

Editorial and Contributed.

METHODIST MISSIONS AND THE GOVERNMENT.

RECENTLY the papers announced that a deputation had waited on the premier at Ottawa to press the claims of Methodist Indian missions for Government aid. Without waiting to ascertain the facts a number of papers assumed that the report was true, and joined in denouncing the Methodists. Not only so, but our Baptist friends have taken up the cudgels, and have memorialized the Government against using public funds for sectarian purposes. To relieve the minds of all concerned, we beg to say that the Methodist Church has never received a dollar from the Government for its *missions*, has never applied for any, and does not intend to do so. Now for some additional facts. The Government is under treaty with the Indians to maintain schools on the reserves, and has developed this policy by providing Industrial Institutes at certain places. They have found by experience that in many instances this work can be better carried out through the Churches than in any other way, and where schools of the requisite grade are maintained by any denomination, the Indian department provides for a part of the cost, instead of providing the whole, as they would have to do if the Churches did not co-operate. So far as Indian schools in connection with Methodist missions are concerned, the situation is this: We feel the vast importance of having teachers whose moral influence will be good, and so for the privilege of appointing the teacher we agree to pay half his salary; but the school, in every instance, is a public school, open to Government inspection, and under the same regulations as those carried on entirely by the Indian department.

But how odd it seems that those people and papers who were as dumb as oysters when \$400,000 were taken from the public funds of Quebec, and handed over to the Church of Rome to be used in any way it thought proper, should be the people to raise all this dust because it was reported that some persons had interviewed the Government in the interests of Methodist Indian missions.

Touching the deputation in question, we may further say that their sole errand in waiting on the Government was to press the early completion of two Industrial Institutes in the North-West, now being built, the management of which is to be under persons nominated by the Methodist Missionary Society, just as is done in other cases by the Roman Catholics, the Presbyterians, and the Church of England.

THE CREDULITY OF SKEPTICISM.

NOTHING is more common among infidels than the taunt that Christians are exceedingly credulous—always ready to believe absurdities, and even impossibilities, on the *ipse dixit* of Scripture. In other words, the reproach is that Christians believe on very insufficient evidence, or on no evidence at all, while it is claimed that infidels accept only what is based upon evidence of the most satisfactory kind. Careful observation, extending over a lengthened period, has convinced us that the very reverse is true, and that while there are credulous Christians who have accepted traditional beliefs without examination, the most credulous creature under the sun is the average skeptic. There is this marked difference, however, between the two: Christian credulity, where it exists, is the result of ignorance; skeptical credulity is, for the most part, the result of ignorance *plus* malignity. It is always characteristic of skepticism that it strives to blacken what it does not like, and does not hesitate to employ falsehood of the grossest type to effect its ends.

An illustration of all this has recently come to hand. An infidel periodical, issued in Toronto, reproduces from *Modern Thought*, published at Bombay, the utterances of an anonymous writer, in which the old stereotyped slanders against missions and missionaries are repeated *ad nauseam*. As the writer lives in India—probably in Bombay—where his falsehoods could be quickly brought home to him, he prudently conceals his identity under the pseudonym of "Anti-Humbug"—a most appropriate name were the "anti" omitted. According to this anonymous slanderer, the "missionaries live in some of the largest houses, keep a large establishment of servants, have splendid carriages and horses, and are more often to be seen in the band-stand or the tennis-court than at chapel. They ape the worst of the government chaplains in never visiting their flocks, and in altogether behaving as if they were of too high a class to associate with such common people, who they consider were only created to be fleeced for the support of missionaries."

When one considers that the stipend of the average missionary in India rarely exceeds £300 per annum, and that very many stipends are much below that sum, one is puzzled to understand how they manage to occupy "the largest houses, keep a large establishment of servants, and have splendid carriages and horses." There must be a bit of legerdemain about the thing, which we don't understand. Some time ago similar charges were made by a globe-trotter or two who had visited India. This led to a searching investigation, by which the slanders were thoroughly disproved, and it was shown that the writers knew