

Our Contributors.

A NEW YEAR HOMILY ON USELESS REGRETS.

BY KNOXONIAN.

If I had the year to live over again, says Mr. Pensive, it would be differently spent.

Now, Mr. Pensive, are you quite sure about that? You have said the same thing at the close of each of the last ten years, and then you went on and lived pretty much as you had always been living. Are you quite certain that if you had 1891 to live over again you would make much more of its 365 days? The chances are a million to one that if you had a second trial at the year, the second would not be much better than the first. There is a new year opening before you, and we shall see how much better you behave yourself in 1892 than you did in 1891.

If I had that sermon to preach over again, says Dr. Thirdly, I would preach it much better. Now, Doctor, how can you be sure about that? Perhaps you might not preach it as well. Second trials are not always successes. When you were getting under way for your second effort something might happen to put you out. Somebody might send you up a notice and you might have to stop and consider whether the pulpit is or is not a dead-head advertising medium. The boys in the back gallery might indulge in some unseemly antics, the day might be wet or the congregation thin, or you might have a cold, or a bilious attack, or one of the elders might worry you just before service with some confidential information about Mrs. Grundy or Mr. Cant. In fact any one of a hundred things might happen on the eve of your second trial and make it worse than the first. So, Doctor, you see there is no use in saying your second effort would be so much better than the first. It might not be as good and even if you thought it better, some of your hearers might not think it as good. There will be fifty-two Sabbaths in 1892, and if you think you can preach much better than you did that time why just go on and preach. Your people will not complain because you preach too well.

If I had that speech to deliver over again, I would deliver it in much better style, says Mr. Cicero, M.P.P. Now, Mr. Cicero, you don't know. During your second delivery one of the free and independent who had been indulging in liquid refreshments might interrupt you, or the boys might put pepper on the stove, or you might walk over the side of the platform in a lofty flight of eloquence, or you might get bad'v mixed in your speech. Any one of a score of things might happen to make your second trial a failure. Regrets are useless. There will be many chances to try again before the bye-elections are over. Instead of moping over your last speech go on and make another that will eclipse anything ever done by Blake or Laurier.

If I had that article, or letter, or book to write over again it would be written differently, says Mr. Quilldriver. That is what nearly all writers say, but saying it is of no use. The writing whatever it was is in type. A thousand eyes have seen it. It is fixed. It remains. It can never be recalled. Every writer not consumed with egotism and ignorance writes some things that he regrets when he sees them in cold type. Macaulay had a fair share of confidence and self-esteem, but if he could come back from his grave he would probably strike a good many things out of his history and his essays. Were Sydney Smith to visit this planet again he would probably be ashamed of much that he wrote about Methodism. If not, the planet might well be ashamed of him. No doubt many writers for the press are the reverse of happy when they look at some of their ten-year-old articles. But regrets are useless, for the thing is done. The most that the writer can do and all that he can reasonably be asked to do is repent. The *New York Evangelist* says if editors are great sinners, they are "good repenters." The senior editor of that fine old journal is such a good repenter that he sometimes repents for the whole staff and takes blame for articles he never saw until he saw them in print. On a recent occasion he got on the stool and repented for something published contrary to his instructions when he was a hundred and fifty miles away. To the uninitiated this may seem unreasonable, but positively managing editors and publishers have to express contrition quite often for sins they never committed personally.

It is sometimes amusing to hear people express their utter astonishment that such and such things ever appeared in print. The man or woman who wonders writes on an average perhaps one private or business letter a week. One letter out of every four is perhaps not in the post-office five minutes until the writer wants it back to change something. The most common of all occurrences is to hear people who write very little express regret for something they have written. How often have you heard people say they would "give anything" to get a letter back unopened. And yet the people who cannot write one short letter a week, without saying something they wish recalled, wonder why writers for the press cannot produce two or three columns a week for years without saying some things that time and reflection and a better knowledge of the facts shown should have been said differently or not said at all.

To say that many things are printed that should not be printed is the most stale of commonplaces. Many things are spoken that should not be spoken, many things are preached

that should not be preached, many things are put in lectures and speeches that should not be put anywhere. All that the most conscientious writer can do is exercise reasonable care. If he does that he need not worry himself with useless regrets.

I am sorry I made that senseless remark, says Mr. Talkative. Well, perhaps you should be and perhaps you will be more careful next time.

Sorry I lost my temper, says Mr. Hotblood. It was a pity no doubt, but perhaps you will watch better in future. The hot-tempered people are a long way from being the worst in the world.

Are all regrets useless? Not by any means. A useful regret is one that leads a man to do better and be better in future. A useless regret exhausts itself in moping. Don't mope. Go right on and do better.

Many of the errors of the past year can easily be corrected by any man who wants to correct them. For example, if you feel that you have not paid half enough during 1891 for charitable and religious purposes just hand over the other half now.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA.

HIGHER RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION—LIST OF EXAMINERS
1890-91—DATE OF EXAMINATION, JAN. 30, 1892.

DEPARTMENT I.—BIBLICAL.

Committee to Prepare Question-Papers.

Junior.—Dr. F. W. Kelly, High School, Montreal, Que.
Intermediate.—Mr. T. C. James, Charlottetown, P.E.I.
Senior.—Mr. D. Fotheringham, Toronto, Ont.
"Kings of Judah."—Rev. Prof. A. B. Baird, B.D., Manitoba College, Winnipeg, Man.

Examiners—Junior Papers.

Question 1-2.—Rev. J. R. Munro, B.A., Antigonish, N.S.
Question 3-4.—Mr. J. Pitblado, Fredericton, N.B.
Question 5-6.—Mr. Alexander Jackson, Lindsay, Ont.
Question 7-8.—Rev. R. D. Fraser, M.A., Bowmanville, Ont.

Examiners—Intermediate Papers.

Question 1-2.—Rev. Anderson Rogers, M.A., Windsor, N.S.
Question 3-4.—Mr. John McMillan, B.A., Principal Collegiate Institute, Ottawa, Ont.
Question 5-6.—Rev. R. P. Mackay, M.A., Parkdale, Toronto, Ont.
Question 7-8.—Rev. E. D. Millar, B.A., Yarmouth, N.S.

Examiners—Senior Papers.

Question 1-2.—Rev. Thomas Stewart, M.A., Dartmouth, N.S.
Question 3-4.—Rev. Peter Wright, B.D., Portage la Prairie, Man.
Question 5-6.—Rev. Findlay M. Dewey, M.A., Montreal, Quebec.
Question 7-8.—Mr. David Ormiston, B.A., Whitby, Ont.

Examiners—"Kings of Judah."

Question 1-2.—Rev. James Ballantyne, London, Ont.
Question 3-4.—Rev. David James, Midland, Ont.
Question 5-6.—Rev. Thomas Nixon, M.A., Smith's Falls, Ont.
Question 7-8.—Rev. Isaac Murray, D.D., North Sydney, C. B.

DEPARTMENT II.—DOCTRINAL.

Committee to Prepare Question Papers.

Junior and Intermediate.—Mr. Thomas Kirkland, M.A., Principal Normal School, Toronto, Ont.
Senior.—Rev. D. McTavish, D.Sc., Toronto, Ont.

Examiners—Junior Papers.

Question 1-2.—Rev. John Ross, B.A., Brussels, Ont.
Question 3-4.—Rev. John Hay, B.D., Cobourg, Ont.
Question 5-6.—Rev. Archibald Lee, B.A., Kamloops, B.C.
Question 7-8.—Mr. J. B. Calkin, M.A., Principal Normal School, Truro, N.S.

Examiners—Intermediate Papers.

Question 1-2.—Mr. James McNab, Toronto, Ont.
Question 3-4.—Dr. D. O. Alguire, Cornwall, Ont.
Question 5-6.—Rev. W. G. Wallace, B.D., Toronto, Ont.
Question 7-8.—Rev. E. F. Torrance, M.A., Peterborough, Ont.

Examiners—Senior Papers.

Question 1-2.—Rev. G. Bruce, B.A., St. John, N.B.
Question 3-4.—Rev. S. Lyle, B.D., Hamilton, Ont.
Question 5-6.—Rev. D. Macrae, D.D., St. John, N.B.
Question 7-8.—Rev. Alexander Falconer, Pictou, N.S.

DEPARTMENT III.—HISTORICAL.

Committee to Prepare Question Papers.

Junior and Intermediate.—Rev. James Ross, B.D., Perth, Ont., Lecturer on Church History, Queen's College, Kingston, Ont.
Senior.—Rev. H. H. Macpherson, M.A., Halifax, N.S.

Examiners—Junior Papers.

Question 1-2.—Rev. Joseph McCoy, M.A., Chatham, N.B.
Question 3-4.—Rev. Archibald Gunn, St. Andrews, N.B.
Question 5-6.—Rev. Alexander Hamilton, B.A., White-wood, Man.

Question 7-8.—Dr. T. M. MacIntyre, Principal Presbyterian Ladies' College, Toronto, Ont.

Examiners—Intermediate Papers.

Question 1-2.—Rev. John Pringle, B.A., Port Arthur, Ont.
Question 3-4.—Rev. Colin Fletcher, M.A., Exeter, Ont.
Question 5-6.—Rev. J. A. Turnbull, LL.B., Toronto, Ont.
Question 7-8.—Rev. Hector Currie, B.A., Thedford, Ont.

Examiners—Senior Papers.

Question 1-2.—Rev. D. MacLaren, B.A., Alexandria, Ont.
Question 3-4.—Rev. J. Mackie, M.A., Kingston, Ont.
Question 5-6.—Rev. Alexander Jackson, Ph.D., Galt, Ont.
Question 7-8.—Rev. Neil McKay, Chatham, N.B.

DEPARTMENT IV.—ESSAYS.

Examiners.

Junior.—Rev. James Fleck, B.A., Montreal, Que.
Intermediate.—Rev. W. A. McKay, M.A., Woodstock, Ont.

Senior.—Rev. George McMillan, B.A., Princeton, P.E.I.

Intending candidates should apply not later than December 30, through their Sabbath school superintendent or minister, or, if this is impracticable, then directly to the Convener for the question papers required. The applicant should state his (or her) name, post office address, congregation (and Sabbath school if that has a different name), also age on January 30, 1892, and subject or department in which entry is made. A proper blank form for this purpose has been sent to every minister and superintendent in the Church through the Presbytery's Convener of Sabbath School Committee. Any who have not received one should apply to him or to the undersigned.

T. F. FOTHERINGHAM.

Convener General Assembly's Sabbath School Committee.
St. John, N.B., December 14, 1891.

THE JEWS.

I think all who take an interest in the Jews agree with me that the General Assembly has come to a right decision in opening a mission for the Jews in Palestine. Any one who has read Rev. Ben-Oliel's "Jerusalem's Crying Wants" must feel the necessity of immediate action to obey the Lord's command, "beginning at Jerusalem." The first Hebrew Church on earth was where? In Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost as the result of a protracted prayer-meeting in an upper room. "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication with the women and Mary, the mother of Jesus." It is true there are missions there, but no missionaries. The Episcopal mission to the Jews has a handsome church in which liturgical services are conducted. But Presbyterians, Wesleyans, Baptists, etc., may go to weep over Jerusalem, but have no place where they can worship God and partake of the Lord's Supper in the more Scriptural and simpler form they prefer. Can room not be found in the Holy City, among 60,000 Jews, for one or more Presbyterian missionaries? Rev. Ben-Oliel is a converted rabbi, and now an ordained Presbyterian minister, and represents that body there. Late in the year he has opened an Upper Room to supply that crying want where now non-Episcopalians can witness for Christ. At present it is a work of faith, wholly dependent on the Lord and the free-will offerings and prayers of His people. Surely the Church will send him help and strengthen his hands in this great undertaking, and establish a Presbyterian mission in the city of the Great King where He suffered, died and wrought out for us so great salvation. It is a good thing just to stretch out our hand to a fellow-worker if we can do nothing more, but may God bless you so that we may have fellowship one with another, the communion of mind with mind, spirit with spirit with those afar off; may it be said of the Church, "she hath done what she could."

No one can look back upon the history of Israel under the providence of God and mark her wanderings and trials, and amidst all her sufferings, "immortal," without being sensible that God is preserving them in their national life for some great future, and that she has a great part to fill in the history of the world. The history of the Jews alone is sufficient to prove the Bible to be the very word of God; they are a living miracle. It is remarkable, their old home is virtually tenantless, as if awaiting the return of the true proprietors, the rightful owners. God is now literally watering that dry and thirsty land, preparing it for the return of His ancient people. If any doubt the conversion and restoration of the Jews, let them study the following passages: Ezekiel xxxvii. 11-14; Isa. xlv. 26; chap. xlix. 22-26; chap. liv. 10-17; chaps. lx. and lxii; chap. lxxv. 17-25. We have need to pray for ourselves as well as for the Jews that the veil of unbelief be taken from our own eyes, so that with the Bible in our hands we may understand God's wonderful dealings with His chosen people. We cannot shut our eyes to what is taking place among the nations without seeing God's hand behind all, holding back until the appointed time. And just as sure as the Hebrews were delivered from Egyptian bondage, on the very day predicted, so shall they be gathered together in the future. God is sending His hunters and fishers in these persecutions to bring them back to their old home. When God works, shall men not help? Where God leads, shall we refuse to follow? Let us not forget how much we are indebted to the Hebrews and under what responsibility we lie for neglecting them till this late hour. What an honour God bestows upon us in permitting us to be co-workers with Him in this great ingathering, which is to bring such blessings to the Gentiles.—Rom. xi. 30, 31. What have we done to