

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

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C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, *Proprietor*.
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WESTERN GENERAL AGENT.

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TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 15, 1883.

MR. C. BLACKETT ROBINSON returned last week from an extended tour in Britain and on the continent of Europe.

THERE was a fine gathering at Embro the other day. It consisted of the professional men given to the world by the Zorra congregation and its off shoots. The number is sixty—twenty-nine clergymen, twenty-one doctors, and ten lawyers. A large proportion of the sixty were present. The re-union lasted two days and seems to have been very successful. We doubt very much if another congregation in the Dominion can show such a record. Presbyterianism and education always go together. The typical Scotch Presbyterian nearly always sends a boy to college. Now, that this re-union has been held, we have a suggestion to make to the men of Zorra. Would it not be a fine thing to continue the celebration a little longer, and let the closing part take the form of raising about three thousand dollars for the Knox College Endowment. How many of these twenty-nine ministers were educated at Knox? A majority if we count right. There were some good speeches at the re-union—some very good poetry quoted. Now let the whole township give one rousing speech—THREE THOUSAND DOLLARS FOR KNOX COLLEGE. That speech if well delivered will wake up the Zorra boys as far west as the Rocky Mountains.

SCARBORO' is a fine old township. One of the best things about Scarboro' is its Presbyterianism. Our congregations there have been ministered to by excellent and able pastors for many years. Scarboro' has had some noble elders whose intelligence, piety and zeal, made them men of influence among the people. Good preaching and good government when brought to bear on such material as the Scarboro' men always bears fruit. Part of the fruit is \$2,000 for the endowment of Knox College. But why should Scarboro' lead among rural congregations in this endowment? Scarboro' is not an exceptionally rich township nor is it very thickly peopled with Presbyterians. A hundred townships could be named quite as wealthy and in which there are as many Presbyterian people. We hope many of these will respond as promptly and liberally to the call for endowment as did Scarboro'. We believe many of them will. Some of the Scarboro' men put down their hundred dollars without a word of discussion. They knew the cause is good one and acted accordingly. We are persuaded that many more of our wealthy western farmers will do the same thing in the same handsome manner. We have two or three Presbyterian townships in our mind's eye that we think will head off Scarboro'. Go on Gentlemen. THE PRESBYTERIAN will watch the record.

"I MUST stay at home this summer," says many a weary toiler. You should be very thankful if you have a home to stay in. A holiday trip is not all pleasure. Once upon a time a respected minister of our Church was spending a few days in a hotel in an Ontario summer resort. One evening he remarked to his companions that he thought of taking a croquet mallet to his room. The mallet was needed for offensive and defensive purposes. There was company in that room. There may not have been "millions in it," but there were very many. They attacked the minister, and would neither allow him to meditate nor sleep. A man

who stays at home has at least the satisfaction of knowing that he may retire without a croquet mallet. Then he avoids dusty cars, crowded steamboats, and other inconveniences that usually fall to the lot of the man who has holidays. He also saves his money. If you cannot get a holiday abroad do the next best thing—come as near taking one at home as you can. Slack off a little in the work; don't worry, don't get excited; keep cool, and enjoy life as much as possible. Sleep all you can, and don't give your brain any severe exertion. Take an occasional day or half day's recreation. There may be as nice places to visit within a few hours' ride of your home as some of the places your neighbours will travel several hundred miles and pay a hundred dollars to see. Don't sit down and mope because you "can't go this summer." Your turn will come. Be thankful you have a home to stay in.

A KEEN discussion in the press always brings the truth to the surface. Since last May the religious journals in the United States have been vigorously discussing the "ministerial famine." So far as the Presbyterian Church is concerned, it is proved by figures that cannot be explained away, that such famine does exist. The principal causes, too, are now well known, and can be stated in a condensed form. They are: (1) inadequate support. A few have princely incomes, but the many are barely able to support their families, and of these a large number are supported by means that are degrading to an honourable man; (2) unemployed ministers become indifferent and disheartened; (3) "the gossip criticism and twaddle" to which a candidate and minister's family are subjected disgusts self-respecting men; (4) short pastorates; (5) the dead line of fifty; (6) the solution of every little difficulty that arises between pastor and congregation by asking the pastor to go. He must make all the sacrifices and not the congregation. Now, we ask any candid and intelligent man if most of these causes are not at work in our Church? If so, must we not expect that similar causes will produce similar results in Canada? Our state of society becomes more like that of the United States every day. The old country element is fast dying out. The fore-going are at work here and must, if not checked, produce the same results. Scarcely a month passes that we do not see the sixth cause in operation. Presbyteries may think they "make peace" by making vacancies, but they may make a famine at the same time. Young men fit to be ministers will hesitate to enter the ministry under such humiliating conditions. Who can blame them?

CHRISTIAN BROTHERHOOD.

THERE is a current impression that Christianity as it was embodied in the average practice of the apostolic age was about perfect in its manifestations. We look back to the beginning of the Christian era to seek for the highest excellence of doctrine and practice. There is a reason for this. The Sacred Scripture contains the inspired body of Christian doctrine. The churches of those days enjoyed the inestimable privilege of apostolic teaching and guidance. In the truths revealed and in the method of government in the early Church, we have most valuable principles to guide us still. It is, however, a mistake to suppose that in the practical every day life of Christians in the apostolic age there was the ideal of Christian excellence. The devotion and self-denial of the early Christians reached an elevation of moral sublimity that no subsequent age can surpass. The separation between the Church and the world was more distinctly marked then than it has ever been since. But even during the life-time of the apostles many dark shadows brought the brightness of Christian perfection into bolder relief.

No careful reader of the New Testament epistles needs to be told that serious defections from the better spirit of a pure Christianity marked the chequered life of the early Church. The invariable conditions of human nature and the peculiar circumstances of the first converts, surrounded by pagan neighbours and heathenism wrought in all the associations of the past and the usages of the present rendered it difficult for many to attain to a high state of conformity with the requirements of the Christian faith. The actual conditions of social life and the traditions of the past were powerful obstacles to be overcome by those who would live soberly, righteously and godly.

From the earliest ages of Christianity the saying attributed to its enemies has come down: "behold how these Christians love one another." The predominance of this characteristic and essential Christian virtue evoked the wonder and admiration of all who beheld its manifestation. It is ever so. No moral or spiritual force has such power to touch the human heart as a genuine and sincere affection. Foes might controvert its doctrines and dispute its claims, but the embodiment in actual practice of the principle of Christian love was irresistible. The exercise of this beautiful characteristic was however far from being universal in the primitive Church. The New Testament makes it plain that less worthy exhibitions had a place in the worshipping assemblies in early times. That fragment of the New Testament which Luther too hastily characterized as a *strawberry epistle*, the intensely practical Epistle of James, gives a vivid picture of a trait of human nature noticeable in those primitive days. It is not very much changed in our own times, but is a little. We can still see come into our assemblies the man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, but somehow we do not often see the poor man in vile raiment among the worshippers of these days, not at least in fashionable churches. Both in conversation and in print these rigid distinctions prevalent in the Christian society are frequently remarked upon. Their existence is not denied, is in fact undeniable. What is more hopeful it is admitted as an evil. Many who recognize the evil strive more or less to overcome it. The removal of those discriminating lines is a problem that seriously presses for solution. To accept as inevitable the present condition of affairs in this respect would be to misunderstand the spirit of the Gospel and to misinterpret the teachings of the Master. If no earnest effort is made to remedy this palpable defect, matters, if left to themselves, will soon become worse, not better. One mode of solution attempted has been the erection of chapels for the poor, and gorgeous churches for the rich. This, however, is only a temporary expedient. In the nature of things it cannot be permanent. Pity if it could be. It may arise naturally out of our artificial civilization, but with an ideal Christian state it has no congruity. Said a high-toned New York professor of "fashionable" Christianity: "It is dreadful to ride in the street cars with these greasy mechanics." "But," he was asked, "will you not have to associate with them in the future life?" "No! thank God, in my Father's house are many mansions." A truth worthy of remembrance, not by bigoted exclusives alone but by all of us, especially in connection with our Christian principles and practice is—"The rich and the poor meet together and the Lord is the maker of them all."

Arbitrary rules for the removal of this acknowledged evil are not of very much value. Here, as elsewhere, there is plenty of room for the display of meaningless cant. It is not the ostentatious shake of the hand, voluble inquiries in tender falsetto after the health of each other, and the sweet but artificial condescension of expert mannerists; much more than these are requisite. We must learn to think much less of ourselves and a great deal more of each other than it is at present customary to do. Let us not forget the common brotherhood of humanity. There is the higher unity of Christian fellowship uniting us by the bond of faith to the Elder Brother. The cultivation of the Christ-like spirit will help greatly the removal of an anomaly that repels many from Christian society and disfigures the life and beauty of the one family named in heaven and earth.

A CRIME AND ITS CAUSES.

A TERRIBLE crime was committed on a Toronto street last Tuesday at midnight. A young man, named Marony, in humble circumstances, but industrious and respected, was shot down by a lawless ruffian. The victim of this unprovoked crime was the chief support of a widowed mother. Accompanied by a friend, he was returning from his work. The young men stood for a few minutes talking at the corner of the street. A man, an entire stranger, accosts them and invites them to drink with him. This invitation the young men decline, whereat the aggressor takes offence. Instantly a scuffle follows, and the accursed revolver flashes in the light of the gas lamp. The inoffensive youth is shot, and death is almost instantaneous. A policeman at hand rushes to capture the red-handed murderer. The officer has a narrow escape for his life, for the reckless criminal