

THE
CANADIAN INDEPENDENT.

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LIKING DIFFICULTIES.

IN an address delivered at the last Conference of his Pastor's College, Mr. C. H. Spurgeon says that the man is blessed who likes difficulties. And no cruer thought was ever uttered than this. Of course, Mr. Spurgeon is speaking of difficulties in Christian work, and especially the difficulties of preachers and pastors. But his remark applies in any and every direction.

No man is without his difficulties in this world. God seems to fill our pathway with obstacles, and then require of us that we surmount every obstacle and advance. And He does this in wisdom. Difficulties call forth what is best and strongest and manliest in men. They call faith and hope, courage and patience. And, for this reason, no true man will ever complain and whine when they thicken around him. Indeed, to every true man the sight of difficulties brings exhilaration. It stimulates him to a mightier endeavour than he would otherwise put forth. And putting forth such endeavour, he can from the outset rejoice in an assured victory, and no small victory at that.

There are many of our ministerial brethren in this land whose lot is in some respects very uninviting. Difficulties beset them behind and before, on the right hand and the left. Blessed are they if they find delight in grappling their difficulties and in overcoming them. There are those who have to struggle against the disadvantages which come from insufficient means. They labour diligently, faithfully, continuously, and they receive but little in the way of pecuniary remuneration. They have to deny themselves in some fashion every day. And, what is worse, they know very well that those for whom they labour are not doing what they might do for them. They know that pennies come where pounds should come. Blessed are they if they not only bear but like the difficulties of poverty for the Master's sake. There are those who have to deal with foolish, unreasonable, perverse men. They are planning for the best interests of Christ's kingdom, and their plans are frustrated here and there by the narrowness, the opinionativeness, the self-importance and self-glorification of those who should cooperate with them. Blessed are they if they can face such difficulties with cheerful heart. There are those who have to deal with dead, formal, worldly churches. They are devoting themselves to the furtherance of the Redeemer's cause; but their purposes fail because of the coldness, the apathy, the manifest inconsistencies and infidelities of their Christian associates. Blessed are they if they can meet such difficulties with unflinching faith. But why should not this blessedness come to all?

If God places us in any sphere whatever, the work that we find there, whatever may be its peculiarities, is of His appointment. And if there be serious difficulties there, we may depend upon it that our vanquishing them is part of the duties which He assigns us. And that should be enough to enable us to calmly bear any difficulty, and to do more, to glory in all our tribulations.

THE RELIGIOUS NEWSPAPER.

THE influence of a good religious newspaper as a constant visitor in the family, we think is greatly underrated. It is regular food for the mind, and is a constant invigorator of the family thinking.

In a well-conducted religious newspaper there are many points discussed in brief articles, and much information communicated from sources to which few of the readers themselves have access. It may require only ten minutes to read and possess what it may have cost the writer half a day to produce. What an amount of labour is thus represented in a single sheet! Can such a collection of valuable matter be read, week after week, without exerting a very decided influence on the reader?

Making all allowance for any indifferent matter which even a religious paper may contain, there is enough of a truly valuable character furnished during the year to render it cheaper, in a pecuniary point of view, than any similar amount of matter contained in books. While the paper should not set aside the use of books, its value ought not to be overlooked, as it ministers to our ever-recurring wants, and refreshes the mind in those hours that lie between business or more systematic study.

It is not a fanciful idea that a difference is discernible between a family in which a religious newspaper is well and regularly read, and one into which such an educational messenger never enters. It may not be always easy to describe the difference, but it is felt in many ways to exist. In regard to the operations of the Church especially, you feel a wideness and freshness in such a family which you find not where the paper is absent. How can it be otherwise? The very selfishness which excludes a religious paper from the family is already a sad contraction. The absence of the information which such a paper alone can give, makes the narrowness which you feel to exist still more oppressive. All pastors know what this contractedness is, though it may be difficult to describe it.

If any have been tempted by the severity of the times to dismiss their newspaper, we beg them to consider the matter. However much you may feel the necessity of economy, you cannot afford to suspend your Church paper. What you save by it in money, you will certainly lose in that which is much more valuable and precious.

The great design of a religious newspaper

is to do good, not alone by publishing what everybody believes, but what only a few may believe; publishing the latter because the few may possibly be in the right, and if they are not, their utterances will at any rate serve to awaken thought and elicit profitable discussion; thus helping, it may be, to preserve religious opinion from the dangers of stagnation. It is probable, therefore, that now and then we shall insert an article which some subscribers whom we esteem, and whose favour we desire to have, will not like; and we believe that we can afford to trust to the good sense of them all for the continuance of their kind regards, even though we may have inadvertently trodden upon their tenderest corns. They want a paper that shall reflect all shades of view which are consistent with charity towards God. They wish to know what other men are thinking, as well as to see reflected their own pet thoughts. They are accustomed to suppose that there may be good in things of which they themselves had never thought of, or thought of only crudely; and are therefore willing to be enlightened by candles which are not of their own dip.

NEWFOUNDLAND CONGREGATIONAL HOME
MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The annual meeting of this Society was held in the lecture room of Queen's Road Chapel, St. John's, Feb. 27th, the Rev. Thomas Hall presiding. The attendance was large, and much enthusiasm was manifested as the various speakers pleaded with ability the claims of the Society. Every year shows a deepening interest in this good work, and steady progress. The Society is yet in its infancy, and the means at its disposal is small; but, through the blessing of Almighty God, it is accomplishing a precious work.

There is a wide and needy field for missionary effort in Newfoundland. Preachers and teachers are required in many parts. It becomes the duty of all who have means and influence to employ them to the glory of God.

This Society is trying faithfully to contribute somewhat to the general good of the colony. It will be seen by the report of the Secretary that, during the past year, the work of education has been combined with that of the missionary. It is the earnest desire of the Committee to assist other settlements to establish schools. There are many destitute places looking to them for help; they are reluctant to refuse, but, without a larger income, it is impossible to do more. Will the readers of this lend a helping hand? Every one can do something more than has been done in the past.

NINTH ANNUAL REPORT OF NEWFOUNDLAND CONGREGATIONAL HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

In presenting the report of the Society's operations for the past year the Committee regret not being in a position to place before you much information respecting the various mission stations. Reports from Random, Twillingate and Bay de North, from some unaccountable cause, not having come to hand; consequently, this report will be rather meagre.

The Committee regret having to record the death of their venerable and beloved missionary, Rev. Geo. Hanington, in July last. Eight years since he became the pioneer of this Society, in Rendell Harbour, Trinity Bay, where, during that time, he laboured most indefatigably for the Master, faithfully doing the work of an evangelist and giving full proof of his ministry; God blessing his work and giving him souls for his hire. Through his effort a church has been built and a school established where none existed before, thereby giving the present generation the benefit of a good education. The people were much attached to him, for he possessed all the qualifications necessary to endear himself to those amongst whom he laboured. He was remarkable for his gentlemanly and courteous bearing, his amiability and kindness of disposition, calm and placid temperament, combined with great firmness of purpose. Having finished the work God gave him to do, he peacefully put off the mortal and put on immortality. His death was very sudden, so that it may be truly said, "He died in harness," having preached twice on the previous Sabbath. A few hours illness terminated his useful life. His last words were, on entering the valley, "I am going home." The deceased gentleman was in his 68th year, and was interred in Rendell Harbour cemetery, amidst the scenes of his labours. All legal claims being met, the residue of his property was left to the Society.

The Committee feeling the importance of immediately filling the vacancy caused by the death of Mr. Hanington, after careful consideration, engaged the services of Mr. John