

THE WESLEYAN. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1878.

WINTER EVENINGS AND HOW TO SPEND THEM

"O the long and dreary Winter! O the cold and cruel Winter!" It will soon be upon us with its biting frosts and wild choristry of storms. Already Summer is dead, and the plaintive winds are wailing a requiem.

"Stars that in earth's firmament do shine," blossom again in the wintry sky above us, as the "forget-me-nots of the angels," and "the thoughts of God in the heavens."

But Winter itself, stern and desolate though it seem, has its attractions; for just as in the centre of a whirlwind there is found a perfect calm, so in the very heart of Winter there is a sphere of rest and quiet and healthful recreation.

"O the famine and the fever! O the wasting of the famine! O the blasting of the fever! O the wailing of the children! O the anguish of the women!"

But if winter is the harvest time of poverty and suffering and sorrow, it is also the summer-time of tender sympathy and kindly benevolence. While charity draws its cloak about itself to keep the cold away, it also opens its hand to dispense its benisons.

Now, Winter makes us turn our thoughts towards home, just as it drives the birds to their cosy nests, or to some warmer clime. When the driving sleet beats against the window panes, and the angry elements howl madly about us, and the cold creeps and steals in upon our shivering forms, "there is no place like home."

May not some assistance towards this end be found in the threefold charms of Music, Reading, and Conversation? A home having these attractions cannot be very dull, and a winter evening spent under their refining and elevating influence cannot be unprofitable.

"Where melodies Alone are the interpreters of thought," and "Whose language is not speech but song?" Then fill the home with its sweet harmonies. Robe the happiness that reigns at the fireside with "the flowing draperies

music as well as light. Every day should die, like the swan, with a song upon its lips. Happy the family circle that is belted with music, for "the concord of sweet sounds" tends to bind loving hearts all the closer.

Wholesome, interesting and instructive Reading will lend additional interest to the home. When the mind is calmed and soothed by music it is prepared to refresh itself by communion with the great and good, whose immortal thoughts abide with us, though they themselves have passed to the spirit-land.

"Books are sepulchres of thought: The dead laurels of the dead Rustle for a moment only, Like the withered leaves in lonely Churchyards at some passing tread."

Put a good book into the hand of a child, and let the elder members of the family people the winter evenings with the conjured spirits that lie buried in books, and the home shall be filled with happy companionships.

After music and reading, a lively conversation may fitly close the social entertainment. Music has furnished the inspiration, and Reading the matter for discussion, for the interchange of thought, for sparkling wit and friendly repartee.

But we must close. Here then is a suggestion on the subject of our winter evenings and how to spend them. Will not our readers consider this matter? If, from the many opportunities of the coming winter you can gather some new stories of truth, and brace your spirits by its long evenings pleasantly spent, you will thereby add additional lustre to the home, and to your own life; and above all, you may taste an earnest of the pleasures which await us in our home in heaven.

MINISTERIAL CANDIDATES—A WORD OF CAUTION.

Recent events may affect this class of young men to an extent that may seriously injure the church's life, in two ways, unless met by persons of influence. Young men looking to the ministry may regard the pressure upon our Funds, especially the Missionary Fund, as indicating that the ranks are overcrowded. They may conclude that, where ministerial support is cut down to a very low figure, Providence may be pointing to other professions as their life-work.

A first fatal blow would thus be struck at their own vital peace. It is possible to change one's purpose as regards even the ministerial calling. Of this we have had repeated instances. Young men have, years ago, resolved to be rich, famous, at the expense of their convictions. God called them loudly to a life of religious consecration, of special, spiritual pursuit; but they took matters into their own hands. Some pretext opened to admit of their going back to the world. And some of them prospered, too. As lawyers they have excelled; as merchants, become wealthy; as doctors, gained great reputation. Let not this fact be blinked.

We have heard it asserted repeatedly that men truly called to the ministry, who accept deliberately, other inducements, do not succeed. They do succeed—sometimes—in the worldly opinion. But—unless they lose their love for God and God's cause—they do not succeed in their own estimation. There are lawyers, merchants, medical men, &c., from whose life has gone out much of the sunshine, because they darkened the windows of their souls. Persons who relinquish their first love are said to carry a bright face forever embalmed in their hearts; a second love only becomes a second wife or husband. Whether this be true or false as respects marital relations, we believe it to be absolutely true in the relation of men called to the ministry. Set this down as the first loss to be encountered.

The church will be sure to suffer correspondingly. That class of candidates to whom we refer—young men of education and talent, ambitious and promising—would be specially required in the ministry. Methodism has ever gleaned rich ministerial sheaves from the common fields of life; God will always, probably, find in our church places of usefulness for men of ordinary gifts and ordinary education. But if the refined and more gifted be allowed to play truant to their consciences, the effect on the ministry must be disastrous.

Our Superintendents of Circuits should see to this. Let them help young men to face such contingencies as give our ministry a shade of dark colouring for the moment. Times will brighten. Parents, too, should help their sons over the rougher places, unless indeed they be disposed to encourage in them a more secular am-

pared to share the responsibility of wrecking their happiness and frustrating the divine purposes.

Our own advice is that no step should be taken toward the ministry, without, as a royal pre-requisite, a positive conviction that God calls. This once settled no earthly consideration should be permitted to come in between the soul and its aim. This call to the ministry is a voice too sacred to be smothered. In any case, like the slumbering principle in the soul of Peter, it will bring tears to the unfaithful man every time that Christ turns upon him an injured glance. Beware, young man; of offending thyself, of injuring the church, of disregarding God! Be true, though you suffer. This life is but a fragment of our existence, though even this fragment tells mightily upon our future destiny for weal or woe.

MISSIONARY DEPUTATION.

As announced last week, Dr. Williams and Rev. Mr. Longley occupied the principal Methodist pulpits of Halifax last Sunday morning and evening. Dr. Williams is a fine specimen of the early Canadian Missionaries. He has retained, as a result of pioneer work in his early ministry, a robust constitution, which now serves him well at a period when most men begin to show symptoms of declining strength. He impresses his hearers as being a man of sturdy independent convictions, with always sufficient courage to pronounce them with emphasis. These are such good qualities in a minister of the Gospel that audiences invariably meet them with respect.

Having been occupied in the morning of the day alluded to, we had no opportunity of hearing Mr. Longley. By report, however, we can assert that his first appearance before a Halifax audience as a preacher gave great satisfaction. His culture and general refinement have specially won the hearts of the thinking classes.

On Sabbath afternoon a Missionary Meeting was held in Dartmouth, which was attended by Dr. Williams and some of the city ministers. The meetings in Halifax, extending over most of the week, and addressed by a variety of speakers, were well attended, and afforded good financial results.

Grafton Street meeting, owing to the weather, was postponed.

NOT TO BE FOUND!

"The late Miss B—, of Newtyle, Scotland, was an enthusiastic admirer of the Free Church. Some time before she died she posted a letter, containing a five-pound bank note, containing the following address:—'To the Church of Christ, Edinburgh,' meaning thereby, of course, her own denomination. A few days afterward the letter was returned to her, with the startling announcement marked on it, 'Not to be found.'—Harris-ton Tribune.

Yes, "Not to be found" The Church of Christ is hidden out of sight by unscriptural names and commandments of men; and souls, infinitely more precious than "five pound notes," search for it in vain, and sadly exclaim, "Not to be found." And they die without hope. Who is to blame? Answer, as of old, the teachers of the people who make the word of God of no effect by their traditions—they are to blame.

The above is from the Bible Index (Baptist), Toronto, and seems to have as its object a provocation for discussion. It is rather remarkable that an organ of a church so denominational as the Baptist, should publish such sentiments. The Free Church is quite capable of taking care of its own interests, but this reflection in the Index takes in all the religious bodies, and, of consequence, the Baptist body itself. Surely the Church of Christ, if dishonored at all by "unscriptural names and commandments of men," has received its full share at the hands of the Baptist Church. We do not believe the reflection is in any sense just, to any body of Christians. There are reasons, sufficient reasons, for denominationalism, and church designations; and we are quite sure the Index knows these reasons as well as any one. There can be but one of two causes for the publication of these stinging invectives;—either they are intended to insinuate in a covert sort of way, that only the Baptists are the Church of Christ; or they are challenges to discussion, without which some papers cannot thrive or hold an existence. "They die without hope!" This is too bad to say of Christian Edinburgh, even if Baptists there have no existence.

NECESSARY AND UNNECESSARY ANTAGONISMS.

Dr. Williams gave utterance to a sentiment last Monday night, in Brunswick St. Church, which, though trite enough, is often sadly misapprehended. He declared that it was impossible for any man to do good without awakening opposition. It was another way of repeating Christ's warning to his disciples. Spirits that had slumbered before he came, awoke with tremendous energy to meet Him, and to thwart his purposes. His true followers in every age were to expect this result, and be prepared for it. But much more

Lord ever intended. He used it as a warning; too many receive it as a consolation who are not entitled to its benefits. It was hatred of British rule, and dread of British supremacy, which led to the fearful rebellion in India; but no sympathy could be accorded to any man who, after shooting down angry sepoys, whom he had aggrieved by despotism, would call for the grace of approbation on the ground that the Asiatic races hated the British flag. Yet something very similar we see in the ignorant self complacency of persons who imagine—perhaps preach—that they are persecuted for righteousness sake, while their antagonisms are only of the kind which spring from human obstinacy and bad management.

It is time strong sermons were preached on this miserable species of self-deception. It holds place in every community, under one form or another. True, the original doctrine should be adhered to. The world has much need of it. We are drifting with the pleasant current, wafted by genial trade winds, in our common Christian methods. We are not "resisting unto blood, striving against sin." No bad man dreads our approach, because for him we have no eye flashing with righteous indignation—no tongue quivering with rebuke. Where any one dares to be solitary in attacking strongholds of iniquity, let him have the full benefit of the divine solace—"If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you,"—for antagonism is as sure to arise as is to-morrow's sun. But as we cleave to this, let us shame down the other.

If Christians are to take a course never authorized by Christ; if they are to abjure tenderness and pity, to assume the atributes of dogged, unrelenting severity, in their treatment of mankind, they should be taught that there is another law as sure in its operations as the law of antagonism to righteousness. Human nature at its very best is impatient of restraint, save to the dictates of righteousness and wisdom. Rebellion will come by provocation as certainly as effect follows cause.

And this applies to Churches as well as individuals. There is much ecclesiastical history written and taught under a delusion as to the causes of persecution in past days. That there has been antagonism of evil against good, because good actually confronted evil and rebuked it, no one can doubt. But a severe analysis of the so-called persecutions of Christianity would leave much to be ashamed of in both Protestant and Roman Catholic Communions.

Yes, let us anticipate opposition in doing good. Let us take all the solace Christ's word's and the sure operations of the law on which they were based, afford to the mind. But withal, let us discriminate. Some Christian men have enemies because they are like Christ, doing Christ's work; others make their own enemies and have no part in the promise. There is a divine element and a human element in all the causes for antagonism in the Christian life; and both sides of the subject should be illustrated in public discourse.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

Several remonstrances have reached us in regard to taking up so much of the paper with the subject of Baptism. These persons will see at once that the present Editor has no choice in this particular. Brother Currie intimated at first that he would not occupy us to great length, and we assume that he is getting well through. In any case their grievance is not with us. Mr. C., we assume, feels under obligation to finish his subject.

BLIND TOM—that most marvelous of musical prodigies—was on Exhibition in Halifax last week. Others enjoyed his improvisations and imitations in the musical art—though with him it is not an art at all, but a reiteration; to us the wonder was all in his character, his constitution, or what ever it may be called, which makes up the man. He is termed an idiot. There are two things which clearly dispute this designation. Firstly—he has not the head of an idiot. True or false as a science, physiognomy and phrenology make plain distinction between a man of common mind and a fool. Tom is not the latter, by any rule of face-reading or brain-reading. His face is well rounded, and at times his countenance beams with intelligence. Then, secondly, he has two or three gifts which by far outrival the very best of the multitude—he remembers with a faculty which not only retains but analyses the parts of every sound whether music, words, or other noises in the air. This is not all. Tom makes music; we are told by judges, moreover, that it is classic music, worthy of the masters. Here, then, are gifts which never idiot possessed in the nature of things. The man's faculties are all chained down—mighty faculties held in bondage—save these two or three. These dominant powers will one day—the resurrection day—open into life, when, we have no shadow of doubt, this creature, who now makes sport for the crowd, will stand forth in the manhood of a mental Samson. He is just a perfect illustration of the fact that a man may have two or three faculties greatly developed, and yet be a child, or worse. While, conversely, he shows that a child, if touched in the right direction by the finger of God, put immortal genius to the blush, for its comparative weakness and

in the far future, as great in other respects as he is now in memory and music.

A selected story, on an inside page, may seem to be overdrawn, and perhaps it is. A child may, however, become the occasion of much needless anxiety, as has been proved in almost every family's experience. We have very vivid recollections of a search instigated, twenty-five years ago, for a child thought to be lost in the woods, while all through several agonizing hours of a dark night, bands of men, with horns and dogs, scoured miles of forest. The object of all this commotion had gone home early by a back path where it was innocently unconscious that a whole settlement was wild with anxiety. There is a well authenticated story of a mother who, well trained to the reins, had wrapped up her babe and laid it in the bottom of the sleigh, that she might the better enjoy the ride. Missing the precious bundle while crossing a large sheet of ice, she drove back furiously three miles and found "Baby Bunting" quietly finishing its nap on the frozen lake. The sequel would be more interesting if we were quite sure as to the subsequent history of "Baby;" but we have good reasons for concluding that she is herself to-day mother of a happy family.

In another column will be found an account of meetings connected with the reopening of Centenary School Lecture-room, St. John. This edifice is really far more than its unpretending name would indicate. It is a place of worship, at once costly and beautiful, and may serve the congregation well as a church, while drawing breath for a fresh effort. Thus the devastation of fire is being overcome. The latter St. John will yet be far more admirable than the first. We congratulate our friends on their prosperity.

Our thanks are due to Ministers who have sent us new subscribers. It will be gratifying to us, and profitable to our Agents as well as those of our people who do not read the paper, if a good canvass can be made at as early a day as possible and many new names added to our list. We are striving to afford our Church a paper as accurate, instructive and stimulating; as to the results, our readers are the best judges, and, if we can infer aught from correspondence, they are not disposed to complain. Meantime a renewal of subscriptions for 1879 will be quite in order. They usually succeed best who begin early

Attention is called to our lists of new books in our advertising columns, as also the fine assortment of Fall and Christmas stock just imported by the Book Room. Orders from the country will have immediate special attention. Christmas Cards will be sent assorted to order for Cash, or samples may be secured by mail to the value of from 25 cents to a dollar.

The Rev. J. A. Williams, D. D., will visit the following places in the interests of the Missionary Society: Truro Sabbath 24th inst. Avondale Tuesday 26th Horton Wednesday 27th Bridgetown Thursday 28th Yarmouth Sabbath, Dec. 1st and following nights. Other arrangements will be published in due time.

THE MARQUIS AND PRINCESS.

Appearances indicate that the distinguished personages will not arrive here before Sunday or Monday, as they did not leave Ireland till last Friday night. The following will show the intended movements while in Halifax—

VICE-REGAL RECEPTION.—PROGRAMME OF PROCEEDINGS.—We understand that the following is the programme decided upon for the landing and reception of the Vice-regal party:—

FIRST DAY. On the day of the official landing (not the day of arrival) Her Royal Highness the Princess Louise, and the Marquis of Lorne, will proceed in state to Provincial Building, where the Marquis will be sworn in as Governor-General. The city address will be presented immediately afterwards. His Excellency and Her Royal Highness will then proceed to Admiralty House.

SECOND DAY. The next day His Excellency and Her Royal Highness will visit objects of interest in and about the city.

At 3.30 P. M. His Excellency will receive addresses (copies of which should be forwarded as soon as possible to Lieut. Col. Littleton, at Government House), and hold a levee immediately after at the Provincial Building.

THIRD DAY. The next day His Excellency and Her Royal Highness will leave Halifax by the Intercolonial Railway at 11 a. m.

ST. JOHN MISSIONARY SUBSCRIPTIONS.

DEAR EDITOR,—While writing of missionary matters, and just before another campaign, may I have space for an explanation. Your columns recently accounted in part for the deficiency in Conference Missionary receipts last year, by the large falling off on the St. John circuits occasioned by the fire, Germain Street heading the list with a deficiency of over \$1800. The facts are, that here was this deficiency, but that it was not occasioned by the fire. \$1500 of the amount were two subscriptions unrenewed, one of these being \$1000 to be invested and its interest to serve as annual subscription. The amount contributed by the congregation itself during the past year was more than 2-3 of the amount raised by it the year before, 125 of the 144 families of the church having in the meantime lost both residences and

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