

sition. "That song," exclaimed an enthusiastic member of the company, "always carries me away when I hear it." Said Jerrold (looking eagerly round), "Can no one whistle it?"

The Maiden's Band of Hope,—a husband.

A WORD OF WARNING.—Junior Clerk: "Would you kindly permit me to absent myself to-morrow to attend my father's funeral?" Head of Firm (deep in figures): "You may go, Hawkins, but pray—do not let this happen again!"

A POSER.—Seven Year Old: "Grandma, Mother Shipton says the world will come to an end in 1881. Is that true?" Grandma: "No, dear, for in the Bible we are told, 'Of that day and hour knoweth no man,' &c. Seven Year Old: "Ah, but Mother Shipton was a woman!"

THE TORONTO PULPIT.

II.

When speaking of the Episcopalian pulpit, allusion was made to Mr. Rainsford. As this gentleman was very prominent for a season, and as it is understood that he is returning to Toronto, it may not be out of place to say something of the man and his work. In two words, Mr. Rainsford was a revivalist and—a lady-killer. The Rev. young gentleman is an Englishman: with a fresh English-looking face; fair hair parted carefully down the middle and elaborately brushed at the sides; a pleasant voice, quick ready manner, and an assurance that is awful in its sublimity. His clericalism was very mild while amongst us; and but faintly indicated in his garb: an extensive shirt-front with a sparkling diamond in it, being his *pieces de resistance*. His revivalism was of a type distinct from the American or vulgar British with which the country has been made familiar. It was a refined and elegant affair. Mr. Rainsford is a fluent—not to say fluid—speaker: it is a mis-use of the word to call him a preacher. His humility is something sweet to behold: he almost takes a pride in it. It was edifying to hear him beg people *not* to worship him: *not* to exalt him. His "don't" was so pertinacious that it sounded like "do." It is needless to say that the devotees of this pretty fellow were mostly ladies: gushing girls, both old and young, who flocked to the Cathedral to have their feelings roused to a sense of sins they never committed, or to experience a temporary exaltation of spirit in which they enjoyed the seventh heaven of self-complacency. Mr. Rainsford was especially great in "drawing-room meetings": that last patent invention for enabling people who are somebody to have a religion pure and undefiled by contact with low people who have nothing except a soul to be saved. This is evidently a great improvement on the old idea of rich and poor meeting together in the presence of the Maker of them all. However, Mr. Rainsford was a great success: and it may be allowed did some good amongst the people: young men especially. Some it may be hoped were roused to higher and nobler aims in life, to consecration of heart and service: but many young people of the 'softer' sex were roused to little above the ambition of working slippers for Mr. Rainsford's dainty feet. Indeed it is whispered that some young ladies almost threw themselves at his feet in the nervous or hysterical excitement of the time. Dreadful were the envyings and the jealousies among the fair: high were the hopes and deep the despair of the maidens among whom the gifted revivalist flitted or flirted: terrible was the disappointment when, like Lord Bateman, he sailed away—still single—"back to his own countree." When Mr. Rainsford returns, it will be curious to note his reception.

What is said in this connection must not be taken as disparaging a revival of religion. Nothing is more needed in this our day; God speed it in His time; but we need a revival of the religion of righteousness rather than of sentiment: of truth-telling, of common honesty, of personal purity. Everything is spurious that does not lead right up to this. This is the revival spirit of the Epistle to the Ephesians, for instance: The doctrines of faith and free grace are exalted; but then they are pressed home with vigour against the lying and the stealing, the brawling and the licentiousness which still disgraced the hearers of the Gospel.

But to go back from preaching to preachers. The ministers of the Methodist Church have always been revivalists of this class. It is to their glory that they have endeavoured to realise the ideal of a living Christianity by having the Church *always* in a revival condition: alert and active for the moral welfare of men. The two most prominent names in Toronto Methodism are those of Dr. Potts and Mr. Briggs. It was Mrs. Malaprop who said that "comparisons are odorous"; but circumstances bring these two worthy men into unavoidable comparison. Mr. Briggs is minister of the Metropolitan Tabernacle; Dr. Potts has been, and probably will be, its minister. Still the comparison, though unavoidable, need not be odious. There is indeed much in common in the two men. Their physique is similar, both being large, portly and dignified in form and carriage. There is, however, considerable difference in the character of their pulpit ministrations. Mr. Briggs is the more scholarly, refined and thoughtful; Dr. Potts the more declamatory and popular. And though both are men of strong will and self-assertion, yet Dr. Potts in this respect has the lead. It was thoroughly characteristic of the man when, standing up to give out a long screed of pulpit notices, he shouted, "I distinctly refuse to allow, in future, this pulpit to be made an advertising medium." This was shortly after he came to Toronto; and it was no doubt this strong personal quality that helped to build up his immense popularity. In preaching, Dr. Potts is equally direct and dogmatic. He speaks with authority; and dealing rather with the practical matters of human life than with the abstractions and refinements of theological systems, his words take firm hold of the popular mind. It is one of the weaknesses of the itinerant system that in the very height of his popularity, with the magnificent Tabernacle crowded to hear him, Dr. Potts was removed to the Elm Street Church. It was not fair to himself; although the church to which he went to soon had to be enlarged to accommodate those who came to hear the strong common sense of religion given out simply and distinctly, without circumlocution or finesse or apology. Neither was it fair to the new comer, inasmuch as the distance between the two churches is but little. Yet Mr. Briggs cannot be reckoned unsuccessful in coping with the

difficulties of the situation. Now that after nearly three years he is about to leave the active ministry for a time, partly compelled by a throat affection, there are many of his people who are not at all enthusiastic in the prospect of the return of Dr. Potts to the Tabernacle next summer. For, no less earnest than his equally burly brother, Mr. Briggs has brought a ripe judgment and good power to his work, and his thoughtful expositions and earnest appeals will be missed regretfully by many. Such men as these leaders of their Church are transforming Methodism, and keeping it squarely abreast with the currents of the age.

With them, in this respect, may be classed the Rev. Mr. Hunter, of the Yorkville Methodist Church, who, last year, nearly kicked over the traces of the denomination when his Conference insisted on removing him from Ottawa. He was then established in great influence, and was daily strengthening the Methodist cause in the capital; and it did seem both annoying and absurd to disturb a man in the best period of his work, merely for the sake of change. Mr. Hunter's appointment to Toronto, where he was an old favourite, was a kind of compromise, and by it Mr. Hunter was preserved to the body. He is now working in the Yorkville Church—recently much enlarged—and is doing good service by a ministry of affectionate instruction. His status as a preacher is a high mediocrity; and his church is well filled and still gaining.

Any sketch of Toronto Methodist preachers would be conspicuously incomplete without a notice of the Rev. T. Jeffrey. Mr. Jeffrey is an anomaly. That a man who is confessedly holy, self-denying, and earnestly active in the service of his Master, should act like a buffoon or a mountebank in the pulpit, is almost without a precedent. Yet Mr. Jeffrey has made the precedent. Whether he has deliberately adopted his present pulpit method, or whether it is the wild unstudied outgrowth of his own nature may be a question, but he strongly exaggerates the grotesque coarseness which was the blemish of Mr. Spurgeon's earlier ministry, but which—being then a young man—Mr. Spurgeon learned to outgrow. There is not this hope for Mr. Jeffrey, who is well advanced in life. But it would be well could he learn—even now—that decorum and dullness are not necessary adjuncts in the pulpit: that it is possible to keep the wit and lose the coarseness: and that for one attracted to the Gospel by the easy process of raising a laugh, probably a dozen will be repelled. The writer has a vivid remembrance of a Sabbath morning mis-spent in the Elm Street Church, when Mr. Jeffrey was officiating. The reverend gentleman jumped up from his seat like a Jack-in-the-box, and stood a moment looking round the congregation with a comical grin which irresistibly suggested the clown's "Here we are again," of one's boyish days. Presently was heard, "let us pray," and amid the suppressed titters of the people, the minister began to pour forth his soul in the oddest conceivable forms of expression. "Bless our rulers: and O Lord, give them common sense: make them honest. Some of them we know are fools, and some we fear are rogues," &c., &c., for a quarter of an hour; during which the half-stifled laughter of people with their faces buried in their handkerchiefs was plainly audible. The minister then began to read the Scripture lesson, which was concerning Ahab and Jezebel, in the matter of Naboth's vineyard. This was read with unaccustomed emphasis and with a running accompaniment of remark wholly different from the standard commentators! For instance, speaking of Ahab's displeasure at Naboth's refusal to sell the vineyard, he exclaimed, "Here's a pretty fellow: sulking till he's sick because he can't get what he wants, and then sheltering himself behind his wife for her to get it for him. If there's any kind of man I hate worse than another it's a sn-e-a-k." And the sentence ended in a rising inflection prolonged into a shriek. Next he commented up on Jezebel writing letters in Ahab's name, and sealing them with his seal and sending them to the nobles in his city; and declared that "any man was justified in getting a divorce from a woman who wanted to rule him!" By this time the whole audience was convulsed; and the writer, who had entered for quiet worship, quietly took his hat and departed. But he was told that the unabashed reader continued in the same style, and that the sermon was even more grotesque; and that if there were not "roars of laughter," still that the smiling could be heard all over the house, one poor old man being so scandalized as to rise and leave, turning as he did so to shake his stick at the pulpit. But it must be repeated that Mr. Jeffrey is a good and well-intentioned man; who can be terribly in earnest, and who has aroused and convinced many in his day. The pity is that such a man should think it needful to use such questionable attractions, or that—if spontaneous—he should not learn to restrain himself and avoid inflicting many with a sense of injury.

Coming out straight from this jocularity and excitement, the contrast was startling when the writer crossed Yonge street, and turning eastward into Gould street, entered the Presbyterian Church of the Rev. Mr. King. Nothing could more forcibly illustrate what has been said regarding the distinctive genius of the two systems of Presbyterianism and Methodism: the vigor and aggressiveness of the one, and the conservative tenacity of the other. Nothing but this holding on, generation after generation, to all that has been acquired, can explain the maintenance and growth of such a congregation as that of Gould street. For the pulpit ministration singularly lacks attractiveness in the eye of a stranger. Yet on the morning in question the church was crowded with a quiet and attentive—not to say sleepy—audience. The preacher must have known this characteristic of his people: for he told them that he had selected his text—"Awake, awake, O Zion"—for its especial bearing upon them. And then he began to give them what some one irreverently called "fits," for neglecting public worship (though where he could have put more people that day it was hard to see), and for disregarding family prayer, and for general coldness and sleepiness in spiritual things. The discourse was excellent in its matter, and probably timely and apt; but the good man brought down his lash in such slow monotonous beats, that instead of awakening Zion, he set more heads nodding. Mr. King's is scarcely a pleasant voice; has little variety or cadence; and as every five minutes he concluded a head of his discourse with the repetition of his text, the "Awake, awake, Oh-h-h-h Zion" became positively soporific. But his congregation holds together; and has outgrown its shell and builded a larger and handsomer. And it rightly respects the high and kindly personal qualities of the pastor; and thoroughly understands that the effort of his life is to do it good. And such a respect easily ripens into affection.

QUIEN SABE?

(To be continued.)