

self—he cannot *know* that the Being whose existence he rejects does not exist. But he must *know* that he does not exist, else he deserves equal contempt and compassion for the temerity with which he firmly avows his rejection and acts accordingly. And yet a man of ordinary age and intelligence may present himself to you with the avowal of being thus distinguished from the crowd; and if he would describe the manner in which he has attained this eminence, you would feel a melancholy interest in contemplating that process of which the result is so prodigious. Yes, and when the claims are so enormous and the actual faculty and attainment so distressingly small as in very many cases they are, the comparison, no doubt, may continue, but the contempt comes to be by far the principal factor in the complex feeling that is awakened by the sight of one whose presumption is so magnificent, and whose actual performance in the world either of thought or argument is so painfully and so suggestively insignificant.

REV. DR. RYERSON.

AS already announced in these columns, the Rev. Dr. Ryerson died at his own house in this city on the morning of Sabbath the 19th February, and was buried on the Wednesday following amid the tears of many, and with the respect as well as regret of all. The Local Legislature adjourned to attend the funeral, while very many of all classes joined to pay the last tribute of respect to one who was in many respects a very remarkable man. Of course the claims put forward on his behalf by a good many of his more enthusiastic admirers are absurdly exaggerated. He was not a man of genius, but his abilities were great and his administrative faculty was especially remarkable. He may be said to have made our Ontario Educational system, and in that he has his chief and most enduring monument. He was a vigorous writer, and excelled particularly on controversial and political matters. In his younger years he was inclined occasionally to be vehement even to coarseness in his expressions, and denunciatory even to the point of being vituperative. Indeed, even after he was considerably advanced in life, he had a copious vocabulary of very condemnatory adjectives, and could handle his opponents, whether political or religious, without gloves, and in a very trenchant style. He was a devotedly loyal Canadian, an enthusiastic Methodist, an enlightened friend and promoter of education, and, before all and above all, a humble follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. He has been gathered to his fathers like a shock of grain fully ripe, and leaves a name and a history which his countrymen of coming generations will always think of with respect, and mention with honour and affection.

THE SUPPRESSION OF VICE.

MR ANTHONY COMSTOCK is well known as the secretary and soul of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice. He has devoted the last ten years of his life to this work, and is every twelve months achieving greater success in his chosen walk. According to the Tenth Report of the Society, 1881 has been by far the most successful year since the Society was started. During that time it has managed to break up many lottery and gambling dens, and has secured the conviction and punishment of a large number of those who for years have been becoming rich by the most nefarious proceedings. The gambler and lottery dealer are not altogether put down in New York, but they have been forced to skulk, instead of pursuing their work ostentatiously and in the sight of all.

The most formidable evil which the Society has to contend with is the pernicious literature so widely circulated among the young, and the frightfully disgusting and immoral details which are frequently given in the name of news, by many newspapers whose conductors ought to know better, and act differently. The dime novel and the blood-and-thunder illustrated papers for the young especially are doing an awful work of moral ruin among far more than may be generally suspected. We are sorry to think that the injury thus inflicted is not by any means confined to the other side. Somehow or other these publications are smuggled into Canada in great, and we fear increasing numbers, and are bought up largely by many from whom better things might have been expected. We more than fear also that regular syste-

matic gambling is being largely carried on in every city and town of the Dominion, to the ruin of many, and to the injury of all so engaged. The people of Toronto are at present very righteously indignant at the manner in which houses of bad fame, in the common sense of that phrase, are allowed to flourish unmolested. But it is to be feared they are not sufficiently alive to the extent and intensity of the kindred evil of gambling. We suspect there are comparatively few saloons and taverns where this is not carried on to a greater or less extent. But indeed the young do not need to go to taverns to gratify their love for hazard and high stakes, when at every turn there is gambling in stocks and lots carried on with ostentatious frankness, as if the whole proceeding were as innocent and honourable as taking one's food.

It would be difficult to say how many young men and old have been tempted into the ways of dishonour and dishonesty by dabbling in margins, and thus hastening to be rich, while the fever in land speculation is so notorious and so general that comparatively few have been able to resist its influence, and successfully to withstand its fascinating delusiveness.

In all that speculation there is no increase of wealth. It is simply and only and ostentatiously a mere shuffling of the cards, and those who are holding the stakes, or engaging in the pastime, have little reason to cry out against the three-card-monte men, or the unprincipled manipulators of the three thimbles and the pea.

THE LATE DR. BLACK, OF KILDONAN.

The Rev. John Black, D.D., who died at the manse, Kildonan, Manitoba, on the 11th of February, was the pioneer Presbyterian minister of the North-West. He was born in Dumfries, Scotland, in 1818. While he was very young the family emigrated to the United States, whence he and his brother James, now minister of Caledonia, removed to Canada. They both studied for the ministry at Knox College, Toronto. Of the two brothers, John, the subject of this sketch, was the elder. For a short time after leaving college he was employed in mission work in the Province of Quebec, and it was while he was so engaged that the call from Assiniboia reached him. This call he accepted, and setting out without delay on what was then a tedious journey, reached the old Red River Settlement on the 19th of September, 1851, in a birch bark canoe.

For forty years the isolated settlers had been sending applications to Scotland for a Presbyterian minister, but without success. They temporarily availed themselves of the ministrations of the Church of England, but never relaxed their efforts to obtain a minister of their own. It was not, however, until their case was given into the hands of the Canadian Church, and the energy of Dr. Burns was brought to bear upon it, that their long-cherished desire was accomplished.

From a very full obituary notice in the Winnipeg "Times," evidently written by one who was well acquainted with Dr. Black and his work, we extract the following paragraph:

"The new pastor proved no trifle. He was ready and willing to do his share, and more than his share, of the work that had to be done. Soon after entering on his duties, it is said of him: 'Our indefatigable and gifted minister, Rev. Mr. Black, in addition to his usual clerical duties at both stations, teaches a French and Latin class.' That was the characteristic of the man throughout his whole career—readiness to do work wherever it was required, in his parish or out of it; unhesitating compliance with whatever he believed to be the dictates of duty, however much that compliance might lead him to put forth efforts which, had he consulted his ease, he might have avoided. For the greater part of the eleven years immediately following his arrival he had, unaided in the ministry, to attend to the spiritual needs of four congregations—at Kildonan, Little Britain (St. Andrew's), Headingley and Fort Garry. As frequently as possible he visited the outlying districts, holding services at Poplar Point, High Bluff, and, we believe, at the Portage. There was evidently much to be accomplished, and his course shows his determination that what could be done should be done. His general practice at this period was to hold divine service at Kildonan at ten o'clock a.m., drive to Little Britain and hold a second service in the afternoon, or else at the close of the Kildonan service proceed to the old court-house, Fort Garry, worship there with the nucleus of the present city congregations, and returning to Kildonan, hold a second service with his own flock the same evening. This was occupation enough for any one man for one day, and as the discourses delivered on these occasions were no crude productions, we may be sure that they necessitated a good deal of study. As a rule, we are informed, his sermons were distinguished by clearness, and a wide grasp of thought and closeness of reasoning. Those who have heard the pastor of Kildonan in his happiest efforts in the pul-

pit, have spoken very highly of his ability. In addition to these Sabbath ministrations, the other duties he discharged were many and various. He took a deep interest in the progress of the Sunday school held in the old church, and attended its sessions personally; week-day services, visitations, meetings, consultations, and a host of other duties, made heavy drafts on the pastor's powers, mentally and physically."

Regarding the illness which resulted in Dr. Black's death, we have kept our readers from time to time informed, and the following, from the Manitoba "Free Press," is all we can now make room for:

"No specific disease is assigned as the cause of his decease, but it is said that his whole physical system had given way as the result of the severe strain of many years of incessant labour. His health failed about a year ago to such an extent that he was compelled to rest temporarily; and, having in April last obtained from the Presbytery leave of absence for some months, he spent the greater part of the summer visiting friends in Ontario and in the State of New York, where also he remained for some time at the sea coast. When he set out to return, he thought himself materially improved, but on the journey he caught a severe cold, which for a long time counteracted the good effects of his rest and travelling, and from which, perhaps, he never entirely recovered. He preached for only a few Sundays after his return, and then it became evident that a still longer period of relief from pastoral duties was absolutely necessary; accordingly, at the last meeting of the Presbytery of Manitoba, at his request the Presbytery made provision for the supply of his pulpit. Since that time he continued gradually to sink, until the last great change came."

The funeral took place on the 15th ult. The Rev. Professor Hart conducted the service, in which the Rev. Messrs. Matheson, Pitblado and Thompson also took part.

LETTER FROM REV. G. L. MCKAY, D.D.

REV. PROF. McLAREN.—MY DEAR BROTHER,—After twenty-seven days on the ocean s.s. "Belligic" we arrived at Hong-kong, where I met my old friend, Captain Abbott, who informed me that his ship was bound for Tamsui, Formosa, by way of Fuchow. Saturday, 17th ult., we boarded her, and Sabbath morning cleared the port and steamed up the Formosan channel against a terrific N.E. gale. Saturday, 24th ult., we passed Tamsui, but could not enter. Sunday we lay outside the bar, tossed on the rolling waves, looking at Tamsui with longing hearts. Monday, 19th, at 9 a.m., we were anchored in the Tamsui river, and in a few moments were welcomed by A. H. A., my first convert in Northern Formosa, who was the very first to greet us. We scarcely spoke a word to him until my dear colleague, Mr. Junor, stepped on board to help us ashore. Ashore! thank God, once more, on beloved Formosa. We found Mrs. Junor and the baby very well, and our own Mary Helen running about. Since arriving, converts have come from all parts of the field to welcome us back. I never expected to get such a warm reception from converts and heathen. I visited several chapels already, and was met by crowds, who expressed great joy at our return. In Bang-kah even the street in front of the chapel was soon packed after my arrival there. When I visit all the chapels I will write at length.

Mr. Junor is not very well, and is going by the steamer to Amoy, etc., and can get materials for "Oxford" college far cheaper than here, so that he will do great good by going. With kindest regards to Mrs. McLaren, etc. G. L. MCKAY.

Tamsui, Formosa, January 2nd, 1882.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT—Dr. Cochrane acknowledges receipt for \$5 for Church Building Fund in the North West, from M. Taylor, Culloden.

THE annual missionary meeting of Charles street Church, Toronto, was held on Wednesday evening, 22nd ult. The attendance was large, and was presided over by the pastor, Rev. J. Hogg. Effective addresses were made by Principal Caven and Professor McLaren, in which the claims of our Home and Foreign Missionary operations were clearly and eloquently set forth. The following amounts were raised during the year: Missionary Society, \$844; Sabbath School, \$150; Mission Band, \$125; Bible Class, \$36—\$1,155 in all. \$1,102 were given to the various Schemes as follows: Home Missions, \$311; Foreign (including Mission Band contribution), \$402; Colleges, \$240; French Evangelization, \$84; Widows' and Orphans' Fund, \$15; Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund, \$35; Assembly Fund, \$15. The above amount includes the collection taken up on the occasion of Mr. Robertson's address on the North-West, amounting to \$78.