

The Canadian Independent

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TORONTO, SEPT. 8, 1881.

THE BRIGHTER SIDE.

Our columns are again being filled by correspondents, each lamenting our present prospects and position. We have been waiting for some friends to take up the more positive side of the question, and indicate a line of action. We hardly dare essay the task, but as our letters for the most part seem set in the same minor key, we shall venture. We have a right, we trust, to speak our own mind and live.

Looking over some old files of the C. I., we are inclined to view this strain as chronic, e.g., C. I., Oct., 1865, "Our churches in these Provinces are few and comparatively feeble, . . . yet we have been in these Provinces over a hundred years." January, 1866, "We know our (missionary) churches—their unhappy history, their divisions, their losses, their unfortunate pastorates." And thus we might go on. Have we become denominational hypochondriacs? That these complainings are groundless we are far from asserting; the facts brought out by "A Practical Man" and "Mason" cry out against us. What, then, the cure?

First and foremost, let us own the force of these facts. All effects have their causes; present positions are in great measure the heritage of the past. If we know *where* we are and lament, let us understand *why* we are there, and find a way into a broader place.

Perhaps the history of Congregationalism (we like the term Congregational, for the simple reason that it is Scriptural, see Matt. xviii. 17, Revised Version, margin) might be studied with profit. How many know what Congregationalism historically is? Rome boasts of her antiquity and martyrs, makes much of her history, and strengthens sanctity by the memory of her saints; our Methodist brethren are ever mindful of their leaders, the Wesleys, remembering with enthusiasm their devotion and their zeal; Presbyterians never tire of the "Tales of the Covenanters," and the "Martyr Graves of Scotland." Do we instruct our children and our friends in the great work of Puritan England? Are such names as Barrow, Milton, and Dr. John Owen, household words as those of Murray and Rutherford are in Scottish homes? And it may be we should be cured of religious dyspepsia if we learnt more fully the principles upon which their faith rested, and by which their lives were tested. Let us get

out of ourselves and take a wide look; let us learn what Congregationalism is and has been—not what we may have belittled it to, and the bracing air of such a view will do much to relieve us of our hypochondria. And this is but the first suggestion, in another form, of our "Practical Man," who says: "Let us rid ourselves of narrowness and bitterness—let us feel the pressure of responsibility to extend."

Pastors may justly become impatient under repeated lectures from those who do not comprehend the difficulties of the work, they will bear with us a little, for to what other source are we to turn? They would do well in obtaining and using such books as Dexter's Congregationalism, Waddington's History, and history generally, making themselves familiar, as by a wider experience, with this wide world, its wants, and how, through Congregational agencies, the gospel has been given to meet these wants. We should have less of goodyism, and a more manly front. How far our college work covers this ground we have no means of knowing just now, but, without doubt, the impetus there is to be given, and this brings to the front another suggestion.

Our college work must be taken hold of, and that earnestly. With neither ritual nor compact organization, we need in our pulpits men fully abreast of the day in piety, culture, and wisdom. It is not enough to say our average is equal to others, or that our smallness makes the number of foremost men few; a small body to have influence must be proportionately the stronger in moral worth and power, or its influence is lost. And our churches must support such men, not bargain with them, as with a day labourer, about their hire.

And then *Unity*. Our lack of unity is the result of the want of confidence, and confidence cannot be dictated by those who have given ground for its lack. To gender this we must be true, not to financial or worldly foolery, but to rigid New Testament truths, break up the "spirit of rampant independency" by each esteeming other better than himself, and by thoroughly permeating our churches with the unselfish principles so plainly inculcated by Paul in his Epistles to the Churches. We must, in short, toil for a more thoroughly intelligent church life, understand our principles, and determine to stand by them.

And here a word upon our distinctive principle—the independence of the individual Church. This is a principle to be earnestly contended for, only as it springs from a deeper and more radical one, namely, the Church is composed of Christian men and women who, as Christ's freedmen, claim independence to do Christ's work and obey Christ's law, whose claim to liberty is not for license, but to utter forth the word of Christ's Salvation.

DENOMINATIONAL ENTHUSIASM.

Here a few words on denominational enthusiasm in gospel work, for where enthusiasm is not, work at best is but drudgery and slovenly

done. Can we justify denomination-ism with work for the gospel?

An illustration or two may answer the question. The principle for which in 1776 the American revolutionists contended is now conceded regarding the colonies by every British statesman—the right of the taxed to a representation in the Parliament which levies the taxes. Had that right then been conceded the American colonies had, so far as that revolution was concerned, have remained under British rule. It was otherwise, and now a national life has been created which it is neither possible nor desirable to crush. Britain, had she the undoubted power and will, would not be the world's benefactor if she coerced that national life into union with her own. The world is interested in the integrity and righteousness of the United States' nationality. The separation has created a right to independent existence.

The Free Church of Scotland had perhaps not been, had concessions been made then that statesmen would now grant, if already they have not been granted, yet what Christian would desire in the interests of Christian work and life that Church with its liberality, its missions and its learning to be doomed to an inevitable decay?

Congregationalism had its origin in these Protestant days in movements characterized by a stern devotion to conscience and truth, and by a martyr spirit secured to none in the struggles of the past for Christian liberty. It is not for Christian edification that its voices should be silenced or its traditions forgotten. There is still a faithful striving together for the faith of the gospel to be evidenced under its name and carried on by its instrumentality, and he is a foe to the truth that would desire that its denominational integrity should be weakened or destroyed. It has done a work for Christ, may it continue so to do, and manifest its right to be by a conversation more and more becoming the gospel of Christ, and unsectarian striving for the faith of the gospel. There may be, should be, enthusiasm therein. *

PRACTICAL TEMPERANCE.

Our English friends have taken a very practical method of bringing the Temperance cause before the public. They have had an exhibition of temperance drinks, thus giving an answer to the question often put, and the complaint made, as to a substitute for alcoholic beverages. While we are glad to read of this exhibition, and hope that it may help the cause, we cannot help feeling that it is an illustration of the great hold stimulants have upon the people; pure water or milk, or tea and coffee, must be aided by "sparkling Zoedone," and bitter ale without the alcohol. Well, half a loaf is better than none, and if people can be weaned from the drinks that intoxicate we must not grudge if allies are found in artificial beverages of an exhilarating kind; by degrees, people will learn that the best drinks are those nature provides. We condense the account of the exhibition from the *Christian World*:

"Just now the Agricultural Hall, at Is-

*Extract from a sermon by Rev. J. Burton in the Northern Congregational Church, Sunday evening, 28th Sep., 1880.

lington, is devoted to an exhibition of an altogether unique character, and which, if not so thronged as a cattle show, cannot but be regarded with deep interest by all social reformers. The vast building is filled with gaily decorated stalls, at which almost every variety of non-intoxicating beverages may be seen and tasted. It is impossible to visit this 'International Exhibition and see the glittering piles of bottles in which so many kinds of fizzing and sparkling drinks are stored, or to look at the tempting little cups of coffee and chocolate and tea, each representing some special variety, which are handed to you so gracefully by the young ladies at the stalls, without feeling that teetotalism is making a decided impression upon the drinking habits of the country. Were there not a great demand for these non-alcoholic liquors the supply would not be forthcoming. People are evic ntly beginning to find out that they must keep their brains cool and clear if they wish to succeed now-a-days in busfness, love, or war. In addition to such well-known beverages as Zoedone and Apollinaris a number of new drinks—or at least new to England claim attention. There are natural mineral waters like the Wilhelm's Quelle, which, it was said, was celebrated in the middle ages; Gerolstein, to the springs of which, near the Moselle, pilgrimages used to be made in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; and the famous Bath waters, now bottled and aerated, and sold under the name of Sulis Water. Among the chemically-prepared drinks, Zoedone, of course, occupies the foremost place, but it is being hard pressed by quite a number of similar compounds with equally ambitious names. 'Sparkling Rubine,' which contains neither iron nor phosphorus, but simply fruit and vegetable products, will probably find favour with many. But the fruit syrups are endless, and to taste all would require no ordinary gastric power. In addition to the beverages, the apparatus used in preparing them may be studied at Islington, and the machinery stalls are perhaps the most interesting. An altogether admirable invention is the 'National Effervescent Drink Fountain,' manufactured by a company at Ipswich, of which Mr. Robert Seager is the manager. This fountain, which has somewhat the appearance of a large but elegant ice-pail inverted, will enable every kind of aerated beverage to be sold on draught, and certainly ought to find a place in every coffee tavern. By means of this ingenious apparatus lemonade, ginger-ale, non-alcoholic bitter ale, such as would make Messrs. Bass and Alsopp rub their eyes with amazement, and a number of equally palatable drinks, may be quickly and cheaply made. The 'Effervescent Drink Fountain' will undoubtedly become a universal favourite. The exhibition was formally opened on Monday, 22nd August, by Canon Ellison, in the absence of Prince Leopold and the Lord Mayor, who, it was hoped, would have been present. That the exhibition will give an impetus to the manufacture of non-intoxicating drinks cannot be doubted, seeing that it will make the public more generally acquainted with them, and so stimulate the demand. Such a consummation, it is hardly necessary to add, is devoutly wished by all temperance people."

REV. JOHN BURTON, the esteemed pastor of the Northern Church in this city, and our Associate Editor, sailed from Quebec in the *Sarmatian* on Saturday last. He goes as one of the representatives of the Congregational Union of Ontario and Quebec, to attend the jubilee meetings of the English Congregational Union to be held in Manchester early next month. Mr. Burton hopes to make his visit profitable to our churches in Canada, by interesting English