

with a large quantity of the "Judas" type of humanity—creatures who are ready to undermine their dearest friends, by burrowing in the dark mostly, rather than lose a passing chance of benefiting themselves at their employers' expense. The sense of business fidelity is not so keen and sensitive in Canada as one would like to see. Unfortunately, in such an atmosphere this kind of unscrupulous selfishness often invades religious circles, and sometimes becomes very marked in individuals.

BLAKE'S BREEZY EXPERIENCE of the peculiarities of Irish patriotism will try his devotion to the cause very severely—unless he has more than the average quantity of Irish combativeness. Trying to "emancipate" a country with at least half the inhabitants against him is very uphill work. It will be very interesting to note how this Canadian Achilles, who has been chiefly famous hitherto for "sulking in his tent," will enjoy the breezy atmosphere of Irish politics. It were to be wished that the leaders on both sides could make it quite clear that they are not keeping up the ferment for any other purpose than that of securing "justice"—or what they think to be such—for Ireland.

"GENERAL" BOOTH'S WAY of populating Canada is not such as to meet with the approbation of its present citizens—dumping ground for paupers for an apparent consideration of \$75 per head. We have no objection to receive our natural proportion of paupers among the other emigrants from Great Britain; but it is quite a different matter when a man makes a business of turning a sluice drain into our midst and pouring a continuous stream of such refuse upon us. The "proportion" then becomes a very serious element.

MISSIONARY MEETINGS.

As winter approaches the rural deaneries from one end of Canada to the other may be supposed to be in motion, if not considerably agitated, over the duty of making effective preparations for the coming campaign—and the cynics are saying, "*cui bono?*"—What will be the good of it all? They are prepared to "demonstrate" in their usual lucid ("*Lucus a non lucendo*") manner—on strict "business" principles, don't you know—that the results in the way of "dividend" do not justify such a large expenditure of time and energy. They will value very carefully the services of the various speakers, and the not too numerous hearers, at so much per hour (15 cents), the cost of illuminating oil or gas, heating expenses, and numerous incidentals: divide this sum (or divide into) by the amount returned as proceeds from the various meetings. If they can evolve a small quotient, they will be happy.

THESE WISE-ACRES

do not think it worth while to consider the indirect, or even remote, results of what is said and done at these meetings; and yet these are really the most valuable consequences. The main object of missionary meetings should not be to get an immediate return of so much money—though it is, of course, desirable to cover expenses of deputation, etc.—but to produce a lasting impression, and promote an abiding interest in the work—again, not "immediate" results—of our self-sacrificing host of missionaries. It is a fact that some of our most energetic missionaries have been immensely strengthened and encouraged in and for their work by addresses which they heard in little English school-rooms (often with slim

audiences) as much as 15 or 20 years ago. If this be so with missionaries—who may be supposed to be "case-hardened"—how much benefit must be derived by earnest laymen and women from such addresses?

"IMMEDIATE RESULTS"

are very misleading if we depend upon them. Those who are active in these matters should try to get up the work for the work's sake, not for so much cash. We are too much moved and influenced by the world's "hurry-scurry" after ready money—"small profits and quick returns," say they—and feel down-hearted if we get a small audience or a small collection. It has often happened that such circumstances conduce—somewhat mysteriously—to the grandest ultimate consequences. It is, indeed, notorious that large meetings and fashionable audiences are extremely disappointing. It almost seems as if the large admixture of worldliness inevitable in such gatherings had a distinct tendency to "vitalize the atmosphere" and deaden the life of the soul.

SMALL AUDIENCES—

like small congregations—are most likely to be made up of the very "cream" of local Christianity. Their very paucity in point of numbers draws them more together, and rouses their strongest energies. They feel the necessity for greater exertion—a stimulant which is diminished in intensity as the audience or congregation increases in size. The really earnest personal units are separated from one another in a large gathering by those obnoxious elements of indifference or of mere worldly curiosity. Far better that the full seats should remain empty than that they should be filled in with such unworthy material—mere "padding," to use a technical literary term. There is, of course, always the chance of some of the miscellaneous crowd being "hit" by an arrow shot at a venture. The chance of that, however, is rather slim—too slim, compared with the disadvantage of their presence. All this proves

THE FOLLY OF PLATFORM ATTRACTIONS.

The only possible effect of most of the efforts in this direction is to secure a "big crowd" of the undesirable kind to which we have referred—a lot, a cram, of curiosity-seekers, whose sole object is really to see what kind of material these missionary people are made of, and what kind of eloquence they indulge in on these occasions. It is not going too far to say, probably, that these "big" missionary meetings are usually a still bigger disappointment to the managers. Not that the eloquent and talented speakers who come from afar to help—often at a very great inconvenience—fail in the duty of creating enthusiasm, but the material is so very unpromising that "*Le jeu ne vaut pas la Chandelle*"—the results are not worth all the trouble. If there are any of our readers whose experience has been different, we should be pleased to hear from them.

THE LITTLE PARISH MEETING

is the best and most satisfactory, humble and quiet as it may be, and devoid of all excitement. Its successful conduct requires a reasonable array of interesting facts—facts are the great requirement. They are easily related and easily digested. Missionary operations are too commonly regarded as belonging to the sphere of romance, and to be subject to a dim and hazy atmosphere which seems to forbid enquiry as if it were impertinent and rather irreverent. This sort of feeling is very apt to lead to a corresponding want of real practical interest. Whatever does away with this feeling of unreality and unreliability and brings

the whole missionary subject of thought down to the "line" of ordinary eyesight, is very conducive to the success of a meeting practically.

THE COLLECTION

should be considered, as much as possible, a secondary matter, and as such kept quite in the background—even if it had not better be omitted altogether. This, no doubt, at first sight looks like betraying the very citadel! But the citadel is not there at all. Any contribution of money might—at least, in many cases—be left for future and more mature consideration. If the work of impressing upon the heart has been well done, further immediate treatment is not needed under such circumstances. We are aware that it is possible to "pump" a large immediate return from an audience stirred up by an eloquent appeal. "Strike while the iron is hot" is an old aphorism for such opportunities. Far more satisfactory, however, is the deliberate subsequent visit from some thoughtful collector, whose "heart is in it," and who brings her missionary heart along for a serious chat in each quiet parish homestead. The heated effects of a heated appeal are too apt to cool off and leave only a disappointed and burnt-over kind of feeling. "Whatever did I do it for?" is a question not easily answered, and very likely to dampen, if not extinguish, one's missionary ardour for a long time to come.

REVIEWS.

HISTORY, PROPHECY AND THE MONUMENTS. By J. F. McCurdy, Ph. D., LL.D., Professor of Oriental Languages in University College, Toronto. Vol. I. to the downfall of Samaria. Demy 800 vo., pp. 449. Price \$8. New York: Macmillan & Co.; Toronto: Rowsell & Hutchison.

The pages of Scripture do not present a complete picture of the history of God's chosen people, and as we read we feel that we have at the best but a partial glimpse of the great actions that are moulding our race. Behind David and Moses and Abraham the nations were moving, and human hearts throbbing as they are to-day, and Scripture gives us only the salient points where God's hand appears in the line of human redemption. But all the time there is a world of thought and action around the chosen race, and it breaks in occasionally upon the sacred precincts; it recedes with the darkness, and we long to follow it under the cloud. Much has been done within recent years to draw back the veil from the unknown. In the volume before us Dr. McCurdy takes up the role of historical interpreter, and no one could do the work in a more earnest, painstaking spirit. In every line we see the careful scholar and judicious critic who loves his work and seeks only for just conclusions on difficult obscurities. His arrangement is very convenient, by books and chapters; but with the paragraphs continuously numbered, so that cross-references are easily given and quickly verified. There is a very complete table of contents, and the notes are relegated to the end of the volume, so that there is seldom any distracting matter on the face of the page. Naturally, the treatment is in chronological sequence; but the dates are based upon the facts detailed upon the monuments, and thus vary from the usual tables. The monuments, it need hardly be said, are the records inscribed in cuneiform characters upon the bricks found in the broad valley of the Tigris and Euphrates. Dr. McCurdy's work commences with the earliest traces of civilization, and follows the evolution and settlement of the most ancient Semite and Argan races. But our chief interest lies in the strong light thrown upon the fortunes of Judah and Israel up to near the end of the eighth century B.C. The self-glorious inscriptions by the ancient despots may at first seem to contain little general information beyond their victories, their amount of booty, and the slaughter of their enemies; yet the hints derived from the history of kingdoms like Babylonia, Assyria, Phœnicia