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Edited by Rev. Wm. Inglis.

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NOTES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

AN eastern correspondent complains grievously of the doings on a local skating rink owned and controlled it seems by a member of the Presbyterian Church, and especially of a masquerade lately held on it. We cannot publish the letter. If things are as he says, why not bring the matter before the session in a regular way? Or better still, why not in the first place try personal and friendly remonstrance with those who it seems are going so far wrong? We quite believe that the doings on many skating rinks are far from what they ought to be, and that young girls are often led to utter ruin from the acquaintances formed at such places. But what good could be accomplished by our singling out a particular place, and giving currency to local scandal about either the owner or frequenters of the rink there? The fiddling, the dancing and the "disarray" may all have been as the writer of the letter describes, and the man who promoted and presided over the whole may be justly amenable to church discipline and general reprobation. But has our correspondent taken the first step as a fellow church member to bring the offending brother to a proper sense of his conduct? If not, why ask us to give currency to mere local gossip which might involve us in a libel suit before we knew what we were about, and do only harm and no possible good all round?

"A MEMBER" asks if one who belonged to a congregation twenty-five years ago, but who has during all the interval been a member and office-bearer in another congregation in another land, is eligible for re-election to office on his return to his old place without having been disjoined from his present connection and re-admitted to fellowship in the church he left a quarter of a century ago. We should say not. In the case supposed he has no connection with the Canadian Church till he present his certificate.

THE letter of Rev. Mr. Chiniquy, which we have received, refers to matters of which we have never so much as heard, and which in any case are of such a personal and private character that their discussion in our columns could do no possible good, and might do a very great amount of public injury as well as personal wrong. We must consequently decline to publish the document in question.

IN reply to several inquirers we have merely to say that the Presbyterian Church in Canada has never formally decided that dealers in, or manufacturers of, intoxicating liquors shall be excluded from the fellowship of the Church. Indeed we are not aware that the question was ever brought before the General Assembly since the last union, and never previously, except on one occasion, before the supreme Court of any of the separate Churches which now form the united body. On that occasion the overture in favour of such exclusion was voted down by a considerable majority.

THE STATE OF THE MISSION FUNDS.

THE close of the financial year is not far off, and still a very large amount of money is needed to meet the necessary outlay connected with the different Church schemes. It is quite true that a large number of congregations do not distribute their missionary funds till almost the last moment. Still even while reckoning upon these, there is some ground for anxiety, though not for anything like alarm. It will have been noticed that the grants from all the Churches in Scotland have been withdrawn, and perhaps in the long run this is the best thing which could have happened, as from the very fact of being entirely cast upon its own resources the Canadian Church may, and we hope will, be only stimulated to

greater exertion and to the manifestation of a larger and more widely diffused liberality. We had thought that with such an immense mission field as that which is opening out in the North-West, and with the prospect of thousands upon thousands coming into those new territories from the old land, the coöperation of the Presbyterian Churches in Britain might very surely have been reckoned on, and that not as a matter of favour bestowed upon the Church in Canada, but as a matter of privilege to be enjoyed by those in the fatherland. In this there is likely to be disappointment, but we are sure that it is a mutual one, and that while we cannot reckon upon their active coöperation and pecuniary assistance, we shall still enjoy their heartiest sympathy, and receive the benefit of their most earnest prayers. The work to be done is, no doubt, very great. Some may be ready to think that it is more than the Presbyterians of Canada can successfully grapple with. Let no one either think or say so. There is consecrated ability, and we hope consecrated wealth, sufficient and more than sufficient to meet the emergency. Neither individual Christians nor churches know what they can do till they are put to it, and as the strain becomes ever severer upon our resources we shall hope that the power will grow correspondingly, and that it will always be seen with greater distinctness that "the people have a mind to the work." It would be in no ordinary measure distressing if the confession had at last to be made that the fears about the work being too great for the zeal and liberality of Canadian Presbyterians were only too well founded; if it should be found that instead of going up to take possession of the fields so invitingly open, we could with difficulty maintain the ground already occupied, and had to consider the question of retrenchment rather than that of extension. It is very evident that in every point of view it is both bad policy and bad religion to maintain our missions—any Church scheme whether at home or abroad, on borrowed money. Such a course, if persisted in, can only have one result, and that not at all pleasant to contemplate. Neither is it becoming or safe to trust to spasmodic efforts toward the close of the financial year in order to make up any threatened deficiency. Extraordinary efforts which become ordinary soon cease to deserve the name of efforts at all. There must be at once an increase in the scale of giving and a widening of the area from which it is drawn. When such a minister as Dr. Jenkins can say of such a congregation as that of St. Paul's Montreal, that not one-half of the membership gives anything whatever to the missionary schemes of the Church, we may very naturally conclude that comparatively few ministers can tell a more encouraging story, and very few congregations present a more satisfactory exhibit. And surely this is not as it ought to be. It may be all very well for those who say that they care for none of those things—that they neither recognize their obligation to do anything for the extension of Christ's cause, nor feel that such work is in any sense or to any degree a privilege—to do nothing in the premises. But with those who have quite another way of speaking, and who, by the position they assume and the profession they make, give all to understand that they are the sworn servants of Jesus Christ, and regard the advancement of His cause in the world as all important, and their duty in the matter as at once confessed and pressing, it is altogether different. For them to do nothing is really to compromise their own honesty, while to do nothing corresponding to the alleged importance of the enterprise is to reflect upon the soundness of their own judgments, or to bring into question the so-called loyalty of their individual lives. The three rules adopted at the well-known missionary meeting of the negro church in the West Indies, if acted upon universally in the Presbyterian Church in Canada, would fill the mission coffers to overflowing and give the whole work a new aspect and a fresh start, viz: (1) that all should give something, (2) all should give according to their ability; (3) all should give cheerfully. We know of nothing more unworthy of a professed follower of Christ, and nothing more discouraging to those who are anxious to do the Lord's work than the way in which missionary collectors are sometimes received when making their monthly or quarterly calls. If they were coming simply as beggars they could not get a more cavalier reception. It seems to be thought that it is some personal object which these collectors have in view, and that it is almost a favour if they are treated with even scant civility, and still more if a

paltry sum is given them, though with an evident grudge. We have known cases of those who were, in their own estimation, pillars in the house of God, telling the missionary collectors that while they were always happy to see them as visitors, they must never come again on such an errand. What kind of work is that? And what kind of a spirit? And is it any great advance to give for such a purpose, perhaps half as much as would be spent on a mantel-piece ornament, or very possibly the fiftieth of what would willingly be invested in a diamond ring? Such proceedings turn the whole thing into a jest, as grim as it is grievous, as injurious to the individual soul as it is dishonouring to Him for whose glory it is all professedly arranged and bestowed. There ought at the least to be five or six additional missionaries sent this year to the North-West alone. Double that number would be more like the need and the opportunities. What will the well-to-do members of our Church say to their consciences, and their God, if even the smallest increase be impossible from the lack of funds? And what about our Foreign Mission work? Are the hearts of our missionaries in heathen lands to be discouraged by the incubus of debt not being removed? Is Dr. Mackay to have the painful conviction that people are quite willing to be intensely interested and enthusiastic, but not that their practical liberality should keep pace with their cheer? What of our French Evangelization work? What of our colleges? Such questions will have to be asked, and answered also. Let there be such an answer as to show that the Presbyterian Church in Canada is not unworthy of the honour and not unequal to the work that are so evidently put to her hand.

HOME MISSION NOTES.

PRINCE ARTHUR'S LANDING.

The congregations of Prince Arthur's Landing and Fort William have asked the Rev. James Herald to remain with them for other six months after the expiry of his present appointment.

DONATION.

The Rev. Mr. Pitblado, of Halifax, has sent \$100 to the Home Mission Fund. In other words, (with the \$50 already sent) he has returned the entire amount of \$150 voted him by the Home Mission Fund to defray his expenses when in the North-West Territory.

MEETING OF COMMITTEE.

The regular half-yearly meeting of the Home Mission Committee will be held in the deacons' court room of Knox Church, Toronto, on Tuesday, the 20th day of March, at two p.m. Claims for the current half year should be forwarded at least one week before the date of meeting. The Convener earnestly requests that all contributions to the fund from congregations or individuals be forwarded to Dr. Reid by Monday, the 28th March, so that the Committee may be enabled to meet all their obligations. At the meeting in October the following resolution was adopted:

"The General Assembly, having enjoined the Home Mission Committee to equalize the revenue and expenditure of the fund each year, the Committee, after careful consideration of the claims of the work, find that \$35,000 is the lowest sum with which the work can be efficiently carried on for the current year. They have made grants and assumed responsibilities to this extent, in the confident hope that the required amount will be obtained, and they earnestly appeal to the Presbyteries and sessions of the Church to use all diligence to secure liberal contributions, to enable the Committee to meet their liabilities and end the year free from debt."

BIRTLE, NORTH-WEST TERRITORY.

From a letter received from Mr. Hodnett, one of our North-West missionaries, we make the following brief extracts:

"My field is from 200 to 250 miles west of Winnipeg. I have a circuit of nearly 300 miles in circumference, from Shell River, thirty-five miles north of Fort Ellice, to Shoal Lake, thirty-two miles east of Fort Ellice, and from Solomon's Indians or Reserve, eighteen miles south of Birtle, to the Riding Mountain, forty miles north-east of Birtle. I have ten stations, and several others I am almost afraid to visit, lest they might think it hard we cannot supply them. It is somewhat difficult to keep engagements here in the winter. We have to go out fully prepared for emergencies—axe, matches, and all appliances necessary for a night on the prairies, sometimes twenty or thirty miles without a house, and not meeting a solitary soul; sometimes missing the faintly-marked trail, and the