

SHORTENING DAYS.

VERY early comes the gloaming
At the fading of the day,
All too soon long hours of summer
Vanish from our hearts away;
Though the lights be fair and tender
Gathering in the distant west,
Soon the creeping of the shadows
Lures the weary ones to rest.

Shorter hours for joyous labour,
Lessening time for song and mirth,
Such the tale of waning summer
Every season tells the earth,
And our hearts, made sad by learning,
Say, perhaps, with silent tears—
This, the early close of beauty
Is the story of our years.

Yet we know an earlier fading
Means an earlier, longer rest,
And the weary spirit gladiy
Calls the eventide the best;
Welcome are the hours of darkness
To the eyes grown tired of light,
And, to the exhausted worker,
The repose of early night.

Only, Thou, to whom the darkness
And the light alike are good,
Be with us amid the shadows
That their use be understood;
Stoop toward us in Thy mercy
From the Land of Light above,
And, the hearts grown cold and fearful,
Comfort with Thy gracious love.

Does it matter if the darkness
Bring Thee nearer to the soul?
Light enough is in Thy presence
To irradiate life's whole.
Never lonely nor benighted
Is the heart that leans on Thee,
Saviour, Master, let Thy whisper
In the darkness solace me.

Shortening days bring ever nearer
The long quiet night of death,
Oh, thrice welcome is that evening,
And the passing of the breath;
For the morn that follows after
Shows to me that glorious Place
Where God's children are made happy
In the shining of His face.

MARIANNE FARNINGHAM.

Christian World.

LABRADOR MISSION.

The following extract from a letter of Student Gerrie, who has spent his vacation at Labrador, under the auspices of the mission, will be read with interest, particularly as following that of Rev. J. Squires in a recent number of the CANADIAN INDEPENDENT:—

BONNE ESPERANCE, LABRADOR,
August 10th, 1881

"Work here during the summer has been in a measure pleasant, and I trust profitable. Vessels in the harbour have not been so numerous, I understand, as formerly. The movements of the fish have been somewhat irregular, I think, and so consequently with the vessels. The largest number visited by me in one day was 27. Frequently the church was filled, numbers having to stand for want of seats. Now that the vessels have nearly all gone, our congregations are much smaller. Still they are not without interest, and I hope and pray that some seed sown in weakness may bring forth fruit to God's glory.

"I have collected from the vessels, for the mission, between nine and ten dollars, which is considerably less than that usually received.

"The carpenter is at present working at the church, which will, I hope, soon be completed. It is being boarded round the inside and above. The ceiling being in the form of an arch, will look quite

nice when finished. A porch is to be put up, and when all is done the church will be neat and comfortable, and then I presume it would be in order for warm-hearted friends in the west to present the church at Bonne Esperance with lamps, etc. An organ too, I imagine, would be an acceptable offering. A pulpit Bible has been provided for by the Rev. J. Squires, of Smith's Sound, Newfoundland, who paid us a visit in the latter part of June. Also some Sabbath-school, that is treating itself to new library books, might give pleasure to both themselves and us by sending the books already read, to the Sabbath-school here.

"The day school, under the care of Miss Warriner and Miss Wilkes, is progressing favourably. It is of course not large during the summer months, as the children are scattered round on the different islands at their summer homes, many of them being required at home to 'help the fish.'

"This school is an important part of the mission work here.

"The summer has been cold, with frequent thick fogs, the winter having been unusually mild.

"Yours truly,

"A. W. GERRIE."

News of the Churches.

THE address of the Rev. M. Lowry is changed from Strathroy to Watford. Friends will kindly note.

EMBRO.—The half-yearly church meeting was held on Friday last; the reports were encouraging. The treasurer had a balance on hand after meeting all liabilities. Seven were received into the fellowship of the church. The "Congregational Hymn Book" was substituted for the one now in use. It was also decided to pay off the balance of debt on Church building this fall. The church is in a most prosperous state.—*Courier*.

LONDON.—On Saturday, 10th inst., Miss Julia Tozeland, of St. James' Park, Westminster, was agreeably surprised by a number of her fellow-teachers in the Congregational Sunday-school. The object of the surprise was to present Miss Tozeland with a mark of esteem previous to her departure for Chicago, where she will make her home. Mr. A. T. H. Johnson, on behalf of the teachers, presented the article selected—a handsome marbled eight-day clock—at the same time expressing the regret the school felt at losing one so beloved. A suitable reply was made, and afterwards the evening was spent in a social manner.—*Advertiser*.

OTTAWA.—RE-OPENING OF THE CHURCH AFTER THE ALTERATIONS.—The changes which have been made in the interior of the Congregational Church, at the corner of Elgin and Albert streets, have so transformed that modest looking structure that its most intimate friends must have been taken by surprise at the appearance which it presented yesterday. The unpretending edifice which for years past has given accommodation to the members of the congregation certainly stood in some need of alteration. The members made haste slowly, and instead of constructing a new and pretentious edifice which might not be utilized to its full capacity for years to come, concentrated their energies over the renovation of the present substantial little church and the

construction of a permanent home for the pastor. The latter, which adjoins the church, which is now under course of construction and rapidly nearing completion, is highly creditable to the practical interest which the members of this body show in their church matters. The cost of the renovation of the church itself has been in the vicinity of \$700—somewhat less than that amount—and the whole sum, less some \$75, has been provided for. The present building being ample for the immediate wants of the congregation the exterior of the edifice was allowed to remain untouched and the alterations confined to the interior, and with such success that the building, if the smallest, is certainly about the most comfortable place of worship in the city. Without great size, stained glass windows, or massive organ to convey the idea of grandeur, it is particularly calculated to suit the wants of a body whose service is founded on the idea of love. The lancet windows of the walls still remain, but the light given by them is tripled by the light neutral tinting of the walls which now cease to be tedious to the eye with the glare of the former white. The ceiling has also been judiciously coloured, the neutral tints prevailing here also except in some slight but effective ornamentation. The exposed rafters have been finished in black walnut. On the main floor the pews have all been removed and the building reseated. The favourite auditorium plan has been adopted for the new sittings. Two aisles divide the seats—which are placed in arcs of circles—into three sections. They are all constructed of pine, finished in shellac, and furnished with black walnut caps and other trimmings, and cushioned in crimson repp. The aisles and other portions of the structure have been richly carpeted. The old pulpit has been removed, and a fine platform has been erected on which has been placed the pastor's reading-desk, and which affords room for the choir and the organ in the rear. The lecture room has also been considerably improved, but the work contemplated in it is not yet complete. The organ now in the Church is a new one, and, although last night complete as to its works, was not as far as its external parts were concerned, some of the most effective portions of the ornamental casing yet remaining to be placed in position. The opening services, which took place yesterday, were attended by very large congregations, crowding the church to its utmost capacity. The Rev. Thomas Hall of Kingston, Ont., late of St. John, Newfoundland, occupied the pulpit at both morning and evening services, and on each occasion delivered most interesting and effective discourses. His text in the morning was selected from the 4th chapter book of the Prophet Nehemiah, the last clause of the 6th verse, "the people had a mind to work." In the evening he selected for his text the last clause of the eighteenth verse of the fifth chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians: "Be filled with this spirit." These two subjects afforded the reverend gentleman themes for eloquent and appropriate sermons. The Rev. Mr. Wood, pastor of the church, assisted at both services, as also at the Sabbath-school service, which was held in the afternoon and at which addresses were delivered by both the rev gentlemen.—*Citizen*, Sept. 12.

AN ENLISTMENT CARD.

The North Congregational Church of Springfield, Mass., has struck a good idea, which is not patented. After the Summer vacation, it sends out to each of its members what is called an "Enlistment Card," which they are asked to sign and return to the pastor, each one putting a cross against the things he or she is willing to undertake to do. These are the pledges:

"Sunday Evening Service.

Will attend.

Will invite others who have no church-home.

"Sunday-school.

Will attend as a scholar. (If not already in the school.)

Will invite others.

Will teach a class, if needed.

"Thursday Evening Meeting.

Will attend.

Will invite others.

Will take part by prayer or remarks.

Will take part by recitation of Scripture or by singing.

"Monthly Missionary Meeting.

Will attend.

Will report from some field of missionary work.

"District Visitation.

Will serve as a visitor for one year.

"Correspondence.

Will assist in the work of correspondence with absent members.

"Ladies' Benevolent Society.

Will attend and assist in the work.

"Young People's Association.

Will attend the meetings.

Will assist, if needed, in the literary and social work.

"Parish Fellowship.

Will spend one afternoon (or evening) every month in calling upon families of the parish who reside in the same parish district with myself, giving preference to families not in the circle of my ordinary intercourse."

That church does not believe in becoming an almshouse for the spiritually lazy.

WORDS OF WISDOM.

No house is big enough for two wits to live together.

The wild oats of youth change into the briars of manhood.

No one is ever fatigued after the exercise of forbearance.

That civility is best which excludes all superfluous formality.

Kindness is the golden chain by which society is bound together.

Let us always be cheerful, if life is a burden, let it be a burden of a song.

A house without newspapers and books is like a house without windows.

Ink is like a caustic, which sometimes burns the fingers of those who make use of it.

An indiscreet person is like an unsealed letter, which everybody can peruse.

THE numbers of *The Living Age* for Sept. 3rd and 10th contain Florence, and Walks in England, *Quarterly*; Edward Gibbon, *Blackwood*; Bonaparte, Two Theories of Poetry and Sketches and Reminiscences by Ivan Tourgenieff, *Macmillan*; A Quaker's graveyard, and The Last Journey of Pius IX, *St. James's Gazette*; A German Cremation Hall, and New Aspects of German Life, *Pall Mall*; with instalments of "In Trust, and "The Frere's," and the usual amount of poetry. Published weekly, \$8.00 per year.