

THE
CANADIAN INDEPENDENT.

TORONTO, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23rd, 1879.

AN EXPLANATION.

THE readers of the INDEPENDENT will have observed that a change has been made in its editorial management. On behalf of the Board of Directors I desire to say a few words by way of explanation. The Rev. Mr. Manchee resigned his position of "managing editor" at the meeting of the Board in June last. As he is about to remove from our midst his resignation has been accepted. The Board at its last meeting, by request, relieved me from the duties of business manager and have secured the services of an old and tried friend of the INDEPENDENT, Mr. A. Christie. Mr. Christie's duties are not altogether pleasant, as I know by experience, though it is in the power of the readers of the INDEPENDENT to make them so. If every subscriber who is in arrears will remit *at once*, and if every friend of the INDEPENDENT will begin in good earnest to increase its circulation, sending few or many new subscribers with the accompanying cash, it will greatly lighten the labour falling on the business manager. The Directors most earnestly request all the pastors and churches to do what they can for *this their own paper*. The Directors publish it as a weekly in answer to repeated calls from the churches and with the understanding that the churches would aid by giving them a greatly increased subscription list. This in many churches has been done. Not a few have doubled their old list and some have trebled it. One church that before took six copies now takes thirty, and another that took four now takes forty. Similarly enlarged lists could be got in all the churches if the pastors and officers of the churches would give the matter the earnest attention it deserves. Please read again "Important Notice" in our advertising columns and act on its suggestion. This is a good time to secure new subscribers. The Directors are making arrangements to secure a managing editor, and expect soon to announce their success. In the meantime send all correspondence, news of churches, etc., to me.

J. B. SILCOX.

Toronto, October 23, 1879.

SEEKING IN VAIN.

A PARAGRAPH copied from the "Congregationalist" has been going the rounds of the Canadian organs which favour the itinerancy, and who publish it with evident delight. The paragraph referred to speaks of nine ministers coming to Boston on a recent Saturday, and having no regular work they were on the look-out for a chance to preach. But only one of the nine found a chance, the others being doomed to disappointment. The "Guardian" has made editorial comment on this as a blot on our system, and an indirect

argument in favour of the Conferential or Presbyterial plans which secure a church for every minister. This conclusion has been widely copied, and demands a passing word.

We have no doubt that these nine men were seeking work in Boston, and that eight of them sought in vain. But before we blame the voluntary pastorate system for this fruitless search, we ought to know what is behind their absence of employment. Were the churches to blame for this, or the men themselves? If the men were responsible for their churchless condition, then the system should not be blamed. We are not able to say on whom the blame lies, but in general it does not lie so much on the churches as on the roving pastors. Among our American brethren there is a great fondness for change, and a tendency to make the ties which bind them to any church as fragile and unbinding as possible, so that they may be easily dissolved. And on the slightest pretext they are off for pastures new. Furthermore it is notorious that many ministers with an over-weening self-confidence pass by some churches, as an express train sweeps by a way station, as unworthy to be considered. Nothing will suit them but a city, Boston or some other large centre; the city only can give the scope needed for their accomplishments. It is a pity, but 'tis true, that over-estimation of talents by ministers leaves many churches unsupplied, and the ministers without a charge. It is notorious moreover that many men have absolutely mistaken their calling by going into the ministry. And people are not so slow as not to see this, and act accordingly. We do not find it in our heart to blame a church for not calling such men, in whom they cannot see any elements of ministerial power. We know of no law compelling a church to inflict cruelty on itself.

We do not say that these things do account for the late unsuccessful search at Boston. But we maintain that they may account for it. And we would like more definite knowledge before we can allow our system of doing things to be blamed, as the "Guardian" has done. Between the two choices of a voluntary selection of pastors with the risk of some being unemployed on the one hand, and of forcing men who are mentally and socially below par upon a church on the other, we do not hesitate for a moment. With our eyes wide open we select the first. And we are willing to accept all the inconveniences which attend it, believing it to be the best on the whole. So far as we are concerned, thus ends the Boston story and the itinerant criticism.

BEHIND TIME.

GOING down to the train the other day, we found to our discomfort that it was thirty minutes behind time. We did not inquire into the reason; the fact was quite sufficient just then. The employees were sanguine of making up the lost time before the terminus

was reached. But not a minute was redeemed though we ran like the wind. And furthermore, our detention had put out every express and freight train we had to meet, so that there was general confusion, necessitating greater vigilance on the look-out than ever.

Our swift-glancing thoughts turned in the direction of the church, and we meditated on the class in almost every Christian circle which are nearly always behind time. The reason of their dilatoriness we passed by, the fact was an unpleasant contemplation. Give this class any specific work, and, if done at all, it is never done in season, with promptitude and timeliness. Nor can they even get to the services for the opening, but sweep in from five to fifteen minutes late, disturbing the congregation and annoying the minister. It is the same thing in finances; their offerings are not paid in when due, but lag behind until, to get them at all, the unpleasant system of dunning has to be resorted to. It is this class which necessitate scolding remarks from the minister, and broad hints from the church treasurer. As a rule, ministers do not wish to find fault, but they are so often aggravated by church sluggards that they find no other course open to them but to talk out.

Just exactly what to do with these behind-time people in the churches is an unsolved problem. Perhaps the only way is to leave it to the correction of their common sense, that is, if they have any. And if they have not, well—we must seal our lips and put up with it. It ought not to take much brains to see that a whole church may be retarded by a few slow-coaches, and, on the other hand, that promptness in work, in offerings, greatly helps to keep a church running smoothly. "Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do it heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men," is an apostolic injunction. And if, instead of doing our respective church-work as if we were conferring a favour on men, we were to do it as if it were something we owed to our Lord, would it not put more heart in all our service? And would not heart ensure promptitude?

News of the Churches.

THE Rev. R. Hay has declined a call to the church at Pine Grove.

FOR the past four months student Powell has been labouring in the Turnberry and Howick field. He reports to have found the people very kind and earnestly desiring a good work done among them. During these months of labour twenty-one were added to the church. Seventeen to Howick Ninth Church, one to Howick Twelfth, and three to Turnberry Church. Just as Mr. Powell left this field Mr. Haynes who has been labouring at Garafaxa took it and is engaged to supply for them for three months.

EASTERN DISTRICT ASSOCIATION.—The annual meeting will be held in the lecture room of the First Congregational church, Kingston, on Wednesday, 5th Nov., at 9.30 a.m. Following is the programme:—
1. Paper on "the examination and reception of applicants for membership in Congregational churches," by Rev. John Wood. 2. Review, "Dale on the Atonement," by Rev. George Willett. 3. Essay on "Studying for the ministry," by Rev. Hugh Pedley. 4. Exposition on Hebrews vii. 1-6, by Rev. Robert