

THE
CANADIAN INDEPENDENT.

All communications for the Editorial, News of Churches, and Correspondence Columns should be addressed to the Managing Editor, Box 2648, P.O. Toronto.

Pastors and church officers are particularly requested to forward items for "News of the Churches" column.

TORONTO, THURSDAY, AUGUST 5th, 1880.

THE INDEPENDENT.

DURING the absence of the Editor circumstances in connection with the financial position of the paper have rendered necessary an appeal to the churches on its behalf. In our issues of July 8th and 15th respectively such an appeal occurs, and we very warmly endorse what is there written. We believe that the churches need an organ, more, in fact, than any of the bodies that have more centralization. It is being conducted at a minimum of expense; not one cent of the receipts has ever found its way into the managing Editor's pockets. Any labour he gives will be richly repaid if the cause of Christ in our midst is helped. As to the character of the paper we may let others speak; and more than one have assured us that "it is a credit to the denomination." Shall it die then? A slight but united effort can save it, and largely help the churches. Some friends, ministerial and lay, have taken the matter in hand and at some inconvenience to themselves are about to go among the people and ask their help. We need to wipe off the accumulated debt and we need a thousand more subscribers, then the paper will be free to advance, to make such improvements as we feel are needed, and to become a power in the body. May we ask that the aid be given freely and heartily.

BIBLE REVISION.

DR. DEWITT'S paper on revision, to which reference was made in our last article, deals with two aspects thereof, (1) the general, (2) the Old Testament with special reference to the Psalms. We give a résumé of both.

(1) Bible revision in its general aspects.—To our present revision there is justly a reverent and passionate attachment; we will not willingly let slip words that have intertwined themselves with our deepest spiritual life. Not the least difficult or important part of the revisers' work is to keep the balance evenly poised between faithfulness in rendering the divine Word, and a proper regard to expressions which linger round our most hallowed memories. To conserve these memories the rules imposed upon the Committee propose "to introduce as few changes as possible consistent with faithfulness," nor can any change be made on the authorized version without a two-thirds vote of the members. Hence, by implication, these rules forbid the attempt to give absolutely the best translation, requiring, as they do, in the choice of language, preference for the authorized and earlier versions. Yet we must be prepared for changes as our last article shews to be necessary. Dr. Dewitt has evidently no sympathy with expounders of the oracles of God who have not exercised self-denial enough to be able to go direct to the fountain head, and suggests it only to be mild punishment for such to find some sermons, prepared with great pains and profusion of rhetoric on, e.g., "Unstable as water," utterly useless in light of the true rendering "boiling over like water." The case is somewhat different with, e.g., Ps. xlvi. 1 when we find the familiar "present help in trouble" more accurately rendered thus, "a helper truly in distresses."

The following emendation, however, throws light upon an obscure rendering: Isai. ix. 1.

AUTHORIZED TEXT.

1. Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first He lightly afflicted the land of Zabulon and the land of Naphthali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the Gentiles.

PROPOSED RENDERING.

1. For there is no gloom to her that was in anguish. In the former time He dishonoured the land of Zabulon and the land of Naphthali, and in the latter time He hath glorified the way of the sea beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles.

3. Thou hast multiplied the nation and not increased the joy, etc. 3. Thou hast multiplied the nation thou hast made great its joy, etc.

"Thus, unless we greatly misapprehend the Hebrew text, we may have in the place of the obscurity that has been transmitted from the earliest versions, a clear and beautiful prediction of the breaking forth of hope and joy upon a midnight of sorrow and despair."

(2) But Dr. Dewitt dwells specially upon the Psalms, though in the renderings he gives he distinctly states he has passed away entirely from the work of the Bible Revision Committee. It would not interest the general reader to follow the critical remarks of our author; but some of his published results may be given which certainly make us crave for more. Dean Alford placed the Christian world under obligation by his revision of the authorized version of the New Testament, and though his version is not adopted, was not written with that expectation, it remains a valuable contribution to the understanding of the sacred text. Perhaps Dr. Dewitt could do the same for the Psalms. We give one or two renderings, where the use of intervening parentheses make plain what otherwise is obscure:

PSALM CXVI.

10. I believed therefore have I spoken. 10. I believe when I say, spoken. (I that was in sore trouble, 11. I said in my haste, all men are liars. 11. I that said in my peril, All men are liars.) 12. What shall I render etc. 12. What shall I, etc.

Psalm lvi where the received rendering is retained.

3. What time I am at aid, I put my trust in Thee. 4. In God (I will praise His word), in God I have put my trust. 10. In God (I will praise His word), in the LORD (I will praise His word).

11. In God I have put my trust, etc.

Each parenthesis being an ejaculation.

In seeking to preserve consistently the Hebrew tenses

Psalm ii. 4, 5, thus reads:

He that sitteth in the heavens derideth. The Lord mocketh at them. Then He speaketh to them in His anger, and in His wrath He terrifieth them.

We have given these brief summaries as a small contribution towards preparing the general mind for at least a candid consideration of what we shall ere long be in possession of, and which we view as destined to be one of the great events of this Victorian age.

CHURCH DEBTS ONCE AGAIN.

WE said something on this subject a few weeks ago. We recur to it now because we believe that it is a subject of great practical consequence. It is one which, in the present condition of affairs, needs to be kept before our churches.

In our previous remarks we pointed out some of the evils which inevitably grow out of a heavy financial burden on the church. But we did not exhaust the catalogue. We now mention one or two others. We think that it is a terrible curse to any church to make the raising of money a very prominent object. And yet many churches are compelled by their position to do this. Perplexed and in difficulty, it seems as if the one purpose of their existence was to secure funds enough to make both ends meet at the end of the year. And so they come to be regarded mainly as money-making institutions. Everything has to be considered with reference to this design. The character of the ministry, the pastor, his preaching, his teaching, his social work—everything is viewed from the financial standpoint. The cry is, "We must secure a man who can somehow or other get the dollars and cents." And this is a degradation of the ministry. And it is a degradation of the church.

But there is another thing. A debt-burden on a church, demanding extraordinary efforts to bear it, turns the church away from its proper aims. How many churches in these days do strictly missionary work? How many make any decided movement in the direction of preaching the Gospel to the masses who are out of the Church pale? How many send out their members to seek and to save those who neglect the ordinances of religion? Are not all our labours as a rule for ourselves? Do not all our thoughts converge to a point which cannot be designated by any other term than "selfish?" Now, certainly, this is not the picture of the Church which Jesus Christ proposed. His idea was that every church should be a spiritual fountain out of which should flow streams of living water which should

gladden all the community. These self-contained organizations—these cisterns which try to gather into themselves rather than to give forth from themselves—they do not approach to His conception of churches. And such must all churches be when they are burdened with debt. They are powerless, useless for any missionary operations worthy the name. They cannot engage in any true missionary operations. They seek and do everything for themselves. The world outside gets but a little of their ministry.

And what is at the bottom of all this building of fine churches when the means are lacking? Is it not to a great extent the spirit of rivalry? One church has a gorgeous edifice, every other church in the neighbourhood feels that it must not be left behind. It is eclipsed until its house of worship is equal to the best. The true remedy for these evils is a more correct conception of the design and mission of the church. Let us realize what our churches mean, what they are to be, what they must be if they are to win Christ's approval, and there will be no desire to spend money for objects which have no connection with the salvation of men from sin.

[We regret the delay in the publication of these letters. An explanatory note was affixed to the first published last week, by the acting editor, but through some oversight was omitted. We may say that the Rev. J. B. Silcox having kindly undertaken the charge of the paper, the first letter was addressed to his care. He having in the meantime gone to Winnipeg, it followed him there and only reached Toronto in time for insertion last week. This second was received in the meantime, but could not be inserted before the first. The matter is, however, of permanent interest, and will not, we hope, suffer much from the delay.]

THE RAIKES CENTENARY.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

IN our last we brought the proceedings at the Centenary meetings up to Monday evening, the 28th, with the sermon of Dr. Burns, of Halifax, at the City Temple. On Tuesday morning the proceedings opened with a devotional meeting, which was presided over by Rev. Dr. McEwan, who gave a very interesting address on the necessity of prayer, especially in its relation to Sunday school work. At the conclusion of that meeting the Conference went into a most interesting session on the position and prospects of Sunday schools on the continent of Europe. It is not our intention to attempt a report of the addresses or even to indicate their tenor; the space at our disposal would be far too limited for that; we can only mention the names of the speakers. Those who would like a detailed report, and no doubt some will, may procure one in a few weeks, as the Sunday School Union will publish the whole proceedings in full. At this meeting the chair was taken by Mr. Geo. Williams, who is well known to many Canadians, and beloved wherever he is known. The first paper was read by Mr. Benham, the chairman of the Continental Committee of the Sunday School Union, who gave the honour of the pioneer work there to Mr. Albert Woodruff of Brooklyn, New York—a gentleman, by the way, who dropped the seed, twenty-two years ago, from which has sprung one, at least, of our Toronto churches. Italy was represented by the Rev. A. Meille, of Rome, who explained how Sunday schools were begun in the eternal city through an intelligent lad who coming from Florence where he had been accustomed to Sunday schools, went to the house of the Waldensian evangelist, who himself had only just entered Rome, and asked for the privilege to which he had been accustomed. To-day the Sunday school scholars in Italy number 10,000.

Pastor Paumier, who presented credentials from the Sunday School Society of France, and who was the bearer of 250 francs from his Society, spoke for that country, as did Mr. W. Brockelmann for Germany, Pastor Backman for Sweden, where many obstacles are thrown in the way of the work, which is grandly progressing notwithstanding, and Rev. W. Priggen for Austria.

In the afternoon the continental reports were con-