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Ottawa, Wednesday, Sept. 3 1903.

The harvest is past, the summer is indeed, nearly; and with the fall and winter months comes one of the best periods for efficient Church work in various branches of service. The Methodists have a motto, "All at it, and always at it." Perhaps they find some difficulty in living up to it, but it is a good motto, all the same.

The Northfield Student's Conference was the largest ever held this year, but it seems to have been somewhat Presbyterianized. Rev. John Kelman, of Edinburgh was the chief attraction, and President Woodrow Wilson, Secretary Robert Speer and Rev. Charles W. Gordon (Ralph Connor) seem to have been with Rev. G. Campbell Morgan, the most inspiring speakers to the young men.

Perhaps it is not wise to pay too much attention to the musical part of the praise service, but is it not possible to pay too little? In the great campaigns of Moody and Sankey, it is generally admitted that the latter added a most powerful element of softening and conviction. Not every minister knows how to make use of sacred song. But how can they, if they have not been taught? and what opportunity of being taught is afforded by the average college? One often hears of the musical part of a service being "run" by the organist. But possibly the minister has neglected to become capable of personally guiding the musical part of the service effectively. The ideal would be to have effective preaching, and all the rest of the service as effective as the preaching. This double ideal is generally admitted to have been measurably attained by the late Rev. D. J. Macdonnell, of Toronto. Much in contrast with this is the case of a minister, of whom we have heard, whose easy method with regard to the praise service of his prayer meeting was to open the book at random, and give out consecutively the first five hymns that met his eye!

### FAIRS AND THEIR PURPOSES.

Ottawa during the past week was filled with visitors. The great Central Fair was well patronized. On all sides we hear favourable sentiments. "What a success!" "What grand weather!" "What crowds!" "What gate money!"

Was it a success? We do not think it was in every respect. We must ask the question: Success in what? Did it fulfil the purpose for which these fairs have been organized?

These fairs are intended to bring people together in a common wholesome interest. They are to help the farmers, the mechanics, the machinists, the merchants. They are meant to be educational, bringing within range of vision and inspection new and useful articles of trade, superior specimens of live stock, and the productions of art and ingenuity.

Frequently they also give opportunities for buyers and sellers of stock and commercial articles to meet and make satisfactory bargains.

They are or ought to be good advertising mediums.

Moreover they give to farmers and their sons and daughters an annual outing. It is for them a well earned holiday and no one will grudge the pains taken to furnish them with suitable amusements.

But one cannot help adverting to some objectionable features. There was too much *fakir* business done on the grounds. Some of the amusements too were such as tend to degrade the morals of the community.

Why should one of the chief attractions be the cyclist's lap? It was a daring performance and as one of our local journals said "he risks his life every time he does it." Other attractions were in the same way performed at the peril of life and limb.

The trained gladiators in the Amphitheatre were "butchered to make a Roman holiday" and those who entered the contest in the bull fights of Spain, risked their lives every time they did it.

The difference between these attractions at which we hold up our hands in horror and those to which we refer, presented at the Central Fair is simply one of degree.

As a matter of morals these attractions where a man "risks his life every time he does it" should be utterly discredited. They can only develop hardness of heart and hunger for the sensational in those who witness them.

If continued something more dangerous looking must be attempted each year, and the education gained is one that has an accelerating downward tendency. What next after "looping the loop" and leaping from the height? What will the next "dare devil" do to gratify this morbid unwholesome desire for sensation?

It is to be hoped that the large and influential body of men who form the committee of management will not plume themselves on the success of the Great Central Fair of Canada if they only gather a crowd by securing such risky attractions or running vigor-

ous circus and dime museum shows. There were many excellent features in the Fair but we respectfully urge that the nobler aspects be developed and the lower and hurtful ones be abandoned in the future.

### A TIME TO REST AND A TIME TO WORK.

The wise man says that "there is a time to every purpose under the sun," and although he does not in his enumeration give "a time to rest and a time to work," yet it must be implied. Annually there now comes to most, if not yet to all workers, a shorter or longer period of rest and recreation, the annual holiday time. It is no doubt well that this should be. The fact of its becoming so general as it has, is evidence of a fitness in it which is every year receiving a wider recognition. The annual rest period and holiday making time is almost over, days are shortening, evenings are lengthening, and northward, or by the sea where people have been seeking escape from heat, they are getting a shade too cool for comfort, and so the feeling comes to the heart, "there's no place like home, sweet home." Now there is a flocking homeward of those who have been absent at the seashore, or up the lakes, or rustication on islands without number in numberless lakes and lakelets, which Canada is so fortunate as to have in its possession. And those who have been away enjoying a rest time are coming home to work. This is the natural order, nature's law, after rest, work. If rest goes on and on, it ceases to be rest and degenerates into sloth, or laziness not rest.

It is an interesting point of the year, this when the rest or holiday season is over. Some have to remain at home, and from them the absentees receive warm, glad welcome, and however happy the holiday season may have been, those who have come back are fain to confess, "it is nice to come home again." Pleasant memories have been laid up which in the coming days it will give happiness to recall; new friends have been made, or old friends have been drawn closer and become dearer. But it is to work, that those who have been making holiday return, and with the sense of freshness and renewed strength, those whose necks have been out of the yoke, again take it up and set their faces to work, and are eager for it. Some of course feel that their holidays have been too short, the days have just flown past, they wish they could have been twice as long, but yet they are glad to have had what they did.

Many toilers come back just to fall into the old ruts of work. It is of such a kind that nothing else is possible; others return full of new ideas and plans, brimful of enthusiasm and with high hope and determination to do more and better work than ever. It is needless to say that all the new plans, however carefully thought out, will not succeed, all the high hopes will not all be realized; but happily the failures, the disappointments, the heart-sinking and heart-ache, the defeats are mercifully hidden from our sight and come, not all at once, but little by little, one at a time, and so we are not crushed altogether. And before another holiday season comes, it is well to remember,