

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

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TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, JULY 26, 1882.

THE Rev. R. H. Warden, of Montreal, requests us to ask ministers and missionaries kindly to return him immediately the addressed postal cards sent them recently, containing names and addresses of Sabbath school superintendents.

"If Arabi Bey is the lineal successor of Oreb, the Prince of the Midianites, as his Eastern biographer would make out, the sixty American marines who have landed at Alexandria to preserve order may, by an easy stretch of the imagination and a touch of Anglo-Israel lore, be deemed to be the fit and proper successors of Gideon's valiant band—at all events, judging by the talk of their leaders about the conduct of the Alexandria bombardment, ply help the modern Jericho about whose walls they go blowing."

GIDEON "wasn't thar." His "valiant band" never went blowing about the walls of Jericho. It was the camp of the Midianites they had to do with. Oh, ye benighted secular editors, when will your blunders have an end? We wonder which of you has been showing off his ignorance this time. Let's see. What! surely not. Yes, there it is, written plainly enough on the back of the slip: "Montreal 'Witness,' July 15th." Hur-h-sh-sh! "Tell it not in Gath."

THE Indore Missionary Society of Quebec, which held its annual meeting in May, though a small Society, has done good work. Its members raise their funds by their own handiwork—meeting once a week for two hours to read and work. They procure orders from shops for knitting, etc., as well as private orders. By this means, without resorting to either bazaars, concerts, or entertainments, they raise a considerable sum during the year for Missions. During the past year they raised upwards of two hundred dollars in this quiet and self-denying way—one lady earning twenty dollars by lace work alone, and another nearly as much by copying music. This Society for several years supported two Bible men in Indore, until deprived of one of their agents, and they at present support one, besides assisting the day schools and doing other work in aiding French evangelization, &c. Their example shows that where there is a will there is a way, and that God will bless patient, steady work for Him to the workers as well as to the cause for which they work.

DURING a recent visit to the Maritime Provinces we had ample opportunity of observing the condition of the Intercolonial Railway. The statements made in letters published by a city contemporary some time ago prepared us to find the road in an almost hopeless state of ruin and decay. Quite the contrary, however. The roadway is kept in good repair, the rolling stock is sufficient in every respect, and the railway altogether is in first-class condition; indeed, it would be difficult to find in the Dominion a better equipped, a better managed, or a safer road than the Intercolonial, notwithstanding all that the "Globe" has published to the contrary. It is but proper to add that much of the present prosperity of the Intercolonial Railway is due to the excellent management of Mr. D. Pottinger, the general superintendent at Moncton, N.B. Mr. Pottinger is no politician, but a thoroughly practical railway man. By dint of industry, coupled with ability of no mean order, he has gradually risen from a subordinate place to the position he occupies to-day, and the universal verdict of those conversant with the facts is that "the right man is in the right place."

WE are in receipt of the new Calendar of the Young Ladies' College, Brantford. An advertisement announcing the re-opening appears in another

column. The past year has been a most successful one in the history of this institution, and judging from the recent appointments made in the staff, there is every prospect that its past reputation shall be maintained this year. In addition to the staff of last year, we are pleased to see the name of the Rev. R. F. Beattie, M.A., B.D., who has recently taken charge of the First Presbyterian Church in that city. He takes charge of the subjects of Mental Philosophy and Logic, for which he is specially well qualified, being a medallist of the University in that department. To the vacancy created by the recent death of Professor Whish, J. Edmond Aldous, B.A., Trinity College, Cambridge, has been appointed as Director of the Music Department. Professor Aldous has already gained much distinction as a teacher and composer. In the Modern Language Department, we find the name of Miss Fluhmann, who has been for the past six years teacher in the High School, Montreal, and who brings with her a well-sustained reputation. The College is entering upon its ninth year under the most favourable circumstances.

THE RICH AND POOR AT CHURCH.

IS it a fact that church-going is more and more confined to the wealthy or well-to-do, and that, in short, a seat in a church is regarded as a luxury in which the poor are scarcely expected to indulge? If so, how has such a state of things come round? Who is to blame for what, so far as it exists, must be unwholesome and injurious? It is alleged that Protestant churches especially suffer from this evil, and that the more "evangelical" the congregation, the more likely it is to be made up of the prosperous and respectable, among whom "the poor" are not welcome, and from associating with whom, even as Christian brethren and sisters, they very naturally recoil. The expense incurred in keeping up the various departments of one of these "thoroughly respectable" "Church homes" is said to be so very considerable, that the poor are frightened away from having anything to do with them. No doubt it is added, that all are said to be welcome, whether they contribute much or little; but their pride, or what they themselves would call proper self-respect, will not allow them to be connected with any organization in which they cannot "pay their way," and they consequently either never venture across such thresholds, or very speedily withdraw, under the impression that, whatever it may be to others, such is no "Church home" to them. Now, it is quite possible that in too many cases there may be some truth in all this; yet, the more carefully the whole is examined, the more it will be seen that there is not nearly so much as is often alleged. Fine, fashionable, expensive churches, with the due amount of mortgage and yearly interest upon them, and all things else in correspondence, may appear to involve a very large yearly tax upon the pockets of their frequenters. But, after all, this cannot be the reason why what are called "the poor" should fight shy of them; for even where there is very considerable liberality displayed by the less able supporters of such churches—a liberality quite equal to that of many far better able to contribute—the amount either given or expected is not nearly equal to the whiskey or tobacco bills, to say nothing of those two items combined, of many an one who is ready enough to plead poverty as an excuse for religious indifference. The Church of Rome, it seems, is not afflicted with this intensely "respectable" weakness, and this may very well be, as the whole genius of that system has not untruthfully been described as one which makes and keeps the great mass of its adherents poor, and issues naturally in a priesthood in purple and a people in rags. The Church of England, it seems, also keeps fast hold of a due modicum of the poverty-stricken, though its great boast is its social gentility and the support of the "cultured." The Presbyterians, the Baptists, and in a less degree the Methodists, are specially suffering, we are assured, from this churchly dry rot of excruciating "respectability" and mere mammon worship and "gigmanity" in Christian sanctuaries. Is this true? Account for it as any one may: it is unquestionable that the great mass of the adherents of those churches belong to the middle classes—the thrifty in short, well-to-do and comfortable sections of the community. They will be found to be made up, as a whole, of those who are neither very high nor very low in the social scale. What is called "society" has but few representatives among them, and the worshippers of "gentility," es-

pecially when intellectually weak, very frequently "see it to be their duty," at a certain stage in their upward progress, to seek a ritual more ornate, "fellowship," more congenial to their cherished aspirations, and one more "helpful," if not to their Christian progress, at least to their social advancement. But is it truthfully to be laid as a crime to the charge of any of those Churches that they either specially attract the comfortable and well-to-do of the community, or very speedily make those who join them to be regarded as such? We submit that it is the very reverse. The whole tone, tendency and teaching of the Churches specially condemned, because specially "evangelical," naturally awaken such thoughts, aspirations, and resolutions as result in more or less noticeable material well-being. They are the merchants, the shopkeepers, the mechanics, the working men and women of ordinary life; and if they are more than usually thrifty, prosperous, and comfortable in their several walks of life, as compared with many who had opportunities equally good and a start equally encouraging, the more credit, not the more disgrace, to the Church whose teaching has had such beneficial effects, and to the religious atmosphere which has to such an extent produced a godliness so evidently profitable both for the life that now is, as well as for that which is to come. Ask many a well-to-do mechanic, among Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists, what has been the great secret of his comparative success, and his present comfortable surroundings, and he will unhesitatingly and truthfully reply—his religion. He will tell how it has quickened his intellectual faculties, elevated and purified his moral and religious aspirations, rendered his conscience more sensitive, his sobriety more unmistakable, his trustworthiness more marked, his diligence more constant, his tastes more simple and refined, his habits more regular—in short, his whole being far different and far better from what they were in other days; so that if he is not now poor and dependent he may thank his religion in a great measure for the change. If it is said that "the poor" in the Churches referred to get scant attention, and are even occasionally treated with something like insult, we should be glad to have better evidence of the fact than mere unsupported assertion. As a general thing, we most strongly contend that it is not true, and that in those cases where there is even the appearance of such a thing, it may in general be traced as much to the super-sensitiveness of those who think themselves neglected, as to the superciliousness of those who are blamed for culpable neglect or *hauteur*. Besides, the very fact of those churches being of democratic and popular character tends to the production of this very over-sensitiveness which is the root of most of the mischief. In some churches, where the social gulf between the members is both wide and deep, the attention and patronage of the high is taken thankfully and humbly as a mere matter of course—a sort of charity to humble dependents for which they cannot be too effusive in their gratitude. It is different where the separating line is not so unmistakable. There the relatively poor and the supposedly social inferior are apt to be on the watch against anything which may have even the appearance of condescension or patronage. We at once say that it is a matter for great regret that the social intercourse among members of the same congregation should often not be greater than it is, and that people may attend the same church with others, and even sit in the next pew for years, and yet remain comparative or even total strangers. But let us be just. Who are those often chiefly to blame for such a state of things? Not the "rich;" not even the "church ladies," who more or less, it is said, "run" the affair, and are often blamed for taking too much upon them. On the contrary, those who are comparatively poor and struggling are often, as we have said, in this respect the greatest offenders. They resent what they think "patronage" when anything rather than patronage was intended. They repel advances which were really as friendly and sincere as could be thought of. They "shy off" in their moody and ever-wakeful pride, and don't give those they are jealous of a chance to show what they are and what they mean. They construe any notice into something like insult, and even unintentional neglect or oversight is set down as unquestionably a studied and unpardonable offence. We are not taking one side more than the other in saying all this. All that we want to insist upon is that the fault complained of is not always on one side, and that whether in the church or out of it,