

guard of our Church, and it will be a sorry day if it has even to fall back one inch, much less to be abandoned as a helpless enterprise. I have little doubt that in the course of the next twenty years, there may be another Presbyterian college at Battleford, or New Westminster in British Columbia. It is a pity every now and then to see in your good paper little jealous outbreaks as to what part of Canada should support Kingston, or what Montreal, or what Toronto. Surely as our good Scottish kinsmen would say, "We are a'e man's bairns," and should help one another. The last subject I shall touch upon is the proposed University for granting degrees. Now, surely if Queen's University at Kingston can grant degrees, there is no use of going to all the trouble and expense of building another institution for that one purpose, and although I am a "Western" man, I do most certainly think it would be a pity to take such a step when we have so many colleges on our hands, and when we call to mind that Queen's University was itself the choice of the Church, or the largest part of it, before the disruption in 1844, and is as to location as favourably situated as any other place. If there is any deficiency in its powers, let it be made up by Provincial legislation if necessary, or by that of our own Assembly.

Feb. 10, 1880.

CANADIAN PRESBYTERIAN.

## HOME AMUSEMENTS.

MR. EDITOR,—I can scarcely allow this discussion to pass without casting in an oar. I may pull the wrong way, but it may not be amiss to *back water* now and again, else those who so unitedly pull the other way might get themselves completely out of line. I like the treatment of the subject by "M," in your last issue. There is a ring of good sense and fair concession to others' views in his admonitions, and I admit that such clerical restraint as he would put upon the innocent pleasures of the people is a wholesome—indeed, a necessary one. Observe, he does not seek to prohibit, but only to check where the tendencies in a particular case are to excess. This should be the limit of pastoral duty. I shall pass from him now and "break a lance" with the other "gentlemen of the robe," for such I take them to be.

If we all were disposed to draw long faces and shut pleasures of a rational kind forever out from our social circle, moon about and speak scriptural phrases, we should become a community characterized by miserable cant, and our manliness itself would droop and die, our strength, both mental and physical, would slowly vanish away, and we should become objects of pity indeed. This is a little overdrawn. I admit it, but it is the one extreme. Mr. Hancock, and more especially he from the balmy South, have the other. There is a happy mean between these two, that cannot fairly be assailed. There is a poetry as well as beauty in the dance, though some people cannot see it—poetry and beauty of action if not of thought. If some are so constituted as to appreciate this, and at the same time mark the measures of stirring music, why should they be denied the indulgence of an innocent pleasure because other men of more sober structure cannot enjoy it and therefore will not see its harmless side. One man courts the Muses and possibly spends his time or a portion of it in idle dreaming, why should we assail him violently for thus wasting his time? But no one does so, I am told. Yes, but is he not occupying precious hours that might be employed in holy work and pious meditation? What more do those who occasionally "trip the light fantastic toe?" Ah! he from the balmy South is down on us there. There is no poetry in the motion, there is no joy in the music, the devil is in the movements, and Beelzebub in the fiddle-strings. Invisible, imperceptible, impalpable, His Majesty plays in and out through the "giddy mazes," and the votaries of the dance are irresistibly carried to destruction. Mr. Henderson paints in high colours—too high for ordinary appreciation, and consequently we fail to see the reality of the picture.

There are those whose downward course is easy, and who make the dance a pastime while they pursue that course, but the dance is not the cause. Wicked, evil natures will find a pastime to beguile their idle hours, though the dance were never known. But because the profligate dance, we are told we should avoid it altogether. Tell us at the same time that we should not discourse sweet music, should not sing a martial song, should not run or leap, should not row or sail, or shoot or go to war; no, we should not even walk. This is the *reductio ad absurdum* of such arguments

as are used. If Mr. Henderson is of the Methodist church at Harrisville then I see in his letter the result of the training of a whole religious life—a positive unbending, persistent refusal to see anything but evil in the dance, no matter of how short duration, no matter where or under what circumstances engaged in. But if he is of our own fold; well, I always thought I was a Presbyterian, but sometimes now I am not very sure which I am.

What I have said of dancing I would say of card-playing.

A LAYMAN.

Toronto, Feb. 9, 1880.

## THE LATE REV. JAMES BRECKENRIDGE.

Rev. James Breckenridge, minister of the Streetsville Presbyterian Church, died Dec. 10th, 1879, in the 49th year of his age, after a month's illness of typhoid fever. Mr. Breckenridge was a native of Argyleshire, Scotland, and in early manhood emigrated to Canada. He chose Canada as his home, while his parents and the other members of his family settled in Rockford, Illinois, where they still reside. For several years he was engaged as a teacher in the village of Georgetown and other places in the vicinity, and shewed at that time the marked intellectual ability and high Christian character which he afterwards manifested in his more extended sphere of labour. For several years it had been his desire to study for the ministry, and during his career as a teacher, he was always closely identified with the work of the Church. He had already attained to ripe manhood when he began his course of study in Knox College in 1865. With a well balanced mind, disciplined by careful study and extensive reading, he was, on entering college in a position to prosecute with full profit the prescribed course of study. During his college course he gained the respect and esteem of all his fellow students, and the highest opinion of his professors. He was thoroughly conscientious and painstaking in every department of his college work, and by a systematic and almost perfect method of study was enabled to accomplish an amount of work which would otherwise have been impossible. Whether in the ordinary class work, or as an essay writer and public debater, he always stood in the front rank, and we are perfectly safe in saying that no graduate of Knox College has passed through his curriculum with greater honour and distinction. His discourses delivered in the Hall, and elsewhere, when engaged as a student in mission work, gave clear indications of the high qualifications which he possessed as a preacher of the Gospel. For two summers, during his Divinity course, he laboured in the East End Mission Church, in Toronto, which is now a flourishing congregation under the pastoral care of Rev. J. M. Cameron. Having completed his studies in the spring of 1870, he spent some months in travelling in the United States to recuperate his health, which was somewhat impaired by a too close application to study, and on his return to Canada, received a unanimous call from the Streetsville congregation, then vacant through the resignation of their respected pastor, Rev. Mr. McKay. He was ordained and inducted to this charge in March, 1871, and continued to labour there with great acceptance until the time of his lamented death.

For several years he was very closely identified with the work of Knox College, acting as examiner in various departments. His co-examiners bear testimony to his faithful discharge of, and eminent qualifications for, the duties laid upon him in this connection. He had the welfare of his *Alma Mater* at heart, and in him the College has lost a warm and valued friend.

Among his fellow-presbyters he was highly esteemed. Of a modest and retiring disposition, he was not forward to speak on subjects under discussion in the Church Courts, but when he did express an opinion, it was evident to all that he spoke from stern conviction, and his views, expressed with singular felicity and clearness, always carried weight. When a Presbyterian committee was to be chosen to deal with some matter which required clear judgment, discrimination and tact, he was almost certain to be appointed one of its members. He was faithful and conscientious in the discharge of any duties laid upon him by the Presbytery, and his removal has created a blank which will not be easily filled.

It was, however, in his real life work in his relations with his own people that his high qualifications as a

talented, faithful and earnest minister were best seen. While discharging efficiently the duties of a comparatively large congregation, he pursued his studies systematically, and was well abreast of the age. He also took an active part in educational matters, and as a member of the Peel Board of Examiners did much for the cause of education. He heartily gave his support to any good movement which was being carried on, and was held in high esteem by all the different denominations in the surrounding country. His daily walk and conversation was that of a calm, unassuming and genial Christian gentleman. As a preacher he stood high; with a singularly clear and penetrating mind, with all his faculties under almost perfect control, and sanctified by a vital godliness, he brought home the great truths of the Gospel to the hearts of his hearers with convincing power; and there are many who can think of him as the instrument by which, under God, they have been led to the Saviour. He had strong convictions of right, was loyal to the truth, and while he was ever tender in his ministerial dealings, did not shrink from denouncing the wrong. He had a firm hold upon the affections of the young people in his congregation, and it was at all times his desire to advance their highest interests, both intellectual and spiritual. In his pastoral relations with his people, whether in his visitations of the sick and dying, whether in administering to the bereaved the consolations of the Gospel, or in his ordinary pastoral visits, he was always welcomed as a true friend and a faithful guide. When his death was made known, the entire community felt that a talented minister and a true friend had been removed from their midst. In the prime of life, with a vigorous constitution, and extremely careful and temperate in his habits, a long career of honoured usefulness seemed opened up before him. During the whole of his ministerial work in Streetsville he had scarcely a day's illness until the last fatal disease seized him. All hoped that with his sound constitution, and with the best medical skill, he would be enabled to gain the mastery over his disease, but it was otherwise ordered, and after a trying illness, borne with great patience, he passed gently away, calmly trusting in that Saviour whom he loved to preach to his fellow-men, leaving a widow and eight children to mourn the loss of a tender and loving husband and father.

His too brief career on earth is ended. We sorrow for his loss, but we rejoice to know that these dispensations do not come by chance; that all is guided and controlled by One who never errs. We rejoice to think that the Saviour's prayer has for him been heard and answered, "Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." No longer shall we behold his form or hear his words, but the words of counsel and instruction so faithfully and earnestly spoken shall live on in many hearts, and the memory of his calm Christian life remains to us as a rich legacy to stimulate us to a higher and noble Christian manhood. The world is made better by every such life that is lived in it.

CHRISTIANITY does not need any credit. It pays as it goes; and it is stronger through its agency, the church, when that does the same thing.

SAYS the "Presbyterian Banner": "To estimate the worth of a man by his bodily size, would be looked upon as an absurdity. Ten acres of land with a rich soil, are worth more for agricultural purposes than a hundred composed of marshes or barren sands. A sermon of forty-five minutes may have more matter and argument than another which occupies an hour and a-half or more in delivery. And this is equally true of newspapers; the size of the sheet is no indication of the worth of the paper. Three things are always to be taken into account in determining the value of a newspaper: (1) A sheet, by the use of a good deal of small type, may contain much more than one that is a good deal larger; (2) The amount of fresh news and lively thoughts compressed into the columns is a still stronger test of the real value of a journal; and, (3) The moral and religious force carried by the journal is the crowning evidence of superiority or inferiority. If any paper can shew that it has more brains, that it employs them more effectively, and that it carries more moral force than any of its contemporaries, then its pre-eminence over them will be admitted; but not till then. Superiority in journalism depends on something more than a few inches of white paper dotted with ink."