

Our Contributors.

HARD TO GET TIME FOR EVERYTHING.

BY KNOXIAN.

A large amount of unfair and snarling criticism would be avoided if people intelligently considered the limitations that old Father Time puts on every busy man.

There are only six working days in a week, and it is not within the bounds of possibility to do more than a certain amount of work each day. The limits of time and strength are soon reached, and when you come to these limits you must stop, no matter how willing you may be to go on.

You pick up a newspaper, read a leading article or paragraph, and see at a glance how the article might be improved by condensation or by a more skilful arrangement of the facts or in some other way. You notice the paragraph has little point and no sparkle. You, modest reader, think you could give it both point and sparkle if you tried. Perhaps you could and then again, perhaps you couldn't. Something depends on how much time you would have for the work; and a good deal more on how much you know about writing paragraphs. Perhaps the man who wrote that paragraph had only a few minutes to do it. Possibly the printers were yelling at him for copy. Perhaps the mail by which he had to send it was closed before the ink on the paragraph was quite dry. If the man who penned the paragraph had been given a day to work at it the work would perhaps have been done in first class style, but he had only a few minutes and that made all the difference in the world.

Literary critics, and some critics who are quite innocent of any close connection with literature, often say that the writing on most newspapers is poorly done. Without affirming or denying the truth of that statement we may well ask how can any ordinary editor do high class literary work and attend to all the other duties that devolve upon him. If an editor had nothing to do except write a column or two each week, he would be a poor editor indeed if he could not write them well; but writing what the public sees is probably not the fiftieth part of an average editor's work. The editor of a country weekly does something at everything in his office. A writer on a daily has a much better chance, but even he may have to sit down late in the evening and write a column or two before the paper goes to press. Small wonder if the work sometimes seems to lack finish.

It ought to be remembered too, that a country editor may have to write amidst many interruptions, not to say anything about tribulations. When he is getting nicely under way with a leading editorial a neighboring law student may come in and hand him a letter gravely informing him that a libel suit is looming up in the vicinity. An angry citizen may appear with a horse whip concealed about his person and mildly ask, "Who wrote that article?" A subscriber may come in and want to discuss cordwood or maple molasses as articles to be bartered for a year's reading of the paper. Various other matters of business may interrupt an editor just as the afflatus is beginning to strike him and spoil the best editorial ever begun in that part of the country. Would that editors were the only men who are liable to interruptions.

A pastor goes out in the afternoon with a well-arranged programme in his mind. He intends to make just so many calls, so many sick visits and attend to a number of other matters. He calls at one house, does all that duty requires him to do and then prepares to leave. The people of the house say he is in a great hurry and wonder why he cannot make a longer visit. If he had no other place to go he could quite easily remain all afternoon. It would, perhaps, be much easier for himself to remain, but he has other work to do and must go. The good people he leaves never consider that the visit paid there is only a small part of an afternoon's work and that all the others have an equally strong claim on the pastor's time.

Sick people nearly always assume that the doctor has no patients to attend but themselves. Their friends are frequently quite as reasonable.

Long years ago we heard an elder complain somewhat tartly because a neighboring minister who preached on the Friday before communion read his sermon too closely. He could not see why a minister coming to preach should not be better prepared. The sweetly reasonable soul assumed that getting prepared for that Friday service was the only thing the minister had to do. Were we to write that minister's name you would laugh.

People might sometimes ask how their pastor has been engaged during the week and what condition his health is in before they too savagely condemn what they consider a weak sermon.

Moral.—Before you give your final judgment on any kind of work always consider the limitations under which it may have been produced. If you don't, sensible, intelligent people will be very apt to call you a fool and their opinion may not be far astray.

AN OLD MINUTE BOOK OF TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

BY REV. SAMUEL HOUSTON, M.A.

NO. II.

In the former article on the Minute Book of the Synod of Ulster, there are two misprints which may as well be corrected. It was not in a "bold" way that the roll was kept, but it was "bald" that was written. It was not "exercises" that were sometimes accepted, but "excuses." The readers will kindly note these corrections.

In reading over the minutes we meet with a few instances of men ordained and set apart for ministerial work in North America. It will be remembered that when such appointments were made, what is now called Canada was not under British rule, and besides there were in this northern part of the continent, no English-speaking people. As soon as there was an opening for work in the British colonies, embracing what is now called Canada, the Synod of Ulster was ready to enter in through the door that was opened. Very nearly 130 years ago, the Rev. James Murdock was ordained by the Presbytery of New-townlineawady, and for the rest of his life, some thirty-three years, he exercised his ministry in Nova Scotia. Never since have the Presbyterians in Ireland been unmindful of the wants of settlers in British America.

There are some curious, as well as amusing instances of the use of words whose meaning is now very different from what it was then. Supposing an elder from a rural congregation, some twenty or thirty miles from Toronto, were to say, seriously, on the floor of the Presbytery, that most of the ministers of the Metropolitan Presbytery were "crazy," what would be thought of him? It would be set down as a very crazy statement, and the speaker would in all likelihood be told that he must be more careful in the use of words. Yet that was done some two hundred years ago by an elder on the floor of the Synod of Ulster. When passing over the railroad that connects Belfast with Portrush, at a point some 10 or 12 miles from the metropolis of the north, there may be seen out of the window, a place of worship on a site overlooking the track, which just there was at the bottom of a deep cut. That is the Presbyterian Church of Templepatrick, where one of the oldest congregations in the country worships. The first minister that was settled there almost 270 years ago, was Josias, a son of the celebrated John Welsh, and grandson of the more celebrated John Knox. Here Mr. Welsh laboured for eight years when he was carried off by consumption. The Upton family, now represented by Lord Templeton, were long connected with the congregation. For many years the Honourable Clotworthy Upton was the representative of the session of Templepatrick in the Synod meetings, and he took an active and intelligent interest in the business. For some reason or other there was an application made to transfer the congregation from the care of the Presbytery of Belfast to that of the Presbytery of Antrim, and Mr. Upton pressed in an earnest way for the transfer. One reason advanced was that it would help in equalizing the size of the Presbyteries. The second reason is put in this way as recorded in the minutes: "Bel-

fast has many crazy members, therefore can't so supply T. Patrick with ministers as sometimes were necessary."

There was a case which occupied somewhat lengthened attention on the part of the Synod, and it seems to us in these days, a rather peculiar one. We do not say that the offence alleged has ceased to be one of which young ministers are guilty. What is to be said is that it hardly ever is dealt with now as an ecclesiastical crime. Here is the first entry of the case in the minutes. "A reference from the Presbytery of Route, relating to Mr. R. H., minister in C., and Mrs. M. W. . . . concerning a purpose of marriage 'twixt them never yet performed, was laid before the Interlocutor." The Presbytery before sending the matter up, had dealt with it carefully. The plea made by the minister was that when the engagement was entered into he was a minor in his father's house, and it was done without his father's consent, and the old man was still averse to the marriage. He asked, moreover, that the Synod appoint some brethren to confer with his father, which was done, but the old man was inflexible. In the meantime the young minister was rebuked by synod for "taking on vows in his father's family, and after he was *foris familiar*, having renewed those vows which he did not perform." He received the censure, the minutes record, with all due regard, and promised in his after life to evidence that he was sincere in what he professed. The case, however, did not end there. At a subsequent sederunt it was agreed, on the minister's request, to allow the space of three months from that date for the fulfilment of his promise to marry, and it was ordered that his Presbytery depose him if he do not fulfil his promise. That was at the annual meeting of 1714. At the meeting next year, in 1715, the following appears on the minutes: "Mr. R. H., of C., observed the advice of last Synod." To those who so earnestly cry out for precedents for dealing with a case, here is one respectfully commended when the need presents itself.

In 1702, ten rules of order were agreed to, and the Moderator was ordered to observe them, and to reprove them that transgress. The following two which we quote, show that at that time, as now, there were people of very much the same kind as to politeness, and attention to business. Here are some of the rules drawn up then: "That there be no whisperings, nor 'private conferences,' but that all attend to the present business in hand." The other is: "That none of the members depart the Synod, or go out while it's sitting, without leave sought and obtained."

FRAGMENTARY NOTES.

MONCTON, N.B.—ITS HISTORY, AND PROGRESS—PRESBYTERIANISM—SPLENDID CHURCH DESTROYED BY FIRE

This has been one of the most progressive towns in this Province, and has lately been gazetted a city with 10,000 inhabitants. It is the chief centre of the I.C.R., with a fine building for their offices, and is the residence of Mr. Pottinger, the popular manager.

The first settlers were German and are said to have left their native land about the year 1749, and found a home in Pennsylvania, and about fifteen years afterwards came to Nova Scotia, and thence to Moncton.

It appears that our energetic brethren the Baptists, were the first to introduce religious services into Moncton, and can still claim the majority of the Protestant denominations in the Province.

PRESBYTERIANISM

has had a footing here since 1838, when the church of Scotland designated the Rev. W. Henderson to this work, at which time there were only three or four families. Mr. Henderson remained a few years when he was called to New Castle, on the Miramichi River. The church was then vacant for eight years, when the Rev. Mr. Ross was settled in 1852.

The next minister was the Rev. Mr. Murray, from Scotland, who did good work, and during his ministry the first church was erected. The next minister was the Rev. Joseph Hogg, now of St. Andrew's church Winnipeg, who was installed in 1875. At this time the congregation evidently took a fresh start, and under Mr. Hogg's ministry made rapid strides.

The good old church which served important ends in its day, became too small, and a fine brick church was erected at the cost of \$27,000, and also a manse for the minister. The church was opened for public worship in 1884.

Mr. Hogg, having received a hearty call from Winnipeg, responded, and this flourishing congregation was again left without a pastor. This writer has many pleasant recollections of meeting Mr. and Mrs. Hogg, in their hospitable home, and the influences exercised there will be felt for many days in the city and congregation.

The present pastor is the Rev. J. M. Robinson, formerly of Springfield, Nova Scotia, who is carrying on good work most successfully. The congregation is the largest in the Synod of the Maritime Provinces, the membership being in the neighbourhood of 600, and a Sabbath school large in proportion.

The Rev. J. M. Robinson is a strong man, a good organizer, and an eloquent preacher.

He was born in St. Stephen, N. B., and educated at Pine Hill College, Halifax, and Princeton, N. Y. This is his second charge and since he came here had the spire of the new church finished.

As many of your readers will have learned, that splendid church stands to-day in ruins. On a Saturday night it took fire and the devouring element, in spite of all human efforts, laid it in ruins. The sister denominations were all sympathetic, and the Methodist brethren placed their church at the service of the Presbyterians. "Behold how good a thing it is and how becoming well, etc."

The congregation now worships in Babing's Hall. Not a very euphonious name to go to church with, but a hall well adapted for the purpose. It seats between six and seven hundred people, and on the occasion when I visited it, it was packed to its utmost capacity.

The congregation is strong and hopeful, and intends commencing building operations early in the spring, and hopes to be able to occupy the school hall in the fall of the present year.

Mrs. Robinson, the pastor's wife, has just organized a Ladies' Aid Society, who held their first meeting lately, when, from the sale of fancy articles, a handsome sum was realized. The sale was preceded by an interesting programme of readings and music, and followed by a social tea and refreshments, which were much appreciated. The chair was occupied by Mr. Marks, the superintendent of the school. There is also a mission school which is efficiently looked after by Messrs. Hopper and Johnson. The outlook for the stability and progress of our church in this centre is most encouraging.

K.
Brunswick Hotel, Moncton, N. B.
March 19th, 1894.

LADY ABERDEEN'S PERIODICALS.

It may not be generally known that the Countess of Aberdeen, already becoming well known among us as a leader in good works, adds to her numerous public duties—and adds very gracefully—the labors of an editor. The two publications to which she practically stands in this relation—although one bears the name of her faithful daughter as editor-in-chief, will it is to be hoped, soon become as well known in Canada as their bright and wholesome contents deserve. Whether we consider the pure, healthy tone of the interesting tales and sketches and brief, pointed editorial articles or the excellence of the artistic illustrations, these little magazines, issued at a rate which brings them within the reach of so many, ought to be most welcome visitors in Canadian households. For one thing, having Government House for their headquarters, they are vouchers that the influence of our Governor-General and his public-spirited wife will be such as to promote the best and highest interests of our beloved country, while they afford to Christian parents low-priced magazines which they may put into the hands of their children with perfect confidence that they will find there only what will help them *onward and upward*.

The elder and larger of these two magazines grew—as most good things do grow—out of a small beginning, connected with a very successful effort of Lady Aberdeen's to raise the tone and level of the life of the women and girls in the neighborhood of Haddo House, her