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Thursday, March 1st, 1900.

Rev. J. G. Shearer seems to be just the right man for pushing the work of the Lord's Day Alliance. His people at Erskine church, Hamilton, will miss him greatly, but there can be no doubt that he has done well in answering the call to a broader sphere of usefulness.

The Presbyterian Journal says:—"The submerged tenth becomes the recipient of the churches' charities, while the toiling, patient masses, who are almost but not quite successful, are forgotten." This is painfully true. The fashionable idler is not the only one who goes "slumming". It is becoming a religious fad to select a protegee for salvation who is just a little worse than any other person has discovered.

We had ten minutes conversation with a young barrister the other evening, and some things that he said have set us thinking hard, among other things he said—"If a wealthy church member gives \$10,000 to a religious or benevolent cause, the ink is not dry upon the cheque before he has sent a notice of the gift to the leading papers." There is just sufficient truth in that to float it. Some men do that. More often it is the enterprising collector that hastens to publish the news. There are men however who even take elaborate measures to conceal their gifts. And these are not a few.

In the last issue of "The Outlook" Philips Whitmarsh submits a terrible arraignment of the friars in the Philippines. These were drawn from the lower classes, were men of no knowledge of human

nature when they were sent to the islands, and were men who violated every article of their creed when there. To secure wealth they oppressed the natives, and, that these might the more readily submit to oppression, the friars kept them in ignorance. The religious question, the writer considers, is a most pressing one. He counsels strong measures, and would at once banish all friars from the islands. If he can establish even a percentage of the counts in his scathing indictment, his counsel would seem the wisest

In the "North and West" of the 22nd February Dr. Robt. F. Horton has an article upon the duties of church members that might bear reading as an address to the congregation when a minister is being settled. He instances four duties that are but rarely performed—appreciation, criticism, candor, prayer. To appreciate the truth, not merely the setting of the truth; to fearlessly, yet kindly express a judgement regarding the statement of either truth or error; to deal candidly with a minister when he has not the hearts of his people; and to pray for the man who is God's servant among them. In a closing word about this last duty Dr. Horton says:—"I, therefore, urge every reader to make an experiment. Give ten minutes on Saturday night to definite prayer for your minister, that his word may come with power, that souls may be saved, and that your church may be quickened. Give yourself wholly to that prayer for ten minutes; wait upon God, wrestle, believe. This journal will not have ceased to be current before you see something remarkable. You will think it a change in your minister; probably it will be a change in you." There is a mine of wisdom in the closing sentence.

The Trail of The Serpent.

One sees it everywhere. In political circles it is perhaps more evident, but that may be because the light beats most fiercely there. Yet even there one cannot help wishing when told that, while one man is in every way fitter for a certain post, that post must be given to another man, who is confessedly incompetent, for political reasons.

In the narrower, and in every way, lower realm of municipal politics one does not need to search to discover the shiny trail. The public-spirited citizen who seeks such legislation as shall benefit his fellow-citizen, is promptly turned down to make room for the interested and interesting party who will make it worth while to listen to him. Municipal life is no longer a post of honor conferred upon those whom their fellow-citizens chose to elect to the administrators chair; it is the goal of the self-seeker, for which he often barters what sense of honor remains to him.

Not so evident, yet too surely present, is the slimy trail within the church circle. For place and position men have made

themselves infamous in the eyes of their fellows. Were it not in the church, and were it not that the church would suffer more than the man, the covering cloak would be torn off, and the base intrigue revealed. It is better so. The New York Presbytery was wise in its decision to avoid public prosecution. Better leave the righting of wrongs for a few years. Yet it is hard to see the trail, and to follow it up to the very door into which the serpent has passed.

Across the page of the manuscript as it lies on the minister's desk one sometimes may see traces of the serpent's trail. The sin of worldliness, like a nipping frost, is entering the church, and the minister is aware of it. Alone with God, in the clear light and warmth of His presence, the deadly effect of this sin becomes evident. With the vision strong upon him, the minister writes his message. But as he reads it on Sabbath morning, with the thought of the faces that shall look up to him in an hour's time, he thinks of the probable effect of these strong words. And he tones down the message God gave him, lest he offend some. And it was to these especially that God bade him speak.

We see the slimy track everywhere. We open the door to the serpent, when we close it in the face of our Lord!

State of the Funds.

The General Assembly, in June last instructed congregations to forward their missionary contributions prior to the 28th February. Many sessions and congregations seems to have overlooked this.

On the 26th February the following amounts were still required to enable the several committees to end the year free from debt:

Knox College	\$ 7,500
Queen's College ⁸	3,300
Montreal College	3,500
Manitoba College	2,800
Home Missions	30,600
Augmentation	9,800
Foreign Missions	28,000
Widows and Orphans' Fund ..	5,000
Aged and Intirm Ministers' Land..	4,300
Assembly Fund	1,500
French Evangelization	4,600
Pointe Aux Trembles	3,400
Klondyke Nurse Fund	1,000

*In addition to this there is the deficit of last year.

This week I purpose sending a statement to every minister of the church from whose congregations contributions have not been received for the several schemes. It is hoped that the Treasurers of congregations, Sabbath Schools and Christian Endeavor Societies will immediately forward contributions so as to reach me on or before the nineteenth of March. The Home Mission Committee meets on the twentieth and it is important that the state of the fund should then be known.

ROBT. H. WARDEN.

Toronto, Feb. 26, 1900.