

The Canadian Independent

Is published every Thursday, and will be sent Free to any part of Canada or the United States, or delivered Free in the City of Toronto, for

One Dollar per Year.

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All communications for the paper, items of news, correspondence, etc., to be addressed to the Editor, Box 2648, P. O. Toronto.

All subscriptions, current or back, notices of change of address, and other matters connected with the business of the paper, to be addressed to the Business Manager, Box 2648, P. O., Toronto.

All communications should be received not later than Monday. Short items of news may be in time on Tuesday morning.

TORONTO, SEPT. 29, 1881.

TEMPTATION.

We pray constantly, "Lead us not into temptation," sometimes, it is to be feared, with a very inadequate idea of the petition we are presenting, and what is worse, with scarcely an attempt to keep ourselves out of temptation, we ask God to do for us what we hardly care to do for ourselves. A desire for gain or for enjoyment, will draw us into scenes and circumstances in which we know full well that we shall be exposed to temptation, and yet we expect our prayers to be answered! It is not, however, so much on that aspect of the subject we want to utter a word as on the still more serious one of Christians becoming tempters of others; for, sad as it may be to say it, Christians do sometimes become tempters to bad courses; and we have in our mind more than one life that has been wrecked on the rocks of sin, turned into the fatal course first by those who ought of all people to have cautioned against it. That it is done thoughtlessly there is no doubt, hence the more need for an earnest protest and warning.

It is in the customs and practices of social life that the wrong is done; scruples and teachings are laughed away, reluctance is overcome, and then, these barriers overcome, the *facilis descensus averti* is often, alas, too sadly realized.

Let us illustrate from actual experience what we mean. Here is a young man carefully trained by Christian parents, taught to look upon the wine-cup as a snare and a curse, as one great cause of the sin and misery by which we are surrounded. He grows up and associates with professedly Christian people, members it may be of the same church, possibly, workers for the Master. He finds wine used at their table; he is not surprised at that, for he has long ago learned that all do not look at this question in the same light, nor feel its importance in the same degree. But the passive temptation is not all, were it, although a temptation, it might not be very powerful; he is met with "Take a glass of wine, it will do you no harm," or the fair hand of the hostess places a glass in his, he cannot resist, takes it, and has made one downward step to darkness and death. It may be said that no Christian people would do such a thing, induce a young man to break away from the teachings and practice of home in so important a matter. The reply is simple. They

should not, but unfortunately they have done so, and will do it again.

It may be done in ignorance, and the fault then rests mainly with the moral cowardice of the young man who shrinks to declare his principles, but whatever the cause the evil is perpetrated, temptation is offered, and is successful.

Or again, a young girl who has been taught that dancing is improper; that, harmless enough, perhaps, among a few young friends, it is the open door to wantonness, indelicacy, and improper acquaintance,—is invited to spend an evening in the home of Christian people, dancing is almost the only amusement. She is invited, pressed to take part, and, unless she has the firmness of strong convictions, she consents, or if unable from ignorance to do so, goes away with rebellion in heart against those whose teachings have deprived her of this pleasure. Now, we say most emphatically, that no one has a right—and above all should not Christians attempt—to induce others, young people, their visitors, to do anything that home teaching has forbidden. It is an offence against the family and against God. But it may be asked, "What are we to do, then? are we to give up the thing to which we have been accustomed for the sake of one trained in such a narrow way?" Yes, if you desire to have that one in your home, but if you cannot give it up, then the kindest way is not to seek for your guests those to whom it may be a temptation. We are persuaded that there is not a father or mother living who have conscientiously trained their sons and daughters on the lines we have indicated, who would not a thousand times rather that their children were left out from all invitations, than that the teachings of their lives should be imperilled. Brethren and sisters, when you pray again, "Lead us not into temptation," resolve that for your part, God helping you, you will not be one to lead others into temptation.—"Let—no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way."

WE are sure that we need only reprint the following paragraph to call forth the sympathy of our readers for that large class of men who, with the "beautiful Liturgy of the Prayer-book," could not find a petition suitable for the wounded President, and were obliged to extemporize. It was hard indeed; let us hope that it was also "for their own good."

It has been noticed that with all the beautiful liturgy of the Prayer-book used by the Protestant Episcopal Church, that there has been found no prayer suitable for such a calamity as now exists, and for what is now feared in relation to the Chief Magistrate of the nation. Many who would have gladly availed themselves of a form have been compelled, perhaps for their own good, virtually to extemporize in this exigency.

WE have not hesitated on more than one occasion to speak strongly on what we are sorry to believe is a growing evil—the practice of dancing. Some of our readers have thought we were unnecessarily severe in our remarks, that the practice is harmless enough, that no evil can flow from it, and so on. To all such we commend

the following extract from the *New York Journal of Education*. It puts strongly the fact we have striven to emphasize, that in this, as in drinking and similar things, the only safety and the true temperance is total abstinence. It will be borne in mind that the paper from which the quotation is made is not a religious paper; that it only views the question from the standpoint of civil well-being.

"A great deal can be said about dancing; for instance, the Chief of Police of New York City says that three-fourths of the abandoned girls in this city were ruined by dancing. Young ladies allow gentlemen privileges in dancing which, taken under any other circumstances, would be considered as improper. It requires neither brains nor good morals to be a good dancer. As the love of the one increases, the love of the other decreases. How many of the best men and women are skillful dancers? In ancient times the sexes danced separately. Alcohol is the spirit of beverages. So sex is the spirit of the dance; take it away and let the sexes dance separately, and dancing would go out of fashion very soon. Parlour dancing is dangerous. Tippling leads to drunkenness, and parlour dancing leads to ungodly balls. Tippling and parlour dancing sow to the wind, and both reap the whirlwind. Put dancing in the crucible, apply the acids, weigh it, and the verdict of reason, morality, and religion is, "Weighed in the balance and found wanting."

THE death last week of Mrs. Bromfield, wife of Rev. E. T. Bromfield, of Glenbrook, in this town, has called forth many expressions of sympathy. The funeral took place on the 8th inst. from the Presbyterian Church. The deceased lady was in the prime of life—a little over fifty—and had enjoyed almost uninterrupted health, till a few years ago, when she contracted malarial fever and ague, which developed into catarrhal consumption, from which she died. About ten months ago she was seized with spitting of blood, which was the first intimation of any fatal difficulty. She was the mother of fifteen children, twelve of whom survive her and followed her to the grave. Mrs. Bromfield was a native of London, England, and came to this country with her husband about forty years ago. She was a pious, compassionate and sympathetic Christian woman, and her death is widely lamented. — *Saturday Advocate, Conn., U. S.*

WE are sure that those of our readers in Toronto and Hamilton who remember Mr. Bromfield will sympathize with him in this bereavement. An intimacy covering the whole period of his residence in the city of Toronto enables us to speak with knowledge and feeling. Fondly attached to the wife of his youth and struggles, Mr. Bromfield will keenly feel his loss. May he have the sustaining hand of the Saviour, whom he has so long served.

WE made reference last week to what we considered the unfortunate "side-shows" to which the promoters of the Toronto Exhibition lent themselves in order to draw the public to the city, and presumably increase their receipts at the gates. We did not then, however, allude to the worst feature of the Exhibition,

and which has been seen this year for the first time, the open and wide-spread sale of intoxicating liquors on the grounds. In previous years there has been a show of observing the law and respecting the feelings of large numbers of visitors, by allowing nothing stronger than lager beer to be sold, and that only on the plea that it was a non-intoxicant! This year there was no pretence of the kind. Anything could be had, we are told, either in the Dining Hall or at the various stalls. We say nothing of the legality of the action, that has been called in question, and we hope that some individual or society will test the point. To us it appears like a violation of the law and a fraud on the revenue, but apart from that, we would strongly urge that, in the interests of morality, the citizens of Toronto will so unmistakably indicate their feelings on the subject that the offence will not be repeated.

A SUNDAY ON SHIP BOARD.

(From a Nonconformist or Dissenter's standpoint.)

Five days of wind and rain and mist, and with a burst of sunshine the Sunday dawned, hearts grew lighter, faces brighter as the five days' dead reckoning was verified, land nearing, and the Sabbath called to praise. Breakfast over, the bell rang for service, according to the rules of the ship the service of the Book of Common Prayer was read (put an emphasis upon that word *read*), a few hymns sung, and a collection taken up in aid of the Liverpool Seaman's Home, which last act was an act of worship, the rough weather of the week had brought the seamen nearer to the heart, and certainly our crew had been exemplary. Then on deck to view the calming ocean, catch the gleams of sunshine thro' the rifted clouds, and watch the sea gulls rising and falling with billowy motion over the wave. After dinner a few friends gathered for an hour in the saloon for a few simple words of prayer. There were

the four men on the morning service was a long ing shadows fell, the sky was partly overcast but peaceful, the water had the long ocean swell and ripple sufficient to avoid that death-like stillness when a perfect calm makes the surface glassy, the ship gently listed with the wave, and glided at full speed through the water; there was not solitude but calm, not stillness but peace; the decks were quietly paced, it was a Sabbath eve. About nine o'clock (canonical hours had long been past) we paused at the open door of the smoking-room. Several sailors were gazing in, the fumes of liquor and of tobacco polluted the air, the usual company was gathered, three of the five clergymen were seated within, two of them being the absentees from the afternoon meeting. They were all drinking toasts. The hero for the moment was one of those unfortunately amiable and clever men who, "without a bit of harm in them," are jolly good fellows and charming company; he was talking patriotically, interrupted every moment or so by his listeners, specially by the friend who had read the morning prayers, it was