

## Our Contributors.

LET US HAVE THE BEST.

BY KNOXONIAN.

Sir Oliver Mowat delivered a good patriotic speech in Hamilton the other day. Sir Oliver has a pleasant literary style. His sentences are clear, crisp, terse, compact and well-rounded. He has individuality, and individuality is, after all, the charm of style. Nobody ever wrote well if trying to write like somebody else. The most excruciating kind of speaker is he who tries to speak like some other man. There is only one more deplorable kind of imitator, and that is the one who imitates when he prays.

The best part of Sir Oliver's speech was the paragraph in which he urges the people of Canada to try and secure the best of everything. "We want," said the Premier, "the best laws and the best administration of the best laws, the best universities, the best colleges, the best schools, the best farmers, the best manufacturers, the best mechanics, the best bankers, the best merchants, the best judges, the best lawyers, the best doctors, the best journalists, the best engineers, the best architects, and the best men in every department of industry and intellectual activity. To crown all we want Canadians of every class and condition to be a law-abiding, a temperance-practicing, and in all respects a well-conducted and honourable kind of people."

It will be noticed that the Premier did not say, we want the best preachers. Why did Sir Oliver omit the preachers? Certainly not because he ignored them. The Premier is a church-going Presbyterian and is well known to take great interest in preachers and preaching. In fact he occasionally occupies the pulpit himself. Some of the American journals said a year ago that the Ontario Premier could hold the attention of a congregation longer on a hot Sabbath than any regular preacher in the Province. Why then did Sir Oliver not say we want the best preachers. The reason for the omission is clear. The Premier thinks we have them already.

If the Premier holds that opinion about the Canadian pulpit he is well backed up by no small number of Canadians who travel. Some of the most disappointed church-goers we ever met were Canadians who went to Scotland expecting to hear preachers over all the kingdom like Chalmers, Candlish, Guthrie, and other pulpit princes of the Disruption era, or Cairns of the U. P. Church. The man who goes to Ireland thinking that every preacher in Ulster is a Doctor Cooke, generally comes home thinking there is a mistake somewhere. Some good people are coming home from Chicago at the present time more than satisfied with their own ministers and churches. They went the round of the Halls on Sabbath, heard the sensational much-advertised men, and came away as much disgusted as edified.

Of course there always will be people who think that a preacher who comes from a long distance must necessarily be better than one near home, just as there are sick people who think that a pill made in New York, or Edinburgh, or London must be better than a pill made by the druggist on the next street. And there will always be imbeciles who roll up their eyes and open their mouths at every new preacher and say, "Did ye ever hear the likes of thon?" but the intelligent people of this young country are not much given to exercises of that kind.

One thing is clear. There ought to be far better preaching in Scotland and Ulster and some other European countries than in Canada. For one difficulty the average preacher in these countries has to contend against, the preacher in Canada has to contend against ten. Considering his environment the Canadian preacher does at least fairly well. If

Sir Oliver did not say we want the best preachers, because he thinks we have them already, he was not far wrong. He very seldom is.

Another thing is also clear. When the church-going people of Canada make it evident that they attach more importance to the really good qualities of a preacher than to his power to draw a crowd and raise money, the preaching power of the country will go up fifty per cent. A preacher needs much grace to keep him from acting like a clown, if he knows that clownish tricks will fill his pews much more quickly than sensible preaching. The temptation to get up a show of some kind is rather strong if a preacher knows that his neighbour has a Sunday show on the next street, and that his own friends may blame him if some of his people patronize the neighbour's show.

It would greatly help Canada to get the best of everything and Canadians to become the best kind of people if we realized once for all that communities, corporations, and bodies of every kind have a reputation and character as certainly as individuals have.

Since the last census was taken two years ago, orators have worked themselves hoarse, and writers have used gallons of ink, on the fact that we have only five millions of people in Canada. How many have said or written much on the kind of people we are? The kind is of much more importance than the number.

Cities and towns wrangle about their population every day. A decrease of one or two hundred is considered a calamity, and an increase of a few hundreds a great thing. Civic character is a much more vital consideration than a slight change in numbers either way.

Even schools and colleges are often judged by the numbers that attend them rather than by the character of the work done in them. Cities, towns, villages, townships, churches, congregations, conferences, synods, Presbyteries, sessions have a reputation and a character. Insurance companies and companies of all kinds have a reputation. We cannot have the best in every line until every man realizes that he has to guard not only his own personal reputation but the reputation of his country, his town, his church, his congregation and every body of people he is connected with.

How is it that so many fairly good men do things as members of a corporation, or company, or society, or party, that they would never dream of doing in their individual capacity? Simply, because they do not realize that bodies of people have a character to sustain as certainly as individual men.

By all means let every Canadian try to have the best in every line. To secure the best we must stop thinking that the biggest is the best, and we must remember that bodies of people have characters that may be good or bad or only middling.

Fellow-citizen, what is the reputation of the city, town or township in which you live? How much have you ever done to make its reputation good?

Son of Calvin, what kind of a congregation is that you belong to? What have you ever done to make it better?

### STATEMENT BY REV. JOHN WILKIE RESPECTING THE MISSIONARY COLLEGE AT INDORE.

I. State of the field. When two years ago I made a calculation from figures then obtainable, I found that .0019, or 19 out of 10,000, of the population were in schools, and that there was one school or college for every 24,245 of the people.

Many of these schools are (a.) Mohammedan, where the Koran is memorized. (b.) Shastric, where the Hindu sacred books are memorized. (c.) Banya, or shop-keeper, where only that connected with their accounts, is taught.

The greater part of the people can neither read nor write, and hence are the prey of the cunning priests and their

ignorant superstitions, and hence, too, the sale of books, tracts, etc., is very restricted.

In the general awakening, Central India has been moved somewhat, too, and hence there is a rapidly increasing number who desire to be able to read and write. Were we able to occupy it, almost the whole field of virgin soil is open to our efforts, and had we but the men we might have 1,000 of schools among these people.

II. Our desires. 1st. To educate as many Mohammedan and Parsee boys as we can reach, in a Christian atmosphere and by direct Christian instruction. We get the boys when their minds are open to impressions, and day after day, before their prejudices have bound them, and so can give continuous and progressive teaching; and, inasmuch as we are helping them in a way they can appreciate, we can instil divine truths by means not possible in the ordinary preaching services we may hold. They regard our words as those of a friend.

Further, we cannot surely, in the awakening in India, in the crisis through which it is passing, allow the young men, the future rulers, to be educated in the infidel atmosphere of too many of the Government colleges, or in the heathen atmosphere of some of those in the native states, if we can counteract that evil influence. There never was so great a need for healthy Christian influence in connection with education as there is here to-day, and this only the mission schools and colleges can give. They are not afraid of us nor our religion, and to me the Bible-class hour is one of the most interesting of the day. I teach the Bible to the college and matriculation class, and have thus day after day about 40 young men before me, deeply interested in our religion, eagerly questioning each step of our way, but yet apparently following me step by step as I seek to lead them up to Christ, not a few of them, convinced of the truth of Christianity, some even confessing Christ publicly. If the Gospel is the "power of God unto salvation," as I firmly believe, then I know of no way in which to gather together for daily presentation of the Gospel a congregation at all equalling this one whether we have regard to the present or the future of these young men.

The fact that heathen colleges are being established, only emphasizes all the more the need for ours, i. e., if we keep before us the higher work that we can and should do, and that will not be thought of by these others. The causes that led to infidel France, are living realities in India, and even the Government has at last been awakened to a sense of her danger; but her hands are tied.

2nd. But our special aim is to train and educate our native Christians for the work of our Lord in Central India.

Every mission has more work than workers, and so we only get those whom misfortune has in some way thrown out of work in their own field, and too often these are far from satisfactory. We must therefore train our own men. For some of these the Vernacular school course will be sufficient, but we must put the best weapons into the hands of those able to wield them in the keen, earnest conflict that is being waged around the cross of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. If a college education and the mental training it imparts are needed at home, how much more in India. All our Christians cannot be set apart as Christian workers, and of the workers all cannot take a university course, but some can, and for this we require our Institution in our own field where we can take them over the entire course. The Normal School and theological classes we should more fully develop, but in the meantime we are trying to train to the extent of our strength, time and ability, in the subjects that seem to be needed for those under train-

ing. We do not mean to say we are doing all we wish, but, till our hands are strengthened, we are trying to cover all that seems possible.

We have now sixty Christians in the school, of whom fourteen form a special class that we are preparing for the position of teacher missionaries in the meantime. The greater part of these are from Indore, but gradually we hope to get the young men from other fields too, when our numbers will greatly increase. These are all taught the Bible outside of school hours, besides the daily Bible instruction given to all the students in their regular classes, and take part in the Christian work, as in Sunday schools, evangelistic work, &c., &c., as they are able.

(The special importance of these facts is very apparent, in view of the following sentences just received from another missionary: "During the past twelve months upwards of 50 of the Mangs have been baptized. These are the first fruits of what is believed will be a large ingathering into the Christian Church. To teach and build up this flock in the Christian faith, will require a band of earnest, faithful native workers." A. R.)

III. Our need. Our great difficulty has been the want of help and want of accommodation.

For the accommodation we require—  
1. A church building large enough to receive the crowds that come to almost every service. We have two rooms turned into one in the new college building, i. e., 50x20, but to-night at prayer-meeting, outside on the verandah, as well as in the room, the whole was crowded full. Our new college hall, 70x40, if completed, would help us over this difficulty.

(In a private letter, recently received from Mr. Wilkie, occur the following touching sentences: "As our wee room (50x20) is crowded full and overflowing at our different services, there is an intense longing for the larger hall—but it will all come in our loving Master's own time, and He knows what we need and when." A. R.)

2. Room for our classes.  
3. We should like to have a "home" for both Christian and other students, so that the Christian influence may be more thoroughly carried out. Such a building could be erected for about \$2,000, of good materials, but of this I do not care to say anything till the college building is completed.

At present the walls of the college building are built, but roofing, plastering, seating, &c., &c., are undone, and to finish it, i. e., to give us class rooms and our hall or church, we will require \$10,000 additional. The entire cost of the building was estimated at \$25,000. Of this, \$10,000 was raised in Canada, and it was expected that \$10,000 would be given by the Government here. In this I have been disappointed, as the great fall in the value of silver has thrown the Government in to serious financial difficulties. If I had obtained this, I could easily have managed for the rest; and I earnestly hope that some good friends may come to our assistance, and give the money the Government was expected to give. . . . I cannot but believe there are many in Canada who will gladly join us in the work that is theirs as well as ours, when they know the need.

I should have said the first story is all done, and is used by the college and part of the school classes.

(Signed) J. WILKIE.

Indore, Sept. 6th, 1893.

Copies of the above "Statement" I propose to keep on hand in quantities during the next three months, to be used by any one who would like to help in making up the amount required, and I hold myself ready to transmit to Mr. Wilkie direct, at the end of each month, any money that may be sent in for that purpose. Mr. John McIntosh, of this village, has kindly undertaken to manage for me the accounts, the banking and transmission, but the money may be sent to me. A brief, weekly account, if space can be allowed, will appear in