

regret, regret the more that we dare scarce'y promise amendment, comforted, however, by the knowledge that whosoever among men or angels occupied our seat it could not possibly be otherwise with him than it is with us. It is difficult to edit to please all men—sevenfold more difficult to represent and speak for a denomination; for when one has pretty strong feelings and opinions of his own, it is hard to repress one's individuality, that it shall not be more visible than the face and figure of the Church. No doubt, our comments on men and things are sometimes wrong and lob-sided or misleading, do our brethren not know that we shall be delighted to give insertion to their refutations, corrections, amendments, and supplements? We are astonished that they do not favour us more frequently; and surely there are thoughts in many brains in country manse or cottage, these long winter nights, such as might do good if printed in our columns. Admitting, however, all our faults, we are none the less convinced that our readers get splendid value for threepence a month, nay, that they can get no such value for their money in the length and breadth of the land; indeed, one almost blushes to think that you can get a copy of the *New Zealand Presbyterian* for the price of half a glass of bad beer or half a bad cigar, or a couple of oysters! We were desirous of continuing this generous incongruity, but, alas! a heavy, heavy bill still due to our printer, reminds us of Bankruptcy Acts and Debtors' Courts, and winding up, and collapse and ruin; and with grief we have to announce that the price must be henceforth raised one halfpenny per month on each copy, and so let our readers note that they will have to pay next year, 4s., instead of 3s. 6d. per annum, to have our periodical sent them by post. No one will leave us for the sake of a halfpenny a month! If any one grudges 4d. a month for us, we must be made of sorry stuff indeed. So we go to work again with a good heart and good will—not caring much to be able to trace the results of our work, content to know that they are *there*, and that all true and honest labour passes from us to the custody of the great Taskmaster, who renders to every man according to his work."

Correspondence.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

SUBSCRIBER.—"A thousand years," was a misprint for "a hundred years."

REV. D. MCKINNON.

To the Editor of the Canadian Independent.

DEAR SIR,—In reference to a letter from Manilla in your last week's issue, allow me to say that I made no attack on Rev. D. McKinnon. It will be time enough to champion his cause when such an attack is made. In stating that "one reason he gave for resigning his charge was that he no longer believed in infant baptism," I only said what I was given to understand on what I believed to be good authority. If he did not change his views on the subject it was sufficient to deny the statement. Your correspondent not being a member of the Church, I take no notice of what he says in the first paragraph of his letter.

R. MACKAY.

Kingston, Ont., July 30th, 1881.

To the Editor of the Canadian Independent

MR. EDITOR,—We are sorry that the Rev. D. McKinnon's name has been published in such a way in your columns of July 28th, by one named "Justice," the Rev. D. McKinnon being a young man of good character, talent, and ability, having the good wishes of the Church and hoping that wherever called to work for the Master, that his labours will be

abundantly blessed. In that article, written by "Justice," contradicting a letter published in your columns of July 14th, by the Rev. R. McKay, containing a report of the Manilla Congregational Church since the revival of 1874 "Justice" said that that statement made by the Rev. Mr. McKay concerning the Rev. D. McKinnon's view of infant baptism is not correct, and that whoever informed the Rev. R. McKay of it knew that he or she was not telling the truth. We believe it a duty devolving upon us to contradict "Justice," and to give the following as stated by the Rev. D. McKinnon at a Church meeting called for the purpose of hearing his reasons for resigning his charge, to substantiate Mr. McKay's statement as correct. He first stated that it was not owing to financial matters, neither was it through any unkindness on the part of the people, but one reason was that when he first came with us that he was an out-and-out Congregationalist; but that he no longer believed in infant baptism, which he said was his main reason, and stated that wherever he preached he wanted to preach the truth as taught in the Bible, and that infant baptism was not taught in the Bible. He pressed that his resignation would be accepted, and at the same time gave the Deacons to understand that afterward he would be open to be recalled if the Church saw fit to do so with his view of infant baptism. The Church, after hearing his reasons, unanimously accepted his resignation. "Justice" may say that we are reflecting upon Mr. McKinnon, so we are compelled to give the true statement of his resignation.

With gratitude we acknowledge Rev. Mr. McKay's visit to Manilla a blessing to the church, having realized God's presence in all the services in which he had taken part during his short stay with us, and substantiate that article written by him in the INDEPENDENT of July 14th, as highly approved by us.

Signed in behalf of the Church.—D. BLACK, J. MOSHIER, J. MCLEAN, and A. H. MCINNIS, Deacons; J. MCINTYRE, Secretary. Manilla, Aug. 5th, 1881.

[This communication from the officers of the Church must be considered conclusive and ends the correspondence in our columns. Ed. C. I.]

THOUGHTS ON OUR POSITION.

ANOTHER VIEW.

To the Editor of the Canadian Independent.

DEAR SIR,—As an old Congregationalist who has long taken a deep interest in the welfare of the Churches, and who has thoughtfully studied their condition and prospects, will you allow me to offer a few remarks on the present outlook?

I adopt "Mnason's" petition, and cordially agree with him in all that he has written, but in my opinion the causes of our denominational weakness are but barely touched upon in his letter.

The patient naturally shrinks at the sight of the physician's instrument, although a painful operation may be necessary to the saving of his life; moreover, he would much rather submit to gentler treatment, and go through life crippled or disfigured so long as the assurance that life would be spared, was held out to him.

This appears to be our position. Touch us where you will, educationally, financially, ecclesiastically, spiritually, there is comparative stagnation and weakness. We have doctored ourselves again and again, but still growth and strength come not to us.

Our college, instead of being our strongest has been one of our weakest points. So deeply is this felt, that not once in a generation do our city churches flourish under a pastor educated and trained therein. It is a sad fact that there is not a church of a membership of 200 of

which one of its *Alumni* is pastor. Amid the excitement of the late Union Meetings I believe a radical change was proposed, or thought of, but it occurs to me that our churches should take the initiative by first providing means to increase the efficiency of the faculty, then by selecting young men of speaking power, of thought and activity, with spirituality of life for training. We have a superabundance of M. A's. and B. A's., but a sad lack of pulpit power.

Financially we are on the verge of nowhere, principally, to my thinking, on account of the plan adopted by our Missionary Society of granting aid to churches for a longer period than five years. Any Congregationalist Church unable to stand alone after this period, might be reasonably handed over to another denomination. The need of a general plan of systematic giving, upon which all of our churches should be expected to act, is another source of financial weakness.

Then ecclesiastically—dare a layman like myself touch upon this? We know full well the functions of a Congregational Church, the importance of care as to the character of its membership and discipline, and its absolute independence of other churches so far as the management of its own affairs is concerned, but, granting this, there is a power in unity of action on questions affecting the whole body which it is to be feared is practically ignored or forgotten. Charity towards those who, although trusting in the same Saviour and working towards the same end, cannot or do not follow the same method, is what we should pray for. There is much in every Church that its members deplore, but surely the very knowledge of this should be an incentive to unity when a higher and nobler catholicity of mind demands our common action. Divisions in the Church give a cry to the sceptic, and the loss of many a precious soul will have to be answered for by the Church at large (all sections), which has all through the ages been torn and troubled by divisions which the exercise of charity would have prevented. Mnason has written both forcibly and wisely as to the necessity for that individual responsibility devolving upon us as Christians which we should more distinctively realize. Are we living branches of the living vine, or simply nominal Christians with names to live, yet dead? It behoves us to see well to this, for otherwise we shall be weak indeed. Let us not be judges of one another, but rather helpers, relying each one solely upon "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ." Yours truly,

THOMAS ELGAR.

550 Church-street, Toronto,
July 29th, 1881.

Denominational Notes.

—The Boston *Congregationalist* says:—"The conferring by Yale College upon Rev. Alexander Hannay of the degree of Doctor of Divinity will, we think, give nearly as much satisfaction to the very many friends whom that gentleman made in his hurried trip last year among us, as it is sure to give—we may say—to the whole body of Congregational churches on the other side of the sea, to whom he belongs, and whom he so admirably serves and represents. It was an act especially graceful in the time chosen for it, inasmuch as this warm right hand of honour stretched out in this Jubilee Year from our oldest Evangelical Congregational university to the official representative of English Congregationalists, just as they are gathering up themselves for great retrospection and greater purpose and foresight for the future, can but emphasize that feeling which unifies all who, speaking the same tongue, and revering the same ancestors, hold substantially the same

principles, and labour for one common end. Yale surely will lead in the autumnal meeting at Manchester; having thus among her honorary alumni the chairman, Dr. Henry Allon, the secretary, Dr. Alexander Hannay, and one of the chiefest of all chief speakers, Dr. R. W. Dale. Would that all such honorary degrees were as wisely bestowed, and were as richly freighted with the universal concession of the right to be.

[We suppose that Yale thought it best to anticipate the inevitable. Everyone who speaks or writes about Mr. Hannay uses the prefix "Dr." We shall now be saved the trouble of correcting MS. coming to us thus, and Honour was never more worthily conferred. Ed. C. I.]

THE BIBLE.

The first book an English child will learn to read is the Bible—that is to say, THE BOOK, which ranks above all other books as containing the Word of God. It would be easy to fill these pages with good words about the Bible, but that is not my object now. All I want to say is that, apart from the great purpose for which it has been given to us, this book, or rather these books, for the Bible consists of many volumes composed in different ages by historians, prophets, poets and apostles—this book, I say, is the most interesting that has ever been written. There is, no doubt, much in it hard to be understood; but there is much more which a child can understand and enjoy. The beautiful Old Testament stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of Samuel and David, of Elijah and Daniel, are told in our translation of the Bible in the most beautiful English that was ever written. Then in Job, the Book of Psalms, and the prophecies of Isaiah, we have the devout thoughts of good men expressed in the highest strain of poetry; and, passing on from these, we come to the simple gospel story—the story of glad tidings—with our Lord's parables and precepts, His gracious deeds and divine words, followed by the Acts of the Apostles and the letters they wrote to the first Christian disciples. Our English Bible is not only the first book that should be read by the child, because it tells him what no other book can, but because it is the key to so many other good books—that is to say, it opens them and makes them plain. Nobody who has read this wonderful book carefully, and who loves the wise and beautiful lessons it contains, will like to read what is coarse and evil. He will have a taste for something better.—A Talk with Children, by John Dennis, in *Good Words*.

THE *Christian World* says:—"Is there no way of making habitual late comers to church ashamed of themselves? Whether the evil habit is more prevalent now than formerly we cannot say, but that it is far too common, all who take their seats in places of worship before the beginning of the service must be painfully aware. In these railway days, when punctuality is so essential in business, it seems strange indeed, there should be men and women seat-holders in our churches, and supposed to be devout persons, who never arrive on Sunday morning till after the first prayer and hymn, and even later. Mr. Binney used often to pause and utter a word of exhortation to these disturbers of the public worship; and we remember Mr. Paxton Hood telling some laggards at Finsbury Chapel, when it was without a minister, and the cause was very low, that the Lord would never bless them till they mended their ways."