

The spacious nave was crowded to its utmost, and numbers could find seats only on the base of the monuments. The sermon was far from what would be termed eloquent. The preacher read closely, and his language never rose into fire or enthusiasm; but it was chaste, polished, and no doubt to his audience was forcible. Speaking to the volunteers he put before them the advantages of the discipline to which they were subjected, and carried on the idea to the discipline of the soul, keeping the passions under, living and working as servants of the Lord Jesus, ready to obey His commands, and do His work, it was thoroughly practical and common sense. Many beside ourselves, we are sure, will today recall his words, and it may be that the seed then sown will fructify and fruit in some hearts.

We clip the following from an old paper heap we were giving over to the flames. Memory fails as to how it came into our possession, but we often cast a look outside, and this doubtless came from thither. It is from the columns of a paper confessedly in the interest of free-thought:—

"It is devoted to science, morals, Freethought and human happiness, and it believes in every one's believing just as he chooses, thinking just as he chooses to think, in fact, it advocates liberty of speech, liberty of conscience, liberty in everything."

We are at a loss to know what "morals and human happiness" may be where there is "liberty in everything." Certainly the look we gave again through the articles ere we consigned it to the fire convinced us that their character amply justifies the jubilant declaration made regarding liberty, free love, free goods, free everything. And this is the cry of our popular "liberal views," deny who may; this the infidelity, noisy, blatant, and such the inevitable tendency of the demagogue's teaching from platform and press, who seek only to catch the loitering, ready ear. And they who stand back aghast at the precipice before them in this liberty march are "craven," they who would stem the tide "obstructionists and narrow." Nevertheless, men to whom Christ is precious, women to whose hearts there are objects of a woman's or of a mother's love, youth whose lives have as yet been unwounded by care, and who have early cried, "My Father, guide of our youth," may calmly, yet fearlessly, meet the issue, and to the empty cry of liberty present "the way, the truth, and the life," with this watchword,

"He is the freeman whom the truth makes free,
And all are slaves beside."

A CORRESPONDENT to the English *Nonconformist* makes a suggestion which is as applicable to our Dominion as to the United Kingdom. Candid men of all classes see that truly Christian work is done by churches not of the Anglican fold. Sometimes we hear this fact heartily acknowledged by clergymen of that special church organization, and regret expressed that no opportunity is given for interchange of denominational courtesy such as the pulpit affords. Does the Anglican Church sincerely desire fraternity

with those other denominations which hold substantially the evangel owned in the Thirty-nine articles? The suggestion made will, if followed, without revolution, or the abatement of a single rule or doctrine, bring about the desired result. Let the bishops, either of their own accord, or by lawful pressure impelled, take the names of the clergy of the evangelical churches within the bounds of their respective dioceses, and send to those ministers, or to any approved number of them, licence to preach in an Anglican church when invited by the incumbent to do so. This would interfere with no right, force no one into the pulpit against the desire of those whose right it is to guard, and be an act of simple Christian consideration and courtesy. We venture to say that the adoption of this suggestion would do more to bring about true Christian union than any "apostolic succession" bravely told, or stilted ecclesiasticism, which is simply ridiculous. Our pulpits are open, because catholic, some are shut because sectarian.

In the Queen's household service at Windsor, was a young Highland servant twenty-three years of age. He died, and his remains were removed to Scotland for burial. A short service was held in the Castle at Windsor, prior to the removal of the body to the railway station, by Rev. T. Orr, Congregational minister. The father and brother were present and the Queen's servants. Her Majesty, with her lady-in-waiting, also attended, and another bond made between our sympathizing Queen and her humbler subjects. But oh! the scandal to the High Church party. Where is the Sergeant-at-Arms? The Queen at a dissenting service! It was scandal enough for the old Duke of Kent to be found occasionally there, but the Queen—"God save our noble Queen."

We clip the following from the *Boston Congregationalist*, and would add to it our full and hearty endorsement. We do believe that there is a power in prayer, in true, earnest, faithful prayer. We may not understand it, but we believe it, and we rejoice that in these days of hesitation and doubt a paper like the *Congregationalist* has issued such a paragraph. Through this Canada of ours, as well as in the United States and England, thousands of hearts were as one in earnest petitions for the life of President Garfield. And we have the assurance that those prayers were heard and answered. Let us not be faithless but believing.

"We regard the physical improvement in the condition of President Garfield during the past week, as an answer to prayer. There is no denying the very serious nature of the wound, and the extreme solicitude of the surgeons, so that the danger in which he lay on the morning of the first Sabbath of this month was great. But on that day the united and fervent prayer of thousands of congregations—of the entire Christian heart of the land—went up to God for him; while the same was true of probably nearly every Non-conformist church in the Fatherland. And from that hour to this millions of requests have besieged the throne of grace that—if it be possible—this cup may pass from us. Is it too much to think—nay, are we not

bound to believe—that it has been in tender answer to these supplications, that, so far, the sufferer has been so wonderfully carried over the imminent dangers which so thickly beset him?"

We would call the careful attention of our readers to the calm Christian letter of our correspondent "Mnason," it contains truths that we all need to ponder and act upon. We shall be glad to publish others from the same pen.

Correspondence.

MANILLA.

To the Editor of the Canadian Independent.

SIR,—The Congregational cause here is at present undergoing a state of purification through the furnace, and after the hay, straw, and stubble that was piled upon us in 1874 will be burned away, and the few good seeds then gathered, in conjunction with the old tried ones, get united, we may expect the cause to prosper. Then, and not till then, can we expect to rise from the dust and rubbish.

In your last issue I notice a letter from the pen of Rev. R. McKay, of Kingston, relating to his visit amongst us. His reflections on the Rev. D. McKinnon, who is at present on a tour through Scotland on account of ill-health, are neither becoming, brotherly, nor Christian.

Though Rev. D. McKinnon is absent from Canada, I am confident that he has many warm friends amongst the Congregational ministry who will take up the pen to defend him from such attacks.

To state that "one reason Mr. McKinnon gave for resigning his charge was that he no longer believed in infant baptism," is not correct, and whoever gave the information to Rev. R. McKay knew that he or she was not telling the truth, and I am confident were it known to the party who told this to Rev. R. McKay that it was going to be published detrimental to the interests of Rev. D. McKinnon, it never would have been said.

This is the first time I ever wrote to you, and I hope to get space in your columns for this article, and trust that Revs. Silcox, Ebbs and others, with Professor Fenwick, will bear testimony that Rev. D. McKinnon does not deserve such treatment through the columns of the CANADIAN INDEPENDENT, as he received from the pen of Rev. R. McKay in last week's issue.

JUSTICE.

Manilla, July 18th, 1881.

THOUGHTS ON OUR POSITION.

To the Editor of the Canadian Independent.

MR. EDITOR,—As an old Congregationalist, who has long taken a deep interest in the welfare of the Churches; and who has thoughtfully studied their condition, and prospects; will you allow me to offer a few remarks on the present outlook?

The opinion has been frequently expressed that, especially of late years, comparatively little progress has been made, either in the increase of membership, or the multiplication of churches; and this opinion has been based on facts which appear conclusive. If true, it certainly is suggestive. Is it not, therefore, high time that earnest and prayerful thought should be employed to discover the cause?

Reasons have been assigned; but these, for the most part, have been purely circumstantial.

Our distinctive principles must be sadly defective, if they have produced the spiritual inaction, which want of progress in the conversion of souls too plainly indicates. It does not, however, appear

that these principles have been so zealously inculcated, as to have interfered with the preaching of the Gospel. Possibly a closer search may reveal causes more vitally operative.

Permit me therefore to suggest one or two subjects for earnest enquiry; not to excite controversy, but close self-examination; and may the Lord Jesus enable churches and pastors seriously to ponder them.

1. Has there been that fraternal confidence and hearty co-operation among the brethren, confessedly requisite to success? It is matter for devout gratitude that there have been no clearly defined party divisions; but are there not symptoms that the moral condition of the body is such that at any moment these may arise, with all their evil consequences? And is it not too apparent that there is the absence of cordial unity—the disposition to magnify differences, and to bandy words, more caustic than charitable?

I fear the pages of the "C. I." do not bear a favourable testimony on this subject.

The tender words of the Master, uttered to His Father in earnest prayer, may still be heard across the ages:—"I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me." May this prayer hush every jarring word, and unite the hearts of all in mutual sympathy, and mutual effort.

2. Has not the desire for numerical increase, without due regard to spiritual qualification, frequently done harm to the tone of the churches and the denomination?

In Scriptural Congregationalism, there is something more vital than congregationalism. Church principles, however important, are of vastly less importance than spiritual life and character. We may add to the church roll without augmenting its spiritual life and character. It is possible to increase the list of the members of the Union, and thereby only diminish the conscious oneness and fraternal co-operation of the body.

3. Have the churches, amidst their laudable endeavours to build places of worship, and to pay for them, been as anxious to engage in the direct work of saving souls, and of building themselves up in their most holy faith, as they ought to have been? Has individual responsibility been sufficiently felt to induce personal effort? Has not Israel been "an empty vine, bringing forth fruit unto himself?"

4. Have all our ministers preached the saving truths of the Gospel, as simply, as directly, as earnestly as they might have done? May they not have rather too often sought to refute scepticism, to preach on "modern thought," with somewhat of modern latitudes, to indulge in doubtful speculation, and to attempt the enlargement of their congregations by avoiding the offence of the cross? I do not charge them with these errors, I only suggest their possible existence, and would urge them as points for serious reflection.

5. To win souls to Christ is unspeakably the noblest of all human efforts, but success, to a large extent, will depend on intimate fellowship with Christ—on deep spirituality of heart, and earnest travail of soul. Christ, mighty to save, must be clearly preached, but there must be more than this—there must be the sympathetic action of the soul of the preacher, to produce the life of God in the soul of the impenitent.

Should you be willing to afford space, you may again hear from

MNASON.

One great reason why the work of reformation goes on so slowly is because we all of us begin on our neighbours, and never reach ourselves.