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OTTAWA, WEDNESDAY, DEC. 19, 1906

Many subscribers are in arrears for 1906, and not a few for two or more years. This is embarrassing to the publisher. Will subscribers take a look at the address tag on their paper, and if in arrears make prompt remittance.

At the meeting of the Saugeen Presbytery at Harrison on Tuesday, the matter of union was discussed and an overture to the Assembly was passed unanimously projecting a good deal of cold water on the project.

Christmas is reproduced in the experience of every believer. At some time Jesus is born anew in every heart. But such is only true to those who watch and wait. There were hundreds in Bethlehem that eventful night who did not know that the Son of God was there. In the spirit world desire is sight. They see who look: the rest are blind.

The story of Christmas, says an exchange, never becomes as a tale that is told, but grows newer and sweeter as the years go by. To think that God came down from heaven to dwell among men, that the Almighty entered our human nature by the gateway of birth, that the Infinite should pass on earth a finite life with its common terminals of birth and death, that the unchangeable should pass through the varying moods of joy and sorrow, of hope and fear, of pleasure and pain that we all know so well, that the Deity should identify himself so closely with us as to become our kinsman—the thought is too wonderful to grasp in a lifetime. And the joy of it! Were the whole heavens a bell-dome and the earth a clapper striking against ethereal walls, and the stars in the infinite spaces the listeners, the universal peals could not express the joy that Christmas should awaken in human hearts.

ANOTHER CHRISTMAS.

There are several ways of taking Christmas; the individual point of view has no small relation to age. To the children, and young people generally, Christmas is the day of days, because of their habit of frankly enjoying the good things of the moment, without peeping present enjoyment with pensiveness as to the past or anxiety as to the future. The older people cannot be blamed too much for recalling the days that are no more, when they think of former Christmases; nor, as the Yule days fly past quickly, like telegraph posts on a railway journey, can one wonder if those past the middle period of life should musingly repeat that

"Age will rust the blindest blade,
And time will break the stoutest bow;
Was never wight so starkly made
But time and age will lay him low."

But this minor undertone must not be encouraged too much. It is sadder and healthier on Christmas to

"Frame our minds to mirth and merriment,
Which bars a thousand harms and lengthens life."

If it be true that Anglo-Saxon people "take their pleasures sadly," it is high time they took a more enlivening view. Who in time past or time present have been more favored of God than the Anglo-Saxon people? Or what portion of the Empire has more for which to be thankful than Canada?

As for the world at large, nothing seems to be taking much harm. Through travel, doubtless, the progress of the world must come; but the world is progressing.

As for the individual,—you, for instance—there is not one life in a hundred in which the happiness and the blessing do not vastly outweigh the misery and the unhappiness. If you do not think so, think again; you are probably mistaken.

After all, on Christmas Day, with their unimpaired enthusiasm, and single-minded enjoyment, it is the children who are sound and sane. Let them enjoy the day to the full, and may those who can no longer be described as children catch something of their true Christmas spirit!

CHURCH UNION.

The four-days' conference at Toronto on Union between Presbyterians, Methodists and Congregationalists, has come to an end. "The delegates consider that they have passed the stage of feeling the way, the prevalent note of this conference having been that they are going on to union, and the proceedings have been on that basis." As Judge Forbes puts it,—Church Union is now within hailing distance. As we anticipated, it is not considered within the region of things practicable to bring either the Anglicans or the Baptists within the union negotiations at present.

The next meeting of the general union committee will be held in September. Matters will be considerably advanced by the time the next General Assembly meets. The prevailing feeling is that there should be no undue haste, on the one hand; nor, on the other, any delay that is not necessary.

AN INSPIRING CRISIS.

In many ways and through many sources the knowledge is being pressed upon the people of Canada that this country is enjoying an unprecedented degree of material prosperity. And just parallel with that prosperity the intelligence is being pressed upon our highly favored people that from every quarter of the heathen world—from the regions lying in the dark shadow of moral and spiritual gloom—there is coming to the ears of the Christian world the plaintive and pleading cry, "Come over and help us." There are many "Macedonias" from which this cry is coming.

What does it all mean? It means two things. First of all, it means that God has answered the prayers of Christian people so long and earnestly presented, that He would open the closed doors of the heathen world. The wide, wide world is open to the Gospel and the professed followers of the Lord Jesus are thereby reminded of the great commission, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," and God's people are confronted by the challenge, "Go in and possess the land" for the Lord Jesus.

In the second place, the great material prosperity the people of Canada are enjoying is a reminder to them that they are not only called on to "go in and possess the land"—the opened up heathen world—but they are also reminded that the Lord of the Harvest is furnishing them with the means, and will furnish them with the men, necessary to carry on the campaign; and back of that they have the inspiring promise attached to the great commission, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." Surely the people, and especially the Presbyterians, of Canada will rise to the measure of their opportunities and realize the solemn responsibility which answered prayers and great material blessings impose upon them, keeping in remembrance the prophetic and inspired declaration of Malachi, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

When Mordecai was pleading with Queen Esther to intercede with King Ahasuerus on behalf of her countrymen whose lives and liberties were threatened by the machinations of Haman, he put to her the pointed question, "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" This pertinent question might well be put to the Christian men and women of Canada today: "Who knoweth whether thou art come to this unique crisis of answered prayers and overflowing material prosperity for such a time as this?"

The most draconic example of State prohibition is the new decree against opium by the Chinese Government. The drug is to be suppressed within twenty years, the growth of opium, its use are forbidden, the young are not allowed to acquire the habit, the old are to unlearn it as soon as possible. Temperance reformers at home will watch the result with intense interest. If prohibition succeeds in the case of China and opium, it will be more hopefully appealed to in this country against drinking. Those who rely most on the education and Christianisation of the people will not (if they are wise) reject any help that can be got from prohibitive legislation.