

# The Dominion Presbyterian

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## The Down Town Element.

The surplus population throughout Ontario is steadily gravitating towards the cities. Some small portion of it goes westward, but the greater part goes to swell the transient population of the great centres. In the cities themselves there is a steady outflow of the old residents from the business centres outward to the suburbs, or at least to the more eligible residential quarters on the outskirts of the corporation. This is true, not only of the wealthy merchant and professional man, but of the resident workman, who, wishing to have a home of his own, finds it in the less expensive outlying districts. The inflowing tide finds a temporary resting place in the central congested district. Here you will find the country lad and the country maiden by the hundred. They are employed in the adjacent stores and shops and business houses, or by the large corporations that operate in this central section.

How shall the Church minister to the spiritual need of these, and of the flotsam of a great city by whom they are surrounded? They are unattached to the Church, and are in many instances out of sympathy with it. Some of them will tell you bluntly that they have no use for the Church, and they have come to think that the Church has no use for them. They have not reached this opinion in a week or a month or a year, but it has slowly worked its way in upon them, and half-believing it, they assert it with all the bitterness of a half-entertained and unpleasant belief.

Are these worth an effort to reach? Worth it! They are from the best homes in the land. They are physically the heritors of the strength of the land! Worth it! He died for them, surely we may make some effort to let them know this!

But how shall we best go about this business of presenting to them this message from Christ? They will not come into our churches. Partly because they are tasting the novelty of freedom from restraint, partly because they are not at home amid such surroundings as the ordinary city church presents, they seldom attend the ordinary services. They will not go to the Mission Halls. They are not the class for such ministration. The

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Young Men's Christian Association gathers in a very small section of them, but the majority fight shy of all efforts like that. Plainly some new method must be devised.

In that method one element must predominate—the simple presentation of the old message. It is no new truth they want, but a knowledge of the old. How shall we clear away the prejudice by which this downtown element is surrounded, as if mist-enshrouded, and let in the full light of the love of Christ upon these lives, now full of promise, but which will shortly be full of sores, if we cannot reach them? In the successful method there must be a genuine respect for the manhood and womanhood lying beneath the somewhat rude, perhaps uncouth exterior. Patronage will destroy all effort to reach them. They are men and women as we are, and stand upon the plane that we do, and must be treated accordingly. Failure to recognize this, even in our thought will make it useless to attempt to work among them. We are at one in this—that Christ suffered for each of us.

This work must be undertaken by a Church that has sufficient revenue to maintain ordinances apart from the contributions of the worshippers there. There is a good field for such work in any one of our cities.

## Among the Wild Ngoni.\*

We hear very much now about the literature of action; but surely one of the most important branches of that literature is the story of missionary activity, as it combines the charm of romance with the sober reality of truth. This book deals with a small part of the great work that has been done in "darkest Africa." The accompanying map shows the position in Central Africa of the various stations of the Livingstonia Mission, and the pictures help to make the story more real and life-like. Such a book is one of the best proofs of the living power of the Gospel and the true greatness of missionary work. For our young people such literature is not only interesting, it is full of the most wholesome inspiration. Let our young men note the lives of the chief workers mentioned in this book. Dr. Laws, a man of great wisdom and remarkable influence; Dr. Elmslie, who has just sailed for Africa on his third term of service; Dr. Steele, who after heroic struggles to educate himself, spent his life in this service, and William Koyi, the Kaffir Christian, who showed such strong faith and kindly tact; and let them remember that this is only a small specimen of what the Christian faith is doing all the world over, and especially in "the missionary world."

\*Among the Wild Ngoni. By W.A. Elmslie, Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier. London and Edinburgh.

## What Blackwood has to say About Christian Science.

We have already, in previous numbers, dealt with the subject of so-called "Christian Science," treating it in its relation to religious truth, and pointing out the baselessness of its claim to any solid foundation on Christian ethics, or the doctrines of revealed religion. Those of our readers who would desire to see its claims, apart from their religious aspect, reduced to palpable absurdity, will have their wishes gratified by a perusal of an article appearing in the April number of Blackwood, entitled "Christian Quackery," from the pen of an unnamed writer, who reminds his readers that, "like so many other nostrums, it hails from the land of wooden nutmegs; that it burst upon the world in 1870, and that its founder, or arch-priestess, is the Rev. Mary Baker G. Eddy, president of the Massachusetts Metaphysical College"; that that "to understand and practice Christian Science, it is absolutely necessary to procure a volume from her pen entitled 'Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures,' which volume, now in its 103rd edition, is the only reliable text-book of the system, and is to be purchased at the ridiculously low sum of \$3.18 per copy."

The writer of this most amusing, but instructive article, proceeds to grapple with "the leading factors in mind science," to wit, the propositions that "Mind is All and Matter is Naught," "Mind governs the body (though, of course, there is really no body), not partially, but wholly." "Matter possesses neither sensation nor life." "Matter is nothing but a mortal illusion wholly inadequate to affect man through its supposed organic action or existence." "Spirit and its formations are the only realities of Being; Matter disappears under the microscope of Spirit." "We define matter as error, because it is a false claim to life, substance and intelligence." "The theory that Spirit is not substance and creator is pantheistic heterodoxy which ultimates (sic) in sickness, sin and death;" from which leading factors the writer points out: "It follows clearly that error, sin, sickness, disease, and death are all but the false testimony of false material sense," whatever "material sense" may be, considering that "matter has no sensation," and that "the human mind is all that can produce rain." Again, quoting Mrs. Eddy's book: "The metaphysics of Christian Science, like the rules of mathematics, prove the truth by inversion. For example, there is no pain in Truth, and no truth in pain; no matter in Mind, and no mind in matter; no nerves in Intelligence, and no intelligence in nerves; no matter in Life, and no life in matter; no matter in Good, and no good in matter." To which the writer adds one other illustration: "Black is White, the converse of which is, to say the least of it, as true as the proposition itself."