

Our Contributors.

CONCERNING SUPERLATIVES.

BY KNOXIAN

Our readers who have feasted on Ian Maclaren's charming book, "The Bonnie Briar Bush," will remember that one marked characteristic of the Drumtochty men was that they never used superlatives. They were strong men and they used strong language. Strong language is always moderate language. Somebody who knew what he was talking about—which, by the way, is more that a good many people know—has said that it is impossible to estimate the force of an under statement. One of the things too many people never learn is that a scrupulously fair statement, or an under statement of a case, besides being the only kind an honest man should make, is many times stronger than a statement that savours of exaggeration even though there may not be much actual exaggeration. We know of no better way to estimate strength of character than by carefully weighing the language a man uses when he does not know anybody is paying any particular attention to his statements. A strong conscientious man uses moderate language; a man weak or wicked or both deals largely in superlatives.

What makes most people think that judges of the Superior Courts are exceptionally strong men though some of them may not be particularly strong? Mainly because as a rule they speak in moderate, measured, well-considered sentences. If a judge while on the Bench loses his temper, or speaks in exaggerated terms about anybody or anything, he loses influence at once. The public conclude that he is as weak as other men because he speaks just like other men.

Most people think that the President of a bank is a strong man, and he often is a man of that kind. How do the public get that impression? Mainly by reading his annual address to the shareholders of his bank. In that address the President states with scrupulous care the signs of the times in the world of finance. He reviews the business condition of the country for the past twelve months with judicial accuracy, and balances the prospects for the future in a way that makes you feel that if the bank goes wrong next year the blame cannot be laid upon the presiding officer. The shareholders feel that a man who talks in that way can be trusted. They re-elect him and think their money is safe in his keeping.

Supposing that President had during the financial depression filled his annual statement with such gems as these: "Business has gone to the dogs," "The country is financially rotten," "Canada is bankrupt," how much influence would he have? And yet that is about the style in which a good many people, who rate themselves as exceedingly pious, speak about the spiritual condition of the church.

Supposing a bank president believing, as most of them do believe, that we are on the eve of a good business era should say, "Canada is booming," "There are millions in sight," "A hundred million bushels of grain will be raised in Manitoba next year," "Ten millions of people will settle in the North-west next spring," how long would he hold his office? Just while the shareholder were turning him out. Sensible people don't allow men who are afflicted with hysterics and who deal in superlatives to take care of their money. And yet the style of speaking that would make sensible capitalists dispense with the services of a bank president is the identical style that some people indulge in when they are reporting a religious movement.

The transition from superlatives to inflated statistics is easily made. The man who calls every wart a carbuncle and every cold consumption, soon learns to say hundreds when he should say tens. The man who said figures do not lie may have been right from his own point of view but he

ought to have known that while figures are too honest to lie willingly they can be made to lie infamously.

Moral:—If you wish to have the respect and confidence of thoughtful men avoid superlatives except when superlatives are the proper thing to use.

MONDAY MUSINGS.

(BY A CITY PASTOR.)

My mood was not hilarious when I sought my study this morning after breakfast. Throughout August, my Monday mornings are for the most part very subdued in tone. Perhaps I feel it specially this August, because I am taking no holidays, except such as I can snatch between Sundays, resembling much the rest of the farmer's harvest hand, as he carries in the mow between the swift returning loads of grain. I had invited a brother minister from another quarter of the city to come down and help me muse this morning, but he declined on the ground that he was going to learn the secret of the bicycle to-day; so I told him of a shady spot a little up the canal, a nice secluded spot in which to die, and betook myself to my musings alone.

My first reflection this morning was that congregations had been decidedly thin at both services yesterday. The sermons, I had to admit, were equally thin, and the pulpit was not much better filled than the church. To tell the truth, the morning sermon was a very old one, and although I concealed the yellow paper, yet every time I raised my eyes, my people looked as if paying reverent homage to the returning spirit of a once familiar but long departed friend. But this was not the worse. The evening sermon was a very new one, and its timid prattle seemed to avow its all too recent birth.

But still I do not think the congregation had any right to be so small. Of course I knew the reason. That reason was twofold, being partly that the people were away and partly, strange to say, that the people were at home. Now, this was discouraging, for it is next to impossible to avoid judging the greatness of the sermon by the greatness of the congregation. Besides, I felt the slightest touch of wrath as I took the census of various vacant pews, and beheld far more clearly those who were not there, than those who sat before me. As a result my whole service was a mistake. I only read one lesson, and omitted the prayer for Her Majesty, not because she was not there but because I deemed the complete service unnecessary, since so many of her loyal subjects seemed to require intercession much more than she did herself, and when I came to preach, I lapsed into a "talk," and in rather a listless way (supposed to be confidential), I leaned over the pulpit toward the people. But, alas, the people did not lean over the pews toward the preacher, and before I proceeded far, I observed that many of them were following the example of their pastor, and had taken a rest. By this lesson, I profited at the evening service. The congregation was not large, but I settled the fact that it was important, before I gave the Bible to the beadle, and took a last glance at the vestry mirror. I came to feel that if the Sunday was in any way to be crowned with fruit, and my own soul comforted with reward, it must be by an earnestness which should both vindicate my calling to the ministry, and have eternal issue in some soul blessed and strengthened, though such blessings should come to only one. And I made it a *wild* service. I preached about One like unto the Son of Man, whose love and grace were so freely offered; I preached to one, whoever that one might be, whose single soul was waiting for the light and love of God; I preached with one aim, that Christ might be revealed to some enlightened vision; and I know that at least one soul was comforted, and that soul was mine.

K.

FRAGMENTARY NOTES.

BY K.

The holiday season is around again; and thousands are taking advantage of the leisure to recuperate. The trains and boats are crowded; from the hard worked parson to the tolling and careworn seamstress, who is appropriately, in many cases, truly set forth in the "Song of the Shirt."

It must be admitted that the railways and navigation companies are fairly meeting the wants of the public, and it is to be hoped that good dividends will be earned for the shareholders. It is a pleasure to see families, including nurses and children, crowding into steamboats and trains for the long looked for holiday, who, at the very start, would seem to have got fresh courage and vitality.

Large numbers are visiting the lower St. Lawrence this year, especially between Cacouna, Riviere Du Loup, Bic and Little Metis. The former is probably the most important watering place on the Lower St. Lawrence, and is largely patronized by wealthy families from Montreal and the United States. There is a fine view of the opposite shore, which is less than twenty miles distance. Many of the visitors own luxurious and well-furnished houses.

There is a Presbyterian church there, which is open during the season; sometimes it is difficult to obtain supplies. The organist was on hand one morning, and commenced at the regular time, but no preacher; this, however, does not often happen.

Bic is a pretty place and is attracting increased numbers every year. There is beautiful scenery, good drives, and excellent bathing.

Little Metis is really in the parish of Sandy Bay stretching along the shore in circuitous form. What is known as Little Metis ends at the west side of the street which runs to the railway station; and at this point, where the Post office is situated, Sandy Bay commences. Little Metis is rapidly coming to the front, among the popular summer resorts, and in the near future will get there. Increased demand for cottages, and hotel accommodation comes every season, and this season the accommodation is more limited than ever before. The excellent arrangements of the I. C. R., under the management of Mr. Pattinger, ably assisted by Mr. Lizons, the general passenger agent, helps this movement forward and is much appreciated by travellers. The air of Metis is considered the best on the River and for six weeks in the year is crowded with visitors, among whom may be noticed many children leading the nurses, mothers and friends whither so ever they will.

It was estimated that there were over one thousand visitors this season, and if better and increased accommodation could be furnished many more would come. Among the many prominent families of our church which were sojourning for the season were the Rev. Dr. Warden and family, Rev. A. T. Love and family, Rev. Donald Tait and family. There is a Presbyterian Church in the village proper which is open during the season. The Rev. Mr. Love took the services during July and Rev. Mr. Tait for August, and at all services the congregations filled the church, which has been enlarged and painted, and presents a handsome appearance.

There is also a successful mission church at Lagates Point which is open all the year and is supplied by the Rev. Dr. Lamont who is doing faithful work. The Rev. Dr. Warden preached recently in both churches, and his sermons were masterly expositions of divine truth. The learned divine was mute as a clam as to his intentions in the important position which the General Assembly has tendered him, and as to his fitness for which it is no depreciation of others to say that he is eminently qualified.

We had also two ministers (Anglican) from New York, Rev. Mr. Skuyler and Rev.

Mr. Garth. The former preached in the Presbyterian Church to a crowded audience. He gave his experience of life in the great city with thrilling effect. Mr. Skuyler said he is what is called a "Mission Priest." He is in the slums and is evidently doing a grand work. The Rev. gentleman is connected by marriage with Mr. Nelson of Toronto, a highly esteemed member of St. James' Square congregation.

The Rev. Mr. Garth is assistant to the Rev. Dr. Rainsford of New York. The world has still great need for such missionaries. In going out "into all the world," we should not forget "to begin at Jerusalem."

New Carlisle, P. Q.—This is among the most beautiful resorts and is situated on the "Baie des Chaleurs," which can be reached either by the fine steamship *Admiral* at Dalhousie N. B., or the Atlantic Railway at Metapedia on the I. C. R. The Baie referred to above has no rival on the continent. It is about 90 miles in length, extending to Gaspe, and about 25 miles in breadth; and as the fine vessel speeds along between Dalhousie and Gaspe one would think they were going along a single street, the houses lining the beach.

New Carlisle is probably the best place on the Gaspe coast. Good farms, and beautiful farm houses; neatly kept and painted, with beautiful flower gardens in the front, and it is no wonder that few people emigrate from this locality. Farming and fishing are the great industries here, and two or three of the fish merchants have a world wide reputation. Although the great majority of the settlers are French, yet the merchant all speak English freely and fluently, and are most liberal and cordial with their Protestant neighbors.

There is a good Presbyterian Church and manse here and although the congregation is not large still the people are loyal to their principles, and the pastor, Rev. Mr. Sutherland, has the respect and esteem of the entire community. His work extends over seventy miles of territory, but all is carefully cared for and punctually attended to.

His sermons are clear expositions of the doctrines of grace, as set forth in the word of God and the standards of the Church; and the whole service reminds one of the good old days when nothing but Psalms and paraphrases were sung.

Mr. Sutherland is doing good work on the Gaspe coast, and has received many tokens of encouragement.

It is said "that one sower and another reapeth" but it is to be hoped that in this case sower and reaper may rejoice together.

New Carlisle, P. Q., 5th August, 1895.

FOREIGN MISSION WORK.

BY REV. CHAS. A. DOUDIET, M.A.

The recent massacre of missionaries in China, and especially the atrocious outrages which accompanied it, give point to the remark "that a grave responsibility is incurred by the Missionary Associations which allow women to go and work among heathen populations, where such outbreaks are not only possible, but probable."

The fact is that we, as a Church, have widely departed from the system of missionary enterprise instituted by Christ, and followed by His apostles. Our Saviour presented twelve men, to do what we now call "Home Mission Work." "Go not in the ways of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." This work, although less risky than that of the Foreign Missionary was not without its dangers, as we see in Matt. x. But even in this comparatively safe work

MEN ALONE WERE SENT.

The same plan was followed in the sending out of the "seventy" Luke x. These missionaries were not to establish "stations" but had to go from place to place, two by two. If a city did not receive them kindly they were to pass on to another, and the