

THE

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Thursday, April 19th, 1900.

The increasing interest in Easter celebrations by Presbyterian congregations has been very marked this year. American papers note a similar increase of interest on their side of the line. One of them, commenting upon it remarks—"This is progress." That depends.

Are we to see the American section of the Paris exhibition closed on the Lord's Day and our Canadian section open? The Paris authorities declined to listen to our representations, intimating that they will treat only with the mother country, and not with her colonies. It may be the end of the summer before we reach a decision, if we must first ask Britain to interfere and then through the British Government approach the authorities in Paris. Is there no other way?

We read recently of one Presbyterian minister who had twenty-nine evangelists assisting him during one season of special services. We condemned that man straight off, but when we read that the evangelists were the elders and other members of his own congregation who had shared the labor of the minister in the special services, we took back that condemnation, and made it commendation instead. The man who can thus enthuse his own workers is a man of the right stamp.

It was "Ian MacLaren who said on one occasion, that there is an immense amount of latent power in the plain men and women of every congregation. An old minister, when taking leave of his congregation, declared that he owed

more to one or two of the aged saints of that congregation, who never forgot to pray for him, than to any other influence he had experienced. In every church there are those who are too much occupied with home cares or business engagements to take much interest in church matters. These can be instant at the throne of grace, and can so live amid their other duties that others shall be helped by their life.

It was said that about a score of men did the work at the last Assembly, while the others looked on. We hope they will not work the same twenty so hard this year. Most of them doubtless will be there, but would it not be possible to make them Committee-men ex-officio, and at least keep from repeating the same names in the appointments made. There were many men at the last Assembly whose blood runs swiftly yet, and who can ill brook sitting idle day after day, while the same men report upon and discuss item after item in the Assembly docket. It would be well to train some of these younger men for committee work. There was a beginning last year. It worked well. Why not try it more extensively this year?

There seems to be a very serious leakage in our Presbyterian church somewhere between the primary department and the ministers Bible Class. From reports shortly to be published, of which we have seen advance copies, we are not holding the young people in our Sabbath Schools. It has been said that we need better teachers, it has been suggested that the superintendents might be improved, it has been hinted that there is practically no support for the Sunday School in the homes of our people. In all probability there is truth in each of these charges, and the truth will be found, not in one, but in a statement in which all form some element. What the proportion of blame may be, we do not venture to say. We do say, however, that there is a pressing problem here that should be solved, and even the Century Fund might give way for its discussion at the approaching Assembly.

**The Treatment of the Inebriate.**

There is a bill before the Ontario Legislature at present in which all who seek the good of their fellows should be interested. It proceeds upon the assumption that the craving for strong drink is a disease, and that it should be treated as other diseases. It seeks that special hospitals shall be provided, or, if this is not practicable, that special wards shall be set apart in existing hospitals, in which the victims of strong drink may be treated.

In the discussion in connection with

this Bill it has become very evident that there are two classes of drunkards. There are those who come within the limits of the law, who are the common "drunks", as a physician put it; and there are those who perhaps drink to as great excess, but they are looked after and kept out of the hands of the police. We saw a good illustration recently. Two men, both in a state of helpless intoxication, were swaying at a street corner entreating each other to come along home. Before they had gone more than across the street they fell in a heap, and were gathered in by the police. Their names figured in the next morning's records. Not long afterwards a beautiful carriage and pair drove rapidly round the same corner. In the back sat a lady, richly dressed, and by her side lounged a young man, so helplessly drunk that with the sudden swing round the corner his head lolled to one side and his hat rolled off, unnoticed by him. But he was carried home, and detained there till he had sobered up.

With the one of these it is easy to deal. Instead of sending him down to the common jail for thirty days he could be sent for three months to this special hospital and put under a special course of treatment, just as he would be if picked up with the evidence of smallpox upon him. But the other man also needs treatment, yet he has done nothing that brings him within the grasp of the law. Plainly nothing can be done with him unless he will voluntarily give himself up for treatment in this hospital.

Would men do this? We believe they would. There are those who curse themselves because they have yielded to temptation again. They struggle against the tempter as few men struggle in this life. But, like Jacob, they wrestle with one whose strength is infinitely greater than their own, and he overcomes, not to bless, as did that One who wrestled by Jabbok, but to curse, with a bitter blighting curse. If there were such hospitals, well equipped, as all such should be, these men would be the first to yield themselves up for treatment.

The Legislature is being asked, not only to pass this Bill, permitting the establishment of such hospitals, but it is also asked to grant Government assistance towards the establishment and maintenance of them. We feel confident that will be done. Some of the most influential medical men have united in promoting the Bill, it has been approved by the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, and has been taken in hand by the Prisoners' Aid Association. Other Christian and philanthropic bodies, though not represented upon the deputation that waited upon the Government last week are thoroughly in sympathy with the movement which we trust will soon be fairly established.