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THE ENGLISH CONGREGATIONAL UNION.

Thanks to the ever-accelerating speed of our trans-Atlantic mail service, the English mail has just brought us—May 22nd—the *Christian World* of the 11th, and enables us to lay before our readers in this June number (a month earlier than ever before) an account of the first sessions of the English Congregational Union, held May 7th and 8th, in London.

The “business meeting” was held in Memorial Hall, on Monday evening, 7th May. Rev. Dr. Aveling, the late Chairman, presided, in the absence of Mr. Henry Richard, M.P., the present incumbent, who was in his seat in Parliament, as Dr. Aveling remarked, “standing side by side with their great leader, Mr. Gladstone, in declaring the true policy of England on the Eastern question,”—a statement which was greeted with unbounded applause.

THE ANNUAL REPORT.

After the nomination and election of chairman for 1878—an honour conferred unanimously upon the Rev. J. Baldwin Brown—the Rev. A. Hannay read the Annual Report, from which we learn (1.) that the committee on the spiritual condition of the country, and the provision which exists for a pure and Scriptural ministry of the Gospel, was preparing a scheme of questions to be submitted shortly, through the officers of the County Unions. (2.) That in future, in electing the Committee of the Union, the names of all representative members, who had been nominated in writing by seven representative members, prior to the 15th March, would be placed on the voting-papers. (3.) That steps had been taken to promote a thorough discussion of the Finance Scheme, and that of twenty-four counties where conferences had been held, twenty were, in the main, favourable to the proposal. Mr. S. Morley, M.P., and other gentlemen, who had been more or less opposed to it had been added to the Committee, and it was proposed to reconsider the whole question at a conference of delegates of the County Associations in September, when it was hoped a plan could be formulated to meet the views of all parties. (4.) The Congregational Union Lecture for 1877 would be delivered in October, by the Rev. E. K. Conder, M.A., of Leeds, on “The Basis of Faith,”—a survey of the grounds of Christian Theism; and the succeeding lecturers would be the Rev. J. Guinness Rogers, and the Rev. Baldwin Brown. (5.) The Committee reported the action taken by them during the year, in regard to various public questions—the Bulgarian Atrocities, the Education Bill, the Burials Bill, and the Conference of the Liberation Society, in all which they were heartily sustained by the meeting.

The Rev. J. H. Wilson also read the Report of the Trustees of Memorial Hall,

from which it appeared that the total cost of the building and ground had been over £75,000, of which all had been met but £4000. A valuable addition had been made to the library, by a gift of about 10,000 volumes from the widow of the late Mr. Joshua Wilson.

On Tuesday morning the Union met in Westminster Chapel the body of which was filled with ministers and delegates, the galleries being devoted to visitors, among whom were hundreds of ladies. Mr. H. Richard, M.P., on entering, was received with hearty cheers, and, after the usual devotional service, proceeded to deliver the

#### INAUGURAL ADDRESS,

a synopsis of which we give from the *Christian World*. The topic selected was "The Relations of the Temporal and Spiritual Power in the Different Nations of Europe," and the chairman passed in review the condition of affairs in several Continental countries where attempts of a very varied character for the solution of this problem are now in course of development. He told of the humiliating position accepted by the Roman Catholic priests in France under the Concordat made between Napoleon I. and Pius VII., and of the fulsome adulation heaped upon that despot. It was true that the First Consul restored to the Roman Catholic Church in that country much of its former outward splendour, but the price which had to be paid was to make religion an accomplice in the most degrading despotism that ever cursed the earth, and the result of which had been an exaltation of the power of the Papacy. Mr. Richard referred to the series of letters from M. de Pressensé published in the *Christian World*, and stated, on the authority of M. Laboulaye, that the question of the separation of Church and State was fast ripening for settlement. In Germany, whatever opinion may be formed as to the character of the Falk laws, one thing was evident, that they were unsuccessful. The resistance with which they had been met had resulted in dis-endowment in certain districts, and if the process were continued, "a free Roman Catholic Church in the midst of the Evangelical empire" might yet be witnessed. Austria, since the defeat of Sadowa, had abolished the Concordat of 1855, which was strangling its civil and political life, and now the schools were conducted on a system which Baron Worms describes as having a striking similarity to the Birmingham League; and "the cemeteries are no longer to be closed to Dissenters"—a palpable contrast to the principle involved in the Government Burials Bill, which was duly noted by the assembly. The mention of Italy called forth sympathetic cheers, which were renewed with increased enthusiasm when a passing reference was made to Mr. Gladstone. Mr. Richard explained the character of the Laws of Guarantee, and found in the recent proceedings at Mantua the probable "germ of a sort of Congregational Roman Catholic Church, the priest elected by the people and supported by their voluntary contributions." In Switzerland they witnessed the evil effects of "a church absolutely dependent upon the suffrages of the citizens," irrespective of any religious condition; while in Belgium they had the State divested of all control over the Church, for which, nevertheless, endowments had to be provided. But even here the very extravagance of clerical tyranny was producing reaction, and M. de Laveleye and a considerable number of writers and professors at Brussels have resolved to give in their adhesion to Protestantism. Everywhere the attempt to combine the temporal and spiritual power in close relation with each other, involves Governments in trouble and embarrassment, rends asunder the national unity, caricatures Christianity, and degrades and dishonours the Church. "Cut asunder," said Mr. Richard, in concluding his address, "that chain of gold, fling away those meretricious worldly ornaments, tear off the Babylonish garments which only tend to fetter her free movements and mar her Divine beauty! Loose her and let her go, and, instead of thus trailing in the dust in the wake of earthly conquerors, she will rise and spread her wings, and be seen, like the vision that John saw, as an angel flying in

in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, to every nation and kindred and people and tongue."

#### THE REPORT ON INTEMPERANCE.

The Special Committee appointed in the Autumn on the subject of intemperance presented a voluminous report, which has been published as a pamphlet of fourteen closely printed pages. It recommends an annual sermon, in every church, on the sin of intemperance, an earnest consideration of the results of recent scientific researches in regard to alcoholic beverages, the organization of Bands of Hope, the removal of friendly societies from public houses to schoolrooms, petitions in favour of Sunday closing of public-houses, limitations of hours of sale on week days, diminution of the number and more efficient inspection of such houses, the withdrawal of grocers' licenses, and suppression of music-halls and dancing-rooms in connection with such places; and lastly, it encourages the opening of places of refreshment conducted on temperance principles, and the improvement of the conditions of life among the poor, specially in regard to their dwellings and their places and forms of amusement, in so far as these lay them open to temptations to intemperance. A resolution commending this document to the attention of the churches was carried unanimously. The chairman was also directed to sign a petition to the Legislature in favour of Sunday closing.

A resolution was also passed deploring the effects of the opium trade, and calling upon the Congregational Churches to unite in a demand for a change of the Government policy in regard to it.

The remainder of the session was occupied with a discussion of

#### THE EASTERN QUESTION,

which was then, as indeed it is still, the all engrossing topic before the public mind. The outburst of enthusiasm when the Rev. R. W. Dale arose to introduce the subject, indicated how offensive was the Government policy in seeking to commit the nation to the Turkish cause, professedly for the maintenance of British interests. Mr. Dale, deplored the necessity for the withdrawal by Mr. Gladstone of two of his resolutions, in order to secure the united support of the Liberal party, but said, he believed that had Mr. Gladstone only promulgated the two resolutions which have been thus endorsed by the Liberal leader, the unparalleled movement witnessed from end to end of England would have lacked much of its existing earnestness and enthusiasm. The resolutions would, however, meet the immediate danger by telling the Government what they must not do. Mr. Dale eulogised Mr. Gladstone (the mention of whose name again elicited rounds of applause) for the magnificent service which he had rendered to the country. There were some who seemed desirous of confining themselves to politics which had grown obsolete—who would descant on the politics of Babylon and Persia, and glorify the saints of the Commonwealth—forgetting that when need required they too were men of "blood and iron"—but for himself, he desired to see God's will done on earth now, and to that end rejoiced in the result of the appeal which had been made to the conscience of the nation by Mr. Gladstone, of whom he spoke as "one of the greatest preachers of righteousness God ever sent." He moved: "That this meeting records its high appreciation of the noble and courageous devotion to the cause of righteousness and freedom, the generous self-sacrifice and the chivalrous spirit, which have characterised the action of the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, in relation to the Eastern policy of this country, and at the same time rejoices in the influence he has exerted in eliciting so unparalleled a manifestation of public opinion against any attempt to lend the moral or material support of this nation to a despotism guilty of the crimes which have disgraced the Government of Turkey and must discredit its allies."

The Rev. Dr. Allon seconded the resolution, and the Revs. Dr. Raleigh, New-

man Hall, Edward White, and J. G. Rogers, spoke in favour of it, several of them giving utterance to sentiments so warlike as to call forth a remonstrance from the chairman, who is a distinguished member of the Peace Society. Mr. Richard "admired the splendid services rendered by Mr. Gladstone," but he regarded the latter resolutions of Mr. Gladstone as full of danger, involving military occupation of Turkey. He could, however, give his hearty assent to the resolution proposed by Mr. Dale, so far as it protests against the crowning infamy of having to shed the blood of Englishmen in support of such an execrable system of government."

The resolution was carried unanimously, and the session was brought to a close by the Chairman pronouncing the benediction.

### THE SCOTTISH CONGREGATIONAL UNION.

The *Advance* (Glasgow) for May, gives a full account of the sixty-fifth annual meeting of the Congregational Union of Scotland, which was held the previous month in Aberdeen. The sessions were largely attended both by ministers and lay members, and the proceedings are described as "not only lively but enthusiastic," and pervaded by the spirit of brotherly love.

The programme for the morning of the first day (Tuesday, April 3rd) embraced a prayer meeting at 8 o'clock, the meeting of the Congregational Widows' Fund at 10, and of the Ministers' Provident Fund immediately afterwards; then the Chapel-building Fund; and lastly of the Total Abstinence Society—a pretty good morning's work, we should say! The afternoon was occupied with the Report of the Theological Hall, at 1 o'clock; the Annual Social Meeting of the Temperance Society at half past three; and the Annual Sermon before the Congregational Union, at 7 p.m.

#### THE WIDOWS' FUND,

which is in its 57th year, shows a considerable falling off in the receipts. Only 12 churches had sent collections. The capital, however, had nearly reached the £10,000 aimed at.

#### THE MINISTERS' PROVIDENT FUND

had been in operation 18 years, and possesses a capital of £6,316. The income for 1876-7, was £612, towards which 43 churches had subscribed. £500 had been paid to annuitants during the year.

#### THE CHAPEL BUILDING FUND

steadily increases. The capital for loans, which 8 years ago was only £400, is now over £2,600,—a result very largely due to the zeal and efficiency of the late Secretary, Mr. Granville. £555 had been loaned during the year. One-fourth of the Scottish Congregational churches had received assistance from the Fund.

#### THE TOTAL ABSTINENCE SOCIETY.

The tenth annual report says that "from seventy-eight returns that had been obtained, it was learned that 31 churches used alcoholic cordial at the communion service, and 39 churches non-alcoholic; 3 churches used sweet wine, 3 grape wine, and 1 alcoholic wine much diluted." An effort is being made to organize Bands of Hope in connection with all Congregational Sabbath Schools. From the report of

#### THE THEOLOGICAL HALL,

we learn that 4 students had finished their studies within the year, 10 applications

for admission had been received, 3 had been declined, 3 lie over for further examination and inquiry, and 4 had been accepted. The ordinary income had been about as last year. That of the Theological Hall Fund amounted to £1,546, and the bursary fund to £879. A generous friend of the Hall had presented £55, to be equally divided amongst the students for the purchase of books—a gift which the Committee, and, we are sure we may add, the students, warmly appreciated.

All these meetings were preliminary, however, to those of

#### THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION,

which commenced with a sermon by the Rev. G. S. Barrett, B. A., of Norwich, delegate of the English Congregational Union, and a united communion service at its close. Wednesday opened with a public breakfast, at which over 200 were present. The chairman, Prof. Stephenson, of Aberdeen University, delivered an eloquent address on the "union of affinity" as contrasted with the "union of conformity"—the former being, as he thought, the true bond of Christian churches.

"Our Presbyterian brethren, he said, are finding subscription a somewhat over-tight and injurious corset, and we, as a Union, existing without any such bond of conformity, may, by our testimony, do much in aiding our brethren to get rid of this piece of man's work, which is producing such serious results in the Presbyterian bodies. The speaker concluded by pointing out that the Congregational and Evangelical Unions, and the Baptist could all unite on the principle he had endeavoured to illustrate, and they were now only kept apart by a difference of human origin." (Applause.)

The other addresses had reference to the claims of the several Benevolent Funds in connection with the Union.

The Annual meeting proper was held at 11 o'clock on Wednesday, under the presidency of the Rev. Ninian Wight, who delivered what is characterized as "an admirable and well-timed address on the character, position, and work of the churches," report of which is deferred by the *Advance* till next month, that it may then give it more fully.

The Report of Mr. McLaren, the Treasurer, showed the receipts of the Union (which is in reality their Home Missionary Society) to be as follows:—Contributions from churches, £1,243; Donations, £64; Legacies, £155; total £1,462, leaving a deficiency of £350 in view of the estimated expenditure for the coming year. The income from ordinary sources had been about stationary for several years past. The discussion that followed, *nomine mutato*, might have been supposed to have had reference to our Canadian Mission field. One brother complained that a great part of the money at the disposal of the Union was given to supporting weak churches in the poorer districts. He should like to see more done in the way of originating new churches in populous places. Another said that in Dundee it was felt that a change was requisite with reference to the administration of the funds of the Union. Without wishing to do anything against their country churches, it was thought that great advantage would take place if the committee would direct more attention to the towns. Some of their members were withholding their subscriptions on the ground that small decaying churches in thinly populated districts of the country were being supported, while sufficiently corresponding efforts were not being made in the larger towns of Scotland.

There, however, the matter dropped, nobody being able to explain, apparently, how the Committee could do more for the towns on a decreasing income, or withhold their pittances from the country churches, without "doing anything against them."

An effort is being made to secure a permanent Secretary for the Union whose entire time and energies shall be devoted to the fostering of their Home Mission work.

One of the principal subjects engaging the attention of the Union was the appointment of a

## DELEGATE TO THE EVANGELICAL UNION,

which is another Congregational Association separated from them on doctrinal grounds which are now generally regarded as not only not fundamental, but altogether too slight to keep two such bodies apart. Hence a growing disposition has shown itself of late to unite, and evidently with a view to such an ultimate result, Dr. Pulsford moved the appointment of a delegate to that body, "to convey to them our Christian congratulations, and an expression of the interest we take in their affairs."

It was, he thought, "singularly opportune, not to say providential, that a highly esteemed clergyman in their very midst—a member of the Evangelical Union to which he desired a delegate to be appointed—a man universally honoured by all who knew him, or knew of him, alike for his piety, culture, and ability—had been chosen to preside over one of the Congregational Training Colleges for the education of their ministers. (Applause.) He said *their* ministers emphatically, for it was not improbable that in Aberdeen they might be very glad at some future time to welcome back some of Principal Fairbairn's pupils to occupy their pulpits, and exercise the office of the ministry in their midst. (Applause.) An association of churches, having among them such men as Morison, Kirk, Fairbairn, Ferguson, Guthrie, and many more like-minded able men, required no commendation. Their acknowledged piety, scholarship, ability, and usefulness, would compare favourably with the qualifications of the leading men of any church. (Applause.) He did not allow himself to go back upon the past. Time was a great healer of all strife, a harmoniser of discords, and a gentle but very effectual worker in all reformation. (Applause.) None of them were now what they were twenty years ago. It was no longer seemly for them to live so much apart from an association of Christian churches with whom they had so much in common, as not to exchange words of salutation at their annual gathering. (Applause.) The appointment of a delegate charged to bear to them the greetings and cordial expressions of interest of this Union would tend to lessen or harmonise whatever differences might yet remain." (Applause.)

The motion was adopted with only one dissenting voice.

At the public meeting in the evening, Principal Fairbairn delivered an address on "the influence of religion on the national life," which is spoken of as a "magnificent speech," but which, like Mr. Wight's is not yet reported.

The second session was occupied chiefly with the discussions of a proposed change in the constitution of the Union, which, if adopted, will make it a representative body, and more like our Canadian Unions. This, however, was followed by a conference of Congregationalists and a *Conversazione*, on several topics of interest—Disestablishment, Ordination, and the claims of Temperance; but our space is exhausted.

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 INTROSPECTION A CHRISTIAN DUTY.

While it is the duty of all immortal beings, exposed to the vicissitudes of human existence, to examine how they stand as to the great concerns of eternity, self-examination is a duty especially incumbent on professed followers of Christ; so that, as to their spiritual state, they may be neither deceivers nor deceived. The general increase of spiritual knowledge, the increased facilities for acquiring it, the ease with which attendants on a gospel ministry may learn the varieties and workings of Christian experience; the ease with which persons in good moral standing find admittance into Christian churches in the present day, together with the possibility of mistaking a few transient convictions, and anxious feelings, for conversion;—and, also, the lives of some professed Christians, to whom one might justly say, as Paul did to certain Galatians, "I stand in doubt of you," render

self-examination an important duty of church members : especially when, as stated communicants, they are about to approach the table of the Lord.

By faithfully comparing ourselves with Scripture standards of faith and practice, we may test, not only our general spiritual state, but the degree of our spiritual growth. It was to professed followers of Christ that the Apostle said, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup" (1 Cor. xi. 28). Now the things that were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope. The Word of God speaks both to our understandings and hearts. It offers abundant consolation to the weary and heavy-laden, affectionate warnings to the tempted, and to any who walk incautiously ; gives directions to Zion's pilgrims, lest they mistake their way ; strong and cheering promises to establish our faith, and confirm our hopes ; a faithful record of the trials, weaknesses, sins, sorrows, conflicts, and joys of saints of old ; forcible representations of the spiritual foes that beset our path, through time, and terrible revelations of the doom of those who reject the counsel of God against themselves ; and to the professed followers of Christ it presents, as a duty, the practice of self-examination. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith ; prove your own selves" (2 Cor. xiii. 5). Other words of similar import may be found. Yet, amidst the various topics of gospel ministration, how seldom, perhaps, is the one before us made the subject of pulpit ministry. It is much needed, however, and can never be out of season. If faithfully performed it will either give spiritual consolation and higher enjoyment of the means of grace (if our self-scrutiny should prove, on the whole, satisfactory), enabling us "to read our title clear" to the blissful inheritance above,—or, if unsatisfactory, will do us good, by faithfully showing us our deficiencies ; our true spiritual state ; will check presumptuous self-esteem,—and, while revealing to us our errors and imperfections, will cause us earnestly to seek that spiritual life, which is the pledge and earnest of life everlasting.

When we draw nigh to the table of the Lord, and partake of the elements that symbolize the atoning sacrifice and finished work of our adored Redeemer, with what preparation of heart and mind do we approach ? The Saviour, who beholds us at His table, and favours His people with His gracious presence there, beholds our daily walk, and understands our thoughts afar off. What assurance have we, what inward consciousness, that we are indeed followers of the Lamb ? And what evidence does our *daily life* impart ? Is it only *this*, that you can remember a time when you had convictions of sin—felt excited about your spiritual state—saw truth more clearly—embraced, with your understanding, the doctrines of the cross,—felt their importance, and resolved that you would profess yourself His follower, and that, having united with His people, you feel secure, because you are numbered with them in profession, and attend with them the customary means of grace ; and are calmly waiting till earth shall be exchanged for heaven ? But is this all ? Where, then, is the Christian conflict ?

In connection with due observance of the Lord's Supper by His professed followers, two things are enjoined : Preparation and Celebration. "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." Let the professed Christian then examine himself (or herself) as to the state of the heart, the mind, and the life,—the life, social and spiritual, as to the general bent of his thoughts and passions, and the workings of his mind, "for, as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." Do the thoughts dwell upon heavenly themes ? What subjects occupy the mind most frequently ? Is the Saviour chief ? Or is the mind occupied almost entirely with things of earth ? Are sinful thoughts *cherished* in the mind ? Or, while diligent in business, is he fervent in spirit, serving the Lord ? Are his plans and purposes in life such as will meet the divine approbation ? What is the foundation of his faith ? Is it confidence in a creed, or does it rest on Christ alone ? Let each inquire what is his or her conduct as a member of a gospel church ? Is such a one a faithful member, fulfilling the obligations involved in church-membership ; studying to promote the peace, prosperity, in-



crease, purity, and unity of the church—supporting it in every effort—diligently attending all its meetings—feeling, that for Christ's sake, as for his own improvement, he must give up a little time, and take a little trouble to meet with his fellow-members, when they assemble? As to prayer-meetings, does he feel it to be a duty and privilege to unite in such soul-quickening exercises? Does he constantly remember Zion in his devotions? Does he pray for those who minister to him in holy things? No professed Christian has any right to expect a blessing from the ministry of one for whom he does not wrestle in prayer. He may come and go to and from God's house, and receive no spiritual benefit, no soul-quickening strengthening influences, and may blame the minister when the fault is his own. Much leanness of soul arises from neglect of this duty.

Let the professed Christian examine his daily *home* life; for it is there we appear as we really are. What is his home life as to devotion? In private does he habitually and constantly obey the injunction of our Saviour: "Thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet; and, when thou hast shut to the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret"? When risen in the morning, do his private praises, thanksgivings, and prayers ascend, before he mingles with the family, or with the world? Does he assemble his household regularly for morning and evening devotions? Or does any worldly hindrance furnish excuse for neglecting family worship?

Let every professed Christian examine himself as to his outgoings of heart when joining in the public worship of the sanctuary—the praises, supplications, thanksgivings, confessions, intercessions, and ascriptions of power and dominion to the Most High. Does his heart join in the devotions, or, while with others he places himself in the attitude of prayer, is his mind in a dreamy, half-unconscious state, wandering, like the fool's eyes, to the end of the earth, occupied and exercised indeed, but not about things spiritual and divine?

As to the professor's daily duties in the common concerns of life, are they conscientiously performed, in the fear of God; seeking the divine blessing on all his transactions and arrangements?

Let him examine himself as to the duties of family relationship, either as a parent, training his children in the fear of God,—or as a child obeying the divine commands as to that relationship; or as a husband, or wife, or brother, or sister; fulfilling the duties of those relationships according to the Word of Christ, as given in the New Testament? Let the professor examine himself as to the tendency of his wishes; whether he covets chiefly spiritual good, the presence and friendship of God, and the witnessing of the Spirit. Moses chose rather to rank with the people of God, than to inherit the honours and pleasures of Egypt. Which does the professor covet most—temporal or spiritual good? Which is most precious in his esteem, and most earnestly sought? for where the treasure is, there will the heart be also. Let him examine himself as to communion with God in solitude. When alone does his soul habitually aspire heavenward? Laying aside worldly thoughts for a time, does his heart turn from these and cleave in hallowed intercourse to his Saviour and his God? Let him examine himself as to temptation, whether he yields to the tempter,—not striving prayerfully against sin, but giving way to his natural inclinations,—or whether, in divine strength, he resists, and overcomes the wicked one.

Now, in self-examination, Scripture must be our guide; not other professors, or human creeds. "What saith the Scriptures," must be our enquiry." Examine yourselves "whether ye be in the faith, *prove your own selves*. Know ye not that Jesus Christ is in you except ye be reprobates." It is not what we are in the sight of our fellow-creatures, but what we are in the sight of God. And, lest after all, we should mistake our standing, let each, while obeying this injunction, seek divine scrutiny, and "Search me, O God," Ps. cxxxix, 23-24.

As to the celebration of the Supper—the feeling and spirit with which each will attend it, will accord with the view he takes of his spiritual state. If, by divine grace, his evidences are such that he "can read his title clear" he will approach

with humble boldness, with calmness of spirit, and thankful joyful heart, to meditate on the sovereign grace that has so distinguished him, and so eat of that bread and drink of that cup. If, on the contrary, his evidences are beclouded; if he has very much to regret, and cause him to humble himself before God, he will approach with penitent sorrow, yet resolving in divine strength to seek not only pardon for the past, but grace and strength for the future, strength to persevere, strength to overcome, to walk and live nearer to God in Christ, lifting up a penitent heart to the Saviour whom he is so little conformed to, and thankful for mercy manifested, and so eat of that bread and drink of that cup. If a professor is constrained, after faithful introspection, to conclude that he has been mistaken in supposing himself a subject of divine grace, not a real Christian, let him not despair, but let him seek, at the throne of grace, those influences of the Spirit that shall make him a true disciple of Him who hath said, "Ask, and ye shall have; seek, and ye shall find, &c. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh I will in no wise cast out."

SESEX.

## THE REV. JOSEPH COOK ON FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

The question is, whether, as Parker affirms, a man who passes out of life as incorrigibly bad as the blackest crimes can make him, can be assured in the name of natural law that he will attain bliss at last, and that character does not tend to a final permanence.

Your chief objection to the idea that evil may last forever is drawn not from Science, nor from Scripture, but from this characteristic of luxurious ages—an unscientific sentiment. You affirm that there cannot be pain in a perfect universe—that is, in a moral system where all are free and where what ought to be done is done by the Ruler. I wish to fracture this boulder which lies upon the necks of many. This vague, easy sentiment has behind it nothing strenuous or clear in thought. I have done enough to throw logical discredit upon that sentiment by simply pointing to the irreversibility of the past, and the certainty that conscience, as transfigured by the salvation, which you say all men will attain, must regret forever and forever a record of sin. I have shown that there will be loss forever and forever on account of all the sin that has occurred, or that is yet to occur.

Having thus, in the name of the scientific method, thrown across this misty chasm of sentimentality a single thread, will you allow me to carry over on that one strand a cable? When the bridge at Niagara was built, a single wire was carried over by a kite, and on that wire was taken over a cable, and finally a bridge. I wish to span this chasm; and, beyond all controversy, we see that a single wire is carried across it. Sin having once entered the world, there is a form of loss or evil, and there is one form of pain which we assuredly know will exist forever. *If, then, some pain and some evil may exist forever, and God yet be good, do you know enough to say how much evil may exist forever and God yet be good?*

Who is there here who dares say that he is wise enough to authorize Theodore Parker to hiss at the Scripture upon this theme?

When you know scientifically that one thread is carried over, how do you know but that the cable which the Scriptures carry across may absolutely be the scientific bridge?

We are all agreed that some evil may last forever; we are all agreed that God is good; and now, in the name of the fact that God is good, you want me to say, with Theodore Parker, that a man may die a kidnapper and yet be saved. You have no reason at the bottom for your demand on that point except this sentiment or the feeling of the luxurious hours, and not of the most illumined days of the world, that it cannot be that any pain can last forever. I say some pain will,

and you know it will ; some loss and evil will, and you know it will. Is it not high time, therefore, for us to consult some other authority than that of this scientifically discredited sentiment ? The question is whether you are wise enough to estimate the amount of pain, or loss, or evil which may last forever.

Apply to this misleading sentiment another and yet sterner test. Suppose that the world were not yet created, and that you were asked : "What will there be in this moral system which God is about to call into existence ? Will there be evil in it ?" "I do not think there will be, because God is good." "Will there be any one in it allowed to lose peace of soul by falling into love of what God hates, and the hate of what God loves ?" "My sentiments assure me that there will not be. God is good and perfect. There will be no imperfection in his work." "Will there be in this universe which is about to come into existence any free and responsible agent, weighted from birth to death with inherited bad tendencies, which, although not sin, are the copious fountain of evil choices. Will there be a law of hereditary descent, by which beings innocent, so far as their own acts are concerned, will be brought into the world to suffer to the third and fourth generation, as a consequence of the evil choices of their ancestors ?" "No ; that cannot be. A perfect Being with a perfect motive, creating with a perfect purpose, never will call such a law into existence." "How do you know he will not ?" "My cultured sentiment is all against it. I was born in the city of Boston. It is almost a violation of taste to suppose that God will do anything of that sort. It is too late to teach in the nineteenth century that Infinite Wisdom and Power, bringing into existence a moral system, will allow to exist in it anything which Beacon Street would not anticipate. Advanced thought cannot admit that any such imperfection will exist in a universe created by a perfect being. God is good. Evil will not be allowed to begin. I am sure nothing of the kind will be found in the world. It is not to be supposed for a moment that an Infinite Being will permit sin to exist in a moral system. I am willing to stake my eternity on the veracity of this sentiment."

Turn now to the actual facts of life, and what is here ? What Infinite Wisdom and Power and Goodness have permitted, and nothing else. What God does not do cannot be done wisely. He has not prevented sin ; He has given to evil, as well as to good, a power of self-propagation ; He has made it a rule that children shall suffer, as well as be blessed, for the evils of their ancestors, and this to the third and fourth generation. It is a fact beyond all comment amazing, that sin has such self-propagating power as to spread itself from birth beyond what we should say is the range of responsibility for it, and that men should come burdened into the world with the offences of those who went before them. But virtue has equally great and even greater power of self-diffusion. Why could not there have been an upper without an actual under in this free world ? Perfectly innocent is many a maniac ; perfectly innocent is many a cripple. But not innocent, some ancestor whose mischiefs spread by hereditary descent ! God allows such things to be, and yet we believe God is perfect.

Archbishop Whately has shown elaborately that all the reasoning which proclaims that sin cannot endure forever proceeds on principles which prove that sin would never be allowed to begin.

Will your unreasoning sentiment stand in this light of science ? Or is the universe perhaps more complex and serious than you dreamed ? I affirm, gentlemen, that all this unscientific sentimentality is best tested by taking it over to a point previous to the commencement of our moral system, and applying the reasoning there fully and fairly. If a sentiment indicates the truth, it will work well there. Well, I go enswathed in this sentiment into the councils which precede the formation of this world, and I really find myself a minority there. *Incontrovertibly there is in the universe a different plan than I should think there would be, if I were to follow the lead of this sentiment, which is the secret source of the denial that all character tends to a final permanence.*

Therefore, my friends, as this sentiment fails us when we apply it to this course

of facts which we can test, I affirm that it is not safe to take it and apply it to this course of facts which lie beyond the touch of the human spiritual finger-tips. We can reduce this sentiment to absurdity, by applying it to the time before the world was ; and, therefore, I fear it will turn out an absurdity if we apply it to the time after the world shall cease to exist.

Yes ; but ultimately more good will come if evil is permitted. What ! I thought you did not believe that evil is a necessary means of the greatest good ! I assumed that you adhered to Theodore Parker's position that conscience pronounces that evil ought not to be. If evil is the necessary means of the greatest good, then it ought to be.

In any case you will obtain only a painless universe ; so we come back precisely to the point where we stood before public criticism was cast on our lines of thought—and that was that your marble staircase takes men up no higher than your red-hot iron ; and your red-hot iron no higher than they can ascend on your marble. And so, if the only object of evil in the universe is to take men up, God is not benevolent, for he could take men up painlessly to the same height, and he does not do so. There is where you come out at last. It is the stern scientific truth on this theme that you have no ground in this sentiment for denying that character tends to a final permanence.

Fill the ages with the certainty that all character tends to a free final permanence, which can come but once, and you encourage all virtue and repress all vice—as the nature of things does. That belief works well, and so deserves coronation. It puts beneath every man who is loyal to duty the everlasting arms. It makes him glad, with the unbounded confidence that all things work together for good to those who love God ; and serious in an equally measureless confidence that all things do not work together for good to those who do not.

Theodore Parker once proclaimed, in a stray passage, that violation of moral law may be so bold and persistent as to bring with it penalties that have no remedy.

He wrote explicitly ; "From my own experience I know the remorse which comes from conscious violation of my own integrity, from treason to myself and my God. It transcends all bodily pain, all grief at disappointed schemes, all anguish which comes from sickness, age, from death of dear ones prematurely taken away. To these afflictions I can bow with a 'Thy will, not mine, be done.' But remorse, the pain of sin—that is my work. This comes, obviously, to warn us of the ruin which lies before us ; for, as the violation of the natural material conditions of bodily life leads to dissolution of the body, so the wilful, constant violation of the natural conditions of spiritual well-being leads to the destruction thereof."—("Sermons on Theism," p. 404.)

This is clear and straightforward ; but it is immediately explained and repudiated by its own author.

If lost souls repent, they in that act cease to be lost. Will Iago repent ? Will Mephistopheles repent ? Will Milton's Satan repent ? What is the definition of perdition ? Permanent dissimilarity of feeling with God. That definition does not imply that a man has lost all tendency to respect what is reasonable ; but that he never attains predominant love of what God loves. The failure to attain predominant love of what God loves and hate of what God hates, is perdition. In the name of the law by which all character tends to final permanence, all science proclaims that Iago and Mephistopheles may fall into permanence of dissimilarity of feeling with God. Salvation in that condition is a natural impossibility, for salvation includes similarity of feeling with God.

Gentlemen, we want truth winnowed by being held up in the breezes that blow out of all quarters of the sky. I take this proposition that it is safe to die as an Iscariot, and I hold it up in the winds that blow out of the centuries of Roman degradation. It suffers a winnowing even then, for the winds whisper to me : "This teaching would not have cleansed Rome." I hold up the proposition in the winds that blow out of American greed and fraud. The answer is yet more decisive. Safe to die an Iscariot ? Safe to die a kidnapper ? Safe to die a Cain,

with the blood of your brother on your forehead? The scheme does not work well, and it is to be known scientifically and finally by its inevitable fruits.

Thread and cable across the chasm—what is the bridge? And this in one word? It is written in Scripture that there will come a time when, in the name of the nature of things, it will be proclaimed: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." There is to be a day, of which no man or angel knoweth the time, after which the unholy will continue to be unholy, and the holy will continue to be holy. On the last page of the New, as in many another page of the New and Old, and of the Newest and Oldest Testament, the law is proclaimed that all character tends to a final permanence, good as well as bad, and bad as well as good. The written Scriptures end with this explicit declaration, and in it reach their most awful and their most alluring height.

In the great words "Let him that is unjust be unjust still," the Greek verb implies that the agent in this eternal sin is wholly free and can blame only himself.—(Alford, Rev. xxii, 11.)

The last verity proclaimed in Scripture is thus the natural permanence of moral character and the certainty that all crystallization of the soul into final permanence will bring with it its natural wages. The truth that I am afraid of is what all science, what all Scripture, what all human experience affirm—that he who is unholy long enough will be unholy longer; he who is filthy long enough will be filthy longer; and that inveteracy will lead to permanence of voluntary moral remoteness from God; and that this will be its own punishment in the nature of things.

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## RURAL CHURCHES AND THEIR DIFFICULTIES.

A Village Pastor, contributing some "Notes on Rural Nonconformity" to the *Congregationalist* (English), says of a certain church quarrel, "It was about the management of chapel finance. The managers of finance in connection with some country chapels and churches are too apt to forget that the principles and habits which regulate finance in secular life are of universal application and cannot be violated in the chapel with impunity. \* \* \* It is all very well to question ministers of dependent country churches about sermons, meetings, classes, conversions, and other things of this kind, and I for one, as the minister of a dependent country church, or "agent" as I am sometimes irreverently called, must bear witness to the fact that the Secretaries that I have had to do with have borne their "faculties meekly," but would it not also be well to question deacons as to the management of church and chapel finances? Are the entries of cash duly made? Is the minister's stipend paid with a fair degree of promptness and civility? Is there a disposition periodically to render up an account of cash to the church, to strike and exhibit the balance sheet? Bad finance is at the root of many of the evils which afflict country churches. \* \* \*

It is too much the habit, in some circles, to depreciate the importance of rural Nonconformity; to say the small Congregational Churches are more plague than profit, "interests" without capital, "causes" without effects. Be it so; and yet something might be said on the other side, if we could only bring a skilful advocate, of fertile brain, and freedom of utterance into court. Let us see what can be done without these advantages. "Strike but hear," and hear before you strike. What the nursery is to the garden and the orchard, country churches are to the churches in town and to missionary enterprise. The best young men and women every year leave rural districts and churches for large towns, and especially for London. Some of the most successful ministers have confessed that in the Sunday School, in senior classes, in the Ragged School, in city mission work, the country recruit generally turns out well. Like the army recruit, he is rather awkward, not to say stupid, at first, but the raw material of a good working

Christian is found in him, and the clever Londoner soon licks him into shape and agility. The raw material of all public service and enterprize is chiefly drawn from country life. \* \* \*

Living in the midst of the simplicities of rural life and occupation, "far from the madding crowd," the most obscure Congregational Minister in the body, or out of the body, less than the least of all saints, not worthy to be called a saint, I have important letters from many cities, and from foreign lands, from emigrants and others, written in hard toil and rough homes, in sorrow and in joy, written also in sweet remembrance of the village homestead, the village chapel, the village pastor, and the God of our salvation. This enlargement of the narrow sphere of the village pastor yields him considerable encouragement, when "scorned by the proud and buffeted by the strong."

"Let not ambition mock their useful toil,  
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure ;  
Nor grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,  
The short and simple annals of the poor.  
The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,  
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave  
Await alike the inevitable hour:  
The paths of glory lead—but to the grave."

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BEHOLD I STAND AT THE DOOR AND KNOCK.

REV. III. 20.

Fling wide to God the hinges of thy heart,  
And let the messenger of mercy in ;  
O, when he knocketh bid him not depart,  
Nor say thou hast no room for him within.

Pause not to sweep its dusty chambers out,  
Foul and contaminated tho' they be ;  
The heavenly guest who waits for thee without,  
Will do that work, and better far than thee.

He is no dainty one, who walks alone  
Thro' richly-sculptur'd rooms and palace halls ;  
But into every hovel will he come,  
And write his blessed name upon its walls !

What tho' thou hast no store to set by him—  
No rich repast, no furnished table there,  
Save the sad fruits of sorrow and of sin—  
The harvest gathered on the fields of care—

He brings the goodly comforts of his love,  
Inviting thee the festive board to share—  
Pluck'd from the tree of life that blooms above !  
He hath abundance, and enough to spare !

Not as a weary trav'ler turns aside,  
To pause a night ere he resume his way—  
He comes with thee for ever to abide,  
And fill thy heart with sunshine all the day.

Then open wide the gate, and welcome him  
To make his dwelling there for evermore ;  
While meaner guests fill all the seats within,  
Shall he stand knocking at the churlish door !

## Editorial.

### The Canadian Independent.

TORONTO, JUNE, 1877.

#### THE UNION AND ITS WORK.

The sands of another year have almost run. The ecclesiastical clock needs winding, and regulating again, and all our machinery afresh putting into order. We meet at Guelph to do that, and anticipate, and pray for a happy, harmonious, and helpful meeting. The place, though as far west as ever we have gone, is not distant to the majority of the brethren, and the church with which we meet is one of the most vigorous and flourishing of the denomination, and we know how hearty will be the welcome which will be extended to us. We hope our brethren's large-heartedness, as well as large-housedness, will be tested to the uttermost!

Unlike some other denominations, we do not meet to "legislate." Our blessed Lord and Master has done that for us, in that He "hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness," and we cannot improve upon the laws He has enacted. We have no creeds to formulate, no knotty questions to settle, no heresies to try, no church action to review. Happy people! And in these times, too, when as some seem to think, the very foundations are in danger!

Well, but why meet at all, then? Why? Because—were there no other reason—we are drawn together by the common instincts of Christian hearts! We be brethren,—in a special sense; as largely "of one heart and of one soul," perhaps, as any body of men ever were in this world. We have no bond but that of confidence and love; and no interests to serve but those of Christ's kingdom; and yet certain we are that to many, this is "the Feast" of the year, going up to which we look forward to with more delightful anticipation than to any other that calls us together.

There is, however, no lack of "business" requiring our attention at the Union meetings. Indeed, there is generally such a plethora of it that the difficulty is to get through it satisfactorily without encroaching on the time that ought to be given to other things. Five important denominational Institutions hold their annual meetings during the sessions of the Union—the Missionary Society, the College, the Provident Fund, the Indian Mission, and the Congregational Publishing Company—each of which claims and deserves a large share of the attention of those present. Several of these, and especially the first-named, will make unusual demands upon the time of the brethren, during the approaching session.

Then there are always great public questions coming up for discussion, upon

which it is desirable that the Congregational churches, as a body, should be heard; and questions of internal administration, of general church relationship, and of aggressive missionary policy, which can properly be ventilated only in some such annual gathering as the Union affords. Papers on several such questions will, we understand, be read and discussed at Guelph, in addition to those ordered by the Union last year; and altogether, we doubt not, the interest of the meeting will be well sustained, and quite up to the average of such occasions.

We hope, therefore, to see a large attendance, both of delegates and ministers, and trust our brethren will, as far as possible, arrange to be present at the sessions, from the very beginning. And to this end we suggest that wherever practicable, the work to be done should be prepared in committee, so that the time of the Union may not be needlessly occupied with details. The sessions might thus be shortened, members of committees could be present without neglecting the duties assigned them, and absentees would thus be left "without excuse" for slipping out before the business was half done. *Verbum sat.*

Especially let every one come up to do and to get all the good he can, bringing the "preparation of the heart" with him, and not merely hoping to be quickened and refreshed when there; and he, at least, will not return home disappointed.

#### AGED MINISTERS, AND THEIR PROSPECTS.

The article in our May number, on

Pastors' salaries, by a deacon of one of our Canadian churches, is suggestive of some very grave thoughts in regard to a subject not directly touched upon by the writer. Many a minister of the gospel, as he approaches the "meridian" of life, or begins to "feel he is not so young as he once was;" finds the anxious question forcing itself upon him—"What shall I do when I am old?" If he can barely manage to live *now*, on what he is receiving, what prospect is there for him, if he should be spared to see three score and ten, or four score years, when his strength is labour and sorrow?

As long as he is pastor of a church, and is able to discharge the duties of his office with tolerable efficiency, he may hope, if not for a comfortable support, at least to be kept above actual want. But what if his people should some day take it into their heads that they need a younger or more eloquent man, and should give him a broad hint to resign—What then? He is, say, sixty years of age, too old, as most churches think, to invite to be their pastor; though as a lawyer, or a physician, or an engineer, large experience and long years' study would have made him a much more valuable man at sixty than at twenty-five. He is fit for no other occupation, his education and his life-work having alike had in view this one sacred calling. He cannot begin at that age to learn a new profession, or trade, with any hope of success in it. And here he is without a charge, unable to obtain one (though, perhaps, never better fitted for his work), and no other means of procuring a livelihood. Is not



such a case a hard one? Alas that it should be any more than an imaginary one!

It is easy for some one with a good snug income to say, Let him trust in the Lord. No doubt he is trying to do so, and praying for grace to quiet those anxieties from which the churches ought to have saved him. But—is trust in Divine Providence the privilege of the clergy only? How would some of our well-to-do laymen like to try it, in a similar way,—out of business, and without any income! Such an exercise of faith must be equally good for both classes.

It is suggested, perhaps, that their children will never see them want. Probably not, if they happen to have any children, and their children happen to have no wives or families of their own to look after, and should be able and willing to assist them. But we happen to know of cases in which one or more of these "ifs" entirely prevent the realization of these hopes; and the minister, worn out in the service of the churches, has nothing to look forward to, in his declining years, for himself, or his aged wife, but what, by a sad perversion of language, we call "charity." But where it is otherwise, and the children are all that duty and affection can make them, what father does not instinctively shrink from such dependence, feeling, as Paul says, that "the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children"?

It is to meet, in part, this very exigency that our Provident Fund has been organized—to enable our ministers to "lay up," at a small expense, an an-

nunity for themselves or their families, against the "evil days" of old age, or infirmity. From four to eight dollars a year, according to age, will secure him one hundred dollars a year from the Retiring Pastors' Fund, and from eight to twelve dollars will secure comfortable annuities to his widow and children in the event of his death. To avail himself of these advantages, however, he must have a salary sufficient for present wants, and a little to spare, to pay the annual premiums as they fall due,—which is the point our excellent friend the deacon urged so well in his article.

#### THE MONTREAL HERESY CASE.

The case of the Rev. Mr. Roy, of Montreal, who has recently been tried for heresy, and suspended from the ministry in the Methodist Church of Canada, of which he was one of its most popular preachers, is naturally exciting a good deal of attention among all religious denominations. In Montreal the sensation it has produced has been very great, nearly every minister in the city having in some way or other referred to it in their pulpits, while almost numberless letters have appeared for and against him in the *Witness*, and other city papers.

The cause of the disturbance, as most of our readers probably know, was the publication, by Mr. Roy, a short time ago, of a pamphlet on Methodism in its relation to modern thought, in which, as well as in his preaching, he is charged with "holding and disseminating doctrines which are contrary to, and subversive of our articles of religion and

standards" on the subject of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Atonement, Retribution, and the authority of the Holy Scriptures as a rule of faith.

These charges having been investigated by a committee convened by the Rev. Dr. Douglass, Chairman of the District, the Committee have given judgment that the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 5th counts have been sustained.

On the 4th count the Committee say, 1st, That the references of Mr. Roy to the subject of Retribution are few and limited. 2nd, That Mr. Roy does not fully hold the teachings of Wesley regarding the basis of the sinner's condemnation. 3rd, That we gladly recognize the fact that Mr. Roy avows his decided belief in the eternity of future retribution.

"We, therefore, regret to be obliged to condemn the teachings promulgated by Mr. Roy in his pamphlet as rationalistic in their basis, in some respects absolutely Unitarian, and in nearly every respect Socinian in their tendencies."

The deliverance of the committee was not absolutely unanimous, one of its members dissenting from their finding on the first, second, and fourth counts, and another of them on the third section of the fourth count. They were so far agreed, however, as to deem it their duty to suspend Mr. Roy from the ministry of the church, until the District meeting. Mr. Roy accepts the situation, and, declining to appeal to the "higher courts," withdraws from the Methodist body, and declares himself a Congregationalist.

Of course, as in all such cases, there is considerable diversity of opinion in regard to the action of the committee. A little spice of "heresy" always makes a man more popular. People love honesty, and outspokenness—not

to say novelty—and admire, if they cannot follow, a man who has the courage to preach what he believes, even at the risk of ecclesiastical proscription and decapitation. And, therefore, it is not strange that Mr. Roy, who is spoken of by those who know him as a very amiable and excellent man, should have many to defend him.

We have carefully read Mr. Roy's pamphlet, and confess that we do not see how the committee could very well do other than they have done. They were bound, by their subscription of the standards of Methodism, to uphold the teachings of John Wesley. The question before them was not whether Mr. Roy's views were scriptural, or logically tenable, but whether they were in accordance with what John Wesley believed; and they declare their conviction that they are not. They are simply judges of the law of Methodism, and as such, probably felt that they had no alternative.

The question, however, at once arises, "by what authority they do these things, and who gave them this authority?"—to bind men down to believe and teach only what John Wesley taught. Great and good man, as he undoubtedly was, who was he that he should stereotype the faith of even the Methodist Church for all the ages to come? Mr. Roy has shown conclusively enough, in his pulpit, that Mr. Wesley's views in the earlier part of his ministry differed very materially on some vital points, from those he held later in life, and claims, therefore, a much greater latitude in respect to doctrinal matters than is generally conceded to Methodist

ministers. So wide, indeed, is the divergence that Dr. Stevens, in his History of Methodism, declares that a rigorous system of interpretation in regard to their standards, "has become impossible." Mr. Wesley was eminently progressive and liberal; we wish we could say the same of the system he has founded.

Into the discussion of Mr. Roy's views we do not now enter. They are, undoubtedly, on some of the points at issue, of the most "advanced" type. We have no sympathy with many of them, especially those in regard to Inspiration, and the Atonement. But we are hardly prepared to go the length of the committee in saying that they show "not only a departure from the standards of faith of the Methodist Church of Canada, but also a decided antagonism to the orthodox views of all evangelical churches." We must wait for some orthodox definition of "orthodoxy" before that we can say that. We cannot be quite sure of our own orthodoxy until that authoritative definition has been given, and hence we prefer not to cast stones at our brother. The subjects with which he deals in his pamphlet are among the most profound and difficult within the entire range of speculative theology. Some of them, we think, had better be let alone. But if any man feels himself called to grapple with them, he ought to be allowed the largest liberty in doing so.

#### CONGREGATIONAL LIBERTY.

In a recent leading article on "the Montreal case of heresy," the *Globe* says, the struggle between Mr. Roy and his

brethren of the Methodist church "has at last culminated in Mr. Roy being suspended from the ministry, and in steps having been taken to organize for him a Congregational Church in which he may utter all his mind without any one seeking to interfere with him."

We hardly know whether to take our contemporary as complimentary or otherwise. If he means that there is a larger liberty allowed to the pastor of a Congregational than of a Methodist or a Presbyterian Church, to "utter all his mind" in regard to the truth of God, he says what is undoubtedly correct, and we fully appreciate the compliment. If, however, he only means to insinuate, as the *Presbyterian* does, that Congregational churches "have no creed to defend," we demur. There is as thorough and substantial agreement among Congregationalists in regard to all the great cardinal truths of the Gospel, as there is among the churches that require *subscription* to a creed. But we prefer to let a man tell us *in his own language* what he believes, and what he is, and judge of him accordingly. And if he give us evidence that he is a man of God, and that the Lord is setting His seal upon his ministry in saving sinners, and in turning men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, we are content to let him see some things differently from ourselves, assured that a true Christian will never get very far away from the doctrines of grace.

As to the *name* assumed by the new church organized by Mr. Roy, we have no reason to object. We have no "patent right" to the title "Congregational," which, as every body knows,

indicates not the creed, but the ecclesiastical polity of the church adopting it. Rather do we rejoice in their assumption of the name, believing, as we do, that a Congregational Church, rightly constituted, approaches more nearly the Scriptural model than any other form of organization. The only suggestion we have to offer on this point, with all due deference to John Wesley, is, that the New Testament churches were composed, not of those professing "a desire to flee from the wrath to come," but of "believers," "saints," the "faithful in Christ Jesus"—in other words, of those who gave credible evidence of their "having fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us." We trust Mr. Roy and his friends may be led shortly to see and embrace this most vital principle of Congregationalism, without which all its other principles, however important in themselves, are rendered nugatory and valueless.

Just now, when the synods and conferences of nearly all the churches are either in session, or are about to meet, every Christian heart should be lifted up to God in prayer, that all their deliberations and arrangements for the coming year may be so ordered that the best interests of the congregations under their charge may be secured, and the glory of God promoted thereby. So much depends, humanly speaking, on the action of Missionary Boards and Stationing Committees, that every lover of Zion must feel the deepest interest in their work. Let us, at such times especially, overleap our own narrow boundaries, and embrace in our arms the whole

household of God. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. They shall prosper that love thee!"

We are sorry to learn that in consequence of his lameness, and the extreme difficulty and suffering with which he moves about, our venerable friend Dr. Wilkes will not be with us at Guelph. His absence will be deeply felt by the Union in many ways, and we are sure that many prayers will go up on his behalf, that he may be speedily relieved from the affliction that keeps him at home. We know his warm interest in all that relates to Congregationalism in Canada. He will be with us in spirit.

The Rev. Mr. Timpany, Baptist Missionary to Telugu, having recently impugned, through the *Canadian Baptist*, the fidelity of the British and Foreign Bible Society in the circulation of an unfaithful translation of the Scriptures in the Telugu tongue, the Rev. Mr. Green, Agent of the Montreal Bible Society, wrote the Editorial Superintendent, in London, in regard to the matter, and received the following reply:—

"DEAR SIR,—Your note of 1st March, containing Mr. Timpany's letter, was laid before our Editorial sub-Committee, and the question is to be referred to the Madras Telugu Revision Committee.

"It is the earnest wish of the committee to circulate the very best translations, and for the preparation of such translations the society is dependent on Christian Telugu scholars who are labouring where the language is spoken.

"I have now before me the last annual report of the Madras Auxiliary with the names of the Telugu Revision Committee, and I think that any candid man will admit that the names are a guaran-

tee for the scholarly excellence, as well as for the Catholicity of the work done, and that, at any rate, no better men could have been got for this society to do the work. By looking over the names one sees that all the Mission Societies are fairly represented on the Revision Committee."

The trouble with our Baptist friends is, we imagine, that the Bible Society will not *translate* the Greek *baptize* by a word that is equivalent to *immerse*. It prefers, as in our English version, to transfer it.

The third triennial session of the National Council of the Congregational churches of the United States will be held in Detroit, Michigan, in October next. Notice of the exact date and a programme of the proceedings, will be given in due time. The basis of representation, which it is recommended should, as far as possible, consist of an equal number of ministers and laymen, will be one delegate for every ten churches. Not being an international council, our Canadian churches cannot properly be represented there, but, as on former occasions, we think it would be highly proper for our Union to send delegates to the meeting.

The post office address of the chairman of the Provisional Committee, Rev. Edward P. Goodwin, D.D., is Chicago, Ill. That of the Secretary, Rev. Alonzo H. Quint, D.D., is 34 School Street, Boston, Mass.

The reports presented to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the (Northern) United States, now in session in Chicago, show that 2,300 of their churches in the United States, do

not contribute to foreign missions; and 1,800 do not subscribe to home missions. A resolution was therefore adopted, instructing Presbyteries to require of each non-contributing church, a written reason for its omission to contribute. We hope the replies will be published. Such a book of excuses would make suggestive reading.

Dr. Gallaudet writes in *The Sunday-school Times*, of a Sunday-school near Washington in which very unique services are held. There is no singing, no reading or speaking aloud. No bell is used, and not even whispering is indulged in. The school is composed of from 80 to 100 members, arranged in classes. The International Series of Lessons is used. The occasion described by Dr. Gallaudet was the February concert. The exercises consisted of hymns, Scripture recitations, speeches from the students, and prayer, and yet not a word was uttered. The members of the school are inmates of the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, and all the exercises were held in the language of signs. Dr. Gallaudet says the absence of music in the rendering of the hymns "was, at least, partially compensated for by the poetry of motion, which is often an element of great beauty in sign recitations." The school takes up collections monthly for the establishment and support of schools in the West, and holds pic-nics, like other schools whose members are not shut out of the world of speech and music.

A correspondent of the *New York World* says Mr. Gladstone has formed

an alliance with Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Fawcett, and other English Liberals in Parliament, for the passage of several measures loudly called for by the "extreme Left."

Among these, he says, are the abolition of the law of primogeniture and the disestablishment of the Church. You will find that if Mr. Gladstone lives, these two measures will both be carried under his leadership—the last first. The "Liberation Society," as it is called, are thoroughly secure of Mr. Gladstone's services. This is the secret of the disorganization now apparent in the Liberal ranks, and it accounts for the hostile, not to say offensive, attitude which many of the Liberals take up in reference to Lord Hartington."

We confess, however, that we are not sanguine enough to expect to see these great changes under Mr. Gladstone's leadership. They will surely come in due time, but hardly, we fear, in his day.

A writer in *The Builder*, despairing of the remedies usually prescribed for sleeping in church, such as "pins, scent-bottles, pinches, toe-treading, and friendly nudges," and we may add, "snuff in the sermon," suggests that "sometimes vested interests close church-windows and doors. An influential doctor or undertaker, as church-warden or deacon, can scarcely be expected to ventilate his church. Clergymen who bewail the emptiness of their churches at Sunday afternoon services should first try the physician Fresh Air. Let them make their sermons heavier if they will, but let the air their audience breathes be lighter. Let only asthmatic beadles be appointed, let them lose one half of their salary, to be added to the fund for cleaning the church, if a single window or door remains unopened during a specified time before afternoon or evening services, and the other half if the doors and windows are not duly shut, to let the

church be warmed. Let the managers of the church be carefully weeded of doctors, chemists, and undertakers. Let the architect of the church be bound to sit one afternoon out of every four in the sight of the congregation, and fined £10 if he betray the slightest symptoms of falling asleep. By such measures as these, and only by such, can we ever hope to have ventilation and health reasonably well attended to.

Somebody has said, "One-half the money spent by the women of the Southern Methodist Church for gewgaws, would support a hundred missionaries in Japan." And somebody else replies, "One-half the money spent by the ministers and laymen of the Southern Methodist Church for tobacco, would support a thousand missionaries in Japan." It is hard to tell which has the best of it.

We are glad to observe that at the Annual Convocation of McGill University, Mr. W. H. Warriner took his degree of A. B., with First Rank Honours in Arts, and in English Language, Literature, and History, with the Shakspeare gold medal; that Mr. Chas. S. Pedley took First Rank Honours, and a prize in Mental and Moral Philosophy, and that Mr. R. Eadie took First Rank in General Standing and Prizes in Botany, English and Logic. All these gentlemen are students in the Congregational College of B. N. A., in Montreal. We congratulate them on their success.

The Rev. Messrs. Stevenson and Bray, of Montreal, expect to leave for England, about the first week in July, on a furlough of two months.

## News of the Churches.

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ALTON.—The new and handsome brick church being erected in the village of Alton, is expected to be ready for occupation, and opened for divine worship on the 17th June.

ORANGEVILLE.—A commencement has been made towards the erection of a Congregational Church in this thriving town. A lot has been secured in a very suitable locality, and the foundation has already been put in for a building 30x50 feet, with tower in front. The building to be erected will cost about \$1,500, and will be of frame, "venered" with brick. The project is very largely due to the energy of the pastor of the Alton Church, the Rev. H. J. Colwell, who has for some months held service at Orangeville.

GARAFRAXA AND DOUGLAS.—These Churches have resolved on being self-sustaining for the future, and have sent a very pleasant letter to the Home Secretary, thanking the Missionary Society for all past aid rendered. May they and their pastor, Mr. Griffith, be abundantly prospered in their work!

BRANTFORD EMMANUEL CHURCH.—Several new members were added to this Church on the first Sabbath in May. The additions since the arrival of the new pastor, Mr. Vancamp, have been 27. The membership now numbers 70, and the congregation is so much increased that it is proposed to erect a gallery in the church. The congregation has lately adopted the New (English) Congregational Hymn Book.

YORKVILLE.—A very largely attended Social was held on the evening of Thursday, May 3rd, for the double purpose of commemorating the formation of the Church, and welcoming Mr. W. H. Warriner, B.A., of the Congregational College, who is supplying during the

vacation, with a view to settlement. Refreshments on a liberal scale were provided by the young men of the church.

The Chair was occupied by Mr. George Scott, as senior deacon, who was supported by the Revs. T. Guttery (Prim. Meth.), R. D. Fraser (Presb.), the pastors of the Western and Bond Street Churches, and Mr. Hugh Pedley, B.A., of the Cobourg Congregational Church. Mr. H. J. Clark gave statistical information with regard to the progress of the Church, by which it appeared that the membership had been trebled during the year, and that the several organizations in operation were being blessed by the "Head of the Church." A number of addresses were delivered during the evening, interspersed with the singing of familiar hymns, and the proceedings were brought to a close at a late hour.—*Com.*

BOND ST., TORONTO.—Mr. Elgar, who sent us the item under the heading of "Home Dedication," in our last number, wishes us to explain, that, although he does not desire to disclaim its authorship, he is not responsible for the singularly bad taste of appearing as his own reporter. The report was signed "A Member of a Sister Church," and not as printed in the magazine.

Mr. J. F. Malcolm is at present supplying the Church at Whitby.

REV. C. H. BROOKS.—We have just received a letter from the Rev. C. H. Brooks, of Constantinople, bearing the post-mark of the 9th May—too late, however, to make any use of it this month. Our brother and his wife and child are well, and seems less anxious about the war than we are who are so remote from the scene. He sends "Grace and mercy and peace to all our Canadian churches."

## Other Lands.

### REV. MR. McALL'S WORK IN PARIS.

The following most interesting account of the work which is being done by the Rev. Mr. McAll, in Paris (France), is taken from the *English Independent*. Mr. McAll was pastor of one of the Congregational churches in Leicester; but visiting Paris, he was deeply moved at the spiritual destitution of that great city, and is now devoting his life to its evangelization, with marvellous success.

—[Ed. C. I].

SIR,—Having had the pleasure of attending nearly twenty of the meetings for the working men of Paris in connection with the mission of our friend and brother, the Rev. R. W. McAll, I desire to crave permission, through the columns of your excellent journal, to bear my testimony to the wonderful character of this work. It is little more than five years since with a trembling hand Mr. McAll and his devoted wife opened the doors of the little shop in Belleville which they had prepared, and to which they invited the working men of the neighbourhood to come and hear them and others speak about Jesus Christ; and now there are twenty places of meeting, and some of them furnished with 300 or 400 chairs. The little shop at Belleville has been exchanged for a *Brasserie*, or beer-drinking saloon, where of a Sunday evening a compact congregation of 300 people, many of them men, listen with great attention to the addresses and the reading of Scripture, and join in the singing of the hymns. At the Faubourg St. Antoine the congregation numbers at least 500.

Last Monday evening a most interesting meeting took place at the Boulevard Ornano, on the occasion of the reopening of the *salle* (hall) after considerable en-

largement. At half-past seven, or a little later, every chair was occupied, and after cups had been handed round, coffee and milk and buns were served by young ladies and young men, Mr. McAll's devoted helpers. This part of the business over, the more serious proceedings began. Mr. McAll presided, and spoke a few words of hearty welcome. He was followed by pastors of the Reformed, Lutheran, and Free Churches, all of whom expressed their delight in the work, and their readiness to co-operate with Mr. McAll. It was a truly wonderful sight to look upon the mass of up-turned faces—at least 500 in number—and to listen to the hearty way in which the hymns were sung. The success of this particular station is the more surprising, as at the outset it was fiercely opposed by the atheists of the neighbourhood, assisted by several of the newspapers. Every evening this week M. Théodore Monod was to hold meetings in this *salle* for the special benefit of those who for the last three or four years have been regular attendants at the meetings, and in the hope that many of them may be brought to decide for Christ. I ought, perhaps, to say that the funds requisite for the enlargement of this *salle* were provided by General Knox, in memory of his late wife, who was the means of opening a station at the *Gare d'Ivry*, and whose intention it was, had her life been spared, to do much more for this mission. I must not trespass further on your space, but must conclude by most heartily recommending this *Œuvre McAll*, as the French people call it, to the hearty sympathy, the earnest prayers, and the sustained and increased liberality (*the funds are very low, and the time for paying the quarterly rents of the twenty stations is at hand*) of all our Congregational churches. Mr. McAll has neither the time nor the strength to come over and plead his own cause, as so many Continental workers are doing. He leaves



it in the hands of God and of his friends. Should any of your readers be desirous of contributing to this mission, I shall be most happy to receive and transmit their donations or subscriptions; and I may add that there is not an evangelistic work in Europe better deserving of support. The number of sittings (chairs) at the twenty stations is about 4,000, and the aggregate number of attendants last year at the nineteen stations then open was 232,923, while the aggregate attendance at the children's meetings and Sunday-schools was over 33,000.

I am, &c., R. S. ASHTON,  
Secretary of Evangelical Continental Society,  
March 31, 1877.

### MEXICO.

Rev. Mr. Watkins, a successful and fearless missionary in Mexico, Monday evening described the social condition of that benighted and backward country to a respectable audience in Emmanuel Church. Rev. Mr. Stevenson occupied the chair, and several city clergymen were present.

It is safe to say that those present were deeply interested in his recital, yet that they were shocked at the terrible state of things in that so-called Republic. While paying a high compliment to the natural beauty and agricultural and mineral wealth of the country, he said, agriculture and commerce were neglected; what they cultivated most extensively was "revolutions." (Laughter.) Good roads were not plentiful and very unsafe; their sides were marked by crosses and heaps of stones, places where people had been killed. The robbers which infested the country were very frequently put to death though, as many as sixty being executed in two months to his knowledge.

Houses were of a primitive and simple construction, and were generally meanly furnished. Beans and tortilla, made with corn soaked in lime and water, then made into dough, beaten thin and baked, were staple dishes; the tortillas being tough served as spoons with which to eat the beans. An estimate of the farmers' progressive ideas could be form-

ed when they declined to use American ploughs. The Mexicans on the whole were naturally brave, patriotic and intelligent men, yet through the debasing influence of the Church of Rome they were in a wretched condition. The Indians had been labored amongst by the Roman Catholics for more than 200 years and there could be seen the fruits; men and women absolutely naked—soul and body. The Catholic Mexicans were almost to a man guilty of lying; stealing was common and morality at a low ebb. To give the audience some idea of the doctrines enunciated by the clergy he read extracts from their writings; in substance that the priest was equal to the Virgin Mary, because he in his way produced Jesus Christ, and superior in one sense as he produced Him as often as he liked; He was equal to Jesus Christ and was Christ; he was the Father of Christ, creator with Him; he was the very God and even greater than God in one sense and he was all this, though a criminal and a nullity as a man. Believing in these blasphemous assertions, the people absolutely obeyed the priest, and worshipped him as God. It was common for them to say about him, "There goes our Christ;" they reverentially kissed his hands, though knowing very often that he was an assassin. The most dreadful crimes were thus perpetrated under the sanction of the priests, or were extenuated and pardoned by them. One woman who killed three of her children was pardoned on giving the priest sixty turkeys! The best families in Mexico were destroyed by the priests, and they could give all possible latitude to the meaning of these words. The fathers and mothers dare not say a word against the wrongs perpetrated upon their children. He said the Bible was there deemed to be of the devil, and anti-Christian; the priests prohibited the use even of their own Douay Bible. He proceeded to graphically narrate the labors of the missionaries there, and the great danger experienced to life owing to the fanaticism and lawlessness which existed; the Mexicans were willing listeners to the Gospel, once they could be reached, and the converts were exceedingly steadfast. His own life had at different times been

at the point of being sacrificed, but God had miraculously preserved him; a blessed work was being done, despite persecution and danger to life, and he asked them not to forget the poor Mexicans.

The reformation is not confined to the Western portion of the Empire. There are in the City of Mexico four Protestant churches, beside a theological school and orphanage. The largest church in the City of Mexico, which was Catholic and built over three hundred years, is now Protestant, and is occupied by a large congregation four times on Sabbath. There are altogether in the States of Mexico one hundred and sixty Protestant churches; a few years since it would have been dangerous for a Mexican to avow that he differed from the faith of the State Church. The most eloquent preacher among the Protestants is one who was formerly at the head of the Dominican Convent, and used to preach in the great Cathedral to crowds of

eager listeners. It must be observed that the reformation commenced among the Mexicans themselves, and was not due to any outside influences. The Protestant community is now recognized as a power in the State, and is allowed full liberty to establish schools and worship. The present organization of the Protestant Church in the City of Mexico is due to the Episcopal Church of the United States, whose bishops visited them and ordained seventeen Mexican ministers, and a bishop is appointed over them, the Rev. Dr. Riley, a Chilian by birth.

Rev. Dr. WILKES returned a vote of thanks to the lecturer, who had retained the interest of the audience for over an hour.

Rev. Mr. Watkins, Missionary from Mexico, addressed the Ladies of the Canadian Women's Board of Missions, at their meeting yesterday, in a very interesting and impressive manner.—*Witness.*

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## Official.

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ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF ONTARIO AND QUEBEC.—The Congregational Union of Ontario and Quebec will meet (D.V.), in Guelph, on Wednesday, the 6th of June, 1877, at 7.30 P.M., when the Chairman, the Rev. D. Macallum, will deliver his retiring address.

The *annual collection* for the Union will be due on the 3rd June. *All* the churches should contribute to this object; a moderate increase on the part of each would secure the payment in full of the travelling expenses.

The Committee of the Union will please meet at the church, on Wednesday afternoon, June 6th, at 3 o'clock.

K. M. FENWICK,  
*Secretary-Treasurer.*

CANADA CONGREGATIONAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY.—The Annual meeting of this Society will be held in the Congregational Church, Guelph, on Thursday afternoon, the 7th June next, at 2.30 o'clock.

The General Missionary Committee are requested to meet in the Vestry of the church, on Wednesday, June 6th, at 11 A.M., to prepare business for the Annual meeting.

JOHN WOOD,  
*Home Sec.*

Toronto, May 28th, 1877.

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CONGREGATIONAL COLLEGE OF B. N. A.  
—Received since last acknowledgment :

Zion Church, Montreal.....	\$72 00
Sherbrooke and Lennoxville	68 00
R. M. B. balance due by him to the College .....	55 00
Geo. Hague, Esq.....	20 00
	<hr/>
	\$215 00

Total receipts to date.....	\$3,410 37
Total payments .....	4,194 35

Balance due Treasurer ... \$783 98

R. C. JAMISON,  
*Treasurer.*

Montreal, 23rd May, 1877.

MONTREAL, May 21st, 1877.

The Thirty-eighth Annual Meeting of the Congregational College of B.N.A. will be held in the Congregational Church at Guelph, Ontario, on Friday June 8th, 1877.

The Chair will be taken at 11 o'clock, A.M.

GEORGE CORNISH, LL.D.  
*Secretary.*

CONG. COLL. OF B. N. A. ENDOWMENT FUND.—Received since last acknowledgment :

Messrs. Robertson Brothers, Kingston, third instalment..	\$25 00
G. S. Fenwick, Esq. Kingston, third instalment.....	100 00
J. S. McLachlan, Esq. Montreal, third instalment .....	100 00

James Linton, Esq. Montreal, third instalment.....	50 00
Francis Scholes, Esq. second donation.....	10 00
Benj. Lyman, Esq. Montreal, in full .....	300 00

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\$585 00

CONGREGATIONAL PROVIDENT FUND.—  
Received since last announcement for  
Retired Pastors' Fund.

Athol & Martintown..... \$5.00.

J. C. BARTON,  
*Treasurer.*

MONTREAL, 26th May, 1877.

CONGREGATIONAL PUBLISHING COMPANY.—The Annual General Meeting of the Stockholders of the above Company will be held in the Congregational Church, Guelph, on Wednesday, the 6th of June next, at 4.30 P.M.

JOHN WOOD,  
*Sec'y-Treas'r.*

Toronto, May 28th, 1877.

LABRADOR MISSION.—The Treasurer of the Labrador Mission, begs to acknowledge the following sums :

Bond St. Church, Toronto....	\$10 00
Western Union S. School, per Mr. Woodhouse, Toronto...	7 00
Ottawa, S. School.....	10 00
Cobourg S. School, Montreal..	10 00
St. Andrews Women's Boarding Missions.....	16 00

Montreal, 21st May, 1877.

## Obituary.

MRS. CHARLES HARRISON.

Died at Maugerville, New Brunswick, on Friday, April 20th, Mary, wife of the Hon. Charles Harrison, in the 86th year of her age.

On the following Sunday, her remains, attended by a very large number of relatives and friends, were conveyed to Sheffield, when a sermon was preached

in the Congregational Church, from Rev. xiv. 13.—“And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth : Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours ; and their works do follow them.”

In the course of his remarks the preacher alluded to the deceased as follows :—“Many years ago she became

a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, she lived near to Him, and she died, as she lived, *'in the Lord.'*

"When I last visited her, a few days ago, she said: 'I'm a poor sinful creature, but Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth. He is made unto us of God, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.'"

There she rested, and sweetly and calmly fell asleep in Jesus.

About the last words she was heard to speak were two verses from a hymn, by Dr. Watts, which were as follows:—

"'Tis He adorned my naked soul,  
And made salvation mine,  
Upon a poor polluted worm  
He makes His graces shine.

And lest the shadow of a spot,  
Should on my soul be found,  
He took the robe the Saviour wrought,  
And cast it all around."

J. B.

## Home and School.

### THE END OF THE WAY.

The following lines are sent us by the Rev. R. K. Black, who says, "The circumstances which led to their being penned are to me very interesting. A young lady in Milton, when writing to my daughter, asked her sister, a greatly afflicted invalid for the past twelve years, if she had any message to send to me. With scarcely any premeditation she uttered these words, which were taken down by her sister, and which I forward to you":—

My life is a wearisome journey,  
I'm sick with the dust and the heat,  
The rays of the sun beat upon me,  
The briers are wounding my feet;  
But the city to which I am journeying,  
Will more than my trials repay;  
All the toils of the road will seem nothing,  
When I get to the end of the way.

There are so many hills to climb upward,  
I often am longing for rest;  
But He, who appoints me my pathway,  
Knows just what is needful and best,  
I know in His Word He has promised,  
That my strength shall be as my day;  
And the toils of the road will seem nothing,  
When I get to the end of the way.

He loves me too well to forsake me,  
Or give me one trial too much;  
All His people have been dearly purchased,  
And Satan can never claim such.  
By and bye I shall see Him and praise Him,  
In the city of unending day;  
O the toils of the road will seem nothing,  
When I get to the end of the way.

When the last feeble step has been taken,  
And the gates of the city appear;  
And the beautiful songs of the angels,  
Float out on my listening ear;  
When all that now seems so mysterious,  
Will be plain and clear as the day;  
Yes, the toils of the road will seem nothing,  
When I get to the end of the way.

Though now I am weary and footsore,  
I shall rest when I'm safely at home;  
I know I'll receive a glad welcome,  
For the Saviour Himself has said, Come!  
So when I am weary in body,  
And sinking in spirit, I say—  
All the toils of the road will seem nothing,  
When I get to the end of the way.

Cooling fountains are there for the thirsty,  
There are cordials for those who are faint,  
There are robes that are whiter and purer,  
Than any that fancy can paint.  
Then I'll try to press hopefully onward,  
Thinking often through each weary day,  
The toils of the road will seem nothing,  
When I get to the end of the way.

HARRIET COLE.

Milton, Queen's Co., N. S.

### THE EVERLASTING ARMS.

One of the sweetest passages in the Bible is this one, "Underneath are the everlasting arms." It is not often preached from; perhaps because it is felt to be so much richer and more touching than anything we ministers can say about it. But what a vivid idea it gives

of the Divine support ! The first idea of infancy is resting in arms which maternal love never allows to become weary. Sick-room experiences confirm the impression when we have seen a feeble mother or sister lifted from the bed of pain by the stronger ones of the household. In the case of our Heavenly Father the arms are felt but not seen. The invisible secret support comes to the soul in its hours of weakness and trouble ; for God knoweth our feebleness, He remembers that we are but dust.

We often sink very low under the weight of sorrows. Sudden disappointments can carry us, in an hour, from the heights down to the very depths. Props that we leaned upon are stricken away. What God means by it very often, is just to bring us down to "the everlasting arms !" We did not feel our need of them before. We were "making flesh our arm," and relying on human comforts or resources.

There is something about deep sorrow that tends to wake up the child-feeling in all of us. A man of giant intellect becomes like a little child when a great grief smites him, or when a grave opens beneath his bedroom or his fireside. I have seen a stout sailor—who laughed at the tempest—come home when he was sick, and let his old mother nurse him as if he were a baby. He was willing to lean on the arms that never failed him. So a Christian in the time of trouble is brought to this child-feeling. He wants to lean somewhere, to talk to somebody, to have somebody love him and hold him up.

One great purpose in all affliction is to bring us down to the everlasting arms. What new strength and peace it gives to feel them underneath us ! We know that far as we have sunk, we cannot go any farther. Those mighty arms can not only hold us ; they can lift us up. They can carry us along. Faith, in its essence, is simply a resting on the everlasting arms. The sublime act of Jesus our Redeemer was to descend to the lowest depths of human depravity and guilt, and to bring up His redeemed ones from that horrible pit to His loving arms. Faith is just the clinging to those arms and nothing more.—*Rev. Dr. Cuyler.*

## BOOTH'S THEATRE.

Mr. Booth, a few years since, built his theatre avowedly for the purpose of proving the possibility of maintaining successfully a legitimate drama in New York City. He was reputed to be one of the finest living tragedians. His theatre—we speak from common rumour, not from personal knowledge—was freed, as far as possible, from those incidental evils which have made the ordinary theatre a disgrace and a danger. The author most popular on his stage was Shakespeare. No pains or expense was spared in auxiliaries. If ever a theatre was unexceptionable, it was Booth's. If ever there was a temple dedicated to histrionic art which the scrupulous might attend, it was this temple. Many who never went to any theatre went thither, either without scruple, or with scruples silenced and sung to sleep. Theological students went—to study elocution. Deacons and elders went—to impart to their children a love for Shakespeare. It was to be an educator. Here the drama was to be made the handmaid, if not of religion, at least of good morals. Here the precepts of humanity and philanthropy were to be preached through all the week. Here neither the French melodrama nor the shameless ballet should shock the sensibilities of the virtuous.

The result is bankruptcy. The proprietor is insolvent ; the theatre passes into other and less scrupulous hands. We do not exult over the future. Nay ! such a failure is far more honourable than the ordinary theatrical success. But we can hardly err in drawing the conclusion that the hopes of those who aim to purify and preserve the drama are chimerical. Repeated failures demonstrate the impracticability of the well-meant attempt. The theatres live by the patronage of those who are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God ; and even in such a metropolis as New York city, there are not enough who desire a purified drama to keep one theatre from bankruptcy.

We believe it was Mr. Beecher who said, There is one serious difficulty in the way of a moral theatre, the difficulty of finding a treasurer.