

The Canadian Independent

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TORONTO, DEC. 16th, 1880.

We would again call the attention of our subscribers to the label on their paper showing the amount due. If the label does not indicate '81 then a year's subscription is due. Will you send it at once? Nearly half of the current year's issue has been sent out and not nearly half of the subscribers have paid their dollar. Let us have it at once.

A FEW TEMPERANCE THOUGHTS.

The Church of Christ is not antagonistic to the State. The Christian, as such, is not expatriated; "ye are the salt of the earth," and salt, to exercise its preserving properties, must permeate the mass. Thus should Christian principles, through those to whom Christ has given life, be made to permeate the body politic. Paul, in his charge to Timothy, exhorts that prayers be made for kings and those in authority, to the end that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. Now prayer includes means where those means are available. The physician who prayed in his surgery when he should have been actively watching by his patient's bedside, sadly mistook his calling, and the true efficacy of prayer. "Look to God, boys, and keep your powder dry," as old Noll said to his Ironsides in a threatened rain in view of the enemy—a common sense piety, yea, and withal the most truly spiritual, therefore we are called upon to pray practically for those in authority; and, as in our state polity the people make the laws, there is a work for Christian men to do in shaping the decrees of the state by forming the judgment of the people.

There are evils which hinder peaceable lives, and which, in some measure, are under state control, e. g., laws cannot close profane lips, but may most justly prevent the street corner ringing with blasphemy as we pass by; and thus an evil may be minimized, and opportunities for general proficiency therein taken away.

Intemperance is an evil—We enter no debateable ground such as the question of Total Abstinence. Personally we totally abstain, nor permit intoxicating liquor within the circle of our home. There are Christian homes where "moderation" is viewed as the true temperance; we differ, but not in this article, in which we stand upon ground they will not question. Intemperance is an evil, and our laws justly take cognisance thereof. In the passing and execution of those laws every Christian man should realize his personal responsibility, that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives. Christian life should lead public sentiment, as in the old Roman days, when the Cross was ultimately planted over the Capitol to the exclusion of Jupiter.

Is there need for legislation? England spends \$750,000,000 annually in strong drink. There are confessedly 600,000 confirmed drunkards there, one-tenth of whom yearly fall into a drunkard's hell. 600,000! A ghastly army four deep and five miles long if drawn up in array! Think of the homes there rendered wretched, hopes blasted, lives wrecked, souls damned! We use annually in Canada, of home manufacture, 3,500,000 gallons of spirits, to say nothing of imported and malt liquors. Our daily papers keep fresh before us horrors, the horrors of drink. Let the following words from a great English preacher come home to our ears:—

"Go and catch with your own eyes a glimpse here and there of the black waves of this subterranean stream. Health is the most priceless boon of life. Go to our hospitals, and ask how many are brought there by the awful diseases, the appalling accidents, the brutal violence of drink. Pauperism is the curse of cities. Ask how paupers are made; ask any economist worth the name how pauperism can possibly be avoided when so much idleness is due to the waste in drink. Lunacy is one of the worst afflictions of humanity; ask at any public asylum the percentage of it due to drink. Idiocy is one of the saddest phenomena of life. Ask any doctor how many idiots are born of drunken parents. Visit our camps and barracks, and there is not an officer who will not tell you that drink is the deadliest curse of our army. Visit our ships and seaports, and there is not a captain who will not tell you that drink is the worst ruin of our sailors. Go to any town or country in the Kingdom, where there are many public-houses and many poor, any clergyman will tell you that drink is the most overwhelming curse of our working classes. Philanthropists sigh for the dirt, the squalor, the misery of our lowest classes. How can it be remedied so long as there is the maximum of temptation, while there is the minimum of wages to waste and the minimum of power to resist? Under the very shadows of the great towers of our Houses of Legislature are streets in which house after house, family after family, is ruined or rendered miserable by this one cause; and, how long will our Legislature still refuse to interfere? Would that we could show them the misery of the innocent, the imbruiting of the guilty; women broken-hearted, children degraded, men lowered beneath the level of the beasts, holidays changed into a bane, high wages wasted into a curse, the day of God turned into a day of Satan, our gaols filled, our criminal classes recruited, our workhouses rendered inevitable. The school, the library, and the Church are united, and united in vain, against the beer-shop and the gin-palace. This struggle is one development of the war between heaven and hell. Have we not a right to expect, have we not a right to demand, that in this struggle the Legislature should take their part?"

The Licensed Victuallers have a compact organization and sit very restive under legislative restraints, e. g., they are moving in this city to the end that the drinking hours, at bar and saloon, may be extended from 7 until 11 p.m., on Saturdays.

Does the public good demand it? Can even pleasure be rendered more restful and bright thereby? We speak in no spirit of personal hostility to the dealers in intoxicants, we know were there no purchasers there would be no sellers, were there no souls no one would seek to gather the fools' pence. We seek to truly help both to do right, which we fear they are not doing. Our laws demand, as every druggist knows, that poisons should be labelled and their sale restricted, in order that every lawful obstacle should be placed in the way of the commission of crime. Viewing intemperance as a national sin, a habit which strengthens for, and aggravates, other crimes, we would create or carry out such legislation as will make drunkenness as difficult as possible, instead, as now, of rendering the habit easy and then most illogically punishing for falling into the same.

We know you cannot legislate men sober, nor if we could would we find the catholicon for human woe. Islam is thoroughly temperate so far as alcohol is concerned, and most thoroughly unreliable and vile. As Christians, believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, we know for humanity's wounds there is no balm save that in Gilead, and no physician except the Physician there. Therefore we are not maintaining that were drink abolished, the nation would necessarily become virtuous and happy. Sin would still remain, the evil heart of unbelief would not be thereby removed. But we do maintain, that, the temptation to drink removed, which legislation can justly and effectually remove, one great obstacle to the working of the Gospel would be away, a stumbling-block, and by no means a small one, thrown thoroughly aside. And maintaining this, we most earnestly urge all our readers to discharge herein their duty as a citizen, not on the hustings with the noisy demagogue, not with the riotous voter, but in forming and maintaining a healthy public sentiment that will prevent all legislation backwards, and that will interpose between the unwary, the helpless, and this dreaded snare.

We must repeat here what stands as a notice to Correspondents: We cannot insert anything in the week's issue received by us later than Monday. This will explain the non-appearance of some communications this week.

We are pleased to observe that the Montreal papers are sharply attacking two of their hotels for refusing to admit the Jubilee Singers because of their colour. Such conduct is an outrage on Christian decency, and richly merits the trenchant criticism of the *Witness* and other papers. But it must not be supposed that Montreal is alone in this outrage. Some years ago another troupe of coloured singers visited Canada,—the Hampton Singers. Like the Jubilee Singers they were Christian men and women; they sang the same pieces, and their object was identical—to raise money for the education of their race. They sang in Montreal, and proposed visiting Toronto. The writer of these lines, advised of their coming by a Christian friend who was deeply interested in their welfare, and who requested that hotel accommodation might be secured for

them, spent nearly the whole of one day going from one hotel to another, asking in vain that they be received. One indeed at first consented, but afterwards sent a messenger to say that the boarders objected (a falsehood, as we afterwards found), and so the proprietor recalled his consent. And another was willing, but only on payment of rates which were practically prohibitory; so accommodation was at last found at a fourth-rate place which proved so uncomfortable that after one day's experience the troupe had to divide to private residences, where they remained during their stay. It does not say much for the tone of feeling in our largest cities that such action is possible.

If our Presbyterian friends go on at the rate they are now doing they will be upon us before our arms are open to receive them. We know, of course, that they must come to Congregationalism sooner or later, but they have been travelling that road at such a pace lately, that if they continue they will not leave much to be got over. Here is the latest development: There has been an "organ" dispute at Cooke's Church, Toronto. The "Session," which true Presbyterianism recognises as the authority in such matters, had allowed the introduction of an instrument into the school room, not into the church, for the use of a "Musical Circle" of young people, whereupon an irate company of the congregation headed by an old true blue Presbyterian, marched into the school room, and when told that the organ was there by authority of the Session, replied that it was for the congregation to decide. Dreadful! and in a Presbyterian building. Rank Congregationalism! and they finally settled the matter by shouldering the obnoxious "Kist o' Whistles," marching it out of the room and depositing it on the sidewalk. Could the most ultra Independent take a stronger position?

FOREST.

On Friday evening last a very pleasant social was held in the Congregational Church, Forest. The Ebenezer and Lake Shore Churches were well represented. Speeches full of hope and encouragement were delivered, and the following address presented to our pastor:

DEAR SIR.—Accept the following:—A new cutter and buffalo robe, a handsome picture in frame, cash, &c., in all \$100, as a token of our appreciation of your ability, zeal, and success, as a minister since you came amongst us. You have by the attractive power of God's truth alone, ably and lovingly proclaimed, filled our old church till it no longer can accommodate all who would wish to hear. This is to encourage you to go on in God's strength like the great Apostle, forgetting the things that are behind to press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. That God may bless you and your family and make you still more and more a blessing is the earnest prayer of your united congregations.

Mr. Fraser replied, and cordially thanked his people for their kindness and the manner in which they stood by him. He said, taking them collectively he could speak to them as he could not separately without the imputation of flattery, and he would say that he felt proud of his deacons and people, that he found amongst them men of intelligence and culture, and what was still better men of Christian worth, and true honesty, and with such men to encourage him he certainly would do his very best to go on to greater usefulness and success. The editor of the *Forest*