

Our Contributors.

SOME PRACTICAL TESTS OF PERSONAL PIETY.

BY KNOXIAN.

The religious papers on Brother Jonathan's side of the lines give their readers a good deal of exhortation at this season of the year as to the manner in which they should spend their holidays. Tourists are told that wherever they go they should bring their religion with them. Judging from the exhortations given, one would suppose that holidays over there are a pretty severe test of personal piety. Now it may be true that very fashionable watering-places, with all their fashionable frivolities, do not furnish a congenial atmosphere for religious men. Perhaps the majority of the people who frequent such places have not much religion to lose. We cannot for the life of us see that a holiday, taken in any reasonable place, is a very severe test of anybody's piety. Sailing down the St. Lawrence, or among the lovely islands in the Muskoka lakes, does not seem to us to put a very serious strain on one's religion. We know several good men who would willingly go through the ordeal if they had an opportunity. Staying in a good summer hotel where nine-tenths of the people are Christians, and many of them office-bearers in Churches, does not strike us as running into very severe temptations. A man with a hundred dollars, and a month to spend in rest and recreation, should be in a good frame of mind. He should be especially grateful, and gratitude is a pious emotion not any too common. It should be easier for him to conduct himself properly than for the unfortunates who have to remain at home, and work with the mercury up among the nineties. In short, a good holiday should be a means of good to a good man.

It is quite easy to find some practical tests without going from home. When the Rev W C Burns visited this country many years ago, a young man in one of the then new townships became impressed at one of his meetings. He followed Mr. Burns for several days, felt deeply interested in the service, and professed to have experienced a change of heart. He was a young man of rather impulsive temperament, and, to put the matter mildly, not noted for self-control. About the time that Mr. Burns closed his services in the locality, the young convert began ploughing a rough, stumpy field on his new farm with a wild, unruly yoke of oxen. Two or three of his neighbours were looking on, and one of them made this observation: "If — can go round three times without losing his temper, I'll believe Burns has done him good." The young man stood the test bravely. He has stood many a test since, and at this hour is a worthy office-bearer in his Church. Ploughing a rough, stumpy field, with a wild, unbroken yoke of oxen, is a much severer test of piety than taking part in some kinds of revival meetings. When the animals go every way but the way the man shouts at them to go, the plough handles fly up and strike him in the ribs, and the ends of the broken roots fly back and strike him in the shins, old Adam is very likely to assert himself.

Putting up old stove pipes is a good test. Many years ago we knew a worthy elder who was sorely tried in this way. He had to run the pipes from the kitchen stove through a partition, and across another room into the chimney. The operation was extremely difficult. When he got the pipes put up in the room they fell in the kitchen, and when he got them properly fixed in the kitchen they always came down in the room. When they had fallen several times he asked his wife to take the children away. Perhaps he was afraid the pipes might fall on them. More likely he was afraid he might say something that would not edify the little people. That elder was a good man—one of the best men we ever knew. He would have gone to the stake serene as an angel had his Master so willed, but those stove-pipes tried him sorely. When he got them up he did seem greatly relieved. Putting up old stove-pipes is a much severer test of piety than telling one's experience.

A political election is a severe test of a man's piety if he takes an active part in it. The committee room, and the hustings, and the polling booth are slippery places. Many a fairly good man has been hurt there. Far be it from us to say that good men should not take part in election contests. This country has cost

too much to hand it over to political scalawags for purposes of government. We don't want politics in our religion, but we want more religion in our politics. The best men in every community are just the men that ought to take a controlling part in public affairs. Still, it is well to remember that the heat of an election contest is a pretty severe test of personal character.

A considerable number of people have another kind of test applied to them at this season of the year. The family have worked hard all spring, and have made a very nice flower, or very productive vegetable garden. The good man wakes up some morning, and finds half-a-dozen of his neighbour's cows devouring his vegetables and destroying his flower beds. If he can conduct family worship that morning with the usual amount of composure, he has more grace and more self-control than most men have.

Perhaps the severest test that can be applied to a woman's piety is to see her clothes line fall after it has been loaded with the nicest things in the house. Some uncharitable man says that if there is one moment in a woman's life when she wants to be alone it is when that line falls. This is a high compliment to women. Most men would say something naughty in that trying moment whether alone or not.

A very good test of a man's piety, or at least of his self-control, is his ability to meet abuse with silence. Anybody can reply to a slanderer. Anybody can strike back when a cowardly assassin strikes, or tries to wound when he is too cowardly to strike. The temptation to drag the coward from his hiding-place is often very strong. As a rule it is better to let him severely alone. As Goldwin Smith once said, there are some opponents, and whether they fall uppermost or undermost they are always sure to leave their mark.

To be worth anything a test of character must be a real one. It must touch at a point where self-denial, self-sacrifice, self-control are brought into action. Going to church is really no test if one is as comfortable there as at home, probably more so. Giving \$10 is no test if a man has \$10,000 in the pile from which he took the \$10. Keeping one's temper is no test if one has the temperament of a clam.

Let no man think he can stand a real test because he may have stood that which really is no test at all.

THE ANCIENT CAPITAL.

ITS SCENERY—LOCATION—COMMERCIAL AND RELIGIOUS LIFE—MORRIN COLLEGE—QUEBEC PRESBYTERY.

The city of Quebec is regarded as one of the most picturesque in the Dominion, and is situated between two rivers, distant from each other about a mile, and is divided into what is known as Upper and Lower Town. Upper Town occupies a commanding position, and is sustained and surrounded by massive walls, and huge rocks that frown defiance to the greatest storms. Here is situated the ancient citadel, which covers a space of about fifty acres, and is supposed to be the strongest fortification in America. This part of the city abounds with handsome residences, pleasant walks, and squares nicely shaded with trees, where people can retire to cool off from the effects of a Quebec sun. In one of these squares stands the famous monument erected to the joint memory of Wolfe and Montcalm, the two great generals who fell in the fight in 1759; and who sleep peacefully side by side on that classic spot, which succeeding generations will visit with increasing interest.

In Lower Town are to be found the principal wholesale houses, banking and other financial institutions; all of which are conducted on a large scale. Here also, on St. Peter Street, are the head offices of the Quebec Bank, Banque Nationale, and Union Bank of Lower Canada. This last named has for its president, Mr. Andrew Thompson, a gentleman well known in mercantile and financial circles, and a liberal supporter of our Church in Quebec.

A stranger, at first sight, is not favourably impressed with Lower Town. The streets are narrow and very irregular, and the matter of cleaning and lighting seems to be of no importance; whilst the irrepresible Frenchman will rush his calèche long at a furious speed, altogether regardless of the lives of pedestrians who, meanwhile, are getting well bespattered with mud.

There are good markets in Lower Town, and a run through the shambles on a Saturday morning will repay the visitor. Here are displayed all sorts of wares, produce and provisions at very moderate prices, and you will not have travelled far until you meet a comfortable looking Madame, making her way through the crowd with a heavy leg of mutton, or swinging a couple of fat chickens; whilst right behind her will be another lady sitting snugly in a calash, carefully guarding a tub of Township's choice butter, or a barrel of apples, whilst the enthusiastic Jehu keeps shouting at his horse as he creeps up Mountain Hill, or dashes along one of those narrow muddy streets which can only be found in Lower Town, Quebec. But on a more extensive acquaintance with this part of the city, you will find that there are some fine streets, such as St. Joseph, in St. Rochs, where the establishments will compare favourably, if they do not surpass, the best in Montreal, Toronto or Hamilton. Paquet's or Lalibertie's would be hard to beat anywhere. The wholesale houses are extensive and of great variety, and are now pushing their goods not only in the Maritime Provinces, but to points west, and I am informed, on good authority, that to such an extent has the boot and shoe business been worked in Quebec, that the enterprising manufacturers are pushing their goods into Massachusetts, the stronghold of this industry in the United States; and here of course is another cry for reciprocity. The fur trade is very extensive in Quebec, and a very large business is done in this line, both wholesale and retail. It is stated that at the Indian and Colonial Exhibition her Majesty the Queen ordered a set of furs from a Quebec exhibitor, which is certainly a gracious recognition of the enterprise of the fine old city.

It is well known that a very large proportion of the citizens of Quebec are French, or, as they term it here, *Canadiens*. Out of a population of 60,000, there are not more than 10,000 who speak English; and of these not more than 6,000 are Protestants, and it is only natural to suppose that the majority will control the educational and religious institutions of the place. In more ways than one the minority feel severely the difficulties with which they are surrounded; but with faces like flint have they stood up against this rising tide of French domination, which, at times, would seem as if it would overwhelm the faithful few; yet they have stood up for Bible truth and liberty with a faith which has never wavered, and a zeal which has never flagged. In St. Andrew's Church, Quebec, the Rev. Dr. Cook, for over half a century, has stood forth as the guardian and defender of Protestant and Presbyterian principles, and in like manner, for many years, the Rev. W. B. Clark, of Chalmers Church, has borne the burden and heat of the day. By the successors of these two honoured fathers of the Church, the Rev. Dr. Mathews and the Rev. A. T. Love, the work which was so well begun is being faithfully carried on.

The Presbyterian mission among the French has been eminently successful. As one of the many results of the work done, the Rev. J. Z. Lefebvre, B.C.L., of Montreal College, has been placed in charge of a French mission station in Quebec, where he has an audience each Sunday, of from fifty to one-hundred, to whom he preaches the Gospel of the grace of God. A ball has been fired at the management of this Scheme, but the effect produced has not been greater than that of blank cartridge. If there are any defects in the management of this work, they are like specks on the sun when shining in his strength. The Rev. Dr. MacVicar and Rev. R. H. Warden deserve the thanks of the entire Church, for the labour and time given to this department of the Church's work. As Popery is an aggressive system, every effort should be put forth in order to strengthen the hands of those who are unselfishly fighting this battle.

MORRIN COLLEGE,

founded by Dr. Morrin, is one of the institutions of the city. The Rev. John Cook, D.D., is Principal, and Professor of Divinity and Philosophy, and Dr. Weir, Professor of Classics and English Literature. The college has university powers, but so conservative has been the course followed by the senate, that it never conferred a degree until last year, when Rev. Mr. Bennett, of Almonte, received the degree of Doctor of Divinity. Dr. Bennett was the first pupil of Morrin, and has been an industrious and successful clergyman. This year, a wealthy lady in New York, a former resident of Quebec, who has relatives in the