

Our Contributors.

LET THE FACTS PROVE THE SUPERIORITY.

BY KANONIAN.

We have been hearing a great deal lately about the evils of Popery. Of course the inference sought to be drawn, is that Protestantism is a much better kind of religion than Roman Catholicism. Naturally enough we Protestants think that it is better, but some of us are old-fashioned enough to believe that the superiority of Protestantism can be better shown by good lives than by shouting at ward meetings and issuing campaign sheets that might make old Ananias turn green with envy. There is an old authority not so much recognized in election campaigns as it should be, which says "By their fruits ye shall know them." Sometimes one can hardly help saying to some of the self-elected defenders of Protestantism, "Well, if your life is a fair specimen of what Protestantism does a man, it makes precious little difference whether one is a Protestant or a Catholic."

There are few localities in Ontario that have not been resounding with denunciation of Separate schools. Separate schools exist because Roman Catholics think that giving religious education is part of the work that should be done in the school. If they are wrong in so thinking they err in excellent company. But supposing they do err—supposing the schools should be made purely secular and the very name of God banished from every school reader, is there not something sickening in the conduct of a man who savagely denounces Catholics for desiring to have their children taught religious truth, while his own children run the streets every night and every Sabbath like little Arabs. If we must have an anti-Separate school, campaign every four years let it be conducted exclusively by men who believe that their own children have souls.

There has been a good deal said in Ontario against the tithing system by which the clergy of Quebec are supported. That stalwart Protestant, Mr. Joly, told a Toronto audience not long ago, that the system is a fair one and works very well without doing injustice to anybody. Of course, Mr. Joly does not understand the matter as well as Ontario people, who feed on the misrepresentations of journals that keep up their circulation by inflaming the passions of the P.P.A. But supposing the tithing system to be all wrong, would it not be better for the Protestants of Ontario to pay their own ministers living salaries before making a noise about the mode in which the Catholics of Quebec pay theirs. We have been hearing about "fat, sleek priests" since our boyhood, but we fail to see that it is better to keep a minister pinched, half-starved and half-distracted with trying to make both ends meet, than to keep him fairly comfortable. It ill becomes a Protestant to denounce Catholics for feeding their priests well if his own minister is pinched with poverty and grim want is stamped on the faces of his minister's wife and family. For humanity's sake, if not for the sake of Protestantism, see that the children in the manes and parsonages of Ontario are decently fed and clad before entering into a campaign against the methods in which the French of Quebec pay their pastors.

It must be a painful fact for Presbyterians that at the very time the denunciations of Popery were loudest in Ontario our Home Mission Committee was engaged in cutting down the salaries of the pastors of augmented congregations. The people would not find the money and the reductions had to be made.

There has been a great deal said about the amounts paid to Catholic hospitals, though we believe the grants were made in all cases in proportion to the amount of work done. That part of the business, however, can be explained by the men who made the grants. What we want to point out is that the loudest shouting about these grants was made in counties that have for years refused to build a poorhouse for the care of the aged, the deformed and the infirm, and in township municipalities that have put aged and infirm people on the cars and shipped them like cattle into neighboring towns and cities. And yet these

people shout like fanatics because public money is paid to Catholic hospitals, at the same rate as is paid to Protestant hospitals for caring for the aged, the deformed and the dying. They would rather see an old or deformed man die like a dog on the street than put their hands into their pockets and provide a poorhouse for him or pay their Catholic fellow-citizens for providing one.

The subject is not exhausted, but our space is. There may be more to follow. Meantime we close by saying again, "If our religion is superior, let us show its superiority by our deeds."

MIDWINTER FAIR, SAN FRANCISCO.

[The following has been kindly sent us by a correspondent for publication because of the writer whose name is still a household word in thousands of Canadian homes.—ED.]

DEAR SIR,—As requested by you, I send a brief note of hearty and grateful greetings to all my friends in Canada who read THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

I spent twenty-five happy years in Canada; years of earnest, hopeful joyous work, as teacher, professor, superintendent of classical schools, lecturer, and examiner, preacher and pastor. I visited repeatedly every city, town and village in the Province of Ontario, and formed many delightful and lasting friendships in every locality. In the discharge of my various duties, I became acquainted with a great majority of the young men and maidens of the land. During last summer I spent a week in the region of the Muskoka lakes and islands, when I had ample proof that neither my person nor my labors were as yet forgotten. Many from all parts of the land, whom I could not recognize, came up and warmly saluted me, and kindly reminded me that I had taught, examined, baptized or married them, or that they had been members of the congregations, to which, in former years, I had ministered. Such reminiscences added an additional charm to the fascinating scenery of that enchanting region, and warmed, gladdened, and strengthened my heart for future and further labor. I rejoiced to learn of the marked success and hopeful prosperity of most of them.

But writing as I do from the chief city of this land of sunshine and flowers, of bounty and beauty, at the time when the Midwinter Fair is at its best, I may be expected to say something of the impression it has made on my mind. And first, considering the time occupied in preparation for it, I deem it highly creditable to the energy, enterprise, skill, taste and liberality, of its projectors and supporters. It were alike unwise and unfair to compare it with the Columbian Exhibition at Chicago, where years were spent in maturing the plans, and in securing exhibitors from all parts of the world, while only a few months of preparation could be spent here. Much of the material exhibited in Chicago is to be found here, and in most instances admirably arranged. I remained on the grounds one evening in company with some friends to witness the fireworks and the illumination, and though I have witnessed some elsewhere, on a larger scale, I never beheld anything so beautiful as the tower, nearly three-hundred feet in height, and the large fountain brilliantly lighted by electricity, the colors varying every minute, and the great searchlight, on the top of the tower, sending its flashing beams for miles around. All these, taken together with the illumined buildings all around the circle, presented a scene of surpassing splendour, seldom equalled and long to be remembered. Many Indians, Japanese, Chinese, Ceylonese, and others mingled in the crowd, arrayed in fanciful and fantastic attire, generally of various and bright hues. All kinds of amusements are provided, adapted to the varied tastes of the visitors, all of them, however, so far as I learned, conducted in a proper and decorous manner.

I fear, however, that financially the stockholders will be losers, as the expenses are very heavy, and the attendance, on the average, is not large.

To-day being the anniversary of Queen Victoria's birthday, a large company assembled in one of the buildings to celebrate it.

Mr. DeYoung, the managing director of the fair, presided; Mr. Stiles, the British commissioner, made an admirable and eloquent address, which, owing to the weakness of his voice, was heard by very few, but was appreciated and applauded by those who did hear; in the applause many others joined, and Mr. DeYoung made a brief but suitable reply. Volunteer speeches being called for, I ventured to speak as a British-born American citizen. The address because audible to the multitude, was frequently and rapturously applauded. Three cheers were most enthusiastically given for Her Majesty when the assembly was dissolved. A large number met in the evening at a banquet given in the Ann Hathaway Cottage, when many loyal and international toasts were given and responded to. It appears to me that such a celebration was peculiarly graceful at such a time and in such a place.

I feel assured that all foreign visitors will carry away with them pleasant memories of this city built on numerous hills, the Emporium of the West, with its golden gate which is open to receive the vessels of all nations which float on the vast Pacific Ocean and its spacious, safe harbor, which could shelter the navies of the world; and all the surrounding scenery of mountain and valley, ocean and bay, undulating hills and level plain. Nor need any Canadian blush for the land of his nativity or adoption, for here as well as in Chicago, Canada is well represented, both in her natural resources and various productions of forest and flood, orchard and field.

With best wishes for the prosperity of the Dominion, and the happiness of its people,

I am, rev. and dear sir,

Yours very faithfully,

W. ORMISTON.

THE REV. DR. MACKAY'S FAMILY.

The following graphic account of Rev. Dr. MacKay's family, from a correspondent of the *Toronto Globe*, has special interest at the present moment, both from their being born and brought up under peculiar circumstances in a foreign country, and that of a most successful and devoted missionary, now Moderator of the General Assembly:

I found Dr. MacKay quietly resting in his brother's house, which is six miles out of Woodstock. Having expressed my desire to see his family in school, he said, "Yes, certainly; they will be delighted to see you, and it will encourage them." So off we hied to the little schoolhouse, about one-quarter of a mile from the home. Here let me say that the missionary has been fortunate in securing the use of an unpretentious but very suitable house, so convenient to his temporary country home, which he has fitted up and furnished for a schoolroom. Here we found, hard at work, five persons—Miss Matheson, the teacher; Dr. MacKay's helper, who spells his name Koakan, and the three children, named respectively, Mary Helen, Bella Catharine and George William. The eldest of the children is fourteen, and the youngest nine. Prior to November last these children knew not a word of English. Their education has been going on for about five months, and their progress is simply marvellous. In arithmetic they can add any numbers as rapidly as the teacher can write them on the blackboard. They can also with facility work any practical question, such as reducing one denomination to another, finding the price of any number of articles, and stating it in proper bookkeeping form. In grammar they can analyze and parse any simple sentence, giving bare and complete subject and predicate number, gender and case. In reading they are nearing the close of the second part of the first Public School reader, and can spell any word in the book that far. I have taught school for many years, but to me such progress in so short a time is simply marvellous. In the room is hung up a large map of the world, and on it the children can point out all the leading countries, cities, seas, rivers, etc. Not the least interesting part of their education is their proficiency in music. They are studying the tonic sol-fa system, and they sang very sweetly in English, the well known hymn, "Nothing but the Blood of Jesus."

After the singing of this hymn the children were examined by the missionary himself as to their apprehension of its meaning. He would read a line, "For my pardon, this my plea," and then request the children to give the line in Chinese. In this way he supplements when at home the work of the regular teacher, and makes sure that the children understand what they read and sing. Koakan the helper, can now carry on conversation fairly well in English, and he is a young man of more than ordinary intelligence for his years. After inspecting one of Woodstock's busy factories the other day, he observed to a friend, "My country is asleep." He is an artist by profession, and I have seldom seen more beautiful penmanship than his. Miss Matheson is deserving of all praise for her earnestness and tact in dealing with these foreign pupils. The education which is now being imparted in this little private school in East Zorra will tell powerfully for all time to come upon the missionary work of the Presbyterian Church in Formosa.

ANOTHER VIEW OF THE MIDWINTER FAIR.

Mr. Editor,—When Sir Humphrey Davy was asked which was his greatest discovery, he replied, Michael Faraday. So your correspondent's greatest "find" at the Mid-Winter Fair in many visits, has been Rev. Dr. Ormiston, whose old-time vigor and fire in pulpit, platform, and his own unique conversational charm, wit and magnetism, are not abated one iota from the days of yore, when known to so many of us in Canada, and later in New York City, for years. The enclosed "snapshot" pen picture secured while he was on the wing, will speak for itself as regards the impromptu versatility of resources at command. To add anything about the fair itself in this letter would only serve as a dark background for his masterly bird's-eye view of it. The congresses or parliaments of religion, science, temperance, and others by the score (as at Chicago), evidencing chiefly what the partakers did not know of religion, science, etc., must be left to the future for notice if deemed worth any further mention, which is doubtful, unless as specimens of human folly, pride and ignorance, thus a sign of the times, in that believe-as-you-please Pantheon of all and only bogus religions, including a bastard Christianity, at Chicago as here since. However, one caveat must in fairness be put in touching the Doctor's view of the moral aspect of the amusements, as it brings up the whole subject so hotly contested here by the clergy and churches, viz., the Sunday opening of the fair. The managers or directors never even seriously entertained the appeal of the ministers to close the gates on Sunday.

On the contrary they have made the admission half-rate (25c.) on Sundays. Every Sunday has a special play, show, athletic or other performance to draw the crowds, special fixtures being made, e.g., 7,000 elevated seats besides boxes, etc. The clergy and religious press, excepting the Roman Catholic and Unitarian, have tabooed the fair. As to the side-shows, legion in number, the vile Oriental corybantic displays of the Midway-Plaisance, were transferred from Chicago to this fair. The society against vice has had these pseudo-Orientials before the civil courts, but these are more rotten than even the lewd men and women of these shows, as money never fails to pervert justice in a San Francisco court, from that of the police up to the highest court and judge. These vile creatures had money so they go free. As to this so-called Oriental show of Turkish-Egyptian performers, it is a fake. They are really vile men and women fixed up as Orientals. Your informant has seen much of the dark things of New York, London, Paris, Naples, Venice, Rome and other European cities, but never anything so climacteric as a master-piece of the devil as this performance, visited by all classes, men, women, children!

It may interest your readers to know that Canada not only makes as good showing in the exhibits, but has had special honor in other ways. The Director-General of the fair and ex-President Harrison responded to toasts at the banquet given by the Canadian Club, at the fair some time ago. Its headquarters are fittingly near Ann Hathaway Cottage, the resort of the Britishers.

J. C.