

Our Contributors.

SOME EXPECTATIONS NOT REALIZED IN 1886.

BY KNOXONIAN.

This year will die next Friday night. When its closing hours come a goodly number of people will find that some of the things they expected at the beginning of the year, to occur during the year, have not occurred. Their expectations have not been realized.

Here is a good man who expected to make some money during 1886. When he struck a balance the other day he found that he had barely held his own. The expected addition was not made to his little pile. He feels bad. Brother, don't worry because you did not add anything to your little pile. Thousands of good men in this country have no pile, little or big, to add anything to. Some of these people are almost as good Christians as you are. Possibly, indeed, some of them are better. There are a great many good people even in this money-making country who have no pile. If a man has a comfortable home, and plenty to eat and wear, he is doing fairly well. He should be thankful for a good overcoat this weather, even if it has not twenty dollars' worth of fur on it. So let the man who has barely held his own this year stop complaining, dry up the tears, and wind up the year's transactions in a grateful mood. Perhaps he expected too much. Possibly he got quite as much as he deserved to get.

Here is a brother who expected that this year would bring him a call. For several reasons, quite satisfactory to himself, he wishes a change. No call has come during the year. The brother is disappointed, perhaps a little soured. Brother, don't feel so blue. It may be quite true, as you say, that you were kept out of a good congregation by the ignoble tricks of ecclesiastical wire-pullers. It may be quite true that some men whine sanctimoniously about partyism in politics, and at the same time do dirty tricks in the Church that any politician of average cleanliness would be ashamed of; but these schemes are soon found out, and always come, sooner or later, to an ignoble end. It may be quite true, brother, that ministers occupy prominent places whose abilities are not equal to yours. That will always happen in a Church in which ministers are called, and calls are too often "fixed." Ministers can never be placed according to their merits in a Presbyterian Church as they are in the Methodist Churches. But never mind, brother. Perhaps if you had got a call your position would not be much better than it is. Perhaps a better call than the one you expect may soon come. So cheer up and begin the year with a capital sermon next Sabbath. Throw yourself into your work. Preach better and visit better and study better next year than you have ever done before; and if you really need a new field, it will be pretty sure to come. The best way to get a better congregation is to be conspicuously useful in the one you have.

Here is another brother who is a little depressed because his congregation has not done so well during 1886 as he expected. The membership has not grown so fast as he thinks it should have grown. On the first day of the year he expected that certain persons who seemed interested, perhaps anxious, would be in full communion before the close of the year. They have never moved. Perhaps their cases do not seem so hopeful now as they did a year ago. Their pastor is disappointed, depressed. His most cherished expectations have not been realized. Brother, did you do your best? If you did, worrying will not mend matters. Paul was not always successful. The people were not all converted even by the preaching of your Master. If you have done your best, leave the result in hands stronger than yours. Worrying unfits you for duty, and does no good to the people you worry about. Begin the New Year cheerily, hopefully, prayerfully, and the end of 1887 may see better results.

And here is a congregation disappointed with their new pastor. They expected a great deal from the new man, but their expectations have not been realized. Quite likely they expected far too much. Nearly every congregation does. If they expected the new minister to do impossible things, and are disappointed because he did not do impossible things,

they are to be pitied; that is to say, they are to be pitied because they have no common sense. People without sense are always objects of pity. Whether people are to be pitied even when a new minister does not do possible and reasonable things depends entirely on how they got him. If two or three men in the congregation arranged the call with two or three men outside—probably wire-pulling ministers—and the people allowed themselves to be handed over like so many sheep, they deserve to be disappointed. May the disappointment teach them self-respect and several other things that men should learn, who are privileged with self-government in ecclesiastical affairs. If fair and reasonable expectations are not realized in the case of a new pastor fairly called by the people, perhaps the best plan is to help him for a time, and give him a good chance. Sympathy, help and prayer may make him a first-class man by the end of next year. Try this plan.

And here is a lonely fellow who thought that during 1886 he would be able to make domestic arrangements that would lessen his loneliness. He didn't. She has not seen proper to tell this contributor the reason why, and therefore he is not able to tell others. Cheer up, young man, and you may have better luck next year. Try again. Try often. Keep on trying. By the end of 1887 your expectations may be realized.

There is a remote possibility that somewhere in Canada there may be a young woman who also thought that the end of 1886 might see her in a domestic establishment of her own. No comments. We dare not enter upon a question of that kind further than to say: "May her expectations be realized early in 1887, and may the fee be a good one."

We see a body of stalwart men, ninety strong, respectable-looking men for the most part, but somewhat haggard and depressed. Most of them are hoarse. They are jaded, and do not wish to say much. They are not so fond of the people as they were a few days ago. They do not admire representative institutions now as much as they once did. Gentlemen, you expected to become members of Parliament last Tuesday, but your expectations were not realized. You thought you ought to be elected, but the majority of the electors thought differently. It was just a simple difference of opinion, you know. The real cause of your trouble is that you had not enough of votes to send you to Parliament. You are elected to stay at home. Well, be thankful you have a home to stay in. Many a good man hasn't. Draw consolation from the source that ministers sometimes draw when they don't get a call—assume that the people are not sufficiently educated to appreciate your ability.

Compliments of the season to all readers, and many happy returns.

A LETTER FROM FATHER CHINQUY.

MR. EDITOR,—The last six months of my evangelistic work from the shores of Lake Huron to the north-east extremities of Cape Breton, in the Maritime Provinces of Canada, are among the most blessed days of my long life. To have been enabled to give 138 public addresses during those six months, without feeling any fatigue, with my seventy-seven years and four months of age, is surely a remarkable thing, for which I cannot sufficiently thank God. But what makes me bless the Lord more than anything else is that I have found almost everywhere in the 130 places I have visited a most remarkable current which is taking the poor slaves of the Pope, almost in spite of themselves, toward the regions of Gospel light and truth. Not less than 300 of them have come to shake hands with me, and to ask me to help them bless God for their having found the truth, and given up the errors of Rome, either in the previous month, or in the very hours of my addressing them.

I would write a most interesting volume, were I to give the history of many of those conversions; but, in order to be brief, I will speak of only one of them. Last year it was my privilege to address the interesting congregation of our emigrated converts in the city of Fall River, Mass. I was invited there by their zealous pastor, the Rev. M. Cote, who is now the superintendent of all the French-Canadian Missions of New England. When there, my merciful God granted me the favour of persuading one of our most ancient and respectable French-Canadian families to give up the errors of Rome, and follow the Gospel. They had a family of three sons and three

daughters, all married, and surrounded by many children. But soon after their conversion they came to tell me how they had been insulted by some of their own children, on account of their change of religious views. I consoled them in the best way I could, asking them to pray day and night, that they would also see the light, and give up their errors.

This year, when coming back from the Maritime Provinces, I was invited by the Rev. Mr. J. Allard, who had taken the place of Mr. Cote, to visit again our dear exiled converts of Fall River; and, to my unspeakable joy, I was told that nearly all their children and grandchildren had accepted the Gospel.

Some of those conversions have such a character of the apostolic days that I consider it my duty to give you some details about them. One of the sons, referred to at the beginning of this letter, was pretty well educated, and more than the rest attached to the Church of Rome, and indignant against his parents for becoming Protestants. He forbade his children to frequent the Protestant Sabbath schools. But this did not prevent grandmother from giving the Gospel Book to his pet son, John, about thirteen years old, and more than once the boy could not resist the winning manners and zeal of Mr. Cote and Mr. Allard, when they invited him to go to their Sabbath school. But John had to conceal his precious Gospel Book; he could not read it except when alone and far from his father's eyes. This went on pretty well for some time, but on an evil or rather a blessed evening his father, suspecting what was going on, squarely said to his boy: "John, I am told that you have a Protestant Gospel Book, and that you read it! Is it so?" The boy answered bravely: "Yes, father, I have the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and I read it every day." Trembling with wrath, the father takes a whip and strikes the defenceless boy without mercy, till he is bruised from head to foot. He stops only when he is tired, and ashamed of his own cruelty.

During this terrible flagellation the martyred boy does not say a word of complaint; but two streams of tears roll on his blanched cheeks. When the torture is over, he raises his head, turns his face to his father, and says, with his pale and trembling lips: "Father, you have just mercilessly beaten me, and bruised my body; but, thanks be to God, you have not changed my mind. These last few months I thought that your religion of Rome was wrong, and my Gospel right, and I believe it now still more firmly. Surely a religion which causes my dear father to beat me, his own son, so cruelly for having read the Gospel of Jesus Christ cannot be the religion of Jesus Christ. Dear papa, you have beaten me to-day to your heart's content, because I read the Gospel of Jesus Christ. But I will not always be a little boy. In a few years more I will be a man! Then, neither you nor anybody else will dare to beat me for that Gospel, which I will keep and read to the end of my life!"

These words fell upon the father as thunderbolts; unable to answer a single word, he withdrew to his private room, where his wife was bathed in tears.

Of course the next night was a sleepless one for the heartbroken parents, and its hours must have been long and dark. However, there were lights, strange, mysterious, beautiful, divine lights around their souls during that night. The marvellous, brave and wise words of their dear John were singing in their ears as if coming from the golden harps of the martyrs who surround the throne of the Lamb in Heaven.

The dawn of the next day was not yet come, when the father, who is a very intelligent and respectable man, said to his wife: "I must confess to you that I exceedingly regret having so cruelly beaten our dear boy. His brave and so wise words have made a very strange impression on me. His courage and wisdom are above the courage and wisdom of such a young boy. Where did he get such a marvellous strength of character? Evidently in his Gospel. That must be a marvellous book; I must read it."

And the next day was spent in reading the Book of Life and Light. Every line came to him as the waters which flow from the fountain of eternal life; he drank them, and they quenched his thirst. They revealed to him the gift of God; he accepted it, and he felt rich and happy in its possession. They led him to Jesus, the Lamb of God, who cleansed his soul with His blood.

Full of joy, he went to his brothers and sisters and his many friends to tell them what Andrew had said