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TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 1885.

In addition to the ordinary contributions by experienced and scholarly writers in this number, we are able to present to our readers a short account by Rev. J. Sieveright, B.A., formerly in charge of the Mission there, of the Prince Albert County, the scene of the present North-West Rebellion, and the first of a short series of practical papers on Sabbath School Work, from the pen of Principal McVicar, D.D., LL.D. To relieve somewhat the pressure on our space we, this week, issue four additional pages. Montreal Notes reached too late for insertion in this number.

THE long, severe winter now gradually coming to a close has served one good purpose in addition to the many good purposes served by any kind of a winter. Last Autumn the weather prophets predicted that we were to have an open winter. Of course, they knew all about it. They could tell just what kind of weather we were to have each month and in the beginning, middle and end of each month. Instead of an open winter we have had the coldest one for fifty years. We hope the lesson will not be lost. For a Province that spends annually over half a million on education the number of people who are willing to believe anything a "crank" says is humilatingly large. There must be some mysterious pleasure in being gulled if we may judge from the number of people who are gullible. Any crank can find disciples—perhaps we should say victims. The most pestilential of all cranks is the crank theological. Next is, perhaps, the crank medical. Then comes the weather crank, who confidently predicts that the coldest winter for fifty years will be an open one. And this weather crank was just as near right as cranks usually are.

SOME years ago an American minister published facts and figures intended to explode the miserable slander that ministers' sons never amount to anything. By statistics that could not be questioned he showed that the number of ministers' sons occupying prominent places of trust is larger in proportion than that of any other class of men. If that brother had not published his book until now he might have had a splendid "point." On the fourth of last month a Baptist minister's son laid down the reins of government at Washington, and they were taken up by the son of a Presbyterian minister. Arthur made an admirable President, and astonished everybody by the wisdom and dignity of his administration. And now we venture to predict that the Presbyterian minister's son will make one of the ablest and most upright and honourable Presidents that ever ruled over the American people. Now, just see if he doesn't. And this is just as good a place as any to say that we believe a number of the volunteers who have gone to the North-West are minister's sons. The major of the Queen's Own is a manse boy, and if he has inherited his late father's pluck the half-breeds that cross his path had better be careful.

FOR our missionaries and teachers in the North-West we bespeak the earnest prayers of the Church. At the present writing there has not been any news from Prince Albert for over ten days, but enough is known to make it certain that the Rev. Mr. McWilliam and his assistants are in circumstances of extreme danger. The position of two or three others is not much better. Were this civilized warfare, the life of a missionary would be comparatively safe, but when half-breeds are commanded by the human brute that murdered poor Scott slowly fifteen years ago no one

knows what may happen. We have important interests in Prince Albert, and it would be a great loss to have our property destroyed, but this would be trifling compared with other losses about which we do not care to think at present. If the Mounted Police can hold out until they get help, all will be well, but the position at present is extremely critical. While hoping for the best, let all earnestly pray that He who possesses all power may protect our labourers in that unhappy region. The position of those who have families must be very trying. Even if there were no danger the suspense must be something fearful. Our heartfelt sympathies are with these missionaries and with their families.

CANADIANS have been so long in the enjoyment of peace and prosperity that war is a new experience to most of us. A few remember the Rising of 1837, and many the Fenian raid of 1866, but, with the exception of these disturbances, our people know absolutely nothing of the scourge of war. Providence has dealt very kindly with us in this regard. It may be that we need to learn some lessons as a nation that cannot be unimpaired in a time of peace. We have not been so grateful as a nation for almost unbroken peace as we should have been. We have not valued the blessings of peace as highly as we should have valued them. War alone can teach the value of bread, and perhaps war alone can teach the value of peace. It is our duty as a Christian nation to look behind the secondary causes that may have produced these disturbances and see the hand of the Great King who rules the nations and restrains the wrath of men. We are all too prone to trace events to their secondary causes and forget or ignore the hand of Him who rules above. Nations, as such, must be punished for their sins in this life, and he would indeed be a bold man who would say that Canada has not been guilty of many sins deserving punishment. The duty of the hour is humiliation before God and confession of national sin.

THAT the insurrection in the North-West will be ultimately put down, there can be no reasonable doubt. Even if Riel had a regular army under his command, all history and experience go to show that an army without a Government behind it must fail in the end. The military power must always have a civil power supporting it to ensure ultimate success. Riel has no organized civil power behind him, and sooner or later must fail. But the people of this country must not become panic-stricken or discouraged if this insurrection is not put down in a few weeks or even months. There are some undoubted advantages on the side of the insurgents. They are a hardy race; they know every inch of the country; they are skilled in the use of arms, and they can live on very little food, and sleep outside in any kind of weather. Our volunteers are brave fellows, no doubt; but many of them are quite young, and all are unaccustomed to such hardships as they must endure in the North-West. They have to cross in one way or another, gaps of about eighty miles in the railway on the north shore of Lake Superior, and when, after a long and tedious journey, they leave the railway they have to march about 250 miles to Prince Albert. It is easy to say 250 miles, but fancy one of these gentlemen, heavily armed, starting from Toronto to walk to Brockville or Cornwall! The prairies are wet and muddy just now, and the journey must be exceedingly tedious. Camping out on the wet ground will be very trying to young men accustomed to comfortable homes. Even if teams are provided to drive them from the Canada Pacific Railway the journey will be very difficult. Our troops have a very serious undertaking before them and we must not expect too much from the brave fellows.

KNOW COLLEGE.

The Session of Knox College just closed, though uneventful, has not been unimportant. The work has been proceeded with in a quiet, undemonstrative way, consonant with the academic quiet and dignity peculiar to the retreats of sacred learning. The Principal and professors have discharged their responsible duties with the scrupulous fidelity for which they are distinguished. The growth of Knox is gradual but steady. There is no retrogression. Were more adequate resources placed at its disposal it is unquestioned that its advance would be much accelerated. There is no denying that its usefulness and influence are restricted

by the want of men and means. The professors, individually and collectively, are strong and influential men, yet it is obvious that there are too few of them. There is not now, and cannot be with the present limited number, that division of labour which the age demands and the healthful prosperity of the institution requires.

None are more keenly alive to this pressing necessity than the respected Principal and professors themselves. With unselfish devotion to the true prosperity of the institution they plead for an increase in the professorial staff of Knox College. In his few remarks during the closing exercises, Principal Caven called attention to the anomaly of having the specially important departments of Homiletics and Pastoral Theology crowded into a three months' lectureship during the session. With such an arrangement it is simply impossible to do justice to these important and essential branches of theological education; it is unsatisfactory to the students themselves, and were these subjects not entrusted to a gentleman of exceptional attainments and ability the arrangement would be as useless as it is unsatisfactory. It is evident that the students earnestly desire to see the establishment of a permanent chair of Homiletics and Pastoral Theology as one of the first improvements to be made in Knox College. The energetic response to the Principal's reference places this beyond a doubt.

The Endowment Fund has been steadily increasing. In the best of times it is easy to find people who are unwilling to contribute largely for educational objects. Their objections are often as sordid as they are occasionally ingenious. Instead, however, of uttering jeremiads over the stinginess of isolated contributors, the many friends of Knox College have abundant reason for gratitude that the effort to raise an Endowment Fund has proved so successful. In these days of financial stringency it is surely very gratifying that the Principal was able to announce that the Endowment Fund had now reached the handsome sum of about \$175,000. It only remains now to get additional subscriptions to the amount of \$25,000 to complete the scheme. A little more effort and the result will be accomplished. In some of the Presbyteries considerable additions may confidently be looked for. A glance at a paragraph on another page will make this plain.

The recent departure in connection with the closing exercises has been attended with excellent results. The public meeting on the evening of the closing day in one of the city churches is eagerly looked forward to, and is each year attracting large audiences. Old St. Andrew's, with its large auditorium, was completely filled, while the galleries had quite a number of occupants. It adds much to the interest taken in academic institutions when their claims and work are brought directly before the people. The addresses on Wednesday evening were well-timed and appropriate. Dr. Gregg's fatherly counsels were wise, affectionate and judicious. The representatives of the College, with becoming modesty and good taste, discharged ably and well the important duties assigned them, while the concluding address by the Rev. H. M. Parsons presented important views of truth with the characteristic earnestness and directness for which the pastor of Knox Church is distinguished.

PROFESSOR PATTON.

WITHIN the Christian Church there is ample room for the employment of all the diversified talent with which her members are divinely gifted. The Church's well being and progress are dependent on the possession and exercise, according to certain broad and well-defined principles, of the manifold endowments bestowed by her living Head. There are diversities of gifts but the same Spirit. The suppression of individualism would be injurious; its unrestrained development would lead to anarchy and confusion. All extremes are dangerous. The effort to cast all religious character and expression in the mould of rigid uniformity has ever failed, and from the nature of the case must ever prove a failure. The lawless exercise of individualism has uniformly paralyzed Christian endeavour and rendered united effort impossible. To many minds the Presbyterian system commends itself, because it harmonizes order with liberty. It accords the fullest freedom combined with a stable form of church government, thus affording most favourable opportunities for the formation of strong Christian independence, strength of character and enlightened co-operation.