

this church, which carries the banner so far as students are concerned, will also give a generous response to our appeals for financial help. Two or three prospective students were met, and we assure them a hearty welcome as soon as they are ready to join our number.

Correspondence.

MR. EDITOR,—There seems to be a somewhat general notion that the accumulation of property is the only evidence of church extension, and that the growth of the church consists in having places of worship, even if they are never paid for or filled. There is also a prevailing opinion that the erecting of mission buildings is essential to missionary work, and that the church which does not thus spread out necessarily becomes selfish, and is destined to crumble away.

Such reasoning, however, is based upon wrong principles, is not sustained by experience, and is contrary to well established rules of commercial enterprise.

It has long been considered a weakness to have branch places of business, and whenever an attempt has been made in this direction it has generally turned out to be a weakening and expensive speculation.

Who does not know that it is the steady perseverance of the concentrated energies that commands success—a result achieved by the economical concentration of power, instead of the faculties being wasted and lost by diffusion? Life is too short, and man's ability too circumscribed, to be wasted by being spread out over too extended a surface.

The river which spreads its waters over too broad a bed is of no service; it hardly floats a light canoe. But concentrate its waters to a narrow channel, and mighty ships float upon its bosom, carrying the commerce of the world.

If, therefore, this principle is true in commerce and in nature, we fail to conceive why it is so frequently lost sight of in the management of churches.

Our experience as a denomination has not been very satisfactory in the matter of spreading out, and surely it is unwise for any city church, not already overcrowded with workers, to diminish its power and impede its progress by erecting additional buildings which it cannot afford to pay for, simply because a few restless spirits are filled with the combustibility of a new idea.

Hobby riding should be done at one's own expense. The fact is we have far too many churches, and so long as these are half-filled and burdened with debt it seems not only unwise, but absolutely wrong, to increase the bondage or multiply the burden.

It is a very simple thing to pass a vote to erect a new church and put a mortgage upon it, but it is just as

foolish as it would be for a merchant with a full stock of merchandise to purchase a surplus quantity and then sign promissory notes at long time, without even the remotest idea how these notes would be paid for when due. When a merchant adopts this course, his credit soon receives a severe shock, and we fail to see why a church should not be subject to the same distrust. There is also another feature in connection with the unnecessary building of churches which needs looking at, and that is the questionable means used to pay for them. Bazaars, tableaux vivants, theatrical entertainments, lotteries, auctions, fan drills, broom drills, are not perhaps absolutely wrong in themselves; but when employed as a means for raising money to pay off the debt upon Saint Mortgage Church, I say in all earnestness that they are shameful, and had such means been used in the temple of God, in the early history of the church, the same rebuke might have been administered, "Take these things hence; make not My Father's house a house of merchandise."

We most earnestly raise our voice against the unnecessary building of mission churches, and against the *modus operandi* to raise the money to pay for them. Not that we are against missions, for we are strongly in favour of them, but it is our firm conviction that the present policy of building churches renders true missionary work almost impossible.

Let there be less necessity, and therefore less concern for church debts, less discussion about finances, and allow every member to contribute as his or her conscience dictates, without their gifts being subject to monthly or quarterly microscopic analysis, for when a committee thus scrutinize the treasurer's ledger, they usurp the office of conscience, and destroy one of the foundation principles upon which church fellowship is based.

Let the young people of our churches use their time and powers in teaching the ignorant, reforming and reclaiming the drunkard, brightening the lives and homes that are dark and sad, helping the poor and needy, and in trying to bring the non-churchgoers to know God in Christ.

Let each church employ a missionary to labour among those who do not attend places of worship, and a church which spends its money in this way will soon be filled, and its power will be felt and respected and Christianity will cease to be regarded as a question of dollars and cents.

S. HUXLEY.

Montreal.

SAYS the *Pall Mall Gazette*: It is distressing to those who value the relics of the book world of today, nevertheless it is a fact, that the original manuscript of "The Pickwick Papers" has been secured by a wealthy New York citizen, much to the delight of the idol worshippers of that city."