

THE
CANADIAN INDEPENDENT.

TORONTO, THURSDAY, JULY 10th, 1879.

MANY of our old subscribers will see by the label that their subscription expires with the 1st of this month. The success of the paper depends upon all subscriptions being paid in advance. Will our friends kindly remit at once. Do not send your dollar alone. Ask your neighbour to subscribe. Our circulation has increased fifty per cent. since the beginning of the new year. But to make the weekly a complete success we want this greatly increased and it can be if all the lovers of THE INDEPENDENT will work for it.

A JUST PLEA.

IT may seem an ungracious thing to take exception to the acts of one's benefactor. Yet we can conceive occasions when the self-respect of the receiver, coupled with a love of fair-play, may compel him to call in question the conduct of the donator. And if the giver be a man of good intention, and willing to do justice so all in the dispensation of his bounty, he will not feel himself above receiving a suggestion from the person to whom his charity is extended.

Believing that the foregoing sentences will meet with almost universal approval, they justify us in saying a word on the relation existing between the Colonial Missionary Society and our Canadian churches. The report of the last annual meeting of that Society has reached us in the "English Independent," and one feature of that meeting calls forth a remark or two by way of criticism. The great burden of that meeting was given to advancing the claims of Australia upon the Society's assistance, while the claims of Canada were relegated to a very unimportant position.

Look at the addresses delivered upon that occasion. The Rev. J. P. Chown referred for a moment to the pleasure he once had of preaching in Zion Church, Montreal, and then he launched out at length upon the work in Australia. The Rev. J. Johnstone followed in a lengthy address about nothing but Australia. The next speech by the Rev. S. J. Whitmee was about the same colony, while the last address by the Rev. W. Wilson was Australia from beginning to end. In the report of the addresses covering nearly nine columns, there are only eleven lines containing any reference to the work in Canada. And what was the inevitable result of these speeches? That the friends of the Society present at the annual meeting heard a great deal about Australia, and next to nothing about Canada. Now, we do not object to the deep interest which the Colonial Society takes in Australian affairs. We have no right to take any exception to that. We are glad that our brethren in the far-away colony are so ably

backed-up in their evangelistic venture. Nor are we at all oblivious to the great kindness and help afforded the Canadian Churches by the Society. Our College and our Missionary enterprises in this land know and appreciate the beneficence shown to them. Yet we think it nothing but right to protest when so much is made of one colony, and another—equally interesting and equally needy—is comparatively obscured. And we very much mistake the temper of the patrons of the Colonial Society, if—were the whole facts placed before them—they would sanction any absorption of missionary interest by the Australian colony.

And for this reason. The contributions of our British brethren are made to help the colonies, not any one in particular, but all who need their valuable assistance. And that means Canada as well as Australia, and Australia no more than Canada. The question then resolves itself into this, Which is the most needy? And we think an investigation will prove that Canada is. We have fewer churches, fewer ministers, and are not as wealthy as our Australian brethren. Then the great work of opening up Manitoba and the North-west lies before us, but we are unable to enter upon that from lack of means. Hence, we feel that our claims upon the charitable consideration of our English brethren are worthy of their investigation and regard. And moreover we feel confident that they have only to be made known to them to be justly appreciated. We envy no one. We ask no favoritism. But we do ask for fair play. And that our English friends are ever ready to show to all.

THE MORE UNBELIEF THE MORE CRIME.

THE self-styled "advanced thinkers" of the present day propose to reform the morals and manners of the civilized world by means of the gospel of Neology. In their view man is only blindly groping his way through different strata of superstition, or religion, or whatever we like to call it, to a condition of enlightenment and purity and true nobility, in which, freed forever from the trammels of creed and catechism, and no longer "the slave of a book" (the Bible), he will proudly assert his supreme egotism, and worship—himself. In the meantime, pending that grand consummation, the less religion a man has the better, say they,—the better as a man, the better as a citizen.

It will not pay to test the soundness of this theory by actual experiment. "Experience teaches fools;" wise men learn without it; or at the very least, the experience of others is sufficient to teach them, without their own. There are countries in which infidelity and all the different shades and degrees of scepticism have already had ample opportunity to bring the inhabitants very near perfection. How would infidel France do to set up as a pattern in morals and good citizenship? Where

does "advanced thought" live when it is at home? Is it not in Germany? And has the "advanced thought" of Germany been accompanied or followed by an advanced morality? It has not. On the contrary crime has increased in Prussia from fifty to two or three hundred per cent. during the last six years. The imprisonments in Prussia, Hanover and the Rhine Provinces alone have risen from 102,077 in 1872 to 133,734 in 1876 and 150,000 in 1878. The prisons are full, and patriotic statesmen are urging the formation of a penal colony on some island of the Pacific or in some part of Africa. Marriages are concluded "on trial" to be broken if not found to answer. On Sunday—we can scarcely call it Sabbath in this connection, for the name, as well as what the name represented, have both almost entirely disappeared—the people work during church hours and spend the afternoon and evening in rioting in the public-houses and music-halls, while the upper classes rush to the horse-race. What formerly was considered generous and noble is now looked upon with contempt; and theft and swindling are called by the euphonic name "business."

These are not the statements of prejudiced outsiders; they come from within the country. The better part of the press gives free expression to them, and the facts embodied in them are the cause of grief and anxiety to many of the best citizens. When we see advanced Rationalism, Scepticism, a negative theology, and a materialistic philosophy, bearing good fruit—a good deal better than is shewn in the morality of France and Germany—it will then be time enough to listen to their claims. As it is, let us cling to the Bible which is the only true source of that "righteousness" that "exalteth a nation."

OBITUARY.

In the Hamilton papers last week under the caption "Died," was the following notice:—"On June 26th, James B. Laing, M.A., M.D., in the 67th year of his age." A word about the subject of the notice is in place here. Dr. Laing was a native of Aberdeen, Scotland, but he lived in the city of Hamilton since 1859. In his boyhood he was nine years in business, and during that time served an apprenticeship of five years to a commercial house. But his mind was set on study, and after passing through a University and a theological curriculum at Glasgow, he settled at Woodside, in the precincts of his native city in 1840, where he ministered for 19 years to a small Congregational Church meeting in Cotton chapel. In 1841 he married Miss McCombie, of Tillyfour, sister of Wm. McCombie, Esq., the late M.P. for West Aberdeenshire. She died of consumption fifteen months after their marriage, leaving a son aged five months, who survived her only five months. In 1844 he graduated A.M. at Aberdeen, and in the same year he started a cheap religious magazine called the "The Day Star," which soon attained a monthly circulation of 20,000, spread over the world. He carried it on for six years. It was afterwards conducted by the Rev. John Kirk, of Edinburgh. In 1850 he married a Miss Hargreave at Southport, near Liverpool, England, who died exactly a year after marriage, leaving an infant son who is now a promising young citizen, Henry Hargreave Laing. On the death of his second wife he found it necessary to have his time and attention completely