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MR. WALTER KERR—for many years an esteemed elder of our Church—is the duly authorized agent for THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN. He will collect outstanding accounts, and take names of new subscribers. Friends are invited to give any assistance in their power to Mr. Kerr in all the congregations he may visit.



TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6, 1886.

THE *Interior* quotes our remarks on the sin of general cantankerousness, and comments thus:

The *Interior* is not given to covetousness in a literary way; but there is an article in the editorial columns of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN which we cannot without a violent effort of conscience forbear from transferring to our editorial columns with small quotation marks. Our vigorous contemporary hits the centre with every sentence.

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN has now begun its Fifteenth Volume. The favour and generous support received during past years we gratefully acknowledge, and for the still more marked encouragement recently accorded we feel bound to use every endeavour to make the paper, which finds a cordial welcome from Halifax to Victoria, still more worthy of the support of every section of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. It will continue in the future as it has been in the past, the earnest advocate of whatever in accordance with Scripture truth is best fitted for the promotion of the divine glory and the welfare and advancement of the Church. It is the mouthpiece of no party or clique in the Church. It is the uncompromising opponent of all schism. It is free to express an honest and unbiassed opinion on all public questions as they arise, and will continue to afford reasonable space for free discussion. The right of the humblest member or adherent is as freely recognized as that of the most influential Doctor of Divinity to a candid hearing, if he has anything profitable to say. From its varied contributions by the ablest writers in the Church, its diligent record of all interesting events; its choice selections for family reading, and its special helps to those engaged in practical Christian work, it cannot fail to reach a still higher position of influence and usefulness to which it is steadily and surely advancing.

WHATEVER may be the result of the movement toward the election of an additional professor for Knox College, the discussion of the question in the press and in the Presbyteries will do good. The Church needs a thorough waking up in regard to the teaching of Homiletics and Pastoral Theology in all our colleges. In proportion to our means we have done fairly well in teaching the other branches of theological learning; but the Church has never attached the importance to Homiletical instruction that its importance demanded. We have taught our young men everything more than we have taught them how to preach. Anyone familiar with the labour and attention given to Homiletics in Princeton or Union can scarcely help wondering how students trained in Canada preach as well as they do. We spend cents where the American Church spends dollars. We expect one teacher, and he generally a pastor, to do in three months the work that two or three specialists do in some college, in a whole session. The textbooks that have been published on Homiletics within the last few years show conclusively that we are a long way behind other colleges on this Continent. These works are the cream of Homiletic instruction given for years in the seminaries in which their authors taught. If the discussion going on at present

does nothing more than convince the Church that the main business of a theological college is to teach young men how to preach, great good will result. We hope it will do a great deal more. What the Church needs at present, next to an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, is a thoroughly equipped Homiletical department in every theological hall. If a college course does not teach a theological student how to preach it does nothing for him.

ONCE for all we tell those people who make the exemption law an occasion for having a fling at the clergy that their abuse shows nothing but their own bitterness. The law was not made by clergymen; so far as we know no clergyman ever asked for it; no clergyman that we know defends it, and were it repealed to-morrow, we are certain no Presbyterian clergyman would use either voice or pen in defending it. Judging from the way some people write and speak one would suppose clergymen framed the law and put it on the statute book. If the Local Legislature wishes to repeal the law next month we don't believe a single minister in the Province will offer the slightest opposition. At all events we are certain no Presbyterian minister will. Some of our ministers, even now, voluntarily tax themselves, though the law exempts them, and all the others do is allow the law to take its course. The subject comes up in the Local Parliament every session, and the majority have steadily refused to make any change. We beg to remind those municipal magnates, in Toronto and elsewhere, who make the annual fuss about this question just before the elections that they do not govern Ontario. This Province is not under the control of ward politicians of the Burnt Contract variety. The Legislature will repeal the exemption law when it sees proper so to do, and all the abuse that can be heaped upon the clergy won't hasten the repeal by a single hour. It may, however, keep it back several years.

It is contended by some that the recent decision on the McCarthy Act affects the constitutionality of the Scott Act. Notwithstanding a previous decision which was understood to have finally decided the validity of the Scott Act, it is said that it will be again attacked and perhaps declared void. We fear there is no such good fortune in store for us. We frankly confess that we would like nothing better in the way of temperance legislation than that the Provinces should have full, absolute and undisputed control of the whole liquor traffic. The result would be a better prohibitory law than the Scott Act in Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and perhaps Manitoba and British Columbia, in two or three years. Nor would this be the only advantage. Ontario having full and absolute control, the Ontario Government would be bound to provide machinery to enforce the law. The weak point about the Scott Act at present is that being a Dominion Act the Ontario Government are not under any special obligations to provide for its enforcement, and the Dominion Government does not seem to care whether it is enforced or not. At least four Provinces of the Dominion would soon have a good prohibitory law were the Scott Act repealed, and along with the law we would have proper machinery for putting it into operation. Go on, gentlemen of the Anti-Scott party, go on, and repeal the Act. The moment it is declared by a competent authority that Ontario has entire control of the traffic, then we will talk about future action. There is no Senate in Ontario.

THE *Montreal Witness* gives the following sensible advice to writers for the press:

A public writer should make the acquaintance of the sort of people who form the bulk of his readers and should keep them clearly before him as he writes. Or rather, as he cannot easily imagine many people at once, it would, perhaps, be wise for him to set before him some one person of average intelligence and average knowledge, and write in such a way that he is sure that person will fully understand. In that way he will be pretty sure of all the rest.

Hugh Miller adopted this method in writing for the *Witness*. In preparing his magnificent editorials he kept constantly before his mind two or three of the most strong-minded and intelligent of his old neighbours, and made such points as he thought would have moved them. In this way he moved all Scotland. As a rule contributions written for the select few are a dead failure. To succeed one must write for the millions. The opinion of a specialist or hobby-horse man on newspaper work is not worth a brass farthing.

Work that pleased him would not please anybody else. The average man is the man to keep in mind. Thanks to a kind Providence, poets, philosophers and literary cranks are scarce. The same rule holds good in regard to preaching. The most useless of all sermons are the sermons prepared for the select few. The few don't care for them and the many are not fed. A preacher should never be afraid to ask his people at times to follow his best possible thought; but his best thoughts are not those prepared for out-of-the-way people. His best thoughts, best arguments, best appeals, are those prepared for normal, average specimens of humanity.

THE Canadian Church enlists the services of students at the beginning of their theological course—in some instances even before entering on the study of theology—in preaching the Gospel. They have done excellent work which is highly appreciated generally. Some of their friends, however, think that a little too much work of this description is exacted of them. Student days and their opportunities come only once in a lifetime, and the condition of the ministry is not specially favourable to continuous and extended study afterward. In Scotland the prevailing practice has been to prevent students from preaching except on rare occasions. This has long been felt to be an injustice, and plans have from time to time been proposed to enable students to acquire a little practice in preaching before obtaining license. One of the latest proposals was made at a recent meeting of Dundee Free Church Presbytery. It recommended that the students should be allowed to preach after their second session and that fourth-year men should attend kirk session and deacons' court meetings, so as to gain a practical acquaintance with the rules and discipline of the Church. One of the members suggested that students should also be invited to attend marriages, as ministers felt rather shy in performing that ceremony for the first time.

A NOBLE CHRISTIAN LIFE.*

THE recently published volume of Frances Ridley Havergal's Letters is the clear, most interesting and stimulating transcript of a beautiful life. It is safe to say that the objections to which an autobiography or diary usually gives rise cannot apply to this publication. These letters were written without the remotest idea that they would fall into the hands of general readers. Their writer was so thoroughly conscientious in everything she did that even the briefest and least important note was never penned without a sense of responsibility.

The many products of her sanctified pen, and chiefly her hymns and poems, taken with these letters, give a comprehensive idea of a singularly fine type of Christian womanhood. The published Letters are classified according to date, save in a group entitled Letters without Date. The first division comprises Early Letters from 1852 to 1869; the second, Letters to a Young Correspondent, from 1856 to 1877; the third, Letters to a Clerical Friend and his Wife, from 1870 to 1875; following the undated series we have Letters from 1870 to 1875; and letters from 1876 to 1879, including some of the last she ever wrote.

In all these Letters there is a visible unity of purpose. It is one of the most striking modern instances of one seeking humbly and earnestly to live up consciously and purposely to man's chief end—to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. Another noticeable and beautiful characteristic of these Letters is the perfect naturalness, the absence of anything strained or unreal, of that genuine and fervent piety clearly marked in the first letter that appears, and which grows in purity and fervour till the end is reached. The first letter introduces the reader to a natural, healthy and gentle girl enjoying a holiday in Wales. Like a true poet and a true Christian, wherever she travels, whether she wanders on the shore of old Ocean, ascends the Welsh mountains, or climbs to Alpine heights, her sensitive nature and keen perception of the beautiful are responsive to the magnificence with which God has adorned the works of His hand. In that same first letter we see that her religious life is earnest and sincere.

* LETTERS By the late Frances Ridley Havergal. Edited by her sister, M. V. G. H. (Toronto: S. R. Briggs.) THE SAME. (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph & Co.; Toronto: William Briggs.)