

The Presbyterian College Journal.

Manuscripts should be sent to the Editor-in-Chief; Business communications to the Manager.

News of Graduates earnestly solicited.

Subscribers who do not receive their numbers regularly are requested to notify the Manager, Room 20. Subscriptions for the current session now due.

MONTREAL, P.Q., NOVEMBER 20th, 1883.

HAD several members of our editorial staff been appointed earlier in the year, the changed appearance of the JOURNAL, so noticeable this month, would possibly have been effected with the first number of the volume. As will be observed, tinted covers have been adopted, and also a less gaudy title page has been substituted for that of former years, which, it is felt, was sadly lacking in good taste—the cut of the buildings being especially barbarous and unintelligible. We hope these changes, as well as the new arrangement of the contents, will meet with general approval.

THE constitution of our Philosophical and Literary Society requires that at least two public meetings shall be held during each session. Accordingly next Friday evening, in the David Morrice Hall, a debate will take place, which all friends are cordially invited to attend. It is pretty well understood that brevity and vivacity will characterize the speaking, and that the remaining features of the programme will be agreeably varied. After the meeting, when the building is thrown open for inspection, we shall be glad to welcome any or all of our city subscribers to the JOURNAL office, Room 20. Step right in and inspect our comfortable headquarters!

We are glad to hear of a movement in some of the city congregations in the direction of looking up university students and welcoming them to church services. Our proverbially "cold" Presbyterians are beginning to realize that, after all, the doubtful privilege of sitting in isolated pews from Sabbath to Sabbath, unnoticed and apparently uncared for, is not exactly calculated to inspire Christian sentiments in the breast of any stranger, however retiring he may be in disposition. The reciprocal effects of cordiality and personal attraction are powerful; and it is thus a promising sign to see the ice of formality gradually melting beneath the rays of brotherly warmth. High time is it for definite action on the part of residents. Young men coming to the city from the country very easily fall beyond healthful influences, and therefore no effort is misspent which aims at gathering them within the fold, and making them feel at home even in a strange city.

There is a keen competition among the more ambitious of our students this session, and every moment, apart from the claims of base-ball, sleep, and an occasional spurt on the race course after breakfast, is pressed into service to keep the grindstone moving. Some even take their notes to table, and seek to assimilate at once both intellectual and carnal food; while others are storing up vast quantities of notes against the month of March. Even the sacredness of the midnight hour is ruthlessly invaded, and sleep deferred till morning. But it was reserved for the ingenuity of a junior to bring the Sabbath into use, and unite practical utility with a profound regard for orthodoxy. He proposes to spend

his Sundays in composing sermons for next summer's campaign, and to appropriate the time thus saved in the holidays to the more secular departments of theological study. Granting it is correct to preach on the Sabbath, there seems to be an *a priori* propriety in preparing on the Sabbath to preach.

No man is fit to be a theological professor who is not in sympathy with the present necessities of the church. Doubtless this is one of the chief reasons why the professors of Toronto Baptist College are required to spend at least two or three months every year in actual mission work. Other denominations may learn a lesson here. It is not enough that, by preaching during the summer months, the students should gain a practical knowledge of the life-work before them. Such experience is valuable, but should be supplemented by the suggestions and counsels of those who are more constantly and more directly engaged in the work. By going forth on the mission field, those who train the coming generation of ministers would, perhaps, be enabled more thoroughly to adapt their drill to the times we live in. Abstract knowledge, accumulated through the ages, is all very excellent in its way; but it will not count for much unless one knows how to use it in the exigencies of the present century; for even some of the maxims of Paul are inappropriate for to-day. The world changes rapidly. In order to succeed, we must make ourselves acquainted with all the varying phases of modern life, and this is best accomplished by personal contact with the people. A course of lectures in any department of theology should aim, not so much at imparting knowledge, as at inculcating right methods of dealing with men; for that is really the ultimate problem to which we come in the course of our studies; How can we influence the world for good? The question is surely not satisfactorily answered by cramming our heads with information and long-winded arguments. The spiritual is too often sacrificed for the advancement of the intellectual. The application of professorial prelections needs a direct bearing upon life as it is. We are of opinion that it is highly desirable for theological lecturers to participate in mission work in some form or other. Our own respected staff is not lacking in this respect; indeed, they are seldom out of the pulpit. Their example is praiseworthy and productive of good. Water never rises above its own level. Like professors, like students.

IMPORTED MINISTERS.

FOREIGN ministers are the only dry goods imported to America free of duty. So Dr. John Hall says, and he ought to know, since himself is a foreign importation. The suspicion is entertained in some quarters that the great New York preacher's witty category applies with peculiar appropriateness to the Canadian pulpit. While our politics and other walks of life partake more or less of a national character and are distinctively Canadian, it must be confessed that a purely exotic tendency characterizes the pulpit. All, or nearly all, of our leading charges irrespective of denomination are filled by foreigners, some of whom, at least, deserve to be distinguished as pre-eminently specimens of public dry goods. It has long been a mooted question whether or no our