

if there were less diseased suspiciousness, less watching for insult when none is intended, less resenting the very appearance of patronage when patronage is not thought of, there would be more friendliness all round, and fewer class antagonisms and social alienations. We have known and know individuals as kindly and considerate as can well be imagined, and as anxious as possible to be on the most friendly, humane, and Christian footing with those who may not be so well to do as themselves, and who have yet found their advances steadily ignored or repelled by the very persons who may all the while be complaining of the coldness of fellow Church members, or the purse-proud isolation of "comfortable Christians." There is no denying the fact that the "gold ring and the gay clothing" have still, as of old, far too great an influence both within the Church and without. But at the same time let us be just, and acknowledge that

"Pride may be pampered when the flesh grows lean ;
Humility may clothe an English dean."

In short, there is no denying the fact that there is something wrong with the Church which has no poor connected with it; but it is equally unquestionable that there is something wrong with the Christianity the great mass of whose adherents continue, especially in a country like this, poor, shiftless, and uncomfortable; for with the highest spiritual blessings which genuine Christianity imparts, it develops energies, promotes habits, and stimulates aspirations which, if not issuing in wealth, have a natural tendency to result in "well-being," and in individual as well as in family comfort. Let anyone look round his own neighbourhood and ask, "What in nine cases out of ten may be the cause of the discomfort and poverty to be met with all round?" and he will have to answer, "Sin; habits which Christianity, understood, believed, and acted out, would naturally and to a great extent effectively cut up by the very roots." Christianity does not indeed make the blockhead a wise man, or the shiftless to be full of tact and energy; but it makes both a great deal better than they would otherwise be, and promotes far more effectually than all the crude nostrums of so-called "moral and social renovators," which have been so often ushered in with such an affectation of wisdom and such a parade of omniscience, to be in due time as discredited and scorned as would be the proposal of any common tramp to transmute a brass farthing into a golden guinea through means of a woollen rag and a little whiting, duly utilized by the requisite amount of friction.

The Churches of Christ at the present day are certainly not what they ought to be, and His followers, whether rich or poor, come far short of their obligations and aims. But in the meantime it is as manifest as is the sun at noon-day that they are the most potent forces at present in existence and operation for the moral elevation and material advancement of the race. Indeed, what other forces are in operation in this direction which do not, directly or indirectly, owe all their power to the teaching of that Christianity which very likely their promoters may affect to ignore and oppose? We have not been able to discover even one, while the lives and characters and conduct of most of those who have claimed to have discovered "a more excellent way" sufficiently explain the failure of their various plans for the moral and social elevation of the race, seeing they have proved so conspicuously that they have failed even at the fountain-head.

SCANDALS IN THE CHURCH.

WHEN any scandal, even the smallest, breaks out in a Church, it seems to give great comfort and encouragement to a considerable class in the community who are neither very brilliant intellectually nor models of personal propriety. They grin and chuckle and wink in a way which to themselves appears very knowing, but which to others conveys only a revelation of obliquity and baseness. They are pleased to find others as bad as themselves, if not a great deal worse. The worst possible view is sure to be always taken, and there is no fear of their charity hiding a multitude of sins. They seem to feel no comfort till they have secured evidence that that excellence is a sham. Indeed, even when they know it is genuine, they wish it were otherwise, and, like the Portland merchant and Dr. Payson, would give their five hundred dollars, if they had them, to verify that which even they know to be a lie. Curious spiritual

phenomenon this, yet easily accounted for—often recurring in different guises, yet in them all substantially the same.

We have no wish that the world, either within or without the Church, should speak or feel tenderly about scandals. It is a tribute of honour which they unconsciously pay to that very Church when they make the most of it. It is their confession that in such cases they must bring to bear a higher standard of judgment than they are inclined to apply to their own conduct or to that of their cronies. What with themselves would pass as matters of course, nay, with a slight dash of meritoriousness about them, are simply awful when found in the Church of Christ. All right. We thank you, friends, "for teaching us this word," and for even once making use of this standard, though it be in malignity and scorn. Hold it up. It is well worthy of all your efforts, whoever may thereby be brought to shame. Nay, it may help even you

To rise on stepping-stones
Of your dead selves, to higher things.

Shipwreck of character, individual inconsistency, failure in realizing a lofty ideal, must always be matters for sorrowful regret to any mind of even moderate elevation—to any heart of even passable purity. But with others very different feelings are awakened, and no one need wonder. Sometimes the scandal is terrible, and the consequent injury widespread and enduring. Sometimes it has to be carefully nursed in order to its appearing even passably outrageous. But in any case, "woe unto the world because of scandals!" How they make the enemies of God to blaspheme! How often they at least raise a laugh, and very possibly bring to nought a holy resolution!

This last kissing scandal at Brampton was but a very poor affair, yet how it has set very small wits agog, and led to many harsh judgments and offensive inuendoes! We pass no opinion on the subject except to say that what had remained untouched for two years might in any case, and considering all the circumstances, have well continued so for all the future.

We can only add that, whatever were the facts in this instance, it is a matter of notoriety and regret that some very excellent ministers of more than one denomination, both in Canada and elsewhere, have been and are offensively prone to what was charged against Mr. Willoughby. It is very possible that they may mean nothing wrong, but the whole thing is more honoured in the breach than in the observance. They need not think that in this way they promote their ministerial usefulness, or even their personal popularity; and though, of course, there is not one law for the pulpit and another for the pew, yet—"a word to the wise is enough," whatever their age and whatever their honours!

ASSEMBLY'S FOREIGN MISSION.

EXTRACTS FROM DR. G. L. MACKAY'S LETTERS.

In a letter from Bang-kah, Formosa, Dr. Mackay gives an account of his journey up the rapids from Sin-tsung to Sa-kak-eng, and also of his walk across the plains, which were like furnaces, at ten o'clock in the forenoon. At the latter place he preached to several hundreds of hearers, among whom were fifty or sixty converts. He goes on to say:

"We have to spend money to repair chapels which were injured during the storms of 1881. The Church should know *how the money goes*. I regret—I feel grieved to tell you that the white ants are all over the house in which we live, and the 'dry rot' in the rafters, etc., has ruined the roof. Masons are at work, and have one side of the roof off. Mr. Junor's house is also in a ruined condition. What can we do? The Church in Canada should know about this."

"On Sabbath, converts arrived from stations twenty miles distant, having walked all the way. Women also appeared from Kelung, etc. It was burning hot, but we had a grand and glorious gathering. Six helpers addressed the people before I spoke to them. God is opening up the high places for the Gospel of our Redeemer. I am told of more than a dozen who became *convinced* by one address since my return. My subject was 'Dr. Duff and India.' God bless our poor efforts! 'Oxford College' (named after Dr. M.'s native county in Canada, and which presented him with a large contribution to his work in Formosa) is going up famously. And \$500 more from a dear departed Christian, for Formosa! Hallelujah! God reigns! So poor Formosa is remem-

bered in Christian Canada. Ten thousand blessings rest on the friends of her who has gone before, and who in her last moments thought of this heathen isle."

"This house is riddled with white ants. They are actually in the walls, and made their way from the bottom. The wood-work in many parts is entirely eaten away. I don't consider the house safe to live in, but don't care for that! Life or death—all one! But I do hope the Church will know where some money goes. *We must repair, or have the building on our heads.*"

"I am just back from our Southern churches, having visited four of them. The rain poured down in torrents nearly all the way. I visited very many villages near the base of the hills, and preached the gospel forty-two times. We had grand evening meetings in the chapels. God is, as in days past, blessing a poor labourer's efforts. The masons are building 'Oxford College.' T. L.

OBITUARY.

The late Mrs. John McVicar, who died on the 9th inst., at the residence of her son-in-law, Mr. Donald Guthrie, Q.C., and for some time M.P. for Wellington, was a native of the south end of Cantyre, Argyleshire, Scotland. Some forty-six years ago the family, then consisting of the parents and ten children, came to Canada and settled near Chatham. Both father and mother were persons of vigorous constitutions, high intelligence, and sterling integrity. They passed heroically through the oft-told difficulties incident to pioneer life in Canada, and always felt confident of the great future in store for the land of their adoption.

While cherishing a truly liberal and catholic spirit, they were devotedly attached to the Presbyterian Church. The deceased, who was the mother of twelve children, attained to the unusual age of ninety-two, and is survived by four sons and three daughters, and many grandchildren. Her decision of character, faith, courage and perseverance are deeply impressed upon her children. She lived to see them all in positions of comfort and usefulness. Her eldest son, Duncan, who has done much to advance the religious, agricultural, and general interests of the county of Kent, still retains the original homestead in the township of Chatham. Her youngest son, the Rev. Dr. D. H. McVicar, was for some time pastor of Knox Church, Guelph, afterwards of Cote St. Church, Montreal, and is now Principal of the Presbyterian College. He was last year Moderator of the General Assembly. Her second youngest son, Dr. Malcolm McVicar, has for twenty-five years held high educational positions in the United States, has written successfully on education in the form of text books and otherwise, and is now Professor of Apologetics and Exegesis in the McMaster Hall, Toronto.

Of late years, Mrs. McVicar elected to reside with her son-in-law, Mr. Guthrie, from whom and from her youngest daughter, Mrs. Guthrie, and her daughter Helen, she received the most devoted attentions. She lived in the affection of the entire family group, comprising, along with those just named, seven grandchildren. She had long exercised a lively Christian faith and hope, and enjoyed for many years, with the greatest satisfaction and gratitude, the unwearied ministerial and pastoral services of the Rev. Dr. Wardrope, Guelph.

On Sunday morning, the 9th, she peacefully, and without any apparent pain, fell asleep in Jesus. The remains were taken for interment to the family burying ground on the old homestead.

Appropriate funeral services were conducted on the following Tuesday afternoon, in the First Presbyterian Church, by her former pastor, the Rev. A. McColl, and at the grave by the Rev. Wm. Walker.

PRESBYTERY OF HAMILTON.—This Presbytery met in Hamilton on the 17th day of July. Besides routine business, Mr. Hutt, catechist, was appointed to supply Port Dalhousie till the end of the year, and Mr. J. H. Simpson, student catechist, to supply Merriton and South Waterdown. Bromley and Port Dover asked for leave to have moderation in a call, which was granted. The standing committees for the year were appointed. All sessions were instructed to hold missionary meetings in the congregations as early in the season as possible.—The Presbytery sanctioned the erection of a new church at Thorold.—JOHN, LAING, Pres. Clerk.