

Our Contributors.

SOME NOTED MEN INTERVIEWED ON NEW YEAR'S DAY.

BY KNOXONIAN.

The reporter for the New Year, anxious to get some good matter for his journal, sallied out on the first day of the year and interviewed a number of well-known citizens. Unlike the "Globe's" commissioners, he did not ask them anything about trade or annexation, or two-rowed barley, or the McKinley tariff or matters of that kind. He did not say a word about the N.P. The N.P. is getting so old and frail now that it should never be taken out in cold weather. It has nursed so many infant industries that it has no strength left. It should be taken to a warmer climate.

The first citizen that the reporter met was

MR. JEREMIAH DISCONTENT.

"Well, Mr. Discontent," said the scribe, "How does the New Year strike you?" "Not very favourably," replied Discontent. "The weather has been fearfully cold. Business is dull. The prices of grain are low. Population is decreasing in many places. Times are hard. Money is scarce. Don't see how people are going to get through the winter."

"Now, Mr. Discontent," said the reporter, "what is the matter with you, anyway. People were crying out for cold weather at Christmas, and the cold weather came with good sleighing in many places. Business has been fair, and in some places better than fair. If prices are low, some members of the Adam family are getting cheaper bread. The world was not made for the exclusive benefit of people who grow grain. The poor people who buy our bread on the other side of the Atlantic should have a chance some time. This is one of the best countries ever given to any people. Our wealth of mine, forest, sea and soil is simply incalculable. If there is anything wrong with this country, the people have themselves to blame. Now, Mr. Discontent, take a lift on yourself and see if you cannot raise yourself to a better state of mind and begin the New Year with a little gratitude for the past and hope for the future."

The reporter then introduced himself to another citizen well known at the present time, mainly because he is somewhat noisy.

MR. UNREST

is his name. "Happy New Year, Mr. Unrest," said the scribe, blandly. "Not much happiness in this country," replied Unrest, "until we have some change." "What change are you after now?" queried the scribe. "Oh, something," said Unrest. "We want Independence, or Imperial Federation, or direct taxation, or Unrestricted Reciprocity, or more N.P., or Free Trade, or Annexation, or more emigration, or—something."

"Mr. Unrest," said the reporter, "please allow me to tell you a little story. It was used by a well-known Presbyterian divine to pacify an elder who whined so much about lack of life in the church that he had scarcely any life left in himself. How much the illustration pacified the good man, I cannot say, but here is the story: 'Mr. —, you remind me of my horse, Charlie. Charlie is a good, quiet horse when he is worked regularly, but when he stands in the stable for a few days and eats a generous allowance of oats, he becomes rather uneasy and does not seem to know what to do with himself. At such times he kicks and kicks until he has nearly kicked away the posts of his stall. You are suffering in exactly the same way; you have so many privileges and so little work that you have become uneasy, and can do nothing but kick. Reduce your food and do more work and you will be all right.' Now, Mr. Unrest, you are perhaps enough of a preacher to make the application yourself. If a number of your tribe would lower your diet and do a little more honest work for your country, your fellow-men and your God, you would feel much more restful in the evening than you now feel."

"Happy New Year,

MR. CRANK,"

said the reporter, as he shook a third citizen by the hand. "How do you like the appearance of 1893?"

"Not at all," replied Mr. Crank, "Everything is wrong. The world and the church are going to the bad. If they would only take my plan for doing things there might be some hope for the human family, but people are so dull and so much wedded to their old way, that they refuse to learn anything. I have an invention of my own by which I could banish all the poverty from the world and all the sin from the church in a few days, if allowed to work my plan, but the stupid officials will not allow me. I would like to explain my process in your journal if —"

"Not now, please," exclaimed the scribe with a rather startled expression on his benign countenance. "Had Methuselah been a newspaper man, and if his journal had gone to press at the end of each century, he might perhaps have found time to hear you, but I am not Methuselah and my journal goes to press at four o'clock sharp every morning, so please excuse me. Besides, I have not much confidence in these patent processes for the regeneration of mankind. Though a newspaper man, I have great regard for an old book that I was taught to read by one who now teaches no more. Supposing you study that book a little, Mr. Crank, and see if its teaching does not straighten you out a little and make a more useful man of you."

Note-book and pencil in hand, the reporter next ran against a well-known, highly-respected and influential citizen,

MR. GOOD-HEART

by name. "Happy New Year, Mr. Good-heart," said the scribe, sweetly. "The same to you, my young friend, and many happy returns," replied Mr. Good-heart, cheerily; "I enjoy reading your journal very much; good live paper; news always fresh; editorials well written; paragraphs crisp and bright. Sorry you press men cannot have a holiday like other citizens." "Thanks for your kind wishes," said the scribe, "but I want to know what your reflections are on the New Year, Mr. Good-heart; how does 1893 strike you?"

"Well," replied Mr. Good-heart, "I don't see how any Canadian can enter upon this new year in other than a grateful spirit. The past year brought many mercies for which we should all be profoundly thankful. We had a bountiful harvest, we escaped the cholera, business has been fair in many places, there has been peace from ocean to ocean and our people have had every opportunity to pursue their usual vocations. There need not be a hungry man on Canadian soil to-day, and there would not be if all our people conducted themselves properly. It is quite true we have some difficulties to contend against, but what country is without its drawbacks? What nation or what man ever became great and strong without contending against difficulties of some kind? Most of our hard problems are self-made, and if the people do not solve them properly, the fault will be their own. We have more principles than we know how to use. On the whole, I think, we should enter upon this new year with gratitude for the past, hope for the future and humiliation because we are not making more of the noble heritage God has given us."

The reporter shut his note-book, put his lightning pencil in his pocket and went to his lunch more than ever persuaded that there is a

MIGHTY DIFFERENCE IN MEN.

THE UNION OF CHRISTENDOM.

BY REV. S. HOUSTON, M.A., KINGSTON.

That they may be one, as we are.—John xvii. 11.

What is really meant by the oneness of the people of God? That Christian unity is a blessed thing is evident from several standpoints. Jesus prayed fervently for it, the Apostle Paul, on many an occasion in his epistles, refers to it, sometimes deprecating divisions and sometimes, in the most pathetic manner, pleading with those to whom he wrote to think and speak the same thing. Then, to refer to another standpoint from which the question may be viewed, Christianity in its very nature implies unity. If men are saved from sin, this, the same Redeemer who died for them, if because of trust in that Redeemer they are living the life which is the legitimate outcome of such trust, they will of necessity aim at agreement with one another. The people of God are fre-

quently spoken of as one family. If we realize what is in that metaphor we will regard one another in a brotherly way. As we look abroad over the Christian world we cannot but deplore the divisions that are so obvious, they are a scandal if anything is a scandal in the face of the unbelief and vice and idolatry that abound. Nobody can pretend to justify the rivalry and antagonism that are seen between different denominations. It is true, and thankful we are that it is true, that the hard words that once were in common use when the members of one denomination spoke of another, have been greatly softened; yet we cannot say that the ideal Jesus had in view is reached yet; no, very far from it.

As regards the question of union there are two aspects to be thought of, and each is to be studied carefully. There is a unity which may be promoted even though the different sections of Christendom may not just yet be organized into one whole in the outward sense. We speak sometimes of unity in diversity. We see in nature abundant examples of unity in diversity. There is one whole, a united organism that we may call the world, and there are many separate kingdoms in that organism diverse enough from one another. For instance there are the departments of animal, of vegetable and of mineral, all of which are different, but each serves the purpose for which it was created. Each of these again has its variety in its orders and families and species, all different, yet a substantial unity. The human body itself is an unity, though made up of different parts which might be so perversely managed as to be antagonistic of one another. It is possible for the different denominations to do their work very effectively and be one whole in Christ, even though we have to wait for a time ere corporate unity be attained. It would be a very monotonous world were the leaves of the trees of the same shape, size and hue. It is possible to have a regenerated world in a very high sense, and still retain the leading denominations. Different shades of doctrine and different forms of polity are, it may be, suited to varied temperaments; one form to one, and another to another. But, so long as the various shades remain, why should not each give a brotherly and hearty recognition to the ministry, the orders and the membership of the others? Can a spirit of unity be promoted if one denomination assumes to be the Church and looks down on all the others as necessarily inferior to itself? If one will be exclusive to the extent which we see things carried, how absurd it is to talk about union. If the rest of us are outside of the fold of the church, how can there be a union with us until we come within that fold? That implies that the exclusive one is right, and all the others are wrong. The phase of unity at which we have been looking, that means all denominations to be on so friendly a footing that each recognizes the ministers of the others to be ministers of Christ, and the ordinances of others to be valid ordinances, and membership in one to be membership in any other, if a man desires to pass from one to another, will necessarily tend to the other phase, namely, that of corporate unity to one visible Church of Christ in the world. When spiritual life is sufficiently developed in all Christians, there will be possible an outward form of unity that will embrace all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth. We who call ourselves Presbyterians, while none too ready to make empty professions, are as much in favour of Christian union as any sister church is; we are, I am convinced, as ready to waive minor matters as any other Church that is around us.

It is a good thing to keep the ideal ever before our minds, though but slow progress seems to be made in the realization of that ideal. We are not to overlook that great progress has been made within a generation past. There has been union after union on the part of those that half a century ago were rivals of one another. The Methodist Church in Canada embraces now what, less than thirty years ago, were four different denominations. The Presbyterian Church in Canada the same, and we have no reason to suppose that we have reached finality yet, no indeed, these are but stepping stones to higher things; and the spirit of comity between those that are still apart, and may be apart for a time yet, is growing; all this gives ground for great satisfaction. That does not mean that we are to

rest and be thankful, but it means that we are to work on along the same lines and be thankful.

For a year or two past we have heard a good deal of a basis of union laid down by the Bishops of the Church of England, consisting of four items now known as the Lambeth Articles. At some conferences held in the old land last summer, a good deal was said, and some extravagant eulogiums were uttered regarding the reasonableness of the said articles, and the amazing generosity of the the Church dignitaries that put them forth. Here is the substance of the proposed terms of union:—

1. The sufficiency of Holy Scripture and its supreme authority in all that bears on Doctrine and Life.

2. The recognition of the great creeds of the early centuries, such as the Apostles' Creed so called, the Nicene Creed and others that were framed or recognized by the first four General Councils.

3. The perpetuity of the two Greater Sacraments; namely, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

4. The acceptance of the Historic Episcopate.

It is very proper that we should examine this proposed basis, the terms that are laid down by those that are fitted to speak with some authority on behalf of the Church of England. These terms have been set forward as a sort of ultimatum. We are told that here is the utmost that that venerable and influential body can do. Not only that, we are assured on many hands that there is an exceeding generosity displayed in their consenting to so much, and it is pretty plainly hinted that if we, who are outside the Anglican system of Church bodies, refuse to treat on such liberal terms now that an opportunity is given, we will show ourselves to be unworthy of any further notice. We, in such a case, will be responsible for the schisms that are such a scandal of Christendom. Some of you that read the papers and magazines of Britain will have noticed that some influential men in the Nonconformist Churches of England are so enamoured of the terms that they are willing to play the coquette for a time on the ground of the proposals held out. If, then, we are unable to see any particular generosity in the terms laid down, it is as well to say so and in a temperate way give our reasons. If we cannot see in the Lambeth Articles the voice of a god, or even of an angel; if we are unable to see any inspiration even in the proposals, we may as well be candid, and say so.

As regards the first three articles there is not much that need be said, there is no particular criticism that we are called upon to make. We heartily endorse all that is said about the sufficiency and authority of scripture. We may make bold to say that no church surpasses the Presbyterian in the honour that is given to scripture. We have even refused to make anything essential either in doctrine or practice that is not founded on and agreeable to the Word of God. We are never prone to magnify what is historical, we are not given to boast of our history, we are far more anxious to have our position and standing scriptural than to have them historic. We do not permit church authorities to decree rites and ceremonies beyond what can be supported by the Word of God. Then, as to the creeds of the early centuries, we honour them as much as any other church. These creeds are the common heritage of the churches of our day, no one may claim a monopoly in them. After all they are only of historic importance, and they are not to be thought of as being in any way on an equal footing with scripture. As regards the third article, that bearing on the perpetuity of the Sacraments, there is no objection to be urged, none at all as regards the substance of what is set forth, we think it an awkward, and therefore an uncalled for, mode of expression to speak of the Greater Sacraments. We know of only two Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and that the word greater or the word less should come in, we are unable to see. That word greater might be struck out with advantage. It suggests observances in certain quarters that we would prefer to pass over in silence when discussing union. Nevertheless we are not disposed to quarrel about the word in that connection.

We now come to the fourth article, that about the Historic Episcopate; that concerning which the authors of the basis were