

whole of the Sabbath. Much satisfaction is expressed at the prompt action of the Government in the matter.

It is also felt to be a cause for thankfulness and encouragement that the people have shewn such a sensitive regard for the sacredness of the Sabbath, and for the rights of those of their fellow-citizens whose rights were being so seriously interfered with. Very many who take a most liberal view of the "Sabbath question" are not prepared to stand still and see the institution of the day of rest trampled on under the sanction of Government, or men deprived of their sacred rights by the unfeeling demands of commercial avarice.

G. BRUCE.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

MR. EDITOR,—Herewith please receive a statement of money, etc., collected by Miss Agnes Kay, on behalf of Knox Church, Port Sydney. There are ninety-one names altogether from whom money was collected, seventy-nine living in Toronto, the balance in Hamilton. I have all the names, but thought it too many for you to publish. The total amount of this collection is \$141.23. One sewing machine, given by Mr. Wanzer, of Hamilton, and to be sold for the benefit of the church, \$35; net proceeds of concert, at St. James' Square Church, \$21.80. Total, \$208.03. Of course there were some necessary expenses that will reduce this amount some, but I think we shall have enough to nearly finish the church now, with what is promised us. As a church we feel deeply obliged to the ladies and gentlemen who have so ably responded to our call for aid, and I would especially mention Mr. J. T. Boyd and Mr. R. S. Baird, of Toronto, for without their assistance I am sure we should not have succeeded near so well. By publishing this you will oblige

W. JARVIS.

Port Sydney, December 6th, 1879.

#### SHORTENING CREEDS.

MR. EDITOR,—In THE PRESBYTERIAN of October 29th, the Rev. Mr. Macdonnell, of Toronto, says, "To propose the shortening of a creed so as to embrace only the essentials of the Christian faith is not to propose its annihilation."

With all due respect to the pastor of New St. Andrew's Church, I maintain that the shortening of the creed of a Church so as to embrace only the essentials of the Christian faith, does annihilate it as a distinctive creed. Take for example our own Confession of Faith. The Arminians differ from us on such points as predestination, election, the extent of the atonement, the perseverance of the saints, and free will. I believe that ever godly Arminian is practically a thorough Calvinist. It has been well remarked that no better Calvinist can be found than a pious Arminian when he prays. Still, though the points above mentioned are most important ones, they are not essential. Suppose, then, that we lop them off. The Episcopalians and the Congregationalists differ from us on the subject of church government. That is far from being one of no consequence. Still it, too, is a non-essential. Let us, then, lop it off also. The Baptists differ from us regarding the subjects and mode of Baptism. These are anything but insignificant matters. They do not, however, belong to the essentials of the Christian faith. Let us lop them off also. Would not the Westminster Confession of Faith, after undergoing all this trimming, be annihilated as the creed of a Church differing from the Arminians, the Episcopalians, the Congregationalists, and the Baptists? What may be called the creed of the Evangelical Alliance embraces only the essentials of the Christian faith, but it is, of course, the creed of no particular Church.

Some say that they have subscribed only the general system of doctrine contained in this or that creed. This to me seems like taking an oath with an "etc." in it, which, it is said, was sometimes done in the days of, I think, Charles II. One purpose of a creed is to shew to the world what the Church professes to hold it believes. Now, if every one who subscribes it, subscribe just what he thinks proper, and reject the rest, how is the world to know what is the general system of doctrine on which all are agreed? T. F.

Meliss, Quebec, Dec. 6th, 1880.

THERE is nothing terrible in death but that our life has made it so.—Matthew Henry.

#### OBITUARY.

In the opening days of September Mr. John Fisher, an elder of our Church and one of its oldest and most attached friends in the Ottawa district, passed to his rest and his reward. When yet young he came to the township of McNab, and experienced his fair share of the privations which fell to the lot of its pioneer settlers. Being a man of great energy and force of character, he in a comparatively short time succeeded in making for himself a comfortable home, and soon won the complete esteem and confidence of those who had settled around him. His business capacity marked out Mr. Fisher as a man to be entrusted with the control of public affairs, and accordingly he was for many years selected as Reeve of the township, and also served a term as Warden of the county. He was even better known, however, as one who took a lively interest in the cause of religion, and being warmly attached to the Presbyterian form of doctrine and government, he early devoted much of his time and talents to the affairs of the Church. From the beginning almost he was a manager of the temporal affairs of the congregation of McNab and Horton, and in that position he was largely instrumental in consolidating and placing on a secure footing that now large and flourishing country congregation.

In the year 1851, Mr. Fisher was called to the eldership, and during the twenty-three years in which he was actively engaged in the duties of that office gave ample evidence of the wisdom of the choice. His sterling and unobtrusive piety gained him a place in the hearts of the people, such as it falls to the lot of but few to obtain. His devotion to Christ's cause, and his excellent judgment, made him a trusted adviser in the kirk session and the Presbytery, and his earnest and untiring efforts for advancing the general interests of the Church caused him to be widely and favourably known as one of the most prominent friends of Presbyterianism in the district. He was deeply interested in promoting the union of the Presbyterian Churches, and sincerely rejoiced at its completion. Strange to say, however, he was never privileged to worship with a congregation of the united Church. Before the union he was laid aside from all work, being stricken with a rheumatic affection which prevented him from leaving his own home. During seven years he was utterly helpless, and it was during those years that his friends learned to value him the most. Then he cheerfully took up his burden, and, leaning upon Jesus, bore it with true Christian patience and resignation. With cheerfulness he resigned himself to the will of God, and in quiet converse with his friends and with his Heavenly Father, he passed his days in wonderful peace and joy. His friends were comforted in having him with them, and trusted that he might be longer spared. But he was suddenly prostrated by a new form of disease, and having no strength to battle against it he sank quickly, and passed peacefully to his rest. His wife, three children, and many friends, remain to mourn his loss, but, mourning not as those who are without hope, they think of that loss as being his eternal gain.

A loving husband and father, a faithful friend, and a true Christian, has gone from the home where he was so greatly beloved, and from a people who knew his worth. "Being dead he yet speaketh," and in nothing more than in the patience with which he bore the sufferings and troubles of his later years. R. C.

LET friendship creep gently to a height; if it rushes to it, it may soon run itself out of breath.—Fuller.

As a countenance is made beautiful by the soul's shining through, so the world is beautiful by the shining through it of God.—Jacobi.

EVERY real and searching effort at self-improvement is of itself a lesson of profound humility. For we cannot move a step without learning and feeling the waywardness, the weakness, the vacillation of our movements, or without desiring to be set upon the Rock that is higher than ourselves.—W. E. Gladstone.

THE source, or motive, of giving to God, and the purpose to which the money given is to be applied, are entirely distinct. The purpose should never serve as a motive. Men are not to give because money is necessary. They are to give simply because giving is necessary. And giving is necessary for the sake of the giver. It is for the giver's own benefit that God expects him to give.—Churchman.

#### PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

##### THE HOME AND ITS IMPROVEMENT.

The influence of the home upon character and morals is so self-evident as to require no particular emphasis; it is an immense factor in the well-being of a community; it not only steadies, but it stimulates ambition, encourages an honest life, and makes its owner a more intelligent man, a better citizen. If the value of ownership is in question, from a political standpoint, one need only look at France where peasant proprietorship is the foundation of the Republic. And this is, perhaps, the most hopeful condition of American life. With the exception of the great cities where a floating population is inevitable, the majority of our people dwell in their own habitations. Scattered all over the country, forming a network of ennobling associations, clustered about the village highway, isolated upon the New England hill-tops, resting on the great prairies, adding to the beauty of our towns, forming in the West the bulwark of civilization—these homes, from the humblest cot to the palace of the railroad king, are so many magnets drawing the better class of the people to an intimate and patriotic love of their native soil.

"True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home," The affections centre in these shrines of domestic comfort. To those who have been merely tenants of apartments or houses, such an affection can be but dimly realized. Can anything be more forlorn than the ordinary city lodging, with its cramped boundaries, noisy surroundings and glaring publicity? How can domestic virtues be cultivated in a great caravan-sary, where the eye of everyone is upon his neighbour? The very word home conveys the sensation of peace and comfort. It means freedom to do as one likes, to enjoy individual liberty to the top of one's bent. But a mere dwelling should not be the sole aim. The Indian has his wigwam which he carries from place to place, but one hardly looks upon it as the shrine of domestic bliss. Without intellectual associations, without culture, without refinement, without at least some striving toward beautifying its interior and surroundings, home is not home; it is a base counterfeit upon the old Saxon meaning. "Home," says Dryden, "is the sacred refuge of our life." Mere possession is not enough, for if the home is indeed a refuge it will be made a pleasant one; the temple of love, it must be made fit for the indwelling of those who would derive strength and benefit from it. Too many of our so-called homes are bare and cheerless. Especially is this the case with those of the farmer and the rural community generally. Eminently practical in all his views, shrewd and capable in all that pertains to the growing of crops, the farmer is apt to neglect the better side of his nature. He looks upon sentiment as purely superfluous; it is with him a matter of dollars and cents. "What," he will ask you, "is the use of pictures, and magazines, and flowers?"—forgetting that life is more than meat and the body than raiment. And what is life if it does not minister to the higher side of our natures; if it means merely food and drink and clothing while the mind is left desolate, without one beautiful association, dwelling forever upon the sordid claims of everyday existence? To those who have mingled with the world and grown weary of drifting from place to place, this yearning for a home grows with years. They consider it a happiness to toil and deny themselves that a permanent abode may be provided for their families. They know that they will become stronger and better men. And when these hopes are realized they feel as if a portion of the earth had been given them in trust, and they are eager not to fall short of the responsibilities thus devolving upon them.

##### WEALTH'S GREATEST LUXURY.

The greatest luxury of superfluous wealth is in giving it away. A man cannot be happy if surrounded by unhappiness. As a mere matter of "enlightened selfishness," the greatest pleasure a man can have is in mitigating the misfortunes or adding to the pleasure of those of his circle. And, beyond that comparatively narrow sphere, lies, in widening circles, the Nation itself. There, in his native town—the village where he was born, or the city wherein he has worked and prospered—should he not like to benefit those places and be remembered as their benefactor? It is