

would produce either the ability or the will? Why, only six men are required to fill all the offices, and laymen are eligible no less than ministers. Will not Ontario and Quebec be able to provide a General Secretary, a General Treasurer, and four District Secretaries? If not, alas for Canadian Congregationalism!

3. Fuller details of the expenditure should be published. In the publication of the financial statements there has been hitherto too much secrecy; arising, perhaps, from a morbid fear of exposing the prolonged dependence of some of the mission churches. But those who are willing to receive aid, should be willing to have the amounts which they receive plainly stated. Doubtless most of them are. Certainly those who contribute have a right to know exactly how this money has been expended.

The treasurer's annual statements have been marvels of adroit management. Admirable classification, but no particulars. The statements have been always duly audited; but surely there have also been audited detailed accounts. If so, why were they not published?

Would it not also be much more satisfactory to have the accounts closed regularly on the first June annually, instead of one month after the close of the annual meeting? There may be some difficulties in the way of this arrangement; but these cannot be insuperable.

In my next, I will have something to say on the policy of our Home Missions. MNASON.

HAVE WE PRINCIPLES?

To the Editor of the Canadian Independent.

DEAR SIR,—No church really fails which has the Spirit. Time may be needed to bring about its justification, nevertheless "he which believeth shall not make haste." Several articles and communications in your columns seem to imply, more than imply, that Congregational Churches are failing. If so, there is a reason, have any of your correspondents yet touched bottom? Some deplore lack of cohesion, want of organization; life coheres, creates, and gives power to organization. Is life wanting? The question has been asked, Have we a polity? I would ask, Have we principles? Not wordy principles, but principles the spring of action.

One land-mark of Ancient Congregationalism was "purity of communion," this was a necessity of the fundamental truth which distinguished our polity—believers constitute the church. Other denominations, once state associated, have learnt, are learning it, do we continue to hold it fast? Like priest, like people is an old adage, it has truth. Congregationalism makes its own pulpit, how are we to be judged in our care thereof? I noticed some time since a remark from one of our ministers that we had not suffered more than others from pulpit disgrace. What means then paragraph 4 in the Union Committee report of 1880? (See Year Book, page 87) and, shall I say that frantic resolution on page 92, as though one declaration was not enough? And if those recommendations were needed, do we not see therein an evidence of departure from our purity of communion? For should not the pulpit be especially guarded? Until churches resolve to disavow practically such departures from the requirements of the N. T. Church, they manifest departure from N. T. life and blessing. "Be charitable" we are told. We would be, yet if the N. T. be our ground for charity, whoever steps off therefrom is beyond our pale of fellowship, for confidence is impossible, and disunion prevails.

Again: Are we doing work? Where is the new ground being broken up in this wide western world? Where the missionary zeal which breaks forth from our brethren at home and across the

lines? Nothing unifies like work in a common cause: where with us is that unifying power? To find unity in simply upholding each other to have one's own way is anarchy—nothing less, we have been trying that I fear to our hurt. Mr. Editor, these are plain words (Prov. xxvii. 6), may we lay them to heart.

Yet again. What are we to do? Answer: Make a new departure. Are there not churches and pastors willing and ready to unite in recalling the days of church life and pulpit integrity? that will utter principles and keep to them? that will talk less of "rights," and earn their rights by duty done? Better Gideon's three hundred than a craven host. May these truths be pondered, unpalatable though they may be, and God give wisdom and light.

EPAPHRAS.

LAND-MARK REMOVING.

To the Editor of the Canadian Independent.

DEAR SIR,—The above caption appears to me sadly to be a fact as regards Congregationalism, in the closing up, or the sale of some of our old and honoured churches, and the dispersion, and consequent absorption of their attendants among other bodies. Does it not seem sad that among some of our older cities, this should have been made so apparent? First Halifax, N. S., then Zion Church, Montreal, and now we have to add, that in the ancient city of Quebec we find the pastor gone, the doors of the Lord's house closed, and of course the adherents scattered. How was it that at our late union meetings no intelligence of such a probability as this latter was generally communicated? Is Ichabod to be written over us here as a body?

That there were pecuniary difficulties in the way of the pastor remaining, did leak out; but it was hoped that the Missionary Committee could step in, and prevent such a catastrophe as that now referred to. The writer, therefore, was surprised in hearing when on his way to that city, some two or three days since, that the Congregational Church there was closed, perhaps not to be opened again. The Protestant population of the city, we have long known, was diminishing yearly, but why the Congregational Church should be the first to be closed, seems to me a mystery. In Paris, in France, by all accounts, it is growing apace. Why can't we stand and grow here, as well as there? Possibly we have not the right men. But is there only one dear Brother McAll in the world? Yes! our Lord can raise them up. For want of information, the churches have had no opportunity for pleading for such.

I can't understand why Congregationalism should be so different here to what it is in England and in the United States. *There it flourishes and grows.* A fault must exist somewhere. The father of the writer, who was a Nonconformist minister of the old school, took care that his children were thoroughly instructed in the teachings of God's Word, as to church polity, doctrines, and duties. I fear we may have been deficient here, in our homes, and perhaps in our colleges too. One of our young men "of advanced thought" has been known to repudiate any reference being made to our distinctive principles at meetings convened for the professed advancement of those principles in connection with our church work in the country. I hope there are not many of this class, but there may be more than we know.

Some of our younger men in the ministry, and, I fear, of our older ones too, find it apparently easy to change their church relationships, which, if they loved their principles aright, they would not—say, they could not do; and, alas! it seems a more easy thing for some of our church members to take the same course. Some others, both ministerial and lay members might thus, if they had been

willing, have advanced their temporal comfort and ease, but by God's grace, I trust, they have withstood the temptation. For nearly fifty years, the writer has been connected by membership, and nearly forty-six years by ministerial standing with the Congregational body, and never has he seen so much to grieve over as he now sees in this body in Canada, where for nearly twenty-five years he has been permitted to labour, the rest of his time having been spent in foreign mission work, or in England, or in the United States.

It may be, there has been too much of what may be called Red Tapeism in our mission schemes, and not enough of publicity given to the work and decisions of our missionary committees. In England, I think, the help and counsel of secretaries of affiliated societies is sought, and they become, by wish, *ex officio* members of such organizations, as information secured by them in their work proves often of much service. Though in such case as above, such counsel would perhaps be of little avail. Wanting to call the attention of our churches to the first-mentioned painful facts must be my apology for this lengthened letter, for which I hope you may find room, and I remain Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.,

JAS. HOWELL.

Quebec, Aug. 6, 1881.

News of the Churches.

STRATFORD.—Our pastor, Rev. H. Hughes, has been very sick this summer. He is at present spending some holidays in Muskoka to try and recoup his health which greatly needed a rest, and fresh air.

BELLEVILLE.—The church has given a call to Mr. Stacey from England. He has not yet signified his acceptance of the invitation.

CORNWALLIS.—On Sunday, July 31st, seven persons were admitted to the fellowship of this church by profession, six of whom were also baptized. Rev. E. Barker continues to supply for two months, from July 1st, unless the pastorate can be filled earlier. Parties seeking a vacant church may communicate with him in the meantime at Canning, N. S., or with the clerk, Mr. B. Tupper, Kingsport, N. S.

CONGREGATIONAL COLLEGE OF B. N. A.

The Session of 1881-82 will be opened with the usual public service, to be held in the lecture room of Emmanuel Church, Montreal, on Wednesday, September 21st. Candidates for admission are requested to forward their applications and testimonials to me, on or before August the 15th, that time may be afforded for necessary correspondence.

My address till September 8th will be Cacouna, Quebec.

GEORGE CORNISH, L.L.D.,
Secretary.

CACOUNA, July 12th, 1881.

LITERARY NOTES.

WORSHIP IN SONG: A. S. Barnes & Co. New York and Chicago. A new candidate for favour in the form of a hymn and tune book for the sanctuary. Clearly and accurately printed. Edited by an experienced and favourably known musical composer, Dr. J. P. Holbrook. The hymns and tunes appear together, the former classified into twelve divisions, which classification, logically and distinctly made, renders reference at once ready and sure. It seems to be inevitable that hymns must have liberties taken with them which the author never dreamed of. We cannot go to hymn-books for the full originals. We record our protest against such liberties as a rule, having so done we are bound to say that abridgments in this book seem judiciously made.

The hymns selected, old and new, are of that class that wear, and brighten as they wear; and the tunes, new and old, judging from the few we have had time to hum over, are well set to their respective hymns. Old Hundred leads the van, and Dundee (French of the old land) finds its place alongside some of the newest contributions to our sanctuary music. There are 712 hymns, and selections for chanting or special choir-singing. Any church desiring a new hymnal should not forget "Worship in Song."

THE DATE OF OUR GOSPELS: By S. J. Curtis, F. H. Revell, Chicago. A manual of seventy-six pages, chiefly in reply to a book by a Judge Wait, who seeks to prove that the gospels are of the second century, and therefore not written by those whose names they bear. Intended for popular use, it does not profess to enter critically into the question, but quotes largely the conclusions of competent critics. Positively it argues the early date (first century) of the writing of the gospels, from the fact that confessedly Christianity was widespread by the middle of the second century, that Christians had in possession authoritative records of the Saviour's life, that those records were thus early given in a Latin and Syriac version, though themselves written in Greek. These versions, and quotations therefrom by the early fathers, identify those gospels with those we now possess. We are thereby prevented from accepting the later, but led to the acknowledgment of the earlier date in which they were assuredly written. Every new book will find some new readers, and this is worth reading; we, however, cannot view the treatment of the subject herein (save where Judge Wait's book, which has not reached us, has taken hold), as possessing the permanent value of Tischendorf's "When were our Gospels written?" Published by the Tract Societies of England and America.

A COMPEND ON BAPTISM: By William Hamilton, D.D. We noticed the advance sheets of this little work now before us, completed in a slightly book of 235 pages. In its controversial aspect it deals specially with the representative works of Dr. Carson and Dr. Conant (Baptists), and brings the question down to the apprehension of the intelligent reader, who has neither time nor opportunity for learned tomes and linguistic subtleties. It deals principally with the mode, giving numerous examples of the *usus loquendi* in pure English dress, describes Judaic, Old Testament, Johanneic and Christian Baptisms, distinguishing each, and presenting clearly the general arguments urged against the exclusiveness of our Baptist brethren, as to both mode and subject. Congregational Churches are profoundly paedobaptist, and yet we find a growing neglect of an acknowledged ordinance among both ministry and membership. Many of our friends would, therefore, do well to revive their interest in this New Testament requirement by a careful perusal of this really earnest, thorough and scholarly unpretentious compend, fitted alike for pastor and people. Though essentially a religion of life, not of ritual, Christianity is adapted to the requirements of our present state. Simplicity marks the few symbolic rites when perpetuated, because of those requirements. Simplicity, however, does not allow neglect as a lawful influence; therefore, we press for a more careful consideration of the great issue involved in the simple rituals of which baptism—infant baptism—forms an important part.

—I sleep most sweetly when I have travelled in the cold; frost and snow are friends to the seed, though they are enemies to the flower. Adversity is indeed contrary to glory, but it befriendeth grace.—Richard Baxter.

—"He who waits," said Dr. Johnson, "to do a great deal of good at once, will never do anything." For life is made up of little things. We do not live even a minute at a time—and the minute comes to us in a sixtieth part of itself. So should our good-doing be. The little deed and the little word of kindness would spread sunshine everywhere, and a life ruled in its smallest actions by a sense of faithfulness to God in the duties of each day, would be everywhere a source of blessing.