

Our Contributors.

OUR COMMON CARRIER.

BY KNOXIAN.

Dr. Patton had a most suggestive illustration in his Jubilee sermon. Some people, he said, treat the church as a common carrier. They pay their fare, take their tickets, and, if they get to the end of their journey in safety, care not a straw what becomes of the carrier. Here is the simile as reported in the *Globe*:

A class of people who are not interested in the answer, he likened to passengers in a railway train bound for Chicago, who, having paid their fares and bought their tickets, care nothing about the solvency of the railway company, whether it is paying interest upon its bonds or dividends upon its stock, nor whether it will go into the hands of the receiver the day following. By these people the church was made a common carrier, and, as they have paid their fares and taken their tickets in it, they care not whether it is solvent or not.

The only unhappy thing about this most suggestive figure is that it makes Chicago represent the place to which the church carries people. Many have been in the habit of thinking that Chicago represents the terminus of the opposition road. Dr. Patton, however, was a citizen of Chicago for years, and, therefore, must be presumed to know. Chicago, like every other place, has its good and its bad. The good are very good, and the bad are very bad. The fence is so high over there that nobody can sit on it.

The church considered as a common carrier is a most fruitful topic. The different denominations may be supposed to represent different trains running on the same line and in the same direction. According to Superintendent Carman, the Methodist train carries the largest number of passengers. Some of the trains make a tremendous noise. They keep their bell ringing and their whistle blowing all the time. The Presbyterian train is a quiet, modest kind of a train, never runs very fast, but keeps on at a fair rate of speed, and always "gets there." If it does not blow as loud as some of the other trains, its passengers do not fall off the cars so often.

The trouble on all the trains is that so many people get aboard who take no interest in the welfare of the road. Dr. Patton says they pay their money, get their ticket, and care not whether the road is solvent or not. Some of them do very much worse than that. They get their ticket and forget to pay any money. They expect the common carrier to carry them right up to the gates of the celestial city without receiving a cent of fare. They never ask how the engineer is paid, or how the conductor's salary is raised, or what pay the brakemen get, or any question of that kind. They seem to think that the cars can be cushioned and lighted and heated for nothing.

The Presbyterian train has a good deal of business on hand just now, and it is highly desirable that all the passengers should wake up and make themselves useful. Our Home and Foreign Mission work is in very good shape, but we might and ought to do more. The Committee on Augmentation passed grants for \$12,000 the other day, when they had just one thousand in the treasury. They had to do it or take bread out of the mouths of the pastors of assisted congregations. The difficulty with this scheme all along has been that so many congregations refuse to contribute a cent towards its support. They pay their own minister—a small enough salary some of them—and care not whether other congregations have a minister or not. A determined and well-planned effort is now being made by an able committee to give the fund a fresh start, and failure this time will likely mean failure for all time.

The funds of at least three of our theological seminaries are not in a good condition. The ever-increasing demand for young ministers is accompanied by weak support of the colleges, as many thoughtful men expected it would be.

Now, why is there scarcity of money in the church treasury? Simply because there

are so many passengers on the church train who care little or nothing about the interests of the line. They use the church as a common carrier, but forget the carrier cannot carry without funds. Some pay liberally; many pay fairly; but not a few don't pay anything. Hence the trouble with the schemes.

The average amount contributed towards the schemes of the church is so small that one hates to discuss it before the Philistines. It is small compared with what many, not by any means wealthy, spend on the unnecessary of life. So many do not pay anything that they bring the average away down in spite of the efforts of the liberal contributors.

Are you, readers, using the church as a common carrier without taking any concern about her welfare?

FRAGMENTARY NOTES.

BY K.

People have returned from their holidays much refreshed and invigorated. The hard-worked parson seems to have got a new lease of life. The sermons will be better, the hearing will be better and many will be saying that the minister never preached as well as he did to-day. The congregations seem as if they were glad to get back to their accustomed places in the church of their affections. It is likely while they were away they heard the best and the worst and come back with the opinion that they did not hear any one whom "they would prefer to their own man after all."

This is an age of conventions, they are rushing after one another at almost railway speed. In Moncton the convention of Christian Endeavor Societies of the Maritime Provinces has been in session, and the attendance of delegates was up to expectation, in numbers, whilst the enthusiasm and earnestness with which the business was conducted was beyond any estimate that was formed of the meeting. Moncton is a good place for conventions and the infant city might be properly termed the city of brotherly love. The superintendent of the Maritime Provinces, Mr. J. S. Smith, is a host in himself. Mr. Smith is an esteemed elder in Fort Massey Church, Halifax, and is no stranger to evangelistic work. The new president is a respected minister of the English Church in Charlottetown, P. E. I., and discharged the duties to the satisfaction of all present. The basement of the Presbyterian Church in the town which was burned down a year ago, was opened for public worship the Sabbath previous to our visit with appropriate services, which were largely attended; the other and main portion of the building is expected to be finished and dedicated in November.

AMHERST.

The Provincial Convention of the Sabbath Schools of Nova Scotia was held here. The attendance of delegates, I understand, was smaller than was expected. The meetings were held in the Methodist Church, and although generally interesting, yet, as the late John B. Gough would say, "failed to enthuse." Mr. Reynolds, of Chicago, spoke and spoke well; he made many good points, and whilst some objection might be taken to the manner of putting things, he was the life of the meetings.

The Presbyterian Church is well represented here. Rev. Dr. MacGregor is the pastor, who has built up a strong congregation in the town. When the writer first visited this place, worship was held in a hall, and a very plain one at that. The first sermon I heard here was from my friend Rev. Samuel Houston, now of Cooke's Church, Kingston, who is still strong and vigorous in that old typical congregation where the late Rev. Andrew Wilson labored for so many years and where there are to be found among the worshippers so many of my Ulster Presbyterian friends. Communion services were being held at the time of my visit which were well attended.

A PASTOR'S BENEDICTION.

The town of Amherst is not without its celebrities. A remarkable man is the Rev. Canon Townshend; he is now in his 86th year, with a mind as clear and vigorous as it ever

was; hearing and sight have failed, but the Rev. Mr. Townshend is as eloquent and impressive as he was in his best days. He came from England in 1834 to do missionary work in Canada, was located in Nova Scotia and in this section commenced his missionary labors. As a result there are to-day a flourishing congregation with several missionary stations, all in working order. For several years Canon Townshend has lived in England, but he has a good representative in Rev. Mr. Harris, who has most successfully carried on the work. On last Sabbath Rev. Canon Townshend conducted the service. As stated, the venerable preacher labors under the difficulty of defective sight, but this is compensated for by the fact that the prayer-book is written out in a very large hand, and his sermons also are copied in a similar way by a beloved niece. But it was when the patriarch lifted his hands and asked the blessing of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, on his congregation for the last time, that the congregation was deeply impressed and many of them in tears. To be the pastor of a congregation for 60 years is a privilege given to few. Rev. Canon Townshend has been a prominent figure in Cumberland County for sixty years. He leaves a family who have all attained to distinction. One is Hon. Mr. Justice Townshend, of Halifax, a judge of the Supreme Court; another is Mr. Medley Townshend, Q.C., of this town; a third is D. A. S. Townshend, of Parrsboro, N. S.; and a daughter is the wife of the eminent city engineer of Montreal, Mr. St. George.

Amherst, 18th Sept., 1894.

REV. PRINCIPAL KING IN THE MISSION FIELD.

I am returning from a brief holiday which has been spent in Alberta. It may be of interest to your readers that I should say something regarding the work of our church in the parts visited. The first portion of the time was spent at Banff, where our church has in Mr. and Mrs. Jaffary worthy successors of Mr. McLeod and Mr. Gordon. Banff is still an ideal resting place, and the C. P. R. Hotel furnishes at moderate cost every comfort which the most fastidious taste could desire, but the number of visitors has this year been smaller than formerly, and the village itself has been steadily declining. The attendance was about thirty on the two occasions on which it was my privilege to preach and at least the half of them were strangers. The services, however, are regularly maintained, and the few permanent residents contribute with praiseworthy liberality. Mr. Jaffary's charge embraces also Anthracite and Canmore, two mining villages along the line, the latter being also a divisional point, and having a population of several hundred people. From the removal, during the stoppage of the mines, of some of the most active church members, and from the general complexion of the mining population which has come in since their operation was resumed, the working of this field is attended with increasing difficulty and discouragement. But while the field as a whole is less encouraging than it was some years ago, it is even more necessitous. It is not unlikely that at one or all of these points Mr. Jaffary may be the only Protestant minister during the long winter months. No Christian could contemplate the surrender of the field for that period to irreligion and its attendant vices.

In Calgary, as your readers know, our church is worthily represented by the Rev. H. Herdman. I was able to spend only one day here, but it was happily that of the week-day service, so that I had the opportunity of meeting with a fair representation of the congregation at their evening assembly for prayer. The congregation which Mr. Herdman has gathered around him here is one of the strongest, if not the strongest, in the town. Like all others in the districts, however, its members have suffered from the effects of the successive dry seasons, and I think it likely that Mr. Herdman, in common with others of his brethren, has had to share the misfortunes of his people. It needs, however, but a return of seasons with a moderate rainfall, or the successful operation of a scheme of irri-

gation in the district, to bring back prosperity and to make the congregation a power for good in the whole Province of Alberta.

The only other point visited was Edmonton. Here it was pleasant to find, as at Banff, a minister in charge who had been a member of St. James Square during his student course. Mr. McQueen had a difficult place to fill in being called to succeed Professor Baird. He has, however, the full and appreciative confidence of the community, now a much larger one than in those early days, and is in a position to do much, not only for his own congregation, but for the growing district of which it is the centre. The congregation, as I saw it at the morning, and especially at the evening service, is a fairly large and an intelligent one, embracing a good proportion of what is termed old-timers and of later arrivals. It still receives a small supplement, but may be expected to dispense with external aid very soon. In the afternoon, we drove out to Belmont, one of Mr. McQueen's country appointments. It ought to be said that the site of Edmonton on the northern and wooded banks of the Saskatchewan is one of great beauty. The view from the bank up and down the broad valley of this river, especially at this season of the year, when the woods have put on their autumn hues, is one which is not easily forgotten. There is a second congregation at South Edmonton, not large but very spirited. A neat church was being built for it at the time of my visit.

The whole country up the river to Fort Saskatchewan, and down the line of railway within thirty or forty miles of Calgary, is very rich in soil, and with its alternating wood and prairie, it is very beautiful. It is filling up rapidly with population, and bids fair to be at no distant period one of the most prosperous districts of the North-West. Its religious wants are not being overlooked by our own church and other churches. At least, five or six ordained ministers, with about the same number of students, represent the Presbyterian Church's contribution to the spiritual care of the district. And if here hopeful, earnest work is at the same time most necessary, the population, with a considerable element from Washington and other Western States, being, at some points, at least, very different from that of Manitoba. Very lax notions in regard to Sabbath observance obtain among some of those immigrants from south of the line. Hunting, shooting and field and other work are not uncommon. Unless men of strong convictions and earnest purpose are sent and sustained, there will very soon be a harvest of irreligion which whole decades of effort will not efface.

One cannot visit a few of these newer districts embraced in our wide field of missions without being impressed with the magnitude and importance of the work and of the necessity to its accomplishment of men of strong faith, of resolute will, and of earnest and self-denying spirit. The homes of our people must furnish such men and the colleges must at once stimulate their devotion and their intelligence, if we are not to prove false to the interests of our church and our country.

Professor Baird arrived at Edmonton, the scene of his early, self-denying labours, the night before I left, as Mr. Laurier and his party had arrived three days before. Cordial as was the welcome given to the leader of the Opposition and his friends by the people of Edmonton, it is safe to say that it was very far short of that which awaited the former missionary at the reception to be given him by the Presbyterians of Edmonton and indeed by the old-timers of all denominations.

JOHN M. KING.

On the cars, Sep. 26th, 1894.

The Cornwall Auxiliary of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society held their annual thanksgiving service in Knox Church last week. The president, Mrs. John D. McLennan, presided. The singing was led by Misses Brown, Cline, and Bella McLennan, with Miss Newman at the organ. The special feature of the meeting was the presence of Miss L. M. Baker, a returned missionary, who has labored for 15 years among the Indians and half breeds of the North West as a teacher. By request the Rev. James Hastie gave a short address of welcome to Miss Baker on behalf of the auxiliary. Miss Baker spoke for nearly an hour, giving a most interesting sketch of her work from the time she went out in 1879 to the present year. The thankoffering of the members amounted to the handsome sum of \$109.