

noted), and both are, as their colleges testify, realizing the importance of meeting the world, not by ignorance, but with an intelligence and culture not to be excelled by the adversary. What is it hinders bodies having so much in common from coalescing, as two globules of mercury touching, forming at once one larger and homogeneous whole? That there are very diverse associations we know, apparently exclusive, class meeting, itinerancy; the rugged psalm version, and stern order. Yet these diversities lie upon the surface, and form no inseparable barrier. No great principle is at stake, and the "shouting Methodist" thus far with the staid Presbyterian may, and do, hold frequent intercourse, and neither come the worse from the fray. Here we seem to find some hope light through the thicket, let us follow the gleam and inquire where we are. Shall we all become Methodists or Presbyterians and thus facilitate the search for unity? Our next chapter will essay an answer.

**CORRECTION.**—In the article "Our Home Missionary Policy" in our last issue, an error occurred in the second paragraph which quite changed the writer's meaning. It reads: "Pardon me for the opinion that the earlier ministers in our Home Mission Field in Canada were never as much alive, as earnest, as laborious, as self-denying, as fit for their work, as their successors." For "never as much," substitute "quite as much," which is the writer's view.

SOME of our readers will be glad to hear that the Rev. E. Ireland, formerly of Pine Grove, is meeting with considerable success in Richmond, Michigan. We learn that the church building has been enlarged to double its former size, nicely fitted up and reopened, and hear this ye many longing treasurers—not only without a debt, but with a surplus actually in hand! Mr. Ireland appears to be very popular with his people, and we trust that the spiritual building will grow by his instrumentality as well as the material one.

WE have omitted to notice before the first number of "The Christian Reporter," a journal of Christian work, issued in Toronto. It will fill in Canada, if the prospectus idea is fully developed, somewhat the same place as is occupied by the "Christian" in England, one of the purest and best publications that come to our hands. While we cannot fully endorse all the views with which some of its promoters are associated, and to which this first number gives prominence, we can very sincerely recommend it as a good help to earnest Christian workers.

WE rejoice to hear that the hopes we expressed as to the effect on the Brantford church of the late pulpit outbreak are being fully realized. It has drawn the members closer to each other, signally defeating the continued attempts of the former pastor to break up the church. The prayer meetings are better attended than for a long time past, the debt has been wiped off, and there is a determination to go on with fresh spirit, to repair the breaches in the walls and build up afresh their Jerusalem. We congratulate our brethren heartily upon the result so far; it proves that they are firmly rooted in their faith and principles. As the storm that snaps asunder the decayed trunk, and roots up the sapling, only causes the sturdy, vigorous tree to strike its roots still deeper into the earth, so it is with a true Church of God; such a storm as this, although it may cause the Church to sway and shake, will not destroy it, but drive its roots deeper down, entwining with stronger grasp the underlying Rock of Ages. Our brethren have still, however a time of trial before them, the choice of a pastoral always is that; but mutual forbearance, a yielding to each other, and a continual waiting upon God to be directed aright, will bring them safely through; let them not, however, be in a hurry, it is wise counsel that tells us to "make haste slowly."

#### OBITUARY.

It is with a feeling of the deepest sorrow that we chronicle the death of Dr. W. H. Woodyatt, son of our respected City Clerk, James Woodyatt, Esq.,

which occurred at his residence in Chicago, last Saturday. He had only been ill a very short time, from quinsy which finally turned to diphtheria. Although but a little over thirty years of age, Dr. Woodyatt was a young man of splendid ability and promise, and had already won for himself a high reputation in the west, by his skill in diseases of the eye and ear of which he made a specialty. His extensive practice, as well as his duties as Professor in the Chicago Medical College, doubtless led him to overwork himself, and so the more easily he fell a victim to the disease which attacked him. He has passed away in the prime of manhood, when, to all earthly appearance, he seemed to have before him a prosperous career and a life of active usefulness. His hearty, cheerful manner and buoyant disposition had endeared him to a large circle of friends both here and in Chicago, where he has lived for the past eight or ten years. He leaves a wife and two children, who, as well as his father and friends in this city, have universal sympathy in their sudden bereavement. *Brantford Expressor.*

#### Correspondence.

##### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Write as briefly as possible—our space is limited—on one side of the paper only.

"The Holy Catholic Church" next week.

M. F.—No good purpose would be served by the insertion of your letter; the matter is personal.

The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents.

##### DEFUNCT CHURCHES.

To the Editor of the CANADIAN INDEPENDENT.

DEAR SIR,—Can you inform us why it is that we so often see such statements concerning our churches as came out last week in our paper regarding the Bolton Church? namely: "We are sorry to learn that the church in this place has been closed since the new year, and the Sunday school disbanded." Is there anything in our system that specially leads to such results? Certain it is that many of our once flourishing churches are now defunct. Those who are acquainted with the history of Congregationalism in Bolton and neighbourhood know that it once held the heart of the country. Why then did it not continue to hold it? Why is it that not only there, but in many other places, the material out of which other churches have been built up is largely Congregational? Our churches have seemed to be a sort of John the Baptist, to open the way for other churches, simply doing pioneer work, then dying, and a harvest accruing to other churches, which gives permanency and strength to them.

We boast, perhaps, a little too often of the tendency of the age to Congregationalism, but surely if this be so, will it not result in the organization of churches of our order, as well as to Congregationalize other bodies? Surely we ought to be able to keep alive those churches that have the first hold upon the country. If we cannot do that how can we organize and sustain new churches, with all the friction and competition of other churches to contend with?

I may be allowed to indicate two causes, namely:

1. A kind of conservatism, that is not by any means progressive, (1) refusing to keep pace with the demands of the times, amounting as it does, too often, to "old fogeyism;" (2) old buildings, in out-of-the-way places, the town in many instances grown quite away from them, and in some others a miserable compromise, which has proved to be giving up the substance, and jumping at the shadow; (3) in many cases a failing to understand the genius of Congregationalism, that it means adaptation to the intelligent and growing wants of the age, an elastic system that knows nothing of compromise with sin, nor with the formality of the types of religion prevailing so largely, not sacrificing principle, but, like the British constitution, never needing the "Fifteenth Amendment," and always abreast of the times, knowing that with Robinson we can always say: "There will be more light,"—a progressive conservatism.

2. Another cause we discover to be that many people, and many churches, too, fail to see that we have anything distinctive. Their distinctiveness amounts simply in having nothing distinctive.

Our distinctive principles are not sufficiently understood, and we fear, through excessive modesty, not sufficiently set forth, or taught, by our ministers and office bearers. We claim, and justly too, for our system, that, as Mr. J. Cook says of the New Testament literature: "It is the only religion which the progress of thought has not outgrown," and that "it contains the only set of religious principles that harmonizes the soul with its environment by conscience, the divine nature, and the record of an irreversible past."

Is this too much to claim? Surely not; for while others claim to have taken their creeds from the Bible, we claim that the Bible is of itself, pure and simple, *our creed*, without human adulterations and additions.

I rejoice that there are strong men amongst us—i.e. men of strong convictions and strong common sense, as well as men of ability, like our venerable brother of Paris; and personally, I thank him for his strong and healthy letter of last week. It has the right ring, and I would say with him: "Are we going to be such children as to give up what we have begun, to begin anew somewhere else" and, possibly, to repeat the failure *ad finem*?

I have no wish to assume the character of a carping critic, but I am grieved, and claim the right to speak when there appears a sufficient cause; and surely there is a cause just now. When we consider the grand history of Independency, its battle for civil and religious liberty, and its success in laying the foundations of that liberty deep and broad as it has done for England, making her the bulwark of civil and religious liberty, which to all human appearance she never would have been without Independency,—what, I ask, should we look for as a result in Canada? Is this weakness and decay the true birth right of our body in Canada? Let us stand by our churches, *and not let them die*. "Have faith in God," and let all meet, intelligently, the demands of *the age we live in*.

AMICUS.

##### THAT BELLEVILLE LETTER.

To the Editor of the CANADIAN INDEPENDENT.

DEAR SIR,—Having read the "Paris Letter" in your last issue, severely criticising "That Belleville Letter," I had to take down my INDEPENDENT of the 15th and read again carefully the communication complained of. And when I had read it I said, "W. H. A. may cry 'shame' at it, but I am of the same opinion as when I first perused it, and that opinion is, that said letter contains a vast deal of wise suggestion and sound philosophy."

There can be little doubt that there is a large and increasing number in our churches whose thoughts and feelings are similar to those wrapped up in the words of the epistle from Belleville. The fact is, we have on our hands a lot of churches that no term other than "consumptive" will fitly describe. Not all were consumptive at the birth; for some of them, at that period, were healthy, and gave promise of a vigorous manhood, yet became consumptive simply through exposure. No shelter was provided them; they lived in rooms unventilated, in halls with a chilling atmosphere; sat on chairs hard as oak, and when, tired of all this, they fell to work and built homes of their own, they were no more comfortable, generally less attractive, and in addition were pressed with a debt incurred in the construction.

It may be considered late in the day to drop them now, and the proposal to do so may sound harsh. Still, late as it is, it may not be too late, and certain it is that many of them must be dropped if the denomination in Canada is to make progress.

Let a committee be selected outside the present officers of the Home Missionary Society, to go round and examine these consumptive churches, set the weaker adrift, and for the few stronger ones provide suitable houses, and, if needful, let them receive assistance for a few years longer.