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C. BLACKETT ROBINSON,

Manager and Editor.

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Let no one engaged in moral reform be discouraged if progress is not rapid at first. Every fish began life on a small scale.

To debauch one's life by lust and avarice is to travel the road that leads to disappointment, despair and suicide. Death follows close on the heels of such sins.

Could not our daily newspapers be persuaded to print fewer details of crimes? The Chinese are not the only imitative people; there is an unconscious suggestion in particulars of criminality which may do evil in unexpected quarters. With so many things in the world worth reporting, worth fostering, it does seem a pity our newspapers should spoil so much good space with happenings which if they must be printed at all should be printed briefly and unsensationally. In the United States many of the big sensational dailies are simply schoolmasters in vice. Let public opinion keep our Canadian dailies from the same cess-pool.

Something of especial interest to Presbyterians is "A Bit of History," appearing in one of the Canadian Northern Railway System booklets called "The Lake Shore Line of the Muskokas." It speaks of the late Professor John Campbell's Island known as "Yoho," and tells of how he, in company with the late Professor George Paxton Young, of Toronto University, and others, first discovered the island. Professor Campbell's book, "Sermons in Yoho," telling for children the legends of the Muskokas, is so widely known that any reference to the island where they were first told under the trees every Sunday morning, seems almost personal in its interest to the thousands who have read them.

WHERE ARE THE MEN?

In all Christian churches, Protestant and Roman Catholic alike, and in all mid-week religious meetings, the attendance of women far outnumbers the attendance of men. This has been plausibly accounted for and variously; but not satisfactorily. When the thoughtful observer notices a series of persistent phenomena, he begins to philosophize and to enquire after the reason why. We have seen some very ready answers, but no very ready answer is likely to be the correct one. If the General Assembly were able to solve the question of the non-preponderance of men at church on Sunday, at the mid-week meeting, and in missionary work, they might then set about the application of suitable remedies. Competent doctors say an accurate diagnosis of a case of illness is half the battle. What really is the matter? Where are the men?

ELIMINATING ADHERENTS.

How? By turning them into Members in full communion. In many of the annual reports one is surprised to see quite a long list of Adherents, as distinguished from Members, and to see certain names appear with unfailing regularity year after year. In any given congregation there ought not to be many adherents; or, if there are many adherents, they should be a new lot, not the old lot. The old lot of adherents should have by this time been added to the roll of communicants. The minister and elders may say they have done their best to turn the Adherents into Members; in which case the fishermen should try a variation in the bait, or the method. It is no credit to any congregation to have too large a list of Adherents relatively to the list of Members.

THE PRESBYTERIAN PARLIAMENT.

The General Assembly at Winnipeg next month will evidently have another good discussion on the Church Union question; which is a good thing, as discussion, and plenty of it, is precisely what the question requires. The question has gone too far to be trifled with, and needs to be dealt with straightforwardly, and in a manner to preserve the respect of the various churches. In so large a question there is always fear that private and supposedly vested interests may exercise too much weight. Care should be taken that no rightful interest of individual or institution fails to receive the fullest measure of consideration; but equal care needs to be taken that the real or supposed interest of either individuals or institutions is not allowed to block the way.

Rev. John Hay, B.D., minister of St. Andrew's church, Renfrew, was elected Moderator of the Synod of Montreal and Ottawa. A report of the proceedings will be given next week.

It is announced that Rev. Donald H. Hossack will run as an independent Liberal candidate, at the pending provincial elections for North Toronto. Mr. Hossack has tendered his resignation as pastor of Deer Park congregation.

SOME PRACTICAL TESTS OF PERSONAL PIETY.

By Knoxonian.

The religious papers on Brother Jonathan's side of the line give their readers a good deal of exhortation at this season of the year as to the manner in which they should spend their holidays. Tourists are told that wherever they go they should bring their religion with them. Judging from the exhortation given, one would suppose that holidays over there are a pretty severe test of personal piety. Now it may be true that very fashionable watering places, with all their fashionable frivolities, do not furnish a congenial atmosphere for religious men. Perhaps the majority of the people who frequent such places have not much religion to lose. We cannot for the life of us see that a holiday, taken in any reasonable place, is a very severe test of anybody's piety. Sailing down the St. Lawrence, or among the lovely islands in the Muskoka lakes, does not seem to us to put a very serious strain on one's religion. We know several good men who would willingly go through the ordeal if they had an opportunity. Staying in a good summer hotel where nine-tenths of the people are Christians, and many of them office-bearers in churches, does not strike us as running into very severe temptations. A man with a hundred dollars, and a month to spend in rest and recreation, should be in a good frame of mind. He should be especially grateful, and gratitude is a pious emotion not any too common. It should be easier for him to conduct himself properly than for the unfortunates who have to remain at home, and work with the mercury up among the nineties. In short, a good holiday should be a means of good to a good man.

It is quite easy to find some practical tests without going from home. When the Rev. W. C. Burns visited this country many years ago, a young man in one of the then new townships became impressed at one of his meetings. He followed Mr. Burns for several days, felt deeply interested in the service, and professed to have experienced a change of heart. He was a young man of rather impulsive temperament, and, to put the matter mildly, not noted for self-control. About the time that Mr. Burns closed his services in the locality, the young convert began ploughing a rough, stumpy field on his new farm with a wild, unruly yoke of oxen. Two or three of his neighbors were looking on, and one of them made this observation: "If — can go round three times without losing his temper, I'll believe Burns has done him good." The young man stood the test bravely. He has stood many a test since, and at this hour is a worthy office-bearer in his church. Ploughing a rough, stumpy field, with a wild, unbroken yoke of oxen, is a much severer test of piety than taking part in some kinds of revival meetings. When the animals go every way but the way the man shouts at them to go, the plough handles fly up and strike him in the ribs, and the ends of the broken roots fly back and strike him in the shins, old Adam is very likely to assert himself.