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SOME Presbytery notices and communications crowded out.

PRESBYTERIAL CONFERENCES.

WE promised last week to have one or more of the papers read at the Conference on the State of Religion recently held by the Toronto Presbytery published in this week's issue. This has not been found to be practicable. We shall, however, be able to redeem our promise next week. The only matter for regret in connection with the Conference in question was that the audiences were comparatively so small, the greater the necessity, therefore, for affording an opportunity to many, of reading, at least some of the papers prepared on that occasion.

We notice that other Presbyteries have either already held similar conferences or are about to hold them with, we trust, very blessed results. What is chiefly to be desired and prayed for is not mere passing spasms of religious excitement, but a general and permanent quickening of religious thought and feeling and life throughout the whole community. The natural and logical course is never to be lost sight of—right thinking, right feeling, right acting. Some tell us that if the acting is right, the feeling and thinking are matters of very small moment. Surely such people don't consider what they are saying. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." It may not be as he professes to think, but it will be as he actually does; and to expect the right or the earnest acting without the antecedent right and earnest feeling and thinking would be as rational as to look for fruit on trees which had no roots, or to begin at the garrets and build downward. There are, no doubt, discouraging features in the religious life of all the churches at the present day, but those of an opposite description are also never to be lost sight of, for they are neither few nor insignificant, and the indications are all in the direction of their becoming, in the not distant future, still more marked and still more encouraging.

CHRISTIAN FORBEARANCE AND INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC.

OUR readers will be glad to see from the report of the proceedings of the Toronto Presbytery at its last meeting, that there is a fair prospect of the lamentable difficulties which have for some time prevailed in Cooke's Church in this city, being satisfactorily removed. We have no desire to enter into all the outs and ins of those difficulties. It is very evident that there have been faults on both sides, and it is equally evident that these have sometimes been made in the public prints to wear a harsher and more offensive aspect than the actual facts would justify. If there is anything in the services of the Church in reference to which it might fairly be expected that great tenderness and mutual forbearance would be exercised towards each other by the members of a congregation, one would conclude that it would be just about this very matter which has caused all the trouble in Cooke's Church, and has also given rise to heart-burnings in other congregations. The supreme Court of our Church has given its sanction to the use of instrumental music in the public praise service when there is a reasonable amount of unanimity on the subject among the members of the congregation, and every intelligent Presbyterian knows right well how this desiderated harmony is to be ascertained. It surely is not sufficient, however, that there be a bare majority in favour of such a change, nor is it at all likely, if the prevailing tone of piety be anything like what it ought to be, that in such a matter even a very large majority will seek to do violence to the conscientious convictions of a recalcitrant minority. Might not the very existence of such a minority be

often an indication that the time for making even what might be thought by most a very desirable change had not yet come? while on the other hand might not the tender brotherly forbearance of a majority be expected to have a softening, persuasive influence upon the minds of those whose conviction of what was right and proper had been deferred to even when it was neither approved of nor acquiesced in? Harsh words and bitter animosities among members of the body of Christ are never but unedifying and injurious, and they can never be great indications of the prevalence of a spirit which would give practical effect to the direction, "By love serve one another."

The wide publicity which has been given to the disagreements in Cooke's Church has been a matter for sorrowful regret to very many of God's people throughout the country as well as in Toronto itself. These will all unfeignedly rejoice at the favourable turn matters have taken, as they confidently anticipate that the finding of the Presbytery, with the arrangement for the disposal of the whole matter, will issue in harmony and cordial brotherly feeling being fully re-established all round.

TORONTO CHURCH EXTENSION ASSOCIATION.

THE annual meeting of this Association takes place next month, and those who have all along shewn a deep interest in its operations are naturally very anxious to have its membership largely increased before that time. The Association has never been supported to the extent, and with the liberality, which it deserves. It has done good work, however, with the means placed at its disposal; has managed matters wisely and economically; and will yet do better than ever for the promotion of the Gospel in this city if Presbyterians generally rally round it as they ought.

The fee for membership is only a dollar yearly, and surely there ought to be in Toronto at least a thousand both able and willing to give each that sum and more for the objects contemplated by this Association. A thorough canvass of the city will be made immediately. Let no one refuse the dollar, and let no one who can give more rest satisfied with contributing that sum.

While a good many have wrought well and heartily in this enterprise, we are sure none will regard it as invidious that we mention specially the name of Mr. J. L. Blaikie. Mr. Blaikie has been untiring in the work in spite of many hindrances and a good deal of disappointing lukewarmness on the part of too many on whose cooperation he had a right to calculate. If any are conscious of having been somewhat remiss in the past, they can make up for it all by now coming forward promptly with their subscriptions and their cordial cooperation in the Association's work.

MISSIONARY MEETINGS

WE again remind our Toronto readers of the missionary meetings advertised in another column. It will be seen that Dr. Mackay lectures to-night at eight o'clock in Cooke's Church, on the "Idolatry of China," and all who have heard him on that subject testify that they never listened to anything more interesting, eloquent, and instructive. We have no doubt that Cooke's Church will, on the occasion, be crowded as it has seldom or ever been before, and that the amount of the collection will be one among other proofs of the success of the lecturer and the earnestness and interest of the audience.

The services to be conducted by the Dr. on Sabbath are three. He preaches (D.V.) in St. Andrew's Church, King street, at eleven o'clock a.m.; addresses a mass meeting of the different Presbyterian Sabbath schools, in Knox Church, at three o'clock p.m.; and again preaches in St. James' Square Church at seven in the evening. To prevent disappointment, it may be as well to state that at the children's meeting in Knox Church the general public will not be admitted. It is expected that if the day be at all favourable there will be as many from the different schools as will completely fill the church, and it would never do to have any of the little folks excluded from want of room. Of course the various teachers will be present with their different classes, and members of all the adult Bible classes who come in a body will also be welcome, and will, as far as possible, be accommodated; but others had better rest satisfied with either or both of the other meetings. It is scarcely neces-

sary, we trust, to add, that at such services there are no reserved seats. The only course for pew-holders, if they wish to occupy their usual places, is to be early at church.

Another meeting is to be held in Charles Street Presbyterian Church, on Monday, at eight o'clock p.m.

We shall be both surprised and disappointed if these meetings be not among the largest and most interesting ever held in Toronto in connection with the Presbyterian Church. Dr. Mackay was sent out to do a certain work in a certain locality. He has come back to tell those who sent him what God has done by his hands, and it will be very strange indeed if there be not great joy awakened by the report he has to present. It may be all very well and all very natural for those who have themselves never tasted of the heavenly gift, and have never felt the blessedness of the forgiven, to treat with comparative indifference all such good news from a far country. It must surely, however, be very different with all who know the grace of God in truth, and who are themselves rejoicing in Christ Jesus as their only Saviour and their all-sufficient portion. Even such a comparatively cold-blooded man as Dr. William Paley could say with the strongest emphasis that the wildest enthusiasm was both more natural and more defensible than cold dead indifference on the part of any who professed to believe what the Word of God makes known. Saints and sinners alike feel the reasonableness of this. It is not the over-eager and interested excitement or self-sacrifice of professing Christians which casts the greatest stumbling blocks in the way of the young, the inquiring and the sceptical. Not these—but the passionless indifference, the niggard hand, and the ungodly life of too many who have said and are saying that they have been bought with the precious blood of Christ, and that they feel constrained to glorify God in their bodies and spirits, which are His.

We have read somewhere that the late Dr. Philip, of South Africa, was eventually led to consecrate all that he was and had to the service of Christ among the heathen from what was said to him one Sabbath evening after he had preached a full, free Gospel from his own pulpit in his own country. It is said that after service a man, notoriously sceptical, came into the vestry, and, with strong emotion, asked, "Is all that true that you have been telling us to-night?" "All true," was the reply. "Then," continued the man, "you and I will need to be converted." "Speak for yourself, friend," said Mr. Philip, "I hope I have been converted already." "No you haven't. You no more believe those things than I do. Why, sir, if I believed all that you have been saying, I could not think of anything else; I could not speak of anything else. Why, sir, they would haunt me in my dreams; I would go to the ends of the earth to speak about them." Yes, we repeat it is not the intense eager, consuming earnestness that is, after all, the marvel, though it is often so regarded. It is the placid indifference, or something worse on the part of many who call themselves followers of Christ, which, in the circumstances, is the strangest and most inexplicable of all mental and spiritual phenomena, and is most calculated to make onlookers conclude that there must be nothing in that Gospel after all.

WE are tempted to ask the good folks in Erskine Church, Montreal, to tell the Church generally what is the peculiarity of their plan for raising funds which shews such good results and such a small amount of arrears.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS. Rev. Dr. Reid has received the undermentioned sums for Schemes of the Church, etc., viz. Anonymous, Millbrook, Foreign Missions, Formosa, \$10; Friend, Montreal, Foreign Missions, \$5; Friend of Missions, Galt, Home Mission, \$4, also Foreign Missions, \$2; One who owes much, Foreign Missions, \$5; A Friend, Uptergrove, Foreign Missions, \$10; Friends, Peterboro', Foreign Missions, Formosa, \$22.40; A Friend, Pinette, Prince Edward Island, Foreign Missions, \$2; Student, for Colleges, 50 cents, Home Mission, \$1, Foreign Missions, \$3.50, French Evangelization, \$1, Poor, 50 cents. For McAll Mission, Paris. Rev. Peter Nichol, Elder's Mills, \$5; Rev. W. C. Young, Toronto, \$1; Toronto, per Rev. J. M. King, \$6; Mr. Wm. Alexander, \$5; Western Congregational Church, per Rev. Mr. Silcox, \$9.80; Friend of Missions, Galt, \$2.

LEARN to hold thy tongue. Five words cost Zacharias forty weeks' silence.—Fuller.