

Our Contributors.

THAT OLD BUILDING.

BY KNOXONIAN.

It is said that the following dialogue is heard in some town in the Western States:—

Stranger (in a lately-settled popular Western resort): "What is that enormous building across the way?"

Guide: "That's a hotel."

Stranger: "And that large, handsome brick structure?"

Guide: "That's the club-house, sir."

Stranger: "I see. Well, what's that long, odd-looking building behind the enclosure?"

Guide: "The grand-stand at the race-course?"

Stranger: "Oh, yes. It's all very beautiful, but I should think the authorities would remove that unsightly building adjoining the hotel away from the main thoroughfare. What is it? Some sort of a hen house?"

Guide: "No, sir. That's a church."

This dialogue might easily be adapted to some rural districts in Ontario.

What fine brick building is that across the way, surrounded by fruit and ornamental trees, with a nice flower garden in front?

That, sir, is the residence of one of our successful farmers. He settled on that farm many years ago, very poor; he worked hard, lived economically, paid for and improved his land and has a good round sum at interest. He lived for many years in a shanty, but has that fine house now.

And what solid-looking stone building is that a little farther down the road?

That, sir, is the residence of another successful farmer. In fact the farmers in this locality, with two or three exceptions, live in houses like these.

And what is that large frame building in the rear of the brick house surrounded by smaller wooden buildings?

That, sir, is the barn. It is eighty feet long, sixty feet wide, has a stone foundation, and cost a lot of money.

What are the smaller buildings beside the barn used for?

These, sir, are the cow and horse stables. They are well arranged and well kept. The winters in this country are generally long and cold, and animals such as the cow and horse have to be well cared for. Some of the cows in these stables are highly bred, and are worth hundreds of dollars.

And what is that old, dingy, dilapidated, dirty-looking little frame building in the corner?

That, sir, is the Presbyterian Church!

Let us reverently draw near, and take a look at that building. Let us examine it closely, for it is the outward and visible representative of Presbyterianism in the locality in which it stands.

The colour of its weather-beaten sides is simply indescribable. The elements have done the painting, and when the elements paint a building for forty or fifty years it is pretty hard to say what colour they have made it. A few of the clapboards have become tired, and are resting themselves by hanging loosely in a free and easy sort of way. Some of the window panes have departed, and left an opening for the elder's hat. Perhaps they have "joined the Methodists" as a good many of the people have done during the last twenty years. The corner is knocked off one of the chimneys. There are holes in the roof. The sermon may be dry, but the people need never be on wet Sundays. Looking in, you see the old rusty red stove stand near the door, and two lines of rusty pipes leading to the opposite end of the church. The lines are not parallel—they twist and turn like a snake fence. Below each hole at which they enter the end wall there is a beautiful streak running clear down to the floor, such as no painter could paint. The plaster is off in several places. The pews owe nothing to modern church architecture, and the floor owes nothing to the broom. The pulpit resembles a barn-swallow's nest, plastered high up against the end wall. Going up that pulpit stair must be a serious thing for a preacher weary with a long journey from his last station. The law of compensation, however, works even here. When he looks down from the lofty eggshell he can console himself with the thought that he stands high in the church.

Let us say all the good things we can about this old building. Forty or fifty years ago it was a credit to those who built it. Some of the early settlers worked at it with their own hands. They drew every board, every stick of timber and every shingle used in

its construction. Money was scarce in those early days, but they gave what they could. That old building when opened for worship represented the united consecrated effort of noble men and women who wished to plant the Church of their fathers in this new land. Their church was then the best building in the neighbourhood. Mark that fact. It is now the worst. Mark that fact too.

We hear a great deal of nonsense about wealthy people in cities spending money on fine church buildings—money that might be used for missions and colleges. The difference between some frame churches built fifty years ago, and the shanties in which most of the builders lived was greater than the difference between St. Andrew's, Toronto, and the residences of the men who put up that noble structure. All things considered, the early settlers put up better buildings for the worship of God than almost any congregation puts up now. All honour to the men who put up the old church. The late Sir Hugh Allan used to sail a tug boat on the St. Lawrence. That tug may have cost him more thought, more labour and, in proportion to his means, more money than the *Parisian*. The old church, all things considered, really cost more than a new one would cost; but some of the old men who are gone were more willing to build than some of the young men are. And, truth to say, some of the old men who survive are not as liberal as they were fifty years ago. That's the trouble. There is too much reason to fear that Canada is a country in which

Wealth accumulates, but men decay.

We have no quarrel with the old church. The discreditable thing is that everything around the old church has improved, but the Church has gone back. Every house in the neighbourhood has been improved but God's. Farms worth \$300 or \$400 are worth \$4,000 or \$5,000. Cattle that looked like skeletons on which decent animals might possibly be built have given place to well-bred stock. The old cradle and the old scythe have made way for the reaper and mower. The old No. 4 plough and the triangular drag have been exchanged for the iron plough and the harrow. The family ride to town in a carriage. The home-made fabrics have been superseded by silk. The corduroy road is exchanged for the railway. Everything has improved, but the old church has gone back.

Well, if anybody has read this far, and is not convinced that a new church should be built or the old one repaired, there is no use in saying anything more to him.

CHRIST'S SECOND COMING.

(Continued.)

MR. EDITOR,—I closed my last letter by objecting to our opponents' mode of exposition in taking only a part instead of the whole of a Scripture statement, as handling the word deceitfully, when taking it as God has given it would upset their theory. For if all that are Christ's are raised when He comes, then none could be left, or none would be saved after He comes. And the same in John v. 28-29, "All that are in their graves." The righteous and wicked must be raised together as stated. Were we to conduct our ordinary business in that way it would collapse in less than a day. Verse 24, "Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power." The kingdom evidently is the kingdom of grace. All the ordinances will cease, for all the saved will be gathered in. In Matt. xxviii. 18 Christ tells His disciples, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." In a sense it may, and sometimes is, called a kingdom of power. Kingdom denotes power, and on that basis having this power He sends forth His disciples to disciple all nations. Having put down this power proves that all nations must have been brought in, and the promise been fulfilled, Isa. xi. 9; Hab. ii. 14, the earth filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. And Heb. viii. 11, All shall know the Lord. Verse 25 is also clearly against the premillennial theory.

All His enemies are to be His footstool before He leaves the Father's right hand. And how can that be said if He is to come before the millennium? Then "the little season" when the great enemy is to be loosed, and to go forth to deceive the nations, which are in the four quarters of the earth. Is he going to

deceive them after being cast into the lake of fire and brimstone forever? Verse 26, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death," by which I understand that death is to continue till after the judgment recorded in Rev. xx. 11-15, the termination of all existing conditions. As stated in 2 Peter iii. 7, "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." Rev. xxi. 4, "And there shall be no more death," whereas there will be death in millennium times; according to Isa. lxxv. 20, there is death of both righteous and wicked.

And, as if to prevent the possibility of doubt on this important subject, in Acts iii. 10-21, "Whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things," which I think is clear. In Eph. i. 10, All are to be one.

The sixth point I wish to present is that the final abode of believers will be with Christ, where He was with God before the world was, John xvii. 4, 5, 11-24; John xii. 26; John xviii. 36; 2 Tim. iv. 18; 2 Cor. v. 11; 1 Peter i. 4; Col. i. 5. It seems to be a very natural thing for any one who is living in a tenement, without any more permanent lease than the good pleasure of the proprietor, to secure at the earliest opportunity a more permanent residence, on as reasonable terms as possible. Now we are all living here, tenants at the will of the Great Proprietor. How many can say we know that when our earthly house is dissolved we have a building of God, a house made without hands, eternal in the heavens? In John xvii. 4, 5 the Saviour tells the Father He has finished the work given Him to do. "And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was."

In verse 11 He tells His disciples He is "no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We are." And in verse 24 He says to the Father, "I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me; for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world."

These texts set aside two of our opponents' statements. First, in verse 11 the two parts which they assert compose Christ's people. They affirm that those who have lived and died and are raised, and those who are living when He comes and are changed, will compose the bride. And the others to hold or occupy a subordinate or inferior place in the kingdom, whereas the prayer of the Saviour is that they may be one, as He and the Father are one. Second, in verse 5 He asks to be glorified with the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. And in verse 24 that all those whom the Father had given Him "be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory." The Saviour designates them as those given Him, and, before leaving, commits their keeping to the Father, in order to their being one. As they were without distinction I cannot see how it could be made plainer than it is, the same as in 1 Cor. xv. 23. They are Christ's at His coming.

It is the same with these adventists all the time. What they cannot garble and mutilate they deny. How can it be otherwise unless they give up their unscriptural delusion, as I cannot find one text in the whole Bible, not even by taking the literal rendering of their strongest texts? They say the rest of the dead in Rev. xx. 5 are those before the great white throne. I ask are those in their mortal and unchanged state as they are represented in Rev. xix. 11. They certainly are not, for all before that throne are in the state they will be in forever. There will be no more change of state in either soul or body except it be the advancement in holiness or that of misery and woe as we may believe that even in eternity there will be a progress in the one or the other without end. But, again, where is there any connection between Rev. xx. 5 and verses 11-15? I cannot find it. We are led to expect them living at the end of the thousand years. After this there is the little season when Satan is loosed, of which our opponents take little notice. Neither of their so-called millennium when the Saviour comes.

From a careful study of those points and the plain Scripture texts establishing them, it must be evident to every intelligent and impartial mind that there can