

Our Contributors.

"EVERY PROSPECT PLEASES, AND ONLY MAN," ETC.

BY KNOXIAN.

Heber hadn't Canada in his eye when he wrote that line, but it describes the condition of this country fairly well. There is nothing in the Dominion that needs improvement so much as the people. The country is one of the best on the globe. God never gave a nobler heritage to any nation. There may be some drawbacks but what country new or old is without drawbacks of some kind. People sit in their houses and read wonderful accounts of other lands, but if they knew as much about them as they know about home they would see just as serious drawbacks there as they see here. Far away fields always look green, but anybody who thinks they are as green as they appear is greener than the fields.

Perhaps some reader feels inclined to say "climate" and then look as if that one word knocked the bottom clean out of this paper. Canadian climate! Which one? We have several climates. An intending settler can have his choice of climates in this country. He can have any variety from the mild air of Vancouver to the snappy, bracing atmosphere of Manitoba. It is said that a man never walks fast in Victoria nor slow in Winnipeg. The difference is in the atmosphere, not in the man. If our intending citizen wants a fair medium thing in the way of climate let him settle down in Ontario. He fancies fog and all its collateral advantages, Halifax or St. John is the place for him. They have an article of fog down there that could hold its own in Glasgow or London. This paper is being written on Monday, 26th of October, within about eight weeks of Christmas, and we might challenge the world to produce a finer day. Adam hadn't a finer morning in Eden than this morning was. A man who cannot get a climate in this country to suit him doesn't know what he wants in the climate line. He is just like those ladies who go into dry goods stores and torment the clerks but never buy anything. Some of them don't know what they want, and if they did have neither money nor credit to get it.

Products! Yes, that is where this country excels. There is probably more wealth taken out of one coal pit in Nanaimo in a year than there is produced in the northern counties of Scotland in ten. The grain belt of Manitoba alone will produce this year about fifteen millions of hard cash. The timber of British Columbia is among the best in the world and is sent to all parts of the world. The timber limits of Ontario are worth over one hundred millions. Montreal is said to be the richest city of its size in the world, and it never could have grown so wealthy if Canada had not been a good country to make money in. Taking it all round, Ontario is one of the best countries in the world. More poor men have done well in Ontario than in any country of its size on the globe. The Maritime Provinces were once highly prosperous in certain lines. Halifax has very wealthy men who made their money in their own city. There is untold wealth in the water on both the Atlantic and Pacific sides of Canada, and nobody can estimate how much more there is underground between the oceans. God has given us a country of unbounded resources. Field and forest, ocean and mine, possess immense possibilities in the way of development. If Canadians ever become a growling, stunted, half-starved people the fault will be their own. The Almighty never gave any people a better chance to get on. The part of the country that was made for us by a higher power is all that anyone could desire. If we cannot develop our resources, if we cannot govern ourselves honestly and build up a nation, let no one blame the country. The people themselves are to blame. The natural factors that make a great country are all here in abundance. If we cannot use them we should say so and be done with it.

It has become a common practice with some to blame our political constitution for all the ills that the body politic is heir to. Well, the Confederation Act may not be a perfect thing but it is not bad. It is vastly better than the Constitution of Scotland was for many years, yet Scotchmen could hold their own and a little more all round the globe. If the constitution is not good the worst parts of it might easily be mended.

Here is a case in point. Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island have all told a population of 880,905. These people have three Local Legislatures, three Upper Houses, three lieutenant-governors, and three governments. Does any sane man say for a moment that all this governmental machinery is needed to manage the affairs of eight hundred thousand people? Ontario with a population of over two millions gets along very well with one legislature of ninety members. The provinces are all getting behind financially except Ontario. Why cannot the people of the three Maritime Provinces unite and live within their means. Simply because they don't wish to do so.

Quebec is in a bad way—thirty millions in debt and its letters of credit hawked about. Whose fault is that? It is the fault of the people. They might send better men to manage their affairs and cry less for Government help.

But what is the use in following up this discussion. Any man who does not see that God has given us a noble heritage and who does not admit that the ills from which the nation suffers are in the heirs and not in the inheritance is "too stupid for anything" or is something much worse than stupid.

SERMON REVERIES.

NO. II.

Last Sunday a m. the sermon was a good one. It seemed to fill my wants in a satisfactory manner, and, as a natural consequence, there was not much wandering of the thoughts. The text was from Hebrews x. 26, 27, and the preacher tried to show that despite the stern dictum laid down there, there was still hope for the sinner if he really was saved by a true knowledge of Jesus Christ, no matter how low down he fell, or how many times he did so. Of course such a Methodist doctrine, in a Presbyterian pulpit, could not help but make me think of a grand scheme I often think of, viz. Evangelical union. General Christian union I never think of. I place it among other impossible schemes—Imperial Federation and the like. The Church of England, as it is called here very improperly, I think, will not give way much. She may open her wings, and take the rest of us poor, deluded mortals under, but not much else. Now to the dissenters, as they are so politely termed, who compose the great majority of our population, this presumption on the part of our Episcopal brethren provokes only a smile of pity and I fear contempt. Yes, union among the working Churches is all we can ultimately hope to gain. What a grand Church it would make. No weakly, miserable congregations in small towns where one only is needed. No three or four missionary systems to hopelessly confound one's reason of that which is right and necessary, and no more diversity of opinion and showing of broken front to the enemy. Yes, I tell you brethren and sisters, that now is the time, none other, for successful evangelical union, and I wish some of our great men would start a jubilee fund of say 100,000 dollars to be donated to the Church of Canada, this being the designation of the new body.

Of course, these ideas of centralization, engendered by the eloquent preacher's remarks, could only be followed up by a reverie on this Toronto vice. At least the rest of the Province persist in calling it a Toronto vice. Oh the greed of this absorbing city! Well, my countrymen, if Toronto does centralize, she gives you good value for your money. Another scheme is before my busy thought department, and it is this: You know our beautiful St. Andrews Church on King Street, every Presbyterian loves the massive structure and admires its fine romanesque lines; well, this church building stands there, but its loyal and influential membership has gone north in the natural flow of population thitherwards. If many are to be believed, they wish their grand building was just four blocks nearer them, and they are quite right too. My scheme is this: let us club together and buy this building from St. Andrews Corporation, and present it to the General Assembly of our Church for an Assembly Hall and general Church offices. Is not this more of this Toronto vice with a vengeance? I admit it, but stop a minute. Look at our Methodist brethren. Have you any difficulty in finding their Church offices and officials if you require them? Do you have to climb up a dingy stair or two and find a small back room with difficulty before you can reach the Church Treasurer, for instance? I think not, and yet that is what we influential Presbyterians are doing every day, if we wish to find our old and venerated Dr. Reid. I say calmly that the sooner we find our Church proper permanent offices in which to transact business the better, and where could a more prominent and imposing suite be found than the church of which we speak. And the Assembly Hall, words fail to convey the *clat* with which the idea should find itself received. I say should, you will notice. I draw your special attention, because in all probability this is the last you will hear of it, our people are so hard-up, especially our wealthy friends.

About this time the sermon was losing its edge in the closing features. As I have before stated, I admire the way some preachers close up their discourses just as much as I detest the way others do the task. Our preacher on this occasion rather lost force as he finished up, yet he did his level best to sustain the interest. His sermon was a good sample of evangelical effort and deserved a much larger audience. We will not attempt in this edition to discuss these sparsely-attended meetings; our minds, I am sure, are too full almost for utterance on the whole matter. Suffice it to say, we are not becoming better, rather worse, in this important matter.

CURLY TOPP.

GLOSSARY OF CHINESE WORDS.

The following is a glossary of Chinese words occurring frequently in the communications from our missionaries. All interested in the progress of our Chinese Mission will find it helpful. It is introduced by the accompanying letter from Rev. Murdoch Mackenzie, addressed to Mr. Hamilton Cassels, Convener of the Committee:—

Enclosed you will find a short list of some of the more common words that occur in the minutes and probably in letters dealing with Chinese matters sent home. I hope it may enable you to understand a little of the complicated phraseology that we meet with here continually. Additions may be made to the list from time to time as necessity requires and our knowledge of the language and customs increases. If terms have been already used that require explanation, I trust you will excuse our omission of duty in not making their meaning clear. Sincerely yours,

Lin Ching, May 11, 1891. MURDOCH MACKENZIE.

LITERATI—A term used in speaking of the literary class

gentry of China. The members of this class are very numerous and influential throughout the Empire, and are everywhere regarded as the sworn foes of Christianity.

LIEN—The Chinese equivalent of the English word rent. Renting in China differs very little from the same transaction in Canada or Great Britain.

TANG—(Pronounce Dang). This is the nearest Chinese equivalent of the English word mortgage. In this transaction a loan of money is given on the security of a house or other property, and the lender obtains possession of said house or property, without disturbance, for the term of years for which the lease is drawn up. At the expiration of said term, which is seldom less than ten years, the owner of the property, on refunding the full amount of the loan, can request the tenant to leave. In the event of the owner of the property failing to refund the loan, the tenant remains in full possession.

MAI—In speaking of buying, the Chinese use the term mai. When purchasing property in China the deed must receive the official stamp to make it valid, and the official has in his power to demand a sum equal to about one-third of the price paid as a Government fee. On this account tanging is much more common than buying. As the deeds do not require the official seal and when a sum of money equal buying price is loaned, the lender's title to the property is as secure as if it were bought.

CHUNG JEN—(Pronounce Jung Ren). The English equivalent of this is "go-between or middle man." Business of all kinds between Chinese and foreigners must be transacted through middlemen who claim a certain percentage in each transaction.

TAEL—A tael is an ounce of silver and varies in different localities as also do the weights and measures, there being no uniform standard. Thus we have Shanghai, Tientsin and Lin Ching taels all differing in value.

TIAO—(Pronounce Diao). The copper coinage called "cash" is strung on strings; each string nominally holds a hundred, and a collection of such strings is called a tiao. The number of cash on each tiao varies in different parts of the country, generally = 40 cents in gold.

COMPOUND—A number of houses, in one or more yards, all enclosed by one wall. This wall is generally eight or ten feet high with no windows or openings on the street and only one entrance. All within the wall is considered the compound.

DISPENSARY—In speaking of a dispensary in contrast to a hospital, the reference is to the limited scope of the dispensary owing to the lack of accommodation for patients, but in all other respects the work done is practically the same. In endeavouring to secure a compound for dispensary purposes the missionary is always anxious to have a good-sized waiting-room convenient to the street to be used as a street chapel.

STREET CHAPEL—This is (1) a good-sized room, (2) situated on a prominent street, (3) with wide doors and (4) benches several feet apart. In the street chapel an opportunity is offered to all who choose to embrace it of hearing the Gospel, either from a foreign missionary or the native helper.

NATIVE HELPER—Our native helpers are unordained men free to devote all their time to talking with the people, teaching and preaching, while on the other hand, the MEDICAL ASSISTANT aids the doctor in his work, and, when a Christian, is expected to take advantage of every opportunity to present the Gospel to the patients and others.

LI—The Chinese mile, equal to one-third of an English mile.

FU—A large portion or department of a province under the general control of one civil officer immediately subordinate to the heads of the Provincial Government. Each province has about ten such divisions. The term fu is also applied to all cities of first order. The provincial capitals which are always fu cities contain an average population of about one million inhabitants. The other fu cities contain from 60,000 to 500,000.

CHOW—A division of a province smaller than a fu, and either like it governed by an officer immediately subject to the heads of the Provincial Government, in which case it is called a chow, or else forming a subordinate part of a fu.

The Fu Magistrate has control over from six to ten Hsien districts, while a chow controls two or three. The term chow is also applied to cities of the second order.

HSIEN—A small dimension or subordinate part of a department, whether of a fu or of an independent chow. The term Hsien is also applied to cities of the third order, which generally contain an average population of about fifty thousand.

A Hsien Magistrate has charge of all the towns and villages in his district which average from two to four thousand.

YAMEN—The official residence of a Chinese magistrate and of all his subordinate officers. Business of all kinds, from the trial and confinement of criminals up to the most important State transactions is conducted in the Yamens.

JAMES F. SMITH,
MURDOCH MACKENZIE.

FRAGMENTARY NOTES.

IRELAND—BELFAST—SOME EMINENT PREACHERS—THE BAPTIST CONVENTION.

In a former letter I made reference to May Street Church, for many years the scene of the labours of the late Rev. Dr. Cooke, and a few lines regarding his successors may not be