'er I hear or see or tell  
Of this dark beverage of hell."

There are several weighty reasons why men should not tarry near temptation.

1. By tarrying near temptation a man suffers some measure of moral pollution. Even though he may not actually fall before the temptation, he can hardly hope to be as chaste and pure as he was before. One cannot look at an obscene picture, hear a blood-curdling story, or read a filthy book, and remain as pure in heart and mind as before. "I am a part of all that I have met." Even though a man may not drink intoxicants, he cannot tarry long in an ordinary bar-room without suffering some measure of demoralization. Just as surely as the hand is blackened by the coal it touches, just as surely as pitch sticks to the object that comes into contact with it, so surely will the man who puts himself in the way of temptation be besmirched. "He needs a long spoon who would sup with the devil."

2. Again, the man who tarries near temptation is almost certain to be overcome, and then to go farther than he intended. Lot at first merely pitched his tent toward Sodom, but it was not before he and his family were in Sodom, and there they remained, though the men of that city were sinners and wicked before the Lord exceedingly (Gen. 13:12-13). When Jacob was at Shechem his daughter Dinah went out to see the daughters of the land, but alas! she was fascinated with the society of the Shechemites and she fell. It is worth while to observe the three words which Achan used when confessing his sin to Joshua; it is no less important to notice the order in which they occur—"I saw, I coveted, I took," (Josh. 7:21). It is not likely that Samson ever intended to tell Delilah wherein his great strength lay, but he dallied so long and so foolishly with her that he felt almost compelled at last to reveal the secret. No man ever intends to become a sot, nevertheless it is lamentably true that thousands go farther in this direction than they intended.

3. There is always a probability that a man, having gone farther than he intended, will not return. The man who tarries near temptation is entering the outer circles of a whirlpool, and before he is aware he may be carried so far into the vortex that he finds it next to impossible to return. He may launch his boat so near the edge of the cataract that a superhuman effort is required before he can reach the shore again.

But even if God sends from above and draws a man out of many waters, he loses some measure of joy and peace through being overcome by the temptation. David, tarrying near temptation, fell, and although he was afterwards graciously pardoned, what must have been the anguish of his soul as he cried, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." Though Peter was kindly restored to his apostleship after he had denied his Master, his sorrow in the meantime was deep and poignant. It is well for us, then, to heed the Saviour's counsel, "Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation."