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ONE IS YOUR MASTER, EVEN CHRIST, AND ALL YE ARE BRETHREN

THE
**CANADIAN
INDEPENDENT.**

NEW SERIES.

VOLUME III. No. 8.

AUGUST.

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THE CANADIAN INDEPENDENT.

(NEW SERIES.)

VOL. III.]

TORONTO, AUGUST, 1884.

[No. 8.

EDITORIAL JOTTINGS.

WE call special attention to the report of the meeting of the Union in the Lower Provinces. We trust that the brethren who visited from the Unions of Ontario and Quebec will yet give their impressions; meantime we desire attention to the fact that the Missionary Societies of the two Unions are again united. This is a most important step, tending to mutual sympathy and earnest co-operation. We rejoice in the issue, and trust that with the increased facilities this age affords for travel, intercommunion between the churches will be frequent and hearty. In the unification of interests referred to, we hail another step in our advance, and feel that we have much additional cause to press on with hope and vigour.

WE would specially call attention to one resolution passed at the meeting, viz., that in relation to THE CANADIAN INDEPENDENT. True it is but a monthly, but it is the one means of constant intercourse between our churches. We cordially invite the brethren to aid in filling up its columns, and to render it thus more welcome into every Congregational home, where we trust through the energy of its friends it may yet find its way. We thank our brethren for their expressed confidence in our endeavours, and beg them to aid us in meriting the same.

THE English *Congregationalist* is always welcome to our desk. Among its many excellent articles in the July number, is one on the present state of English Congregationalism. Mr. Morley, whose name is a household word among our English brethren, has suggested that Congregationalism was not holding its own, for whereas it once provided for six per cent. of the population, to-day it provides for but four. The indefatigable secretary of the London Congregational Union, has given abundant reason for distrusting the conclusion

thus arrived at, and the *Congregationalist*, commenting thereon, has drawn attention to several facts, which have their interest for us as for our brethren across the water. Figures can be readily manipulated to suit any theory, witness the unquestioned figures of our national expenditure and income as manipulated by the Minister of Finance or the opposition leader. Hence friends are often misled by figures. But granted a decrease according to figures, which emphatically we do not, is that reason for hanging down one's head? This is a part of what our contemporary says: "Congregationalism has always had a strength in the nation out of proportion to its numerical power. It was so as far back as the Commonwealth, when the influence of the Independent party was greatly in excess of any force they could have brought to the poll in the case of a plebiscite. In its very genius it abhors a compromise, and so acquires the power which invariably belongs to a clear and vigorous assertion of principle even though it be an extreme one. It leavens the thoughts of parties which on profession are most strongly opposed to its principles, a statement which every one familiar with the internal life of our various religious communities must be able to corroborate." We quote these lines to show, by comparison with our chairman's address, that the same discouragements—if discouragements they be—which too often press heavily on timid hearts, are meeting us as they meet our English brethren, of whom and of whose work the world may be justly proud.

UNFORTUNATELY there are men who do not appreciate liberty, as there are men who do not appreciate the Gospel. This says nothing against liberty, but renders the abuse of the blessing more culpable. The Rev. James Wood, who has for some years been pastor of a Congregational church in Leicester, England, has just accepted the pastorate of a Unitarian congregation at Birmingham. With this freedom we are not

disposed to quarrel, but Mr. Wood has taken the occasion for what seems a fling at the Evangelical character of the Congregational churches. He is reported as saying, "The whole Congregational Union has known for more than eleven years that I have not been a Trinitarian." What reason the Union had for the negative knowledge is not stated, and representative members of the Union plainly say that "as a matter of fact the Union had no such knowledge." We would say the Union and the world had every reason to suppose otherwise. Independency presupposes Christian honour. It refuses to engage in a heresy hunt, leaving men free in the sight of God. Nevertheless Independency Congregationalism as a Christian denomination has fixed principles. It asserts these principles in a "declaration of faith and order," and it leaves individuals to say whether they can honourably abide and work under the same. If any man abuses that confidence he manifests himself unworthy of confidence and reads himself out of the line of true fellowship. We do not ask subscription; we do expect honour; and if a man accepts a position in any of our churches, we do not expect him to travesty or evade the principles of the denomination. To our mind a man who would abuse our denominational liberty is under deeper disgrace than one unrobed by any Synod or conference for heresy, he is a self-convicted dissembler. The Unions are not courts, but should be the visible fellowship of Christian gentlemen.

We did not know when we greeted at the recent meeting of the Union, the delegate from our American brethren, that we were greeting a brother editor. Yet so it seems we were, and we hereby acknowledge our ignorance, which has been put to flight by the reception of the *Madrid Recorder*, Rev. W. D. Williams, editor. Its politics are eminently republican, and its *polity* Congregational, prominence being given to "Our Church," "Our Association," etc. A double fraternity, Brother Williams, will not render us less mindful of each other. Our readers will not object to reading our friend's impressions of our gathering. Here they are:

We have seen something of Canadian Congregationalism. We are impressed with the earnestness of its advocates and the soundness of its representatives. They stand firmly upon the Puritanic principles, and consistently resolve against the slightest encroachment

of Church and State. They are aggressively engaged in propagating our polity and our faith. Compared with other denominations in her Majesty's Dominion they are emphatically a minority, but a well organized and disciplined minority is worth more than a sprawling, scattered majority. Their ministers average high, although there are only a few that are conspicuous enough to be known beyond their own territory. Congregationalism in Canada owes much to Dr. Jackson, of Kingston, and to the untiring labours of the ubiquitous Rev. T. Hall, the superintendent of missions. It also has a periodical and a college. The former is conducted under the able and successful management of the Rev. John Burton, of Toronto. He is the editor and business manager of THE CANADIAN INDEPENDENT. The college is presided over by the pastor of Emmanuel Church. During the meeting of the Union, one evening was spent in formally

OPENING THE COLLEGE

building—a model of neatness and convenience. The speeches that evening were very able, and a paper read by Rev. Allworth, sparkled with brightness. The chief characteristics of this college are the ability of its teachers and the paucity of its students. It is remarkable for its room to grow. Hoping it may again be our privilege to greet our nearest and best neighbours, and again take another "bird's eye view," we bid them adieu.

A REMARK or two on some sentences in our estimable friend Mr. Hall's letter must be made. Our July number, it would seem, has discouraged missionary work by speaking of union with other bodies. Sorry are we that the mention of that which occupied a place in the Saviour's prayer "that they all may be one" should cause missionary zeal to flag. We hope second thoughts will come, and patiently wait.

BUT then we did not discuss union, nor in any way give up the denominationalship. Our chairman, than whom no more loyal man to our missionary cause we have, did mention union; our friend Mr. Hall's comment "no true friend of Congregationalism would raise the question of Union at the present juncture of our affairs," is a sample of the manner in which, by a few, his remarks were met. We deprecated that manner, we do so still, only that and nothing more. Why should not Mr. Sanderson express his convictions so long as within evangelical bounds? Why should Mr. Hall not express his? And if our chairman raised the question as in his judgment called for, is he to be denounced "as no true friend of Congregationalism" any more than our worthy missionary superintendent is to be denounced as a foe to the denomination because he thinks union inop-

portune? We stand for liberty of speech and conscience without the *odium theologicum*, and therefore we defend our friend in discussing union, as we shall, if occasion arise, defend our other friend for urging reasons against it. Nor do we fear the discussion. No position we occupy fears the light of Christian discussion. Already has the mention of the subject done good. It has brought out some manly utterances from our brother Mr. Allworth, who makes it manifest that the charge of disunion does not lie against our principles, and that our action in the past cannot be held as recreant to the desire for true union; and we are persuaded that when the true relations of the varied denominations to each other are calmly viewed and stated that so far from "cutting the nerve of our missionary enterprise," it will be found that we shall have the more abundant cause to press on in our unsectarian work, waiting patiently the guidings of the providence that may meet us. We rewrite our words of the July number: "Let us maintain firmly, lovingly, these truths (our unsectarian denominationalism and Christian liberty), have faith in them, and make them sound forth the word of life, the Spirit of Christ. We shall patiently work on these lines, leaving the future with God"; content, if it be His will "to drop out of sight until the great roll-call is made."

WE are glad to insert the letter from our friend, who will be readily recognized under his signature, W. H. A. We like his outspoken *Independency*, though we are scarcely ready to accept his implied charge of lecturing the Congregationalists on union. We recognize the unsectarian character of the Congregational platform and on that account said and say the discussion of union ought not to terrify us, it may the rather bring out in stronger lines our denominational *raison d'etat*.

OUR contemporary, the *Canada Presbyterian*, kindly gives us a lesson in logic. We are, we trust, thankful for all mercies and thus far for this, though it is so small that our grateful emotion would scarcely keep our friend warm, if the thermometer were near zero. As, however, it is genial weather while we write, he does not so much need our help. If our friend will look again at what he saw in the paragraph, on which we were

commenting, he will find that he gave it as a reason for consulting the Presbytery, rather than any higher court that "Presbyteries are nearest the people and are most likely to know the mind of the church." Now either our friend was writing nonsense (and we are the last to think that he was) or this must mean that it is desirable to know the mind of the people in order that it may influence legislation. If his sentence did not mean that, it is not rude to say that it was distinguished by a "plentiful absence" of meaning. And, if it did, then the question as to the comparative authority of different church courts is distinctly made to turn on the degree in which they reflect the mind of the people. It is not necessary for us to teach a writer so learned in church law, that legislation according to the mind of the people is the distinguishing principle of Congregationalism and we must be allowed to renew our expression of pleasure that our contemporary is so rapidly approximating what we hold to be the true point of view. We know Whately pretty well, or did, and have opened the cover of Stuart Mill, Archbishop Thompson and other logical teachers; we have heard of a Sir William Hamilton also and we have no fear as to the fairness of our reasoning as tried by their canon. No doubt the *Presbyterian* will be unwilling "to give up" anything in the way of church government in order to union. But it may be, that some day, he will rub his eyes and find, that though not given up by a deliberate act, it is "all gone"! All, we mean, that really stands in the way. His paragraph convinces us that it is "going—going", and the hammer will probably come down ere long with a smart *gone!*

A WORD, too, about the "failure" of Congregationalism in Canada. We do not feel at all like people who have failed, or are going to fail. What is your standard?—that is the question. Is it energy? We were never so energetic. Is it mutual love and goodwill? We never had more of them. Is it numbers? Well, we were never in Canada so numerous as our friends it is true, but, as to this last year, we need not hang our heads. While the Presbyterian Church reports a clear increase of 380 communicants, we are able to report one of 404. And if we consider

the increase *per cent.* which this implies, the difference in our favour is considerable. But after all our chief success is the success of our principles, and while these are so gently but certainly penetrating the *Canada Presbyterian* our success, if not splendid, is secure.

THE Rev. James Baldwin Brown passed away June 23rd., last, having for some time manifested symptoms of departing strength. The son of an English barrister, trained himself for the same profession, necessity seemed laid upon him to preach the Gospel. This he has done fearlessly, independently, for over forty years. A sturdy nonconformist, yet with heart so large that he numbered among his intimate friends, dignitaries of the National church. Independent to a fault, his frank, manly, sympathetic bearing forbid his being separate from his brethren. He esteemed no earthly portion higher than that of an Independent Minister of an Independent church, strong only in the faith of God and in the affections of his people. If he lives long who lives best, Mr. Brown's life has been long, measured by the flight of time, his years numbered sixty-three. His religious standpoint can be but declared in his own words taken from his address as Chairman of the Union, in 1878.

"It is easy, unhappily, in these days to contract habits of thought which lay hold but lightly on the great historic facts of the Gospel, while attaching the highest importance to the ideas and influences of which we believe it to be the spring. In other words, the transposition of religion from the objective to the subjective key is a process which is in full play around us, and easily draws minds of a certain temper into its train. There are those who attach no meaning which seems to us to be substantial, having its ground in God, to such words as Inspiration, Incarnation, Resurrection and Immortality; who yet express some amazement if we ask them, what is there left, then, of even the shell of the Gospel? They answer—and, no doubt, with entire honesty—there are left very beautiful, elevating, stimulating, sanctifying ideas—ideas which will work out in time what may be regarded as the salvation of the human race. But they have to learn that man never has been, never will be, never can be, saved by ideas, as Athens has

taught us; it is the solid substance of Divine fact which is behind the ideas; it is the vital power of God, of which that fact is the conductor, which sanctifies and saves. The Gospel is not a noble and beautiful speculation about God, about life, about duty; the Gospel is the tale of what the God who made the world has in His own living person done and suffered for the world. Here is the firm, strong, broad basis of Christian communion. A communion which has feeble hold on the truth which God has given to unite and compact mankind, has in it the principle of decay and the prophecy of dissolution, and can only in the end mock the hopes of all longing hearts."

We shall leave these words to tell their tale of the man.

REV. C. SPURGEON has celebrated his jubilee, in a series of meetings at his Tabernacle, with great enthusiasm. Over twenty thousand dollars have been handed to the pastor by admiring friends, and by him been virtually put aside for the institutions which have sprung up as the direct result of his work. The now venerable Earl of Shaftsbury with Canon Wilberforce were present in person, to testify to the widespread esteem in which the nonconformist minister was held. The *Times* and the *Pall Mall Gazette* have each felt impelled to notice editorially the work of the great preacher. The following from the latter paper reporting an interview, is worthy of note and reflection. Mr. Spurgeon evidently has no faith in religious endowments, nor would we, if we had faith that God will always find the means of carrying on his work.

"I am even against endowing my own college. Some one offered me money the other day to found a scholarship in connection with my college. I declined. Why should I gather money which would remain after I am gone to uphold teaching of which I might entirely disapprove? No! Let each generation provide for its own wants. Let my successor, if I have one in the college, do as I have done, and secure the funds which he needs for his own teaching. I wish there were no religious endowments of any shape or kind among Dissenters or Churchmen, for I never yet knew a chapel enjoying an endowment which did not find that in-

stead of its being a blessing it was a curse. One great object of every religious teacher should be to prevent the creation of external appliances to make his teaching appear to live when it is dead. If there were no endowments an error would soon burst up, whereas an artificial vitality is imparted to it by bolstering it up with endowments."

"Then you have faith for yourself, Mr. Spurgeon, but none for your successor?" queried the visitor.

"A man does very well who has faith for himself; but how can he undertake to have faith for another? I am no believer in sponsorship. Who knows where my successor may be? He may be in America or in Australia, I know not where. As for the Tabernacle, the man who occupies my place when I pass away will have to depend upon his own resources, upon the support of his people, and the grace of God, as I have done; and if he can't do that, let him come to the ground, for he will not be the fitting man. With orphanages it is quite another matter."

One of the noteworthy facts is, that Spurgeon has won his laurels fighting the devil on the old Calvinistic lines. Hear his words:—

"In theology I stand where I did when I began preaching, and I stand almost alone. If I ever did such things, I could preach my earliest sermons now without change, so far as the essential doctrines are concerned. I stand almost exactly where Calvin stood in his maturer years. It is the Calvinistic way of looking at things which causes my sermons to have such acceptance in Scotland, in Holland, and even in the Transvaal, where a recent traveller expressed his astonishment at finding translations of them lying beside the family Bible in the Transvaal farmstead. I am aware that my preaching repels many; that I cannot help. If a man does not believe in the inspiration of the Bible, for instance, he may come to hear me once, and if he comes no more, that is his act and not mine. My doctrine has no attraction for that man; but I cannot change my doctrine to suit him."

Perhaps he may teach some of us yet that the old wine is better than the new.

OLD TESTAMENT REVISION.—The Old Testament Revisers have just completed

their labours. Their eighty-fifth and last session, which was held on Friday last, in the Jerusalem Chamber, was attended by the Bishop of Bath and Wells, the Dean of Peterborough, Mr. Bently, Dr. Chance, Mr. Cheyne, Dr. Davidson, Dr. Douglas, Professor Driver, Dr. Ginsburg, Archdeacon Harrison, Dr. Kay, Professor Leathes, Professor Lumby, Mr. Sayce, Professor Robertson Smith, Professor Wright, and Mr. Aldis Wright (secretary)
—*Christian World*.

CRUMBS FROM THE UNION MEETINGS.

The brother who furnished the report of Union proceedings in our last, says the awkward phrase "Pan-Congregational Council," is, in the Minutes, "General Congregational Council." It was "Pan" in the rough draft probably, and thus reported. It is much to be hoped that the English Congregational Union may mature a feasible plan for bringing together such a gathering within a year or two from date.

ADMISSIONS AND DISMISSIONS.

The following is a list of admissions and dismissions, as members of the recent Union meetings in Montreal: Received as members of the Union, Rev. E. M. Hill, Calvary Church, Montreal; Rev. E. L. Bolton, Warton, Ont; Rev. E. M. Brainerd, Sherbrooke, Que; Rev. W. H. Way, Pine Grove, Ont; Rev. George Fuller, Brantford, Ont; Rev. David Beaton, St John's, Newfoundland; Rev. A. F. Rivard, Belle Riviere, Que; Rev. C. E. Gordon Smith, Stratford; Rev. C. L. Ross, Kincardine, Ont; and Mount Zion Church, Riverside, Toronto.

Dismissions from membership of the Union—Letter of standing in the Union, granted to Rev. B. B. Sherman, removed to United States; Letter of dismission to any kindred association in England or Scotland, to Rev. Robert McKay, Evangelist; certificate of standing in the Union up to the time his name was dropped from the roll, to Rev. John Campbell; letter certifying to the standing of Rev. J. F. Malcolm, up to the time of his leaving us; letter of dismission to the Congregational Union of England and Wales, to Rev. F. James, late of Eaton, Que; letter of dismission to Rev. William McIntosh, to the Congregational Union of Nova Scotia and New

Brunswick; certificate of membership, up to the time of his leaving us, two years ago, to Rev. J. W. Cutler; certificate of standing in the Union, to Rev. Prof Fenwick.

The following were invited to sit with the Union, as corresponding members:—The Students of the Congregational College, Rev. A. E. Dunning, Secretary Congregational S. S. Society, Boston; Rev. H. M. Dexter, D.D. Editor *Congregationalist*, Boston; Rev. W. D. Williams, Madrid, N. Y. delegate from the National Council; Rev. Messrs Cox and Whitman, delegates from the Congregational Union of N. S. and N. B.; Rev. J. G. Shipperley, Cape Breton; Rev. Wm Lynch, Danville, Que.; Rev. M. Woods, Stanstead South.

FOREIGN MISSIONS.

The Foreign Mission Secretary, Rev. Hugh Pedley, said there were five Canadians in the field from the Congregational Churches working under the American Board. Under the circumstances, it would seem invidious to support *one* of them; but the time was approaching when we might select our field, and send our own Missionary direct.

Rev. George Willett said churches were starving themselves by not giving systematically to Foreign Missions. In thinking over the matter, the question was pressed home on him, "Why not yourself go?" and last year he *did* offer himself for the foreign field; but he was not accepted, on account of his health and strength being deemed by no means sufficient for the work.

All honour to our brother, so weak in body but so strong in spirit! The great Master will recognize a willing heart. "They also serve who only stand and wait!"

AMERICAN FRONTIER WORK.

Rev. A. E. Dunning, of Boston, Secretary of the Congregational S. S. and Publishing Society, said he was surprised at the new kindling of life all along the frontier, from this Sunday-school work! A British sailor, seventeen years in the navy, went, at his own instance, to be a S. S. Missionary. The place was full of saloons, and the liquor dealers persecuted him. One day they rolled a barrel of whiskey up the aisle, when he was preaching. The sailor was no mean antagonist. He weighs 170 pounds *when he is quiet*. So he said, "He just took his *associate pastor* (a big stick,) with him, and marched down the

aisle; and in a few minutes there was no whiskey there, and no opponents! But one day they saturated the place with coal-oil, and set fire to it, and burned up everything he possessed; as also the house of a poor Swede adjoining, who was his friend and co-worker. The sailor, beholding the destruction of all his little earthly goods, had just remarked, "If the wind changes, *that whole row of saloons will go!*" The poor Swede replied, "Do you think it would be right to pray to the Lord for the wind to change?" "Brother," said the Missionary, "pray for the wind!" The wind *did* change; and the whole of the saloons were burned out! and more changed than the wind! Now there are three churches there, and a Christian sentiment is the prevailing sentiment of the place!

AT THE COLLEGE DEDICATION

Rev. Dr. Wilkes gave some interesting reminiscences of the long ago. In 1827, being then twenty-two years old, a few others with himself held a little meeting in Montreal, to consider the interests of Christ's Kingdom. They agreed that the country needed an educated ministry, and they formed the Education and Home Missionary Society. The next year, (1828,) he left commercial life, and went to Great Britain for theological training. He also did some "collecting" for their "Education and Home Missionary Society;" and the Doctor exhibited to the meeting his old *Collecting Book*, pointing out the autographs of John Angell James, Rowland Hill, and several other celebrated characters. Rowland Hill, who was then very old, gave him five pounds. Mr. Hill had struck his *shin* against the step of his carriage, and was confined to his house with the lameness. As the servant-man announced the visitor, Rowland, who was in an easy-chair behind the door, to be out of the draught, said, "*Come round here, sir; till I get a look at you;*" apparently satisfied with the look of the Canadian envoy, he gave him five pounds, asked a good many questions, and sent him away with his good wishes. The London Missionary Society gave him £100; and a gentleman who did not give his name, but whom the Doctor is now satisfied *was George Peabody*, gave him another hundred!

Rev. Mr. Lafleur said he belonged to the *majority* in the Province of Quebec, (as to

nationality.) In another sense, he belonged to a very small *minority*—a French Congregationalist. If he saw a man casting out devils, be the man Protestant or Catholic, he would say to him, "Go on and cast the devils out." A writer in the *Revue du Monde* recently said, "I am not a believer in Christianity; but after all, all the noble and most glorious things done in the world, have been done by Christians!"

DR. DEXTER'S SPEECH.

On Monday night, June 9th, Dr. Dexter said: One who, like myself, has spoken for thirty years mostly by the pen, finds a difficulty in addressing a meeting where many—perhaps most—of those present know more of the matters in hand than himself, you come together so as to learn to do work and to be better workers for the Lord Jesus than ever before. Every age has its own duty, and we want to know what God has for us to do, *now*. One great thought is pressing—"How can the Gospel be brought down more into contact with the mass of humanity?" Was it not one of our Congregational brethren, who, through the cry of "Outcast London," has roused the mind of the world on this subject!

A great wave of immigration is rolling to our shores. Dynamiters among the rest. The great heart of the American people has no sympathy with the talk and aims of such immigrants. What can be done with such people when they do come to us? How can we do it? How can we reach them? Some say, "Hire a Theatre." "Put up a great preaching-tent!" I thank God for all the good that has been done in such ways. But, "Can the church not do the Lood's work?" I believe the Church of God is God's engine for the salvation of men—poor men and rich men! But you ask, "Can't I, in some way, and through my church get hold of the people?" To do so, obstacles must be taken out of the way. Things may have existed once, to make certain forms and modes advisable, that do not exist now. A sentinel was found in the middle of a lawn, at a palace in St. Petersburg, and no one could tell *why* he was placed there; it was simply a military tradition. But, with much research, it was at last discovered that long ago, in the time of the Empress Catherine, she had ordered a sentinel to protect a *daisy* growing there;

and though the *daisy* was gone generations ago the *sentry* was continued! Poor people don't come into your churches, because they are not quite sure whether everybody welcomes them. I don't know whether you have anything you cherish so much that deserves it so little, as a quartette choir—I don't see any here! We must have the church as a place where the rich and the poor meet together—the Lord the Maker of them all! Let me illustrate this from a church to which I belonged—in fact I believe I was pastor! We could seat nearly 2,000, and the community around us was largely leavened by poverty and vice. We took a survey of our surrounding population. I called the deacons together, and as we looked on the map of the vicinity, I said, "Let us divide it into ten divisions, and visit every family, and talk to them, and get their children to Sunday School." The people came. The children came, and in the two Sunday Schools, and the two Mission Schools, 1,200 to 1,300 children were taught. We looked out for the sick; and in alphabetical turn we watched through the night with those who needed this ministry. And they came to us—won by kindness—to be taught the way to the better life!

In *some* way, cannot the Church put out its hands, and reach the poor and needy around it? Some argue against the Truth; but is not Christianity able to take care of itself? Don't be afraid of a little opposition! We want self-consecration. We want to go out to the poor around us; and we shall see the desert blossoming like the rose! We are going to see the people all righteous; and you and I are going to help to make them so!

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

The reference to this was not altogether clear, in July issue of THE INDEPENDENT. The change in the mode of electing the chairman does not come into effect till next year, and is sufficiently indicated in Rule Four as amended at Montreal:—"On Thursday morning, immediately after the devotional exercises, the Chairman's Address shall be delivered, and the roll shall be called, and the Chairman for the next year shall be elected by ballot without nomination. For this purpose, the ballot papers shall be sent by the Statistical Secretary to every member of

the Union, and every church connected with it, along with the blanks for statistical returns, to be handed in on Thursday morning on entering the church in which the meeting is held, and to be counted by scrutineers for the purpose appointed by the Union Committee.

CONGREGATIONAL UNION, N. S. AND N. B.

The 37th Annual Meeting of the Congregational Union of N. S. and N. B., was held at Economy, N. S., on June 28-30, July 1, 1884.

The Rev. S. Sykes presided at the opening session in the absence of Rev. J. L. Beman, retiring Chairman.

Rev. W. McIntosh, of Yarmouth, applied for personal membership and was received.

Revs. Messrs. Jackson, Cornish and Hall were presented as a deputation from the Canada Congregational Missionary Society, and Rev. Dr. Warren, as delegate from the National Council of Congregational Churches of the United States.

Rev. D. W. Cameron, of Keswick Ridge, N. B., was elected Chairman for the current year.

At the afternoon Session on Saturday, Mr. James Woodrow, the Treasurer of the Union, gave an address on "Our Mission Work," recommending a union with the "Canada Congregational Missionary Society," for the purposes of Missionary work. The Union resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole when a free expression of opinion anent such union was given, several of the brethren participating in the discussion. On motion it was resolved, that it is the sense of the Committee that a union of this body with the Canada Congregational Missionary Society for Missionary purposes is desirable.

The committee rose and reported the resolution when it was adopted by the Union.

On motion resolved that the Union Committee, be authorized to meet and consult with the deputation from the Canada Congregational Missionary Society, to draw up basis of union. An adjournment then took place to enable the conference to be held.

In the evening there was a very large audience at an evangelical service. Addresses were delivered by Revs. Messrs. McIntosh, Hall,

and Cameron, which were of a stirring character.

On Sunday morning the annual sermon was preached by Rev. G. W. Johnson, of Milton, text. 1 Peter ii. 9: "That ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."

In the afternoon a Sunday-School gathering was addressed by Rev. Dr. Warren, Rev. Thomas Hall and Mr. James Woodrow.

Dr. Warren preached in the evening to a large congregation from Rev. xxi. 5: "He that sat on the throne said, behold, I make all things new."

The Presbyterian and Baptist pulpits of Economy and vicinity were supplied by ministers of the Union.

On Monday after devotional exercises of an hour, conducted by Rev. Mr. Cox, and in which several brethren took part, Mr. Cox on behalf of the Union Committee reported a plan of Union in missionary work with the Canada Congregational Missionary Society, the representatives from the latter Society consenting thereto. After considerable discussion the basis of the Union was agreed to by unanimous vote. This Union gives the supervision of the missionary work to the Canada Congregational Missionary Society, the "Union" and the local associations having the right to representation on the Executive Committee, the Union of N. S. and N. B. agreeing to send the income of its invested funds to the general Treasurer. The Canada Congregational Missionary Society agreeing to spend the full amount thereof in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick agreeably to the terms of the bequest. The churches of the Union of N. S., and N. B., also to have a share in the labours of the Missionary Superintendent.

The Union of the two Societies for Missionary work was consummated amid much applause, and special prayer was offered for the divine blessing on such Union.

In the afternoon the report of the Statistical Secretary was given, showing an increase of one church (that of Baddeck, Cape Breton), and an increase of sixty-eight members over deaths and removals. Total members in nineteen churches reporting 1,246.

In the evening the annual missionary meeting was held. From the report of the Ladies' Home Missionary Society, which was re-read, it appears that that Society, through its

various branches, had raised nearly \$300 during the past year. The Treasurer read his annual report showing receipts \$1,494,75, Expenditure \$1,748,69. A movement to wipe out the deficiency was at once made, resulting in a subscription of nearly \$100.

(At a subsequent session, the Rev. Mr. Hall was authorized to collect subscriptions from the churches with the same end in view.) After the presentation and adoption of the reports of the retiring Missionary Secretary and of the Treasurer the meeting was addressed by the Missionary Superintendent, Rev. T. Hall, also Rev. Dr. Cornish, President of the Canada Congregational Missionary Society, and by Rev. Dr. Warren, the latter speaking of the great work accomplished by the 4,100 Congregational Churches in the United States in home and foreign work.

The Rev. A. F. Thompson, (Presbyterian) who was invited to sit as an honorary member pronounced the benediction.

On Tuesday, after devotional exercises conducted by Rev. J. Whitman, the Union resumed business. The following resolutions among others were proposed and unanimously adopted:

1. "That this Union express its appreciation of the Year Book and earnestly recommend it to every member of our Churches.

2. "That this Union express its confidence in the management of the CANADIAN INDEPENDENT as a means of denominational communication and religious instruction, and recommend that the pastors of our churches seek to extend its circulation.

3. "Whereas intemperance has been, and is still, a great, if not the greatest evil, with which our churches have to contend, therefore be it resolved (1) That this Union urges total abstinence as a Christian duty upon all members and adherents of the Congregational Churches, and all within their influence. (2) That the churches be recommended to use unfermented juice of the grape in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. (3) That the ministers be requested to preach a temperance sermon at least once a year, and that the third Sunday in December be the day when this subject be specially brought before the people. (4) That this Union views with pleasure the efforts of the W. C. T. U., and sees in this movement great hope for the future; also the efforts put forth to submit

the Scott Act to the electors of the several Counties of the Provinces, and urges all ministers and members of our churches to put forth all reasonable efforts for its success."

4. "That in view of the increasing desecration of the Lord's Day, the Union would express its sorrow for the same, and recommend that the members of all our churches do their utmost for the suppression of this growing evil."

At the afternoon session the delegates from and to corresponding bodies were heard. Rev. Dr. Warren conveyed the greetings of the National Council of Congregational Churches of the United States, as well as the greetings of the Maine Conference which he represented by request of the delegate who was appointed, but was unable to be present in person. He gave a statement of the National Council, and referred to the new creed drawn up by a Committee of the Council. "If this creed," said he, "is received by the churches, we shall be in the singular position of being the only Protestant denomination which would have a creed that the denomination in general believed." Dr. Warren, by request also spoke of the *Christian Mirror* with which he is connected.

The following resolution was then unanimously adopted,—"That this Union has heard with pleasure the addresses from Dr. Warren in which he conveyed to us the fraternal greetings of our sister churches in the United States, and rejoices with them in their continued prosperity; also that this Union welcomes to our midst Dr. Warren as Editor of the *Christian Mirror*, of Portland, Me., and would express our appreciation of that journal, and commend it to our families as worthy of their confidence.

Rev. Dr. Cornish then addressed the Union, first conveying as he had been requested to do by the delegate appointed, the greetings of the sister Union of Ontario and Quebec, and then speaking on behalf of the Congregational College of B. N. A. of which he is Secretary.

On motion Resolved, That this Union has heard with pleasure the address of Dr. Cornish on the new departure, the C. C. B. N. A. has made in the completion of new and commodious College buildings and its more efficient management. We would commend the college to the systematic beneficence of the churches of our Union as well as to their prayerful sympathy.

After singing the hymn "Blest be the tie that binds," the Union was addressed by Rev. Thos. Hall who gave an account of his reception as a delegate at the National Council of Congregational Churches of the United States.

He had been impressed with the devotional spirit of that great assembly. He expressed great satisfaction with the manner in which he had been received as a representative of this Union.

A vote of thanks was tendered Mr. Hall for the manner in which he represented this body before the Triennial Council.

The closing meeting of the Union was held on Tuesday evening. Addresses were given by Rev. Mr. Shipperly, Rev. W. McIntosh, Rev. Mr. Watson, Rev. Dr. Cornish, Rev. Mr. Hall, and Rev. Dr. Warren, the last named made some touching allusions to Queen Victoria which were received with great applause.

The following resolutions with others were unanimously adopted: 1 "That the thanks of this Union be tendered the people of Economy for their generous hospitality and kindness to the ministers, delegates and visitors in attendance at this annual meeting of the Union."

2. "That the thanks of the Union be given the railway, steamboat and coach lines for generous reduction of fares by which the work of the Union has been forwarded."

3. "That the Union desires to express its sincere regret at having been deprived of the presence of Dr. Jackson on account of severe illness, but now would record its sense of gratitude that he is in a fair way to recover."

4. "That the Union do now adjourn to meet in Chebogue, N. S., the first Saturday in July, 1885.

The doxology was then sung and the benediction pronounced by Rev. Mr. Shipperley.

OUR CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS. JUNE, 1884.

OUR PAST AND FUTURE.

BELOVED BRETHREN.—The year that has rolled by has appeared to be very much like other years, and yet personally none of us stand where we did a year ago; the time may have been marked by few changes—day has followed day, as week has followed week, in

monotonous succession, but it has led us through new experiences and has left its mark upon us. Some this year have known the peculiarly joyful yet solemn experience of entering fully for the first time into the pastoral office; others have been called to relinquish their charge—their work here is done, they have entered into rest. Our Brother Heu-de-Bourck, so refined, cultivated, noble in appearance and soul; who, more than many, loved the beautiful and delighted in it, now, his enraptured soul thrills with delight in the contemplation of the beautiful above. And Dr. Duff, so genial, brave, faithful as a pastor, permitted to labour beyond the average life of man, the three score and ten, called suddenly to serve in the same sanctuary. He has left behind him spiritual children whose lamentations are best expressed in the words "*My father, my father!*" Thus one and another are passing away, and new ones take up their toil and burden.

But whilst changes are seen everywhere, the great Bishop of the Church is the same yesterday and to-day and forever, who still stands in the midst of the Golden Candlesticks, holding the stars in His right hand, and whilst men may come and men may go His work will go on, and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

In connection with our own work as a denomination, there is a tendency to be discouraged with the progress we have made during past years, and consequently to belittle ourselves and our work. In the last published chairman's address, referring to the Jubilee meeting in England and to the addresses of our brethren on the other side of the line, we read:

"It was spirit-stirring to hear the story told by our American brethren. Deducing a leaven of *spread-eagleism*, which was evident here and there, one could not but feel proud of our ecclesiastical relations as they told of following the stream of emigration westward and planting churches and colleges everywhere towards the settingsun. Fifteen hundred new churches planted during the last twenty-five years was a roll call to excite reflection. They told, too, of their work amongst the coloured people of the south. Further, they told in never to be forgotten words (and there was no *spread-eagleism* here), of their great missions to the heathen and Mohammedan world, giving clear evidence of a far-reaching and apostolic ambition. re-

vealing a society pressed by the multiplied needs of nations, longing, and groaning, and praying, and giving both men and money, and consecrated women, too, to the great work. It was a wonderful story, and we thank God we heard it.

"But when we had to tell our story, 'alas what a falling off was there.' The story was told as well as it could be by the brethren who were deputed to do so. They performed their task well. But they had to confine themselves largely by telling about Canada as a country. Of the Congregational churches and their work, there was little to be said. And one could not but cry out in bitterness of spirit: 'Our leanness!' 'What were we among so many?' It was a bitter experience."

Now it is well known that our failures have not been few—that our successes have not seemed great—that many of our churches have died, and some are weak and feeble and ready to die. And history would seem to be a very sad one, *i. e.*, in Canada, but it is a glad one on the other side of the lines, and if our brethren in the United States can record their glorious successes, and tell of sixty new churches every year—their success is ours. They are spreading the same gospel, teaching the same principles, and preserve the same freedom. Some of the men over there are our own countrymen. They work no better since they crossed the lines—they became endowed with no supernatural grace because they made their home under the shadow of the great Republic; but their circumstances are changed; their surroundings are more helpful to success, and we rejoice with them in progress made. If great results have not attended our labours here, it has been otherwise there, and in England, and Australia. If we can rejoice in the prosperity of churches on this side of the line, why have not we the same joy in the prosperity of churches on the other side of the line? and if we feel that in some way or other the work on this side of the line is ours, and we share in the honour of the success, then why should we not feel the same regarding work done across the line? Christ's kingdom is not to be divided into sections by the arbitrary lines of nations.

In an engagement every company may not be able to do the same executive work on the ranks of the enemy, but when victory is proclaimed they rejoice together, and any brave man who faithfully performed his duty has a

right to share in that gladness. There is no invidious distinction made between the few brave ones who occupied a position of peculiar difficulty and were barely able to hold the ground against the attacks of the enemy, and the larger company well equipped and supplied who were able to drive the enemy before them. They all share honour at last; they are one. But why is it in this part of the great field Congregationalism has not made greater progress? or, at least, why is it that in its progress it does not compare favourably with the United States, or other places? It may be noted in the first place that no blame can be attached to the men in the field, as a whole. No doubt there have been failures here—men who seemed to have no qualifications for building up churches, but there have been pulpit failures in the U. S. and in England, and as many in proportion to the numbers as in Canada.

We have tried men both from the U. S. and in England, and whilst some have done noble work for Christ and the churches, others will only be remembered for the mischief they have wrought. We have also had men leave us to take up oversight of churches in the neighbouring Republic, and in the Mother Country, some of whom are much esteemed for their usefulness, and the service they render the cause of Christ in these places. Our men will compare favourably with the men of other lands for devotion to the cause of Christ, self-denying labours and success in saving souls.

Where then is the cause of weakness? 1st. It is owing to the lateness of the time when we entered the field. The first church was organized in Granby in the year 1830, excepting Stanstead which did not properly belong to our Canadian work. In 1832 churches were founded in Danville, Montreal and Cowansville. In 1834 the first churches were founded in Ontario, viz., Toronto, Brantford, followed in 1835 by Burford, Guelph, Hamilton and Scotland. But coming so very late we laboured under special disadvantages. The Wesleyans, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians, were here long before and had taken possession of the country. In the United States the Congregationalists 150 years ago were nearly double the number of any other denomination, but they have been left in the background by the Baptists, the Methodists and the Presbyterians. Now if the Congregationalists of the U. S. could not hold their own when they were first

on the ground and had numbers, influence and education on their side, do you wonder that in Canada so little progress was made when we came last on the ground, and had to labour under special disadvantages. When our missionaries came here, it was only in a few places that the way was open to them to enter without offering too manifest a spirit of unseemly rivalry. Moreover, the early settlers suffered much hardship, and were very poor in this world's goods, and therefore the Methodist itinerating system with young men accustomed to roughing it, and to live on scanty pay, while they travelled over large sections of the country, was peculiarly adapted to the needs and circumstances of the early age of this country. Not that the itinerant has an advantage over the settled pastor, on the contrary, the settled pastor remaining faithfully and devotedly at his post will have the greater success, and if he be the right man years will deepen the influence for good that he will have in the community; but if the church be subject to changes, if there are long periods of time without pastoral oversight, and especially if there should arise pastoral troubles, the advantage lies with the itinerating system. Another cause of weakness is the lack of emigration to this country of those of our faith and order. In this respect our churches in the U. S. have the advantage over us ever since the Pilgrim Fathers came, and though they were peculiar were a very good class of emigrants. It is remarkable, but none the less true, that few Congregationalists comparatively settle in the Dominion. It may be different now but it was the fact thirty years ago when, as a denomination, we began to labour here—the places where two or three families of Congregationalists were known to have settled were soon supplied with pastoral oversight, then the work became more difficult. Yet some of our best churches were planted where there was not a Congregationalist to encourage the first labourer. The Rugby and Vespra churches, concerning which I may speak with confidence, has not a member who was originally a Congregationalist, or who came to the country as such. The Edgar contained but one family who were Congregational before attending this church. This township of twelve miles square was mainly settled by Presbyterians, in fact it may be safely said that for one Congregationalist to the place there were 200 Presbyterians. Yet there are but three Presbyter-

ian and two Congregational churches here. Some of our churches are made up of Episcopalians, Methodists and Presbyterians. Had we the advantages that other denominations have had, or the U. S., we should have had a different story to tell. The third hindrance that I shall note is the lack of support from the Mother Country. The Colonial Missionary Society began well. During the first ten years of its operations twenty-five churches were organized. During the next ten years eighteen were added to the number, making a total of forty-three churches, *all of which report in the Year Book*; but after that the progress was exceedingly slow. It was unfortunate that the state and needs of the country were not better understood. It was a far grander work to Congregationalize Canada under the discouraging circumstances named than was imagined, and there was manifested much impatience for results.

The time of self-sustentation did not come as soon as expected, so there was dissatisfaction manifested and pressure brought to bear on the churches to do more. At the same time it was felt in many instances by those on the ground, and knew all the circumstances, that more could not be reasonably expected. So it came to be a question whether it were better to abandon certain churches, and lose the fruit of the labour of years, or keep on, receiving aid grudgingly given, or trying to do without it in the hope of reaching the point aimed at. Sensitive men regarded the dissatisfaction as implying a charge of inefficiency and left their fields. Others disliked to take up work abandoned under such circumstances, so the weak churches were left often months, even years, without any pastoral or fostering care, and if they were fortunate enough to obtain a successor, it took years to recover lost ground. Some were left to die, and the country is scattered with the wrecks of Congregational churches. Subsequent events here show the folly of too easily giving up places because the results do not come up to our expectations.

Some of our strongest churches to-day are those who were long on the mission field, and whose pastors remained at their post in spite of the trials and discouragements that might have driven others away. And as a rule the churches after reaching the part of self-sustentation, have repaid doubly the amount expended upon them. It is a matter of surprise when

we come to know the history of the early planting of Congregationalism in this land, not that so little has been done, but that we have done so well. Even what has been done has been accomplished only by great sacrifice on the part of some of the early pastors. In one case the family were obliged to live on bran for over a week at a time. In another case the meal barrel was often empty, and it was not known where the next was to come from. The first missionary worked as a carpenter among his congregation in order to supplement his salary. He was also at times a school-teacher—a farmer—and at all times the family physician of his flock. They did good work and the result is seen to this day. Often they were scantily clad, miserably fed—unable to purchase or keep a horse, yet having to go miles through the woods to their appointments, sometimes on snowshoes in winter, or plunging through the swamps in summer, they wore themselves out before their time.

The self-sacrifice and self-denials of some will never be known on earth; but it is enough it is known in heaven.

Another hindrance to our success was extreme independent views in certain quarters which hindered us from having adequate organization for the proper carrying out of missionary work. In an old number of the CANADIAN INDEPENDENT, I find the editor in referring to a certain missionary cause which the pastor had left and the little church not knowing what to do waited for a time and then disbanded, says: "Our churches should know it is their duty to look out by enquiry and correspondence with ministers and others for some one to take the oversight of them. *And that all the committee should be expected to do for them is to assist when necessary in supporting the man of their choice.*"

The committee thought it was their duty not on any account to send a man even temporarily to such a field. They were so afraid of interfering with the individual liberty of the church that they let the church die. It was thought that for the Missionary Society to take the initiative, and to work conjointly with the church in securing a pastor, whom they helped to support, was to interfere with the liberty of the church. Some churches thought so too. This individual liberty carried to such absurd lengths was to some minds the truth which transcends all other truths in importance. Nothing was to be so carefully guarded. Nothing so soon

would wake a spirit of irritation as to do or say anything that seemed to infringe upon that so-called liberty. It was like the man who walked so straight that he leaned backwards. Some seemed to be always on the lookout for fancied slights in that direction. The coat tail was trailed on the ground with a sharp lookout lest any one should put his foot on it.

The fact is that most of the churches would have gained ground by more oversight. There were among us little weak infant churches not able to stand alone, and whatever might be our views of duty, the fact exists that without help they must die. These churches were treated as though they had arrived at maturity, whereas they were not independent enough to do without asking for money. Many too of the churches were composed of persons who were trained up under a different denominational system. They were accustomed to be governed and directed, and now they did not know how to use their newly acquired liberty, so when they lost their pastor, they became quite helpless in the way of securing another.

Many of the people had not learned the principles of our church policy sufficiently to understand where they stood or what to do.

Some of the churches were not in a position to choose a pastor, or to judge of the character or talents of the man they or the community needed. And sometimes they called the most unsuitable man, and the cause suffered. Whereas had they been advised and the right man selected and recommended, not forced, they might have been prosperous, but the action of the society was like neglecting a child that could not walk, and yet expect it to provide for its own living. True it was a natural feeling; our fathers suffered so much from prelacy that we went to other extremes. But it is a wrong principle that a church may stand alone—independent not only of the State or outside control, but also of the advice, sympathy and assistance of sister churches in council.

Churches ought never to be so independent as to act in important matters without consultation or advice, nor should they ever feel that it matters not to sister churches who they call to the pastorate, or what is the nature of their discipline. A man shipwrecked on a desert island is independent and free to do as he likes so far as the law referring to his neighbours is concerned, but when another shipwrecked one comes to the same island he

is not independent of the newcomer, nor is the newcomer independent of him. They each have duties they owe each other. So may a church be independent if it is geographically isolated; but when another church is within reasonable distance, it is independent in some senses no longer. Churches *are* under obligation to sister churches, especially if they have the same name, and purpose to be governed by the same principles. They are under obligation to those who have laboured among them, and who have rendered them assistance; they are under obligation to those who have instructed them, and especially to those who, it may be, helped in their weakness to provide them with a preached gospel.

Churches are no doubt independent of all forcible control from any quarter, and it must ever be so, but it is a shame and a wrong for a church to practically say to a sister church: "It is not your business how we act." We may be sure that as a rule those who are the most willing to submit their cases to the scrutiny of represented sister churches, and court advice and counsel, are those who are conscious they have nothing to hide.

I need not dwell on another source of weakness, viz., unworthy men, especially religious tramps, who go about from place to place, imposing on an unsuspecting people, perhaps at last called to the pastorate, only to work mischief. When we consider all the obstacles to our progress, the difficulties to overcome, the lack of means at our disposal, the peculiar position in which we were placed, we believe the results are as good as could reasonably have been expected.

WHAT IS OUR FUTURE.

We cannot comparatively grow much larger as a denomination. We shall probably increase, proportionately to the general growth of the country. We rejoice so much in our blessed freedom from all State and ecclesiastical control that it is a matter of surprise to many of us that others do not shake themselves free and accept our polity and adopt our principles, forgetting that this is just what the other denominations are doing, but they are doing it in their own way. They are not going to come out and call themselves Congregationalists, but they are going to retain their own names, with some of their old forms and peculiarities, whilst in all essentials they will adopt our principles. "The abolition

of Church and State, the secularization of the clergy reserves—the establishment of religious equality have opened a sure and effectual door for the entrance of the principles of Congregational freedom into other bodies. They entered accordingly and have made themselves at home more and more ever since. They will yet verify the fable of the camel which having got his head into the tent, slowly but surely advanced until he had full possession." Every year there is a drifting toward us. Denominationalism is undergoing a process of disintegration. Its courts are losing power; its standards have less authority; its functions are becoming more and more advisory. The laity have at last a place and a voice in Methodist conferences and Episcopal synods. You hear the Methodist churches talk of *calling ministers*, which according to strict Methodist rules and practices could not be done. And the Bishop of the Episcopal church is hardly free to appoint his men over the local church without first finding out something of their wishes. If the newspapers report correctly then it is that the laymen of the Episcopal church in the city of Kingston, Ont., demand a voice in the appointment of a curate. In a certain Presbyterian synod the following remark was publicly made by an active member there: "The difference between the Congregationalists and ourselves is this, The Congregationalists give advice which is taken, whereas we make laws which are broken."

Had the ecclesiastical authority of the past continued without any relaxation, it must have resulted in an ecclesiastical revolution, which would have outrun the old forms of church government and introduced a form of church life that might not have hesitated to adopt our name, as it would certainly have been constrained to accept our principles. There is, perhaps, a satisfaction in knowing that, if we are not numerically great, our principles are mighty, and like leaven they are working and will work until the whole lump becomes leavened. The spirit of the age is liberty, liberty in the nation, liberty in the church—'tis in the air. It is irresistible. Every reform in other denominations only brings them nearer to us.

These principles once despised, and for which our fathers were persecuted to the death, are now held in high esteem and the

churches are demanding that they be put to practice. If the spirit of reform continues, and continue it will, the denominations will soon be practically Congregational, *i.e.*, they will be Congregational in everything but the name, and the name is the last thing people like to give up.

The unions lately consummated and to be consummated among other bodies of Christians has done something to help on this state of things. People of different ecclesiastical training cannot come together and discuss such unions, without having the question ventilated as to where authority is rightly vested. And the tendency of all such discussion and plans of union is to remove the authority from the quarter where it does not properly belong, and place it with the local church.

Now, it is because of the growing Congregationalism in other churches that we shall not grow. People are going to find in their own churches all the liberty they desire, and it will come as they are ready for it, and will never be withheld when it is demanded. Now, whilst the future has no promise of extraordinary growth for us, yet the growth of our principles in other societies of Christians is preparing the way for our union with them. It will surely come to this. No one who looks into the future and reads it in the light of the past can evade this conclusion. To the bigot, the thought will give pain, to the liberal soul, joy.

You will observe I have said union not absorption; but it must be, and will be, a true union, easily entered into, because there will be little to hinder except the name, and possibly that will be the greatest objection, for people will sometimes stand up for a name more than for a principle.

We hear continually of union of the varied branches of the Presbyterians and Methodists, thus reducing the number of the denominations and setting men free for new work. It is a good thing that they feel so kindly towards each other as to desire to unite. The feelings that drove them apart were very bitter; but the circumstances have changed, views have become modified, and they have been gradually drawn nearer to each other. If this is the experience of those who once bitterly repelled each other, may not the fact that others are growing near to us end in

union, especially as we have none of the bitter feelings to which we have referred.

The difference even now between ourselves and certain divisions of other denominations is not so great nor so intense nor deep-seated as between the different schools of the same denomination. There is more real union of heart and sympathy between ourselves and certain divisions of the Baptists, Presbyterians, and even Episcopalians than there is between the different classes of these denominations.

In the Episcopal church we find *High church*, *Low church*, *Broad church*; some *skeptical*, some *ritualistic*, others *evangelical*. There is no risk in saying that there is a greater difference between the extreme high churchmen and extreme low churchmen, than between ourselves and the evangelical branch of the Episcopal church. We should be ashamed to speak so disrespectfully and contemptuously of the Bishop of Montreal as has been done in a certain high church paper, because of his liberal principles. And words fail to express the indignation and bitterness that a certain class of the Episcopal church felt in England towards their brethren when a deputation of leading Episcopalians about two years ago visited the Congregational Union in session in that land.

It is not much wonder that when at a certain entertainment in England when the toast was proposed, *viz.*: "The ministers of all denominations." A leading minister in responding stated that it must refer to the Episcopal ministers for they were of all denominations!

This is the very opposite of true union. There is no union of spirit with such opposite elements. It is called Union but it is really division. We are nearer to one another when we are in evangelical truth, though divided on the question of government, than when we are one in government and divided regarding the way of salvation. Church government as a ground of Union may be a good thing, but it is not so sure a thing as oneness regarding justification by faith and the need of atonement for our sin, or devotion to Jesus Christ. In this respect we are one with many from whom we are nominally separated.

As, therefore, we are already one with others, in the great essentials of the Gospel of Christ, and as the leaven of Independency is working everywhere, we shall not have to

wait long before we are one; not in doctrine alone, but in religious freedom also.

It is thought by some that this Union is a Utopian theory; that whilst the churches are growing nearer to us, they will never come so very near as to be precisely like in our forms of worship or government, and that as congregational government is a matter of principle, whilst other forms are matters of expediency, we cannot be expected to give way in any point to promote such Union. Now, I presume that we are agreed that the principles of government are founded on God's Word. There is no danger of us supposing that the form of government taught in the New Testament was Episcopal or Methodist, or had any of the hierarchal principle about it. We know that it has been conceded by leading men in other denominations that the New Testament form of government was Congregational. Now the Scriptural government is very dear to us; we could not part with it to bring about any Union, however desirable. It is not to be given up or sold for any apparent advantage. But, whilst we hold to the general principles of the independence of the local church, and the right to elect its own officers, the equality of membership and purity of communion; there are matters of detail and custom that we are not to imagine part of our New Testament principles.

We believe in the right of the church to decide, according to New Testament teachings, who ought to be received into fellowship, but the method of examination or manner of receiving is a matter of detail. The church has the right to elect its own pastor, but the method of training men is a matter of detail. The church must train the young, but the Sunday school is a matter of detail. These are only samples of other things that may be changed or altered without any sacrifice of principle, and might be, any time, for the sake of Union, but a sacrifice of true principle would be selling our birthright for a mess of pottage, which we are not, I think, in danger of doing; as the time is at hand, if it has not already come, when it will not be required. It is probable, however, that our name so loved, the name our fathers bore, and around which gathers in our recollection so much that is *heroic, self-sacrificing and true*, the name associated with many a hard-fought battle and blessed victory over usurpation and religious

tyranny will hold us together as a distinct denomination after the principles for which we have contended have become the governing power of the churches throughout the world.

We are growing nearer; the hindrances to union are not so great as our names with these historic associations seem to imply. It will come. It ought to come. The churches of Christ ought not to waste strength in conflict with each other. The missionary societies of all the denominations are wasting funds in striving to keep men in over-crowded villages, and the labours of some ministers are increased by having to watch and counteract the proselytizing efforts of some men who are devoid of honour. Men and means that ought to go to the dark region of the earth to carry the blessed Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, are kept at home, to perpetuate the divisions that exist among Christians.

As Congregationalists our work should be to seek to hasten the time when union can be happily and righteously accomplished. Had our fathers in the early history of our struggle only had to contend with the outside authority of the present day in this land, we should have had no history as a distinct denomination. But the cruel and united authority of State and Church persecuted even to the death, and they were forced by a tyranny of which we know nothing in this day to fight for the right to worship God according to their own conscience; with a great price obtain they that freedom; but it is now the heritage of the Church of Christ.

What then is our position? We are a part of one of the great and influential tribes of Israel, separated geographically and politically from the main body of our people; yet content to work and do our duty in that state in which it has pleased God to place us. Content to be few and to faithfully work so long as the principles we teach are leavening the masses. Looking forward to the time when our work in this direction shall be accomplished and the way opened to unite with other branches of the Christian Church; doing all we can to hasten it, and being ready to seize the right opportunity of bringing about such union, when we may all rejoice together, there being one fold and one Shepherd.

THE result of the Good Templar movement in Sweden has been a diminution in the consumption of spirits in 1883 as against 1882 equal to 6½ per cent.

SPIRITUAL EXCURSIONS.

BY REV. DUNCAN M. GREGOR, M.A., GUELPH.

AT this season of the year excursions seem to be the order of the day. We hear of excursions of all kinds and to all places. Excursions of the select few and excursions of monster proportions.

Lying at the bottom of the idea of an excursion we may discover the love of change, the desire after pleasure, and, not unfrequently, the eye to business. If for such reasons so many go on an excursion trip, surely, for far higher reasons, men ought to go on a *Spiritual* excursion to the favourite places of Christian resort.

(1) On such an excursion let us then first go up the *Mount of Prayer*. This ought to be very familiar ground to every Christian, and a favourite spiritual resort. How it ministers to our love of change! We frequently get tired of the dull monotony of our common round and daily task. We want a complete change, and to get out of the ruts of worldly thoughts and pursuits, to get away from the feverish excitements of life, and to enjoy, even for a brief season, the sweet and holy calm of heaven itself. And *where* can we realize all this so much as on the mount of prayer? What pleasure may also be ours on this sacred height! Visions of glory and of God fill the eye of the soul and ravish it with spiritual delight. How sweet to commune with the Great Father of Spirits, and listen to His voice of love and mercy! On the mount of prayer let us have "an eye to business." At a throne of grace, in a few moments even, it is possible for a business to be transacted with God and heaven before which the commercial transactions of this world are as nothing.

(2) Let us go on a spiritual excursion to *Mount Calvary*. Here is the favourite resort of the holy and intelligent universe of God. To this place angels, as well as men, resort. It is the most sacred spot on earth, as it may be the most memorable spot in the universe. Hither have come the spiritual tribes of the Lord for well nigh nineteen centuries; and, until time shall be no longer, hither shall also come the sinful, the weary, the sad, the hoary head and the infant of days.

Standing on Mount Calvary, beside the cross of Christ, what a scene presents itself!

Millions of eyes bright with youth or dim with old age are turned in its direction. And a look at the "crucified One" fills the soul with delight. What a bright halo of glory gathers round this height! Dazzling may be the light crowning the summit of some of Nature's mountains, but what is their glory compared with that of Calvary? Their glory shall pass away, the sun himself shall die and can no more fling his golden rays on their heaven-kissing summits, but the glory of Mount Calvary shall never pale. It shall rather brighten and increase until the universe shall be filled with its glory. O, the high and holy thoughts that cluster round the cross! What pleasure their contemplation affords! What mental stimulus! And what wonderful things are to be seen from the heights of Calvary! What a vision of magnificent spiritual distances! As we look around us we behold no unloveliness here. From base to summit *all* is glorious. It is a heavenly mountain. Its "darkness is but the excess of light;" its mystery the highest glory of God. Is it not, therefore, strange that so many would rather go anywhere else than visit Calvary? Many on a spiritual excursion to-day *pass by* Calvary and go to Bethlehem instead. They pass by the sufferings and death of Christ and find all the inspiration and pleasure they want in the Incarnation of Christ. In their estimation this is the great fact in the history of Redemption. Bethlehem and Bethany, Nazareth and Galilee *are* indeed grand places for a spiritual excursion. But, *without Calvary* what would be the condition of the world to-day? Take the cross of Christ out of the scheme of redemption and you rob that scheme of its true glory. Leave the teaching of Calvary out and where is the Gospel for poor helpless sinners? Whatever a man's theory may be let him ignore the *fact* of the atonement Christ made on Calvary, let him fail to trust in it, and he may go in raptures over the teachings of Bethlehem, but he will never find a direct road from spiritual Bethlehem to heavenly glory. The only road from earth to heaven *passes over* Mount Calvary: "For we have redemption through the blood of Christ," and, "without shedding of blood is no remission." Reclining beneath the cross of Christ, we shall rejoice in its shadow and evermore cling to the cross. On Mount Calvary we get spiritual inspiration

from the breezes which come over this mountain of myrrh and hill of frankincense. Visiting it daily we shall come down from it with spiritual strength renewed, and shall "glory only in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

(3) Let us go on a spiritual excursion *down the valleys of life*. As we visit the lowly walks of life what pleasure comes to us! How good it is to meet there those with lovely graces, fruitful lives, and humble views of themselves! How refreshingly simple their habits of life! They are altogether strangers to the thousand hollow ways of many who move in the higher walks of life. It is good even to descend the dark valley of affliction, where the shadows thicken, and the darkness is but occasionally relieved by glints of heavenly sunshine. What pleasure to behold the contentment and resignation, the radiant faces of those who feel that they are surely descending the heights of life and sinking lower and lower into the dampness, and gloom of the valley beneath! It is good for us to behold how the lowly Christian dies, how the stone pillow and hard bed are made soft and downy with the love of God, and how the otherwise dreary and cheerless chamber is made bright with the hope of heaven and glorious with the peace of God. While on a pleasure excursion in the valleys of life, let us not forget to combine business with our pleasure. Let us minister to the wants of the humble poor, cheer and comfort the suffering, speak the word of sympathy to the sorrowing and point all to the bright home above. Thus shall these valleys be to us "valleys of blessing so sweet."

Let us go on a spiritual excursion *to the wild and uncultivated places of this world*. Such places are favourite resorts for tourists and pleasure-seekers to-day. People want to get away from the bondage of civilized society, and enjoy relaxation from the oft-toilful life they live at home. Hence, the rush from towns and cities to some desert-wild. Sitting on the rock or reclining in its shadow, gazing into the blue of heaven, or peering into the different stretches, if *before* we were oppressed with the thought of the world's straitness for room we will have our ideas enlarged. If we thought, before starting for such places, that the world was pretty well civilized and this earth subdued, we will have our ideas converted. It is a good thing

for us to go on a spiritual excursion to the *moral wilds* and uncultivated parts of our world. Never going beyond the bounds of our own church or denomination or country, our views must be necessarily very contracted. Seeing, perhaps, the parts around us pretty well occupied by Christian churches and organizations, there is great danger of our relaxing our efforts to bring the whole world to Christ; but, going on a spiritual excursion round the globe, and visiting its moral wilds, how speedily will our views be changed and enlarged as we discover that there are yet 1,000,000,000 heathens, 278,000,000 Roman Catholics and only 116,000,000 Protestants in the world! How it will awaken our sympathy for those who pine away and die for want of the Bread of Life, when we discover that to-day there are in Great Britain and the United States 114,000 ministers preaching to 70,000,000 Christians, and only 2,293 to 1,000,000,000 heathens! And how also will it stimulate us to greater efforts in these "wild" moral wastes to learn, that during ten years the conversions from heathenism have been *thirty* times more numerous, in proportion to missionaries employed, than in the home churches! In these wild and morally uncultivated parts of our globe, we sit on some elevated rock to ponder over the scene just witnessed, we open the Bible and our eye rests on the words of Him who "came to seek and to save the lost:" "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations. . . preach the Gospel to every creature." Then, we seem to hear a low, murmuring sound coming to us from the far-off and the far-down. We listen, and catch the words: "Come over and help us," "Preach Jesus to us ere we die." Thus enlightened and impressed we return from our excursion, resolved to pray, to give and to labour until God by His Spirit and Word shall "make the wilderness like Eden and the desert like the garden of the Lord."

(5) Let us for our good frequently go on a spiritual excursion *to "Zion, the city of our solemnities"*. People like to go on an excursion to some large and historic city. It is indeed a pleasant thing to "walk about Zion," for "beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is Zion," the "city of the great king." It is pleasant and profitable to tell her towers, to mark well her bulwarks, and consider her palaces. How it stimulates us

in our Christian work to behold the cultured and consecrated churches of Christ, to behold their government and order, and to learn how it enables the cultured and wealthy to be found engaged in the Lord's work!

(6) Let us also make frequent excursions to the *Highlands of Truth*. We are usually far too easily satisfied and altogether to contented with our present attainments and store of divine truth. There are excursionists so fond of their ease that they will not exert themselves to scale the heights of nature, or force their way through the thickets in the healthful exercise of attempting to reach the summits above them. And there are diamond truths now flashing on the heights, golden nuggets hidden in the veins of the rocks towering far above us, but how few care to put forth the effort that might make these precious truths of God their own? There are heights in Christian truth we have never yet scaled, and heights of Christian experience we have never yet reached. Let us then put the spur to the sides of our desires, let us scour the lower planes of truth; and, having reached the "highlands," let us rouse ourselves to earnest effort. Let us bravely and fearlessly scramble up the heights of every truth; its summit we may never be able to gain, but at any rate we shall plant one foot on a *higher* ledge of the rock of truth, and from our vantage-ground look beneath, around, and above us. Then collecting rare specimens in the upper regions of thought and truth, and reverently breaking a fragment even from the Rock of Ages, we shall return from our intellectual and spiritual excursion with something new in our possession, with strengthened intellects, with a more ardent love for the whole truth and a truer and grander conception of God and of Him who is *the Truth*. In the highlands we shall see divine things in a divine light, for a halo of glory crowns the summit of every truth God gives to man.

(7) Having thus "done" the favourite spiritual resorts of this world, before returning from our excursion trip, let us, in thought, at least, *visit the New Jerusalem* which is above; let us travel the streets of gold and climb the beautiful hills of glory, and endeavour to scale the mountains of immortality; let us fill our eyes with the glories of heaven, and our ears with the music of the skies; let us

set our affection on things above; let us drink of the river of God's pleasures; let us taste of the heavenly manna, and the things of time and sense will not hereafter allure us from God and heaven.

Jesus is now getting things ready for a grand excursion to Glory. He has sent forth His servants to extend the most cordial invitation possible to the whole world to join in this excursion. The gates of the New Jerusalem are now open. The white robe is ready for all who will accept it, and who are willing to be arrayed in it alone. Time flies! The excursion moves! O, the shining hosts! The vast throng! The "multitude that no man can number!" But some are left behind! They "fixed their affection on things below." Now, they must hear the gates of the city *forever* close upon them, while such as were ready entered in no more to go out, for the Lord Himself "shut them in."

Correspondence.

MR. HALL'S LETTER.

MR. EDITOR,—I spent a few days in Montreal after our Union meetings were brought to a close. Went one Sunday to

ZION CHURCH

where I found some loyal adherents and devoted friends of the old Cause. If the right man is found for the pastorate, there is ample room and opportunity for a strong church under the old banner. A large visiting Committee was organized to look after the Sunday School work. I found a good prayer meeting, a staff of earnest Sunday School Teachers, a large library and a strong determination to succeed.

From my heart I wish them God-speed. After a few days at home, I undertook a journey of a thousand miles to Economy, Nova Scotia, to attend the meeting of

THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION

of the Maritime Provinces. All the members of the Union were present, and every church was represented. The meetings were good throughout. The National Council of Congregational Churches of the United States, and the Maine Conference were represented by Rev. I. P. Warren, D.D., of Portland, Maine, who endeared himself to all by his genial spirit, and his earnest, practical and eloquent addresses. The Rev. Dr. Cornish, represented the Union of Ontario and Quebec, together with the College of B. N. A., and he certainly fulfilled his mission well and was enthusiastically received.

THE CANADA CONGREGATIONAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY was represented by Rev. Drs. Jackson, Cornish, and the Missionary Superintendent, and the event of the occasion was the union of this Society with the Missionary Society of the Congregational Union of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. For the past six years the churches in these parts have worked their Missionary Society independently, and though the results have been as good as could be expected under the circumstances, yet the desire for reunion with the Sister Society in the upper Provinces has been growing for some time, especially since our new departure, and it was agreed upon not only unanimously but most cordially. We all expect very blessed results to follow. And now that I have touched upon the subject of Union, permit me to express my surprise and regret that so much of the valuable space of our denominational paper should be occupied with the discussion of the question of

UNION WITH OTHER BODIES.

I have already found that the July number of THE CANADIAN INDEPENDENT has discouraged Missionary zeal, and given very grave offence to some of our best workers. I may just as well stop my work at once, if the idea gets abroad that we entertain either the *probability* or the *possibility* of the Congregationalists of the Dominion becoming absorbed in some of the larger bodies. It may be as well to dispel the illusion at the present moment. The idea is Utopian, it is more, it is a snare and a delusion, and the discussion of the subject can work only mischief for our Missionary Society, our College and every other interest of the denomination. No true friend of Congregationalism would raise the question of Union at the present juncture of our affairs. The proposal is received with very great disfavour throughout the churches, and the agitation of the subject in THE INDEPENDENT will do more injury to it than you imagine. The paper has not been supported at considerable sacrifice in the past, to be used now to cut the nerve of our Missionary enterprise, and discourage all our work, while it simply plays into the hands of our enemies. You may count the advocates of such a Union upon the fingers of one hand, and there is reason to think that most of these are Congregationalists from expediency or circumstances, and not from conviction. We are Congregationalists and can be nothing else. No prospects of worldly aggrandizement by union with any other body can induce us to part with our heritage of freedom and put our necks into the yoke of ecclesiasticism. With a great price our fathers obtained this liberty, and God helping us we will hand it down unimpaired to posterity. I am surprised to hear so much made of the fact, that other denominations have become Congregationalized, and therefore that we should be content to *drop out of sight*. Does it not occur to the advocates

of this drop-out-of-sight policy, that these partially Congregationalized bodies have been *forced* to their present platform by the fidelity, self-sacrifice, and persistent testimony of the churches of our faith, and moreover, that just as soon as these truly free churches become absorbed by the others, the reform will stop and the hierarchical spirit again assert itself. The genus of every one of these systems is hierarchical, that is the rule of the clergy, and lay representation has been wrung out of their unwilling hands. To Congregationalism the other churches are largely indebted for the measure of liberty which they enjoy.

THE RECENT UNIONS

Of the Presbyterians, and of the Methodist bodies are quoted as examples, and doubtless these have inspired the thought and hope of the union between us and other denominations. I confess I never could see anything very remarkable or particularly virtuous in the union of the Presbyterians of Canada, or of the more recent union of the Methodists. There had been family quarrels, and each of these now united denominations or churches had set up housekeeping on their own account, with very little difference in their domestic economy. After years of separation they agree to reunite, with scarcely a change of name, without the surrender of one doctrinal point. The Kirk of Scotland, the Free church, and United Presbyterian, differed so very little in Canada, that had there not been property complications a union would have been the simplest thing imaginable. The union of the various Methodist bodies so recently effected, and talked about as some wonderful event, strikes us as most simple and natural. Every one of the uniting churches held Methodist doctrine and Methodist discipline, and with one exception, even the name, and every one was a corporation, governed by the conference, just the converse of Congregationalism. Let us see how it would be if the Congregationalists contemplated union with either of the churches mentioned. In the first place we must face the creed difficulty. We should have to adopt a creed that we do not believe. It is idle to talk about any of these leaving this an open question, there is no evidence that they are disposed to do so. They cling to their standards as tenaciously as ever, and we are as emphatic in our repudiations of mere human authority in matters of faith. We boldly avow still, that we call no man master. We differ materially in our views on the composition of a church of Christ, and there is no tendency among us to receive into our fellowship any but those who give credible evidence of a changed heart. But the difficulty that is insuperable is our independency. It is not in the power of any number of men now, even associated in unions or in any other way, to carry our churches into any other

denomination. The title deeds of our churches are not in possession of the Union or of the Missionary Society, or any other governing body, they are in the hands of Trustees for the local churches and

ONE HUNDRED ACTS OF PARLIAMENT

would not legalize their transfer to any other body of Christians or carry our denomination into a union with them. Others can unite with us. We will welcome a union which will leave us our polity, our faith and our liberty. Our pulpits are open to evangelical ministers of every name. Our churches are always ready to welcome to their Communion every one who loves the Lord Jesus Christ. Any church can adopt our principles and enjoy our glorious heaven-given privileges, but you may as well advocate

OUR EMIGRATION TO THE NORTH POLE

as our amalgamation with any of the existing church organizations. In fact we have the only church polity which all can adopt, and work in together harmoniously without serious danger to the liberty of the whole, and irreparable loss to the cause of Christ.

I am not aware that overtures on the subject of union have been made to us by any of the other churches, or are likely to be made, and if any of the brethren are anxious for union, they can have it at any time. Our system of church government puts no obstacle in any man's path who wants to become a Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Methodist or anything else, but it renders impossible for any man or number of men to carry the Congregational Churches into any other organization. Why this hankering after union with larger bodies? Is it not pride of heart? Have we not a goodly fellowship? There is but an imaginary line between us and our brethren in the United States, who are strong and influential for good, both at home and abroad. Are we not closely allied with the Congregationalists of England, who occupy the front rank among the evangelical churches of the Mother Country? Have we not with our small beginnings and feeble help from abroad done as much, nay, far more for the cause of Christ, of education and of liberty than any other denomination in the Country? I can prove that we have. Is not the great Head of the Church smiling upon the work of our denomination at the present hour? I find that there have been more conversions in our churches during the past year, than in denominations three times as large. I am writing in Nova Scotia, where our churches are few in comparison; where other denominations have had the ground almost wholly to themselves. From every quarter down here comes a loud demand for Congregationalism. Had we men and means we could plant scores of churches in this Province. The difference between the spiritual atmosphere, and those parts of Ontario where we have churches, is very marked indeed. You will find the

cold, formal sectarian club in many places, under the name of a church, but not much spiritual life. I have been told again and again both here and in the West that a Congregational church in any place is a source of strength to all the other churches. Other churches may exist after the spiritual life has departed. A Congregational church has nothing to keep it in existence, and should have nothing but its spiritual power.

This is not the time to drop out of sight, or to talk of surrendering our Charter. The claims of our new country are too pressing, and the prospects before our denomination too promising. The out-look was never so hopeful. It may be in comparison with others, the day of small things, but it is not wise to despise it. The small one may become a great nation. The worm Jacob was to thrash the mountains.

With the glorious Gospel to preach to perishing sinners in every land, the right hand of fellowship for all who love our Lord Jesus' Church, we mean to go forward building up our churches throughout the Dominion, and planting new ones from Cape Breton to Vancouver Island, content to be despised by the world, while the Master approves.

What we want at the present is not a discussion about Organic Union with some one denomination, which is an utter impossibility, now or at any other time, but more self-denial in the cause of Christ, more earnest effort to save souls, more cordial co-operation among ourselves for the promotion of the spiritual growth of the churches. We want a greater number of godly young men to enter our College, and we want our churches to take greater interest in that institution, and manifest that interest by earnest prayer and liberal support. We need very much increased resources for our great Missionary enterprise. Above all, we need the mighty power of the Holy Spirit upon us, sanctifying our lives and hearts and making us instrumental in converting thousands to the Lord Jesus. This is what our denomination wants, and what our country needs.

T. HALL.

CHRISTIAN UNION.

It is difficult for some who have been from the earliest days brought up among Congregationalists, or as they are termed in England "Independents," to understand, or at least sympathize with the repeated allusions to union of the Congregationalists with some other body.

The Chairman of the Union struck the chord. The CANADIAN INDEPENDENT vibrated. "Why should not the Congregationalists discuss union?" again, the CANADIAN INDEPENDENT says: "Whether our Chairman's views on union are to be accepted or not is one thing, but that without shackles, union with the

brethren may be sought, is assuredly the right of the freest section of the Church of Christ." It may not be unfair to put the question: Has Christian union ever been ignored by Congregationalists? We repudiate the imputation. It has been cultivated in our intercourse with others, encouraged in our churches, and taught in our pulpits, and manifested in the favour our ministers have always shown to ministerial associations, the evangelical alliance, and union prayer meetings. We have never been exclusive. There has been often more noted fellowship and Christian love between a Congregational church and its minister, and the churches of other denominations, than between some churches bearing the same name, and under the same organization, and in the same town. In the great schemes for Christian work where all unite, we have been never wanting. Bible and Tract Societies are our witnesses. The great London Missionary Society founded on the true basis of Christian union, was forsaken by others, and left in our hands, but we refused then to exclude others, by calling it after our name. We aver without fear of contradiction that the Congregational churches have been in advance of others in regard to Christian union. Union has been our cry, practical solid union.

More than thirty years ago a published article on the subject of Christian union from the pen of the writer of this article, was copied and republished by other denominations in Canada, as far as we know, without condemnation. We are now lectured on the subject and pointed to the great organized combinations of other denominations, and asked, cannot we go into it and call it union? We reply, the sort of organized combination such as the Methodists and Presbyterians have, is contrary to the very genius of Congregationalism, and we believe of Christianity. Great centralized organizations banded to govern and make laws for the churches of a province or a nation are dangerous, not only to the Christian liberty of the churches but to their spirituality.

The larger and more powerful the organization the more dangerous it becomes. This is not Christian union, if it is the Church of Rome has it to a greater perfection than any of the rest of them, for it is the largest, and most thoroughly organized.

We do not regard the Methodists or Presbyterians as having a jot more of the union of the Spirit than they had before their combinations. The people do not love one another any better; as denominations they are made not a whit more catholic. Being more powerful, they are likely to become more exclusive and intolerant of others, as Rome is. We desire no such union as this. From the first introduction of it among the churches of Christ, it brought evil, and led to corruption. If any minister desires it, or private member, it is always open to him to join such a

union and place his neck under the yoke. The Congregational Union, however, have mistaken their mission, when they conceive that they meet to discuss that sort of union for our churches. The union as it is, is open to every free church of Christ, or should be. Our constitution says: "That this union is founded on a full recognition of the distinctive principles of Congregational churches, namely, the scriptural right of every separate church to maintain perfect independence in its government and administration, and therefore that the Union shall not assume legislative or administrative authority or in any case become a court of appeal." It is then out of place for the Union to discuss the bringing of our churches into these large organizations. Our churches do not want it, are not sighing to belong to some powerful body which shall exercise control over them. We can now say, grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, whatever name they may bear, to whatever party they belong. As a brother is Christ's so we are Christ's, one in Him, through one Spirit; separate families, but of one Holy nation. We have one Lord, one Faith, and one Baptism. This unity of the Spirit we have and cultivate. The other kind of union we do not want, and as far as the sentiments of our churches are known they will not have it.

Large organizations are always coming apart, and cement them as you will, they will divide again. United by the Spirit, nothing but sin—departure from the faith—can separate us from one another. Love is the only true bond of union. This we shall feel towards all who abide in Christ. This will unite us in Heaven, where there is neither Synod nor Conference.

We are in advance in our Christian union of that of denominations who are only bound together with creeds and formularies in a large organized body.

If it were possible, it is not desirable that we should go into any large human organization, and call it Christian union. Let us strive for more of the Spirit, if you will, more love to Christ, more love to all who bear His image. Let us be willing to unite in any Christian effort with all who are doing the Lord's work in the Lord's way. The great organized bodies with centralized power will, as such, have no place in heaven, and are not needed on earth.

"Head of Thy church beneath!
The Catholic, the true;
On all her members breathe,
Her broken frame renew;
Then shall Thy perfect will be done
When Christians love and live as one."

From, July 8th, 1884.

W. H. A.

If I can put one touch of a rosy sunset into the life of any man or woman, I shall feel that I have worked with God.—*George Macdonald.*

OBITUARY.

Rev. Edward Ebbs, whose death we noted last month, was born at Bury St. Edmonds, Suffolk, England, May 10th, 1821. He died, therefore, having entered upon his sixty-fourth year. His parents, and grandparents, and their ancestors, were staunch English Nonconformists. With his parents our brother came to Canada in 1836, and settled in Hamilton, in which city, as he has recorded, he gave himself to the Lord, eventually making a public profession, May 10, 1840, in the Congregational church in Guelph. While listening to a sermon by the pastor of that church upon the death of John Williams, the martyred Missionary, he decided to devote himself to the work of the ministry, and entered the Theological Institute, then in Toronto, in the same year. He was therefore the oldest graduate of our College at the time of his death in connection with the Union. Affectionate is his memory to his surviving fellow students, one of whom bears testimony to his invariable neatness, piety and affection. Our brother, Mr. W. H. Allworth, now remains the senior alumnus of our college on the Union.

On July 16th, 1843, he began his ministry at London, Canada, and was ordained August 30th of that year. Here he was married to Miss Jane Wickson, who after three decades of happy wedded life survives to wait the blest reunion in the better home.

Until the summer of 1882, he continued in pastoral work, labouring in London, Hamilton, Paris and Ottawa City, in Canada, besides a pastorate of nearly six years in Plainfield, Illinois, and a shorter one at Aurora, in same State. In addition to these, he laboured for short periods in two or three other American fields, both east and west.

In July, 1867, whilst labouring in Illinois, he lost his only son, then a young man of twenty-one. His feelings were expressed "so far as he is personally affected, all is well, it could not be better; the Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

From many of these fields, by letters received before and since his death, we hear of good resulting, even now, from his work. The children always held a warm and large place in his heart, and by Bands of Hope, Juvenile Missionary Societies, as well as by Monthly Sermons, specially for the young, he tried to interest them in the various branches of Christian work. He was of exceedingly strong temperance principles, and for many years carried a Pledge Book in his pocket, obtaining signatures from any he could influence.

Since the fall of 1882, he resided in Toronto and connected himself with Zion Church. Though not in any regular charge, his interest in the work never diminished, nor was his liberality withheld, and he intensely enjoyed such occasional work as he was

able to do. Singularly, as it seems to us, his oft repeated prayer that he might be able to serve the Master until he was called up higher was fully answered, as only a week previous to his death he preached at the Central Prison, and at the Communion season, in June, in Zion Church he took part.

Our personal knowledge of our brother has been but of short duration, but the memories are pleasant. He has evidently been ripening for the Father's house. The editor returning from the Union meeting, on the Wednesday previous to Mr. Ebbs's death, leaving the Union station of this city, met our deceased brother leaving home for Paris, from which he returned next day. It was the last greeting till hands again are clasped in heaven. In character Mr. Ebbs was even, earnest and affectionate, his preaching characterized by what the old divines called unction. Christ was his theme, and with loving consideration for freedom of thought and utterance, he found the "old way" all sufficient, leaving the doubtful exploring of new fields to others. Taken ill on Saturday morning, June 21, he gradually grew weaker, and became unconscious until Monday night, when without a struggle he peacefully slept in Jesus, and the spirit that had so often longed for heaven was taken home. From a letter sent by him to friends some months ago on receiving news of the sudden death of an aged saint, one of his former parishoners, we get a good view of his own feelings about what we call—death.

"He was probably surprised to find himself freed from mortality and infirmity, as he awoke in His likeness, with whom he shall ever remain! What could his loved ones desire for him better? Gladly would I change with him, but I should not desire to bring him back to the feebleness and weariness of his earthly state."

His remains were taken to the Mount Pleasant Cemetery. In the absence of Mr. Powis, his pastor, Mr. Burton and Mr. Duff conducted the funeral services.

Literary Notices.

THE PULPIT TREASURY, E. B. Treat, Broadway, New York. This Monthly, which, in its one year of existence has earned for itself a reputation second to none among the journals of its class, has with the July number increased its power by adding to itself the talent of *The Southern Pulpit*, a journal specially devoted to the publication of the orthodox utterances, of the pulpits of the South. *The Treasury* thus secures a larger circulation and a wider field from which to gather gems. From its excellent July number, we quote the following hints for the enquiry-room, from the pen of Mr. George Soltau, an English

Evangelist, who lately visited Toronto and manifested the strong common sense this article evidences:—

If desiring to engage in the solemn and important work of dealing with the anxious in the enquiry room, we must be convinced at the very outset that the Holy Spirit alone can lead a sinner to the Saviour; that each of us must look to him for the right word, the fitting text, the wise counsel, and that we are to be but the mouth-pieces through which he will speak. Our constant attitude must be one of communion with God, and our memories and minds must be well stored with Scripture, so as to be ready for the Master's use.

The following general suggestions may be found of great use:

1. Be not *too eager* to lead a soul into peace. (See Jer. vi., 14, and viii., 11, 12.) It is not desirable to use the expression, "Have you found peace?" seeing that the anxious soul needs a *Person* rather than a *blessing*.

2. Avoid the expression, "You have only to believe to be saved," until you have very fully stated and explained the facts and promises to be believed, and then point out that it is a *Person* in whom the soul's trust is to be placed, and not in your statements about Him.

3. Always read your quotations from the Bible, turning to the passage, so that the enquirer may be able to distinguish between your statements and the Word of God. The latter has an authority that your statements cannot possess.

4. Avoid telling your own experience or that of others, as the enquirer must lean on the Word of God, not on your experience of it.

5. Do not try to apply to the need of enquirers texts the truth of which you have not yourself experienced.

6. Make it clear that at conversion the Lord Jesus claims possession and control of the entire being. Show that it is not merely the *salvation of the soul* that is needed, but also deliverance for mind and body from all power of sin in every direction.

7. If you find an enquirer baffles you with difficult questions, hand such a one over at once to a more experienced Christian.

8. As far as possible, converse only with persons of your own age or younger; your own sex and walk in life.

9. Do not tell a person he is saved; leave that with the Lord to tell him.

Let us compare the enquiry-room to the out-patient ward of a large hospital, in which are gathered a multitude of sick folk, afflicted with various diseases and complaints, waiting to be dealt with by the physician. Each case must be attended to by him personally, the special malady inquired into, and the fitting treatment prescribed. Were the physician only a quack doctor, he would prescribe one patent medicine for all his patients, regardless of the variety in their diseases.

The great Physician here is the Lord Jesus; the workers in the enquiry-room are like the assistants and nurses in the hospital, receiving from Him directions for the treatment of each wounded and suffering one. Let us suppose we had before us these different cases: "The first might say," "I can't see my way at

all"—that is a case of blindness. The second, "I am afraid to die, my sins are so many"—that is like a bad pain. The third, "I can't break off my sinful habits, and I want to be a Christian"—that is like a case of crooked limbs and distorted joints. The fourth, "I don't feel very bad, but I know that I am not all right"—that is like numbness produced by paralysis. The fifth, "I have fallen into an awful sin, and I am afraid God cannot save me"—that is like a case of broken limbs. An experienced worker, with a few favourite texts, would probably speak to each one in this way: "You must just believe that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin. You know He said, 'Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out.' Can't you believe that now is the accepted time, that now is the day of salvation? 'For God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son' Just kneel down, and say from your heart, 'Take me as I am.'" We would not say that none of them would get any blessing through such treatment, but the chances are more against it than for it. What we must do is first to ascertain the cause of this blindness and lameness, and numbness, etc., and then by God's help apply the right remedy.

We notice with pleasure a little tract of 16 pages by Dr. Thomas Murphy on the duties of the church member to the Church. The cover can have the impress of any church or pastor. We believe Rev. J. M. Cameron, of Toronto, will supply churches or pastors with any needed number. Its opening sentence indicates its design and presses home some pertinent enquiries. "This little manual is intended to awaken attention and to serve as a guide to the chief duties which each of its members owe to the Church. Many persons become connected with the Church and are members of it for years without seeming to recognize the claims it has upon them. They do not reflect upon the obligations which this relation imposes, differently to be led to make even an effort for their performance. Words too true, hence in the successive chapters, the duties are enforced, to pray for the Church, to attend, to support, to draw others thereto, to study the peace of the Church, to guard its good name, to stand by the pastor, to contribute to its benevolent objects, to adopt some branch of the church work, to help the Sabbath school. We believe it will pay for every church to place a copy of the manual in the hands of each of its members.

THE CENTURY and ST. NICHOLAS, retain and surpass their long continued character for excellent, instructive and entertaining literature. The July number of the CENTURY, has an excellent portrait and memoir of John Bright; an interesting account of the true origin of the KuKlux Klan, and of their final disbandment. The interesting cruise around Cape Breton is completed, indeed there is not an article that does not contribute to the reader enjoyment and instruction. More cosmopolitan than *Harpers*

it maintains a wider harmony, as it ensures a wider sympathy.

FUNK & WAGNALL's publications continue to invite attention. THE HOMILETIC MONTHLIES, for June and July are valuable numbers containing, as they do, the best and the latest of pulpit power and homiletic strength.

MEYER'S COMMENTARY, on John, is now being delivered to subscribers of the *Monthly* at the exceedingly low rates advertised. THE STANDARD LIBRARY, too keeps up its value, its later editions being Archibald Malmaison, by Julian Hawthorn and Himself Again by I. C. Goldsmith. We remind our readers that Rev. W. Briggs, King st. East, Toronto, is the Canadian Agency for this well known Publishing House.

News of the Churches.

TOTTEN.—We have received a letter from Rev. M. J. Totten, four years ago pastor of the Congregational church at Cavendish, Suffolk, England. Mr. Totten is at present at Wingham, and is available for service in any vacant church or as occasional supply.

WATFORD—June 16th. witnessed a pleasant gathering at the parsonage in this place. Our brother, Rev. R. Hay and his wife, found friends commemorating with them, the twenty-fifth anniversary of their wedding. An affectionate address and suitable silver articles were presented on behalf of the churches, over which Mr. Hay presides. We send, though late, our editorial greetings and pray that the silver quarter-century being past, the golden now may impart its richer gleams.

WHITBY.—A few historical reminiscences of the church in this place, may be of permanent interest. It is not well that the records of our pioneer work should be forgotten. We insert these mites as a contribution from a friend to our early history.

An Episcopal church near the lake, was early started and built but of the present town the Congregational church was the first, attended and supported in its early days by representatives of all the then existing denominations, who made it for a time their common religious home.

The church was organized on the 24th. Dec., 1843. Proceedings were immediately taken for the erection of a building, and everything seems to have been completed at the close of 1845.

The site, consisting in the outstart of one acre of ground, intended both for church and burying ground was the gift of the late Peter Perry, Esq., so well and honourably known in connection with all early movements for the advancement of our Town and County at large. The deed of the property being in some respects conditional, and the land covered by it interfering to some extent with the

streets as afterwards laid out, it was deemed advisable to secure a new deed if possible, untrammelled with the conditions contained in the old, leaving out the burying-ground clause, and giving a better description of the land. Such deed was obtained from the heirs-at-law of Mr. Perry on payment of a moderate sum, he having in the meantime died. The church as originally organized consisted of sixteen members. Rev. Thos. Machin was the first pastor of the church, and on his resignation in 1845, was succeeded by Rev. Thos. Snell, whose memory is still cherished with affection by those who knew him. Mr. Snell, having resigned his charge in 1848, a call was given to and accepted by the Rev. John Cunningham Geikie, a young man of much talent, who had been trained in the Congregational College then in Toronto, under the supervision of the late able and scholarly Rev. Adam Lillie, D.D.

The church under Mr. Geikie's pastorate made rapid advancement, and was attended by nearly all the leading families of the then rising town. The writer well remembers the stirring times there were during the visit of an evangelist, Rev. J. Burchard, in 1851. The church was crowded to its utmost capacity, and many professed conversion, under methods in some respects similar to those of the Salvation Army of to-day, or rather, very similar to the *modus operandi* of the old Methodist protracted meetings; so much so indeed, that a witty Methodist friend sent Mr. Burchard word to "return the borrowed tools at the finishing of the job." On one occasion Mr. Burchard announced that he would next evening preach a *hen* sermon. When next evening came, not only the sermon, but the hen was ready. A practical joker of the time (the late Mr. Herman, a man of ready wit and overflowing with good-natured fun) brought a hen along to the meeting, and at the announcement of the text set the hen afloat over the heads of the audience. The fruits of this season of revival were rather evanescent. Much good appeared to be done at the time, and doubtless much good was done, yet a large proportion fell gradually back into the ranks of the world. Besides this, the old and new elements in the church did not easily coalesce. Difficulties also arose between the pastor and some of his flock which resulted in his resignation in the fall of 1851. He was for some time editor of the town paper (called the "Whitby Reporter," I believe) and took an active part in the establishment of the Grammar School in Whitby, and in urging the formation of a Teachers' Association. He was also a strong advocate of total abstinence and gave no uncertain sound as to the duty of uprooting, if possible, a traffic so fraught with evil individually and nationally. His views were perhaps much intensified by the fact that one of the attendants on his ministry (James Tirriff, a cooper I think, who lived at Hamer's

Corners) came to an untimely end as a fruit of said traffic. Poor Jamie was found dead one morning by the side of the road, just west of the bridge at Blair's creek, with his whisky jug by his side, a ghastly spectacle to passers by, and sad commentary on a system of things that still unhappily exists.

Rev. J. T. Byrne followed Rev Mr. Geikie in the pastoral charge of the church, and commenced his ministry in Oct., 1851. His first efforts were directed to the removal of discordant feelings and the restoration of harmony and good will among the membership, in which laudable effort he was very successful. His pastorate covered a period of about twelve years of earnest and faithful labour, marked by much self-sacrifice, and by the accomplishment of much good. The Sabbath school received his special attention, and being at that time conducted to a great extent on union principles, was large and prosperous. Quite a number of those who are now heads of families in our town and neighbourhood had their early training either as scholars or young teachers in said school. Mr. Byrne's pastorate closed in June, 1863. Owing in a great measure to the gradual withdrawal of the adherents of different denominations as they found themselves strong enough to commence operations, and to "arise and build," the Congregational church made little if any numerical progress during those years.

In the fall of 1863 Rev. H. H. Budge, became pastor of the church, and so continued until May, 1867. He was a man of good ability, but of very unhappy temperament. *How is your own?*

After an interval of a year, Rev. S. T. Gibbs, whose memory is yet fragrant in the hearts of his late flock, was invited to the pastoral charge of the church, and accepting the invitation, commenced his ministerial duties on 1st. August, 1868. His pastorate continued to Oct. 1875, when he resigned his charge. His preaching was talented, rich, spiritual and earnest, and his resignation was a great loss both to the church and the community, as, like Mr. Byrne, he was ever ready to give the helping hand to every Christian effort or enterprise for the general good. The church, under his oversight, took fresh courage. Several improvements in church property were undertaken and successfully carried into execution. A neat and commodious parsonage was erected, and many members were received into fellowship.

Changes now intensified, removals from the town took place. others died, among whom I may mention the senior deacon, Samuel Hill, Esq., and Mrs. Hill also the late Mr. and Mrs. Hamer, Mrs. Eggleston, Mrs. Sonley, Joseph Harper, and our former highly esteemed Mayor, James H. Gerrie, who, although by persuasion a Baptist, was for many years—almost

from its commencement—a supporter of said church.

These and other losses and difficulties were severely felt by the little church. In the summer of 1876 Rev. H. T. Miller, from Liverpool, England occupied the pulpit for some time, and on invitation assumed pastoral oversight, but withdrew the following spring, and was succeeded by Mr. J. F. Malcolm, then a promising student of the Congregational College, Montreal. In June, 1877, he received and accepted a call to the pastorate, and was afterwards duly ordained. His charge of the church continued (with a short interruption) for about three years, and was marked by earnest effort and some progress, but owing to long continued feeble health, indicating a necessity of a change, his resignation was given and accepted.

He was succeeded (in July, 1880) by Rev. R. Wrench, just arrived from London, England, highly recommended, and sporting somewhat jauntily the plume of *Professor*. The Prof. was a man of fine talent as a speaker, but in other respects just as unsuited to the position as the position was unsuited to him. The little church needed the careful and prudent oversight of a pastor familiar with the ways and wants of the country and the people. Suffice it to say that a great mistake was made by both parties which the resignation of the Professor in June, 1881, came too late to remedy. Since then there have been occasional services, but no settled pastorate. Perhaps it is all for the best. The officers of the Salvation Army are at present in possession of the building under leasehold, and are apparently doing a good work, and, however much we may differ from them in some respects, we cannot but wish them God-speed in every proper effort for the benefit of fallen humanity. Thus endeth, for the present, the history of the Whitby Congregational Church, but we have written over its history this word *Resurgam*.

MOURNING after an absent God is an evidence of love as strong as is rejoicing in a present one.—*F. W. Robertson.*

ONE great cause of our insensibility to the goodness of our Creator is the very extensiveness of His bounty.—*Paley.*

A NOBLE and attractive every-day bearing comes of goodness, of sincerity, of refinement; and these are bred in years, not in moments.—*F. D. Huntington.*

TO grow old is quite natural; being natural it is beautiful; and if we grumble at it, we miss the lesson, and lose all the beauty.—*Friswell.*

THE more a diamond is cut, the brighter it sparkles, and in what seems hard dealing God has no end in view but to perfect His people's graces.—*Dr. Guthrie.*

International Lessons.

LESSON 6.

Aug. 10, }
1884. }

ABSALOM'S REBELLION.

{ 2 Sam. 15 :
1-14. }

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."—Ex. 20 : 12.

TIME.—About twelve years after the last lesson. B.C., 1023. The 12 years are made up as follows: One year after David's sin came Amnon's crime. Two years later, Amnon was slain by Absalom, who thereupon fled to the court of his maternal grandfather at Geshur, where he remained three years; then two years in Jerusalem without seeing the king, and after the reconciliation, four years of intrigue and preparation for the rebellion.

PLACES.—Jerusalem and Hebron, this latter, like Damascus, one of the most early and most interesting cities in the world. Its original name was Kirjath-arba, it is also called Mamre, and is situated at a spot in the south highlands of Judah, having the name of Macphelah, its present name is Khulil, so named after the Arabic title of Abraham.

Introduction.—Our last lesson was on David's repentance. Through the infinite mercy of God he was forgiven his great sin, the cloud rolled away and he could again look up and see the face of his Father in Heaven, but he was never again just the man that he had been. The remembrance of his sin is with him, and the sentence is still upon him. "Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house." He loses the exultant gladness of his early life, he is as one who goes down to his grave mourning, his active history is past, henceforth he is passive merely; his early life, not without many faults, has yet on the whole a noble and grand history; his later life, with much that is beautiful in it, develops more strongly the unworthy elements in his character. He is still a servant of God, a son, but how different is his service and feeling to what they had been—that one sin darkened his life. Our lesson is one of the incidents which most strikingly show the truth that: "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap;" he had sown lust, deceit, treachery, murder, and this is a part of the harvest.

Notes and Comments.—Ver. 1. "Absalom:" his mother's name was Maachah, daughter of the king of Geshur; he was the third and favorite son of David. Beautiful in person, remarkable especially for his luxuriant hair; (Chap. 14 : 25, 26.) his moral man was of the basest sort, he was ambitious, crafty, unscrupulous, and could play the hypocrite well, when it suited his purpose. "Chariots and horses:" he would bring himself into notice, so he affects the retinue and style of royalty. "Fifty men:" still further to the same end, great men were accompanied by running footmen. (1 Kings 1 : 5.)

Ver. 2. Having attracted notice, his next step is to win popularity. "Rose early:" it was his custom—a good one, but here with a bad purpose. "Gate," the place where the low business of the kingdom was transacted. Unhappily for himself, David, who should have sat there, had lately neglected the duty, nor had he appointed any one to perform it for him. "Controversy:" matter of complaint, law-suit—called "of that city," petending an interest in his affairs.

Ver. 3, 4. "Good—right:" his object was to get favour, so he would not care for looking into the case, likely he said the same thing to both litigants. "I judge," and those thus flattered by him doubtless wished so too, for he had pronounced their causes good. "Justice:" the justice of a parricide and a would-be parricide. Yet how plausible the king was neglecting the matters of his subjects to their

great loss, and here was one, a prince too, ready to devote himself to their interests.

Ver. 5, 6. In these verses we have a still further bid for popularity, and that successfully. "Came nigh—obeisance—kissed him:" on approaching the king's son, the people would have done him the reverence given to a superior, but instead of allowing that, Absalom would draw the man to him, embrace him, and give him the kiss of friendship; no wonder that he "stole the hearts of the men of Israel," either deceived (as Gen. 31 : 20, 26) or stole their affections, this latter we prefer.

Ver. 7, 8. "Forty years:" evidently an error of some later Jewish scribe; the Syriac and Arabic versions read *four years*. Josephus gives the same time, and it is without doubt the true reading; it would be four years after his restoration to the King's favour. "Vow:" undoubtedly a mere pretext—he would deceive the king as he had deceived the people. He well knew how the heart of his father would rejoice at this apparent piety of his favourite son. "Hebron:" his birthplace, and the old capital of the kingdom, doubtless there were many friends of his youth there, his companions ready to take his part; at the same time the wish would seem to the king very natural that Absalom should choose Hebron for the purpose.

Ver. 9. "Go in Peace:" poor David, a little thought of the kind of peace Absalom was preparing for him. But, it may be asked, was all this four years of intrigue unknown or unobserved by David or Joab, or any of the true friends round David? We can hardly think so, but in all probability the king refused to see any evil in the actions of Absalom; unsuspecting in the extreme, he thought that all was right; he would not believe anything to the contrary until the news of v. 13 reached him.

Ver. 10. "Spies:" secret messengers to sound the people, and if they found willing hearers to dwell on the evils of the present reign; the advantages of having a young and popular man like Absalom on the throne; that this was to be, and that its accomplishment was to be proclaimed by the "Sound of the trumpet;" which they could explain to their neighbours as meaning that "Absalom reigneth in Hebron," that it was not a rebellion but a revolution, that all was settled and the new king enthroned in his capital.

Ver. 11. "Two hundred men—called:" invited to the feast; most likely men of position and eminence, whose presence would, it was expected, be regarded as an approval of the movement; "simplicity"—sincerity—knew not—deceived—like the king.

Ver. 12. "Ahitophel:" David's most trusted counsellor. The importance that David attached to this defection may be judged from the prayer he offered when the fact was told him, v. 31, so in Psa. 41 : "Yea, mine own familiar friend," etc.; again in Psa. 55 : "It was not an enemy—thou my guide," etc. No doubt Absalom knew his man, and was sure of receiving his support; if, as is almost certain, he was the grandfather of Bathsheba, another reason may be supposed for his treachery. "Giloh:" was upon the mountains of Judah, to the S. or S.W. of Hebron.

Ver. 13. "Messenger:" some one from Hebron, friendly to David. Any way ill news flies apace, and such news as this would not take long to travel.

Ver. 14. "Arise—let us flee:" where is the faith and courage of David now? Alas! it is true that "Conscience doth make cowards of us all." He had said: "My sin is ever before me," and he would feel at once that this was a part of the retributive justice of God. That there were military and social considerations likewise is certain; in the excitement of the first news and the exaggeration that would come with it, his cause would perhaps appear desperate; then he might not have enough troops to defend Jerusalem, uncertain also, as he was, of the loyalty of the people; fur-

ther, he would not fight against his son if he could avoid it, in fact the impression left by the whole narrative is, that his first feeling was to accept the position, let Absalom reign and himself leave the kingdom. Worthier and more kingly resolves came with the fidelity and sympathy of those about him.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Preliminary.—Our last lesson in the last quarter was on "Obedience to Law;" we have here a striking lesson on "Disobedience," for that was the seed that blossomed into murder and hypocrisy, and that fruited in a bloody death. Throughout the lesson don't lose sight of the fact that this was not only a rebellion against a king, but against a father. Among the black-hearted traitors of the Bible, Absalom takes place with Judas, Balaam and Cain.

Topical Analysis.—(1) Intrigue 1-6; (2) Hypocrisy 7-9; (3) Rebellion 10-14.

We give this arrangement for those who may feel it convenient to use it, but in this lesson we prefer just to look at some aspects of Absalom's character as seen in the light of the narrative and judged by the word of God.

The first thing we would point out and teach is that: "*A very foul heart may dwell under a very fair exterior.*" This may seem a truth so well known as hardly to need repeating, yet all history tells us that it cannot be too often repeated and urged, upon the young especially. Here is a striking instance. What did the people of Israel know of the character of Absalom? Only evil; his record was of murder—murder of a brother, deliberate, long-plotted, committed under the guise of friendship and reconciliation. Then his conduct to Joab, to whom he was indebted for return from exile, was of the worst description; yet notwithstanding this record, the beautiful hair and the sweet looks, and the gracious, condescending, winning ways of the prince blinded them to it all, and he stole the hearts of the men of Israel. Our scholars need to have this truth impressed upon them, a beautiful form is often a dangerous possession, it has been called "a fatal dower," and so it has proved to many; he or she who has it, needs great grace to prevent it becoming a snare, a stumbling block and ruin. Teach emphatically, that character alone should be the test. "Handsome is that handsome does."

A second truth is that: *great gifts may be perverted to the worst purposes.* Absalom had great gifts—gifts which, if used wisely and religiously, would have made him the greatest man next to the king, he would have been able to supply those things which his father lacked in the administration of the kingdom, and instead of dividing the people and bringing bloodshed into the land, would, by the blessing of God, have knit the people more firmly into one nation; healed tribal jealousies, bound them more firmly to his father's throne, been a wise help and counsellor to Solomon, and thus, in all probability, the rending of the kingdom might have been long averted, perhaps never have taken place. So to-day, we are called from time to time to hear of men of great natural ability and acquired learning, who use all without reference to God or man; it is for self they live, for self they work, and it matters not who suffer in the pursuit of their end. Swindlers, forgers, speculators with other people's money, and unscrupulous politicians, such are specimens of this class. Teach that abilities, mental gifts, knowledge, are all from God, and to Him and to fellow-men should be dedicated. All are a trust from God, and of these, equally with wealth and opportunities, will he require an account at the last.

There is the further sad truth to impress, that a *pretended zeal for religion may be a cloak for evil deeds.* It was so here. Israel, as a nation was a religious nation. David was a religious king, and Absalom, to accomplish his purposes, had to appear religious. We are not told what pretence of religion he put on earlier in his career, but we may feel sure

that he would not omit that attention to the services of the tabernacle which would impress the best portion of the community with the idea of his religiousness and therefore fitness for the high position to which he aspired. At last came what Absalom thought the opportune moment, his plans were laid, his emissaries had prepared the way, and to cover the last move more effectually, he pretended to wish to fulfil a vow made in Geshur. The reply of the unsuspecting father was: "Go in peace;" and there, at Hebron, the mask was thrown off, and Absalom stood revealed in his native perfidy and blackness. Teach a strong detestation of hypocrisy, it is hateful alike to God and man. That there are hypocrites to-day, men, who, to serve their purposes, make a pretence of religion, there is too much reason to fear. Let your scholars see it so vile, that by the mercy of God they will avoid it forever.

INCIDENTAL TRUTHS AND TEACHINGS.

Punishment of sin sometimes comes in the love of the sin. In David's case, murder with murder, and the peril of his own life.

The sin of those in public positions, leads to sin in those beneath them.

Regard with suspicion those who profess a greater interest in your welfare than any one else has.

Reject, come from whom it may, familiarity that would make you a tool for selfish purposes.

Beware of the devil when he becomes very pious.

Man proposes, thinks he has accomplished, but God rules.

There are revelations of baseness and ingratitude that will unman, at times, the stoutest heart.

Main Lessons.—Filial obedience enjoined, disobedience to be punished—Ex 20: 12; 21: 15; Lev. 20: 9; Deut. 27: 16; Prov. 10: 1; 20: 20; 30: 17; Mark 7: 10.

Aug. 17,
1884.

ABSALOM'S DOOM.

{ 2 Sam. 18
24-33.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Whoso curseth father or mother let him die the death."—Mark 7:10.

TIME.—Shortly after the last lesson.

PLACE.—Mahanaim (*two hosts*), so called by Jacob when he had divided his people into two hosts on his return from Syria.

INTRODUCTION.—Read carefully the incidents between the flight of David as narrated at the close of the last lesson, and the tidings of the battle in the woods of Ephraim as we have in this lesson, note the *spirit of David* in the matter of the cursing of Shimei: the *encouragements* he received in the warm attachment of so many to his cause, Joab and his brother Abishai, Hushai, Zadok, the priest, and his son Ahimaaz, and not least, Ittai the Gittite who though an alien could show a noble devotion to the fallen King; and again he had encouragement in the sympathy and assistance of so many who were able to give it, as detailed in Chap. 17: 27-29; these things must have strengthened David's faith, and been to him an assurance that although the Lord was chastening, He would not cast him off for ever. Then follows the story of the battle, with the death of Absalom, slain by Joab against the express command of David. As our lesson opens David is waiting news of the battle.

Notes and Comments.—Ver. 24. "Sat between the gates:" the outer and inner gate of the fortified city wall, between which there was a small court. His overpowering anxiety fastens him to the spot where his troops left him in the morning; all day long he has been waiting and watching and it is safe to say that his thoughts have been all of concern for Absalom. "To the roof:" the top

of one of the towers of the outer gate; it was a suitable place for a watchman. "A man running alone:" swift runners was the ancient method of obtaining news; two messengers had left the scene of battle, but one, Ahimaaz, had outrun the other, Cvshi.

Vers. 25, 26. "If he be alone—tidings:" that is, of victory. David as a warrior knew well enough that a defeat would have brought on a large number of fugitives. "The porter:" whose business it was to attend to the opening and shutting of the gate, and who being below could inform David. "Another:" and only one, so the King would be confirmed in his previous opinion as to the result of the battle.

Ver. 27. At first a mere speck on the horizon, only visible, perhaps, to the practised eye of the watchman, the form of the runner and his gait as he drew near were familiar. It was "Ahimaaz the son of Zadok." David knowing his loyalty and attachment at once said, "He is a good man and bringeth good tidings." He had borne good tidings before at the rejection of the counsel of Ahithophel. (Chap. 17: 14-17.) There are some people who appear to delight in bearing evil tidings; Ahimaaz was not one of these.

Vers. 28, 29, 30. Full of his message he scarcely waits to reach the King but calls out, "All is well;" lit., "Shalom," peace, or "Hail." "Blessed be the Lord:" Ahimaaz did not forget, as some too often are apt to do, from whom our mercies come. "Delivered:" lit., "Shut up." (See 1 Sam. 17: 46 margin.) The idea is of confining our enemy and not giving him the liberty to work evil. There is one thing, however, about which the King is more anxious than victory. "Is—Absalom safe?" Oh, the power of a loving heart! The son who had deceived him, rebelled against him, and would have taken his life, yet his first thoughts are for that son's safety! Ahimaaz seeing the heart of the King in his question, and remembering the charge of the morning, gives an evasive answer, and would have him think that he had been sent before Absalom's fate was known. He was willing to be the bearer of good news, but afraid to announce the bad. "Turned aside and stood still:" tired as he would be after his long run of several miles, he could not sit down in the presence of the King.

Vers. 31, 32. "Cushi:" we are not sure if this was the proper name of an Israelite, or whether he was a descendent of Cush, a son of Ham. (Gen. 10: 6, 7, 8.) If so, he was a Canaanitish slave of Joab. Cushi brings the same news of victory as Ahimaaz, "The Lord hath avenged thee," and he is met by the same question, "Is the young man—safe?" Note how David dwells upon the thought of the youth of Absalom, as if that were an excuse for his crimes, although he was really over forty years old. Delicately, yet unmistakably, does Cushi give the reply, "the enemies—be as that young man is." It carries the dreaded news to the heart of David.

Ver. 33. "The King was much moved:" hope that had lingered with him had fled, the dreadful calamity was there—Absalom was dead. With kingly pride he will not show his grief, but goes up into the chamber over the gate weeping, mourning, and lamenting for his slain son. "Would God:" so Moses would have died if the people could have been saved (Ex. 32: 32); and so Paul "could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren" (Rom. 9: 3); and how are we reminded of Him who, when He beheld the city, wept over it, knowing so well the sore trouble that was coming upon it. (Luke. 19: 41.)

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

PRELIMINARY.—This lesson is the fitting completion of the last. David was troubled once at the prosperity of the wicked and their success in life; it appeared to him as if God let things take very much their own course, that the

plotting, the devices and schemes of the wicked were not interfered with and that in the full harvest of his works the doer of evil could look around him and despise the power and providence of God. The Psalmist learned in "the sanctuary" that he had made a mistake, and that the course of the wicked was held as by a bridle in the hands of Jehovah. "He sets them in slippery places, casts them down to destruction, brought them into desolation in a moment and utterly consumed them with terrors." No more striking illustration of this truth is to be found in the whole range of Bible narrative than the story of Absalom! Everything up to the commencement of our lesson gave promise of the ultimate and complete success of his scheme. His plans were well and carefully laid; he had won the hearts of a large number of the people, had secured the services of brave, wise and faithful men. The circumstances of the country and of the court favoured his cause. It is more than likely that David's sin, of which we have had the story, had alienated a large number of the people; it is certain that the King had withdrawn from his active duties of attending, either personally or by deputy, to the interests of his subjects; he had shut himself up and forgotten what he owed to the nation, and if, as *Geikie* supposes, the numbering of the people, and the plague by which it was punished, came before this, we have an additional element of disaffection. The country, if not actually ripe for revolt, was not, at any rate, unwilling to try the experiment of a new and younger King, seeing that the old one was apparently worse than useless. Absalom had, too, that rare virtue in a conspirator, *he could wait*; he would not risk anything by precipitating his actions, but plotted patiently on for years. The time came and the opportunity, and without striking a blow he leaped into the royal position; there it appeared as if he was King beyond peradventure, as if nothing could supplant him, and he was safe for life; but "The Lord reigneth:" a fact Absalom had forgotten, and although He permitted chastisement for sin to fall upon David, He did not intend that the penitent should be destroyed, nor that wickedness should triumph. Let us then teach this great lesson, that although to-day, as then, wickedness may appear to succeed, and the wicked to triumph, yet all are in the hands of God, and only so far as it serves the wise purposes of His counsel will He permit the success of evil, and even if we do not see here the reward of the wicked we may be sure that it will come in that after life which is but the development and completion of this.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Topical Analysis.—(1) Waiting for the tidings 24-27; (2) the tidings received 28-33.

On the *first* topic, picture the intense anxiety of the king as he sat waiting there to hear the result of the battle that was to decide his fate and the fate of the kingdom. It would appear that he had little doubt as to the issue; as a soldier he knew his men and had confidence in them; perhaps he had the assurance from God that so far his afflictions would go, but no farther. Sure of victory, there was another care upon his heart; that was Absalom. He feared, too truly as it proved, that his son would perish in the battle, and this foreboding hung heavy upon his heart. Recall another waiting for tidings, which we studied in the fourth quarter of last year, poor old Eli, sitting trembling by the wayside, not so much for the result of the battle, or even for the fate of his two sons, but for the Ark of God. Refer also to that picture, if you have seen it, so expressive, so touching, "Waiting for the Verdict," the old father and mother sitting just outside the court while their son is being tried within. Oh, the deep and bitter sorrow and anxiety of their hearts as the life, or life-long liberty, of their dear boy trembles in the balance! These show that this is one, and a perfectly natural result of disobedience to parents, disregard of par-

ental authority, and that in Absalom's case, as in many others, the end thereof was death.

On the *second* topic, in noticing the sorrows of David we may speak of one or two things that made it deep and intense. *Absalom was David's favourite son.* This is evident right through the history; handsome, graceful, winning in his manners, he held foremost place in the king's heart, and there was truth in Joab's rough words: "I perceive that if Absalom had lived and all we had died this day it had pleased thee well." Chap. 19: 5-6. The grief of David, not wrong in itself, was wrong in its excess, and in the discouragement it gave those who had risked their lives for his sake. Might not one element of his sorrow be, that *his own sin was the beginning of the evil.* How had he appeared to that son; what example had he set? Could he wonder that this son should sin even as he had done, and was it not a part of the chastisement of his sin? Who can tell how much the consciousness of neglect of parental duty and of the evil effects of a bad example help to make that cup of sorrow so bitter. Perhaps "bitterness of all was the hopelessness of Absalom's death;" he could not say now, "I shall go to him," as he had done once before, that hope was lost forever; the sun of Absalom had gone down at noon in eternal darkness. Some one has said that every such instance of tender love should stand in our hearts as a type of His love who left His Father's throne for us. Let the human affection interpret the Divine.

Supplementary.—Picture in a few words that solitary grave heaped over with stones, in the wood of Ephraim, a grave upon which the passing Jew for generations after cast a stone with an execration of the sin of Absalom, and show that in some way or other sin will bring punishment, sure and terrible, for, "the wages of sin is death."

INCIDENTAL TRUTHS AND TEACHINGS.

While there is life there is hope, but hope ends with death.

We sometimes fail to see the blessing that comes as a sorrow and weep as though it were a curse.

We cannot redeem another nor offer a ransom for him. Christ alone could do this. *Psa. 49: 7.*

There are graves over which no ray of light from the eternal world falls. Pray that no scholar of yours may fill such a grave.

He that will *live* for another may never have with bitterness to desire to *die* for him.

Sometimes the objects of our pride are the instruments of our destruction.

Main Lesson.—Death. Temporal, Spiritual, Eternal, the result of sin—*Psa. 9: 17; Prov. 2: 22; 11: 5, 21; Isa. 57: 20; Ez. 18: 4, 23; Rom. 5: 12, 21; 6: 23; Jas. 1: 15.*

LESSON S.

Aug. 24,
1881.

THE PLAGUE STAYED

{ 2 Sam. 24:
15-25.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"So the Lord was entreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel."—2 Sam 24: 25.

TIME.—B. C., 1017. Six years after last lesson.

It is right however to note, that although placed after the rebellion of Absalom some think that this occurred before that time. The narrative is not always as we know, strictly chronological.

PLACE.—Jerusalem, and the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, on Mount Moriah, the site of Solomon's Temple.

PARALLEL.—1 Chron. 21: 1-30.

Introduction.—Questions will arise about this lesson, or rather about the circumstances that led to it, which the wise teacher will do well thoroughly to consider and be prepared, so far as he can, to answer, just as "What was

the plague sent for?" "For numbering the people." "But where was the wrong of that, had not Israel been numbered before, and even by the express direction of God?" "Yes, and we are not told where the sin lay, but we may be sure that there was sin in what appeared an innocent act. We saw in the death of Uzzah, that a thoughtless, irreverent act, although the act of a good impulse, may be displeasing to God, and bring down punishment; so, here, there was doubtless in the motives to the act, pride and vain glory; perhaps, as one of the results told the number of fighting men, David might have been contemplating an aggressive war to bring some of the surrounding nations beneath his sway, a thing displeasing to God; most likely the sins of pride and ambition were at the root of the action. Another question may be, "why should the innocent people suffer for the sin of the king?" Let us note that the innocent do suffer for the sin of others, to-day, every day; an engineer takes too much liquor and his innocent passengers are hurled to a terrible death; a lookout on an ocean steamer is careless, a swift collision occurs, and both vessels, it may be, go down into the deep, leaving but few to tell the tale; and so is this law under which we live illustrated in a thousand forms. But beyond this it is evident from the first verse of this chapter that the people were not innocent, they had shared doubtless in the pride and vain-glory of their king, and they had to be punished for their sin, for "the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel." Teach, however, that if we knew *nothing* and could see no reason for the act, we may rest assured that the Judge of all the earth will do right; *He who tries the heart and reins knoweth what is in man and judgeth as He knoweth.* David was offered from Jehovah, by the prophet Gad, the choice of three things, seven years of famine, three months flight before his enemies, or three days' pestilence. Well might David say "I am in a great strait," and devout was his choice; "let us fall now into the hands of the Lord, for His mercies are great." Here our lesson opens.

Notes and Comments.—Ver. 15, "a pestilence;" lit. "a death" while natural causes were likely employed, such as the gathering of large numbers to certain centres for the census, and the spreading of the death among them with frightful rapidity; yet we need not look beyond the fact that it was the very hand of God. "Time appointed:" This would be the morning of the third day, but as the plague was mercifully cut short (see next verse) it has been rendered "until the time of the assembly," that is the hour of evening sacrifice, about three o'clock in the afternoon. This was also the hour of Christ's death, the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world. "Dan-Beer-sheba," the first on the extreme north, the other on the southern frontier of the land, 150 miles apart "seventy thousand men," an enormous mortality, and nothing is said of women and children; we may not suppose that they were exempt, and if the usual proportion held, then it was the most frightful plague in Biblical or secular history.

Ver. 16. "The angel;" angels are God's ministers to execute His judgments—2 Kings 19: 35; Acts 12: 23. "The Lord repented Him;" we can only measure the mind and will of God by our imperfect human thought, and express them in human language. In one sense there can be no repentance with God, but there can be and is, a change in His feelings towards man when he repents. "Threshing place;" these were generally on high, open places for the advantage of having the wind to carry away the chaff. "Araunah the Jebusite," of whom we know nothing, certainly, beyond the narrative, he was evidently a man of wealth and consideration, possibly had been so in the old Jebusite city, and most likely from his actions, was a convert to Judaism. Tradition has plenty to say about him, but all is uncertain.

Ver. 17. "When he saw the angel:" there was a visible manifestation of the destroyer as was said at other times,

notably during the first siege of Jerusalem. "I have sinned—done wickedly," True penitence will acknowledge and take the blame of sin. Where penitence is not, the sinner will try to throw the blame on others, as Adam and Eve, "What have they done?" Much evil, but the magnitude of his own sin hid theirs from his view; "against me:" feeling that he was the sinner he would receive the punishment.

Vers. 18, 19. "Gad came." It was he who brought the message of punishment to David; now he brings one of mercy. In the parallel account, 1 Chron. 21: 18, we had that it was by command of the angel that Gad took that message. Gad was an old friend of David, having been with him in the cave of Adullam, 1 Sam. 22: 5; but his name has not been in the narrative since, until this pestilence. "David went up" promptly and in deep humility.

Ver. 20. "Araunah—saw the king." Araunah and his four sons had also seen the destroying angel, the sons had hid themselves in fear, but the father went forth to meet the king, "bowed himself" with true oriental courtesy; both were deeply interested in the fate of the city, which as *Dean Stanley* says (on the old tradition of Araunah having been its king before the conquest by David); "in different senses belonged to each."

Vers. 21, 22, 23. Two grand, unselfish men have met, at this threshing floor. Araunah asks why David has come to him, and then David replies, "to buy the threshing floor that the plague may be stayed." Araunah at once with noble liberality says, "take—what seemeth good," and not only does he offer the place, but he hastens to add, take also "oxen for burnt sacrifice—and instruments of the oxen for wood:" and it has come down to us, and will go down to the ends of the world that he did it "as a king," with a kingly heart and a kingly spirit; the "threshing instruments and instruments of the oxen" were made principally of wood, although the teeth or spikes of the former would be of iron for the purpose of bruising the ears of corn.

Ver. 24. The nobility of Araunah is matched by the unselfishness of David, there was all that he needed, and for nothing, but; "Nay," said he, "I will surely buy it of thee," and he adds as a reason a true principle "neither will I offer—of that which doth cost me nothing." So the king bought threshing floor and oxen for "fifty shekels of gold," about twenty-five dollars, but in 1 Chron. 21: 25, we are told that David gave 600 shekels of gold for the place, about \$5,250. We agree with the explanation that the writer in Chronicles is giving information additional to that in our portion, and that the larger sum represents a larger purchase, that is the fifty shekels of silver bought the threshing floor, a comparatively small space, and that David later on, perhaps in thankful recognition of the staying of the plague on the spot, purchased the whole hill, the homestead of Araunah as the site of the temple.

Ver. 25 "Built—an altar, as rapidly as possible, we are sure; "burnt offerings," expiatory; "peace offerings;" thanksgiving for Divine mercies, and so "the plague was stayed."

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

- Topical Analysis. (1) The pestilence 15: 16. (2) The repentant king, 17. (3) The merciful Jehovah, 18. (4) The accepted sacrifice—19: 25.

On the first topic we must show that *sin never goes unpunished*. We may not see the punishment, but punished it will be, for there is a God that judgeth righteously in the earth. Then the innocent are often involved in the punishment that falls upon the guilty. We have dwelt upon this in the introduction, so we need only reflect that broken law is no respecter of persons innocent or guilty, it must take its course although, as we have said

the people were joined in the sin, yet amongst them there would be many innocent, children and others, but they would suffer with the rest. How terrible, therefore, the responsibility of those who set in action a power which they cannot stay, and which may involve many in common suffering.

On the second topic show that *the way of penitence is the way of mercy*. David truly repented of his sin, not simply because of the pestilence, for before it was sent he confessed: "I have sinned greatly," neither did he seek to palliate his sin, or fix the guilt upon others. Nay, so far did he go in that direction as to be blind to the share that the people had in the sin, and to exclaim "these sheep, what have they done?" How different to the oft repeated repentances of Saul, wrung from him by judgments, but which were only like the morning cloud and the early dew.

On the third topic point out how merciful and gracious our Heavenly Father is, though he chastises he will not utterly destroy. For David he provided a way of acceptance. It was on the line of the dispensation in which David lived, an altar on the threshing floor of Araunah and the offering up of the appointed sacrifices; and for us there is a way, the way of Salvation, by the cross of Jesus Christ, and the penitent soul that seeks pardon and salvation in that appointed way, shall not miss it. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

On the fourth topic we may see how *obedience brings blessing*. God commanded, David hastened to obey, and in obedience he found the pardon for which he so earnestly sought. We must not omit to point out in this connection the noble conduct of Araunah. He had the opportunity in the extremity of the king to drive a hard bargain, but he was above it. His heart was not fettered by shekels, and, as a king, he would give to David freely all that he needed for sacrifice—threshing floor, oxen, and instruments of wood, so to-day he stands out grandly on the sacred page a noble pattern to us of unselfish liberality.

INCIDENTAL TRUTHS AND TEACHINGS.

We are never safe from temptations. Watch and pray. We may deceive others and ourselves as to our motive. We cannot deceive God.

The spirit of vain glorious pride is hateful to God, and will be punished by Him.

The heaviest chastisements for sin fall upon the children of God.

One mark of true repentance is sincere confession.

There is a way of return to God, so plain that none can mistake who look for it.

The acceptable giver gives that which cost something, the giving of which involves self-denial.

Before we speak God hears. He is merciful and ready to forgive.

Main Lesson.—"If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." 1 John 1: 9; 2 Chron. 7: 14; Psa. 32: 5; Pro. 28: 13; Isa. 55: 7; Jer. 3: 12, 13; Luke 15: 21, 22.

LESSON 9.

Aug. 31, } GOD'S WORKS AND WORD. { Ps. 19: }
1884. } } 1-14.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name."—Psa. 138: 2.

TIME.—Unknown; we cannot gather from the title or the Psalm itself any indication of the time of its composition; some have attributed it to David's bright unclouded shepherd days, before *Cour life* had left its stain on his beautiful nature; there is little doubt that it was written before the great sin that brought sorrow to his soul and darkened the latter part of his life.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.—Ver. 1. "The heavens," the physical "heavens" the sky above us with its marvelous spread of sun, moon, stars, clouds, light and darkness ever recurring. "The glory of God:" the power and greatness of Him who made them. "Firmament:" another word for heavens. In the Old Testament the noun has the sense of expanse, and also of firmness, steadfastness. "Handiwork:" it is not chance, evolution anything like that, all is from the hand of God.

Vers. 2, 3, 4. "Day unto day:" every day as it dawns takes up the story of the power and glory of its Maker. "Night unto night:" the stars in their course are vocal with the same story of Him who is Lord of all. The days and nights talk together concerning the greatness of their Creator. "No speech nor language:" two interpretations of this have been given, that of modern commentators (generally), who refer it to the silence of the heavens, that they are speechless witnesses, yet inwardly audible and everywhere intelligible, a truth; but we prefer the other interpretation, that they tell the same story to every nation, in every speech and in every language. We think that the context supports this; "their line," "their course," "their words," the speech of which the previous verse had spoken, it is another putting of the same truth, these testifiers for the glory of God go through all the earth, and wherever they go their words are heard.

Ver. 5, 6. "A tabernacle:" a tent, a moveable dwelling; "the Sun" as if the one great thing in the heavens was its majestic occupant, the Sun; "a bridegroom—a strong man:" the point of comparison is the cheerful, glad brightness of the morning sun, and his power and vigour. "Going forth:" morning by morning, "his circuit, his path through the heavens," is from one end to the other. "Heat:" without which life could not exist, it fills the whole earth, heat includes light, the type of the great Sun of righteousness, the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

Vers. 7, 8, 9. The Psalmist now turns from the works to the word of God; he has spoken of the heavens, day and night, and the bridegroom Sun, these have each great beauties, and uses, but there is something greater than all these, divine in its nature, and spiritual in its effects, the Word of God: In these verses the Psalmist describes it by six titles, gives six characteristic qualities, and six divine effects. It is "law:" not merely what Moses gave but the whole Revelation of God; it is Testimony, it testifies, shows forth God's character and His relation to man; it is "statutes:" His ordinances and will declared; "commandments:" the special obligation he has laid upon man; "fear:" the spiritual effect, piety, reverence; "judgments:" revealed in the land, his dealings with the children of men. It is "perfect:" no admixture of error in God's word, "sure:" of it "yea, and amen:" this word "amen," is its derivative and brings out the idea; "right:" founded on the everlasting principles of truth and righteousness; "pure:" nothing unholy, or sinful, no taint of impurity there; "clean:" like the heaven to which it points, into which enters nothing that defileth, and it is "true," true especially in connection with the word; "judgment:" all God's judgment is "true and righteous altogether:" its effects in the heart of man, are conversion, wisdom, joy, spiritual knowledge, and it endures forever.

Ver. 10. "More to be desired—than gold:" for gold, men starve and suffer; think no labour heavy, no privation severe, so that they may obtain it, and it perishes in the using; but the word, the law of God, is the true riches, to be enjoyed here, and laid up in heaven for everlasting enjoyment; "sweeter—honeycomb:" or, rather the drippings from the honeycomb—the purest honey; to the spiritual man, to the child of God, there is no sweeter portion than his father's word, all else is dull and insipid.

Ver. 11. "warned:" of our danger, our duty; the word is our lighthouse, our beacon, our wreck-chart of the sea of

life; "in keeping—great reward:" not alone in the future but now; like Abraham the obedient and faithful shall find that even here God is their "exceeding great reward." Gen. 15, 1.

Ver. 12. "Who—understand—error:" a question that is a negative like the word of God to David in Lesson 3. "Shalt thou build me an house:" it emphatically forbade his doing it, so here, the idea is, that none can tell their errors, errors of action, of desire, of thought, therefore, "cleanse—secret faults:" of all sins the most dangerous, as are hidden rocks to the sailor, those which are unknown to others, and those that are unknown to myself, cleanse me from them, not only pardon, forgive, but purify me from them, take them away in all their polluting power.

Ver. 13. There is still another kind of sin against which the Psalmist prays "presumptuous sin:" sin against knowledge and against light, wilful, daring, determined sin. Under the Jewish law an atonement was provided for every kind of sin except this, the presumptuous sinner was to be "cut off from among the people:" he had "despised the word of the Lord:" Num. 15: 30, 31. "Not have dominion," "that I may not become the slave of sin, alas how many there are of such:" "great transgression:" even though I have errors and secret faults, yet I shall be saved from the greater sin of deliberate, or reckless sinning—from the climax of the presumptuous sin.

Ver. 14. "Words of my mouth:" whether the praises of the early or the prayers of the latter part of Psalm "and meditation of my heart:" without which words are a mockery, and together they are worthless unless "acceptable:" lit "be for pleasure:" to God "strength or rock:" Psa. 18: 2 "My redeemer:" so Gen. 48: 16; "the angels which redeemed me from all evil:" when applied to God it always has the idea of a deliverer, a Saviour.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Topical analysis.—(1) The works of God Ver. 1-6. (2) the word of God 7-11. (3) a prayer for purity and acceptance. 12-14.

On the first topic the opening thought is that the works of God, especially, we may say the glorious heavens tell of a maker: this is part of their "speech:" whatever the process, the method, which He employed we know not; but of this we are sure that no chance hung out the silver moon in the sky, the queen of the heavens with the countless stars following in her train—no chance sent forth the sun to shed its glorious beams of light and heat on this earth of ours, and we know not how many worlds beside; chance! none but the blindest, most ignorant or prejudiced of men could contemplate the heavens and fail to see the hand of God. It has been truly said that "an undevout astronomer is mad:" that is, if he is not something worse in his sanity; let us listen to utterances of the starry firmament, for they tell us that

"The hand that made us is Divine.

We speak of the voice of the stars, and yet it is no contradiction to say that *their speech is silent*, and what should be so impressive, for silence as the great law of the universe! In the forest as the trees are growing, in the garden as the flowers are blossoming and the plant is ripening, no sound is heard. The great laws of attraction and gravitation do their work so noiselessly that we forget their presence until we cross their path, and so we watch the constellations in their vast march; "there is no speech:" but what dialect so devout, what voice so sweet as this silence, whose lines have gone out through the whole earth, and whose words to the ends of the world? "The thought may come, as it did to David (Psalm 8.) *what is man?* We can answer with more light than David: greater than all these; made in the image of God, capable of communion with Him, having the promise of sonship and being made partakers of the eternal inheritance beyond the skies.

On the *second* topic, shew that this second *text-book* of God is greater and more glorious than the first, the "heavens are not clean in His sight:" but the law of the Lord is perfect—pure, it is "true and righteous:"—it endureth forever, the heavens shall pass away 2 Pet. 3. 10. but "the word of the Lord endureth forever:" 1 Pet. 1:25. never in the history of the word of God have so many been gathered at one time, and is with one mind to study the word of God as are found in our schools on every returning Sabbath; more than once in the sacred narrative we are told how Israel gathered to hear the reading of the law, and heard it with weeping and trembling, but the thousands of those days are multiplied a thousand times to-day. God grant that the generation thus taught may be a Bible-loving and a God-serving people. We may note some things which the works of God cannot tell but which the word of God does. It tells us of the *love of God in Jesus Christ*; it tells us that he who weilds the lightning and tempest is a *gracious and merciful God*, that he has made us for Himself, *for happiness eternal*, that the purpose and end of our being is to *glorify God* in obedience here, and everlasting life hereafter; that *in all our cares and troubles and sorrows we can go to Him*; "cast all our care upon Him for He careth for us:" 1 Pet. 5:7, and blessed thought, that *our Saviour our elder brother is at the right hand of God*, our advocate and intercessor there. These and similar thoughts will help you to show the exceeding greatness of the word of God. Blessed are they who read, understand and obey.

We cannot dwell on the *third* topic, but you can point out that the Psalmist especially prays to be delivered from two things "*secret faults—presumptuous sin*:" shew the danger of these two evils, and bring your scholars to take the prayer of the last verse as their own, then you will not have taught in vain.

INCIDENTAL TRUTHS AND TEACHINGS.

God's works and word, the two volumes of His will.

One name alone is written on the heavens—God.

The spiritual ear can hear the voices of the silent heavens.

There are no contradictions between God's world-book and word-book.

Yet, great as is the book, nature; the book of Grace is greater still.

Only are we sure of the goodness and love of God by the revelation of His word.

Nothing so sweetens and blesses life as knowledge and love of the word of God.

The true child of God would be preserved from sin, not because it will be known, but because it is sin.

Main Lesson.—Delight in the word of God, and obedience to it, as taught by the Psalmist—Psa. 1:2; 37: 31; 40:8; 119 is one continuous strain in this thought, it is emphatically "the Psalm of the word."

LESSON 10.

CONFIDENCE IN GOD.

Sept. 7, }
1884. }

{ Ps. 27 :
1-14. }

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The Lord is my Light and my Salvation, whom shall I fear?"—Ver. 1.

TIME.—Uncertain. But evidently a time of trouble. Some writers place it at the time when Doeg the Edomite spake against David, others during the rebellion of Absalom, before the decisive battle.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.—Ver. 1. David speaks of God Jehovah, as being three things to him, and in view of that fact he asks "Whom should I fear?" God is "light," amidst the darkness of the circumstances that surround the Psalmist; darkness signifies sorrow, stumbling, death; hence, light is the very opposite of these, it is knowledge,

peace, safety, "Salvation;" deliverance—Prov. 11:8; Job 5:19. "Strength of my life," or "stronghold of my life"—Prov. 18:10; and Psa. 18:20.

Ver. 2. "Wicked—eat up my flesh:" remembering the beasts of prey of his early days and comparing these to those:—Psa. 14:4. "Stumbled—fell:" as they had expected I should do, but God was with me; so the man that is on the rock Christ Jesus shall see the waves of angry sinners dash themselves upon the rock, to overwhelm him, but be cast back broken and helpless from the strength of God.

Ver. 3. "An host:" it is the soldier who is speaking and contemplating the greatest possible danger that could arise—perhaps in his thoughts was Saul and his army, or the great host that Absalom had gathered together to crush his father; in this "will I be confident:" desperate though it may appear to men even in that my confidence shall not fail.

Ver. 4. "One thing:" whatever else may come to me or whatever may be my position; "desired—seek after:" that's the true spiritual and common sense way. "Desire:" pray for blessings from God, and then strive to work in the line of your prayers, rarely then will you pray in vain, but desiring without seeking, when seeking is possible, is a mockery and a snare. "Dwell in the House of the Lord:" to the Psalmist the work of the Priests, constantly ministering in holy things, was the holiest and the happiest lot; "all the days:" he would be there as at home, the sanctuary his constant resort; "beauty of the Lord:" that is, to behold in the outward symbols all the gracious attitudes of God. "Enquire," or "contemplate," with delight; "temple:" the ark was still in the tent, but the original idea is not of a building, but of a place, separated from other places and devoted to God.

Ver. 5. "Hide me:" spiritual safety is now the thought, "pavilion" or "booth:" a figurative expression, as are the others in this verse; "secret—tabernacle:" as if he had said, "Were there no other place God would hide me even in the Holy of Holies:" "on a rock," as in Notes on Ver. 2.

Ver. 6. "Head lifted up:" the token of deliverance and honour—Gen. 40:14. David expected deliverance from his enemies. "Offer in His tabernacle:" not quietly in my palace but publicly in the place of worship; "sacrifices of joy," or, as in Margin, "shouting," the shout of exultation; "sing"—sing praises; "these will be the sacrificing joys.

Ver. 7. As in the Psalm of the last lesson, and many others, we have a sudden transition of thought: the Psalmist now breaks out into a prayer and a cry for mercy. The pendulum of spirituality swings from prayer to praise, and from praise to prayer.

Ver. 8. "Seek my face:" to seek the face of a King is to seek his favour and protection—Esther 5:1-3. "My heart saith" or "is saying"—constantly answering to the gracious invitation of God. When God speaks to us we must faithfully respond.

Ver. 9. I am seeking, therefore "hide not thy face:" the word *far* is supplied by the translators and should be omitted. David did not write "far;" he knew that the least hiding of God's face would bring darkness and sorrow. The *first* step of the Lord's displeasure; "passed not away, the *second* step: the plea of the prayer is "I am thy servant," and the servant should be where his Lord is, so "put me not away"—John 12:26. "Thou hast been," art "my help," so, leave not, neither forsake;" how strong the plea of "my salvation," or better, "my salvation God;" that is what God is to him—his salvation.

Ver. 10. "My father and mother:" Parental love is the highest type of earthly affection, yet it is as nothing to the love of God. "Take me up:" as a little child in a tender parent's arms—"father and mother" may "forsake," but the everlasting Father, never!

Ver. 11. "Thy way:"—the way thou knowest to be the right and safe one; "plain path:" a straight and even

path—Psalms. 26 : 12—that he might not stumble. “Enemies:” who were ready to take advantage of any fall. David asks, not only to be shewn the way, but to be guided in it.

Ver. 12. “Will of mine enemies:” which was his destruction; if the enemies of the people of God had their way there would not be many left in the world. “False witnesses:” the weapon of the enemies of the people of God in all ages, as of their Master who could not be condemned without that resort. How rarely you find an unbeliever who can speak with candour and truthfulness of religion and its professors; false witness either from ignorance or by design, is almost universal with them. “Breathe out cruelty:” a very vivid expression; his enemies were so filled with malice and hatred that their very breath was tainted with it.—Acts 9 : 1.

Ver. 13. “I had fainted:” the original is abrupt, and these words were supplied by the translators, to make the connection, but as has been well observed “perished”—is more the idea as in opposition to “the land of the living, i. e., this life, in which he believed” to see the goodness of the Lord,—a continuance of the goodness he had experienced, and as in previous verse, deliverance from the wrath of his enemies, and such as “breathe out cruelty.”

Ver. 14. “Wait:” twice repeated, has the sense of hope; trust in the Lord, but beyond that it carries the idea of a duty, and answers to the N. T. “Watch:” “of good courage:” David’s faith to David’s fears; so Psa. 42 : 5-11; and 43 : 5: “he shall strengthen.” This had been his experience and his constant assurance: Psa. 31 : 24.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Confidence in God is the theme of our lesson, and following the excellent arrangement of the Homily in “Half-hours With the Lesson,” we would consider the subject under three topical heads. (1) Occasions of confidence. (2) Grounds of confidence. (3) Fruits of confidence.

On the first topic, an occasion is *in time of peril*. Such peril David was often placed in during his chequered life, peril by wild beasts in the wilderness, by the enemies of Israel and Israel’s God, by the malice and persecution of Saul, by the rebellion of his son, and in many other ways; but in the midst of it all he could keep his faith and trust firmly on the Lord, and say: “The Lord is on my side, I will not fear what man can do unto me;” like also the great apostle of the Gentiles, who, speaking of the perils to which they were exposed could exclaim: “In all these things we are more than conquerors”—Rom. 8 : 27.

Times of Privation: Whenever this Psalm was written, it is evident, that David was shut out from the privileges of God’s House. “One thing,” he says, “I have desired, that will I seek after;” and in Psa. 84 he seems to envy the very birds that made their nests in the sanctuary, while he could not draw near to it; and there are times of deprivation which fall upon all men, times of disease, of poverty, and of suffering; but in all such times they can take up the utterances of David and say to their sorrowing soul: “Hope thou in God, He is the health of my countenance and my God.” *Times of Desertion*: David experienced what many a good man has since David’s day, that “closest friends are not always to be depended upon, and that some who have been “familiar” friends, even as a “brother,” fall away and join the ranks of enemies. In all such times we can have the confidence in God that David had. He cannot be unfaithful; He cannot betray the trust reposed in Him. “In God I have put my trust; I will not fear what man can do unto me”—Psa. 56 : 4. *Times of Calumny*: Those who strive to serve God and are in opposition to the world have always found, that there is nothing too bad for the world to say respecting them. The amount of calumny and misrepresentation directed against believers would be amazing if we did not remember that it has been

the same in all ages and in every land, and that even the incarnate Lord, who was goodness and purity itself, was spoken against, accused of being a wine-bibber, a traitor, a blasphemer, of being in league with Satan, and of not being worthy to live. If these things were done in the green tree, “what shall be done in the dry?” Will not the world that maligned the Master, malign his followers? Well, in all such times those who are God’s children may, as David did: “He shall save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up”—Psa. 57 : 3; and can take to themselves the comforting words of the Saviour: “Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my name’s sake”—Matt. 9 : 11. *Times of Temptation*: When the enemy comes in like a flood, when we feel our strength failing, our feet well nigh slipping; then is the time to feel that God can help us and God alone, that he can save us from the evil one, and deliver us in the time of temptation. Well would it have been for David if he had always felt thus and trusted thus; how different would have been the latter part of his life; how much sorrow and darkness he would have been saved.

On the second topic the grounds of confidence are so many that we can do little more than enumerate them. We have confidence in God because of *His Almighty Power*. Whatever we need He can do, read Isa. 40 : 15-22; and feel that He who can do all this is our God, our Father and our Friend; what then have we to fear? Again *His knowledge of our needs and weakness*, inspires trust in Him, for this knowledge is joined to infinite love and kindness, He knows our wants and He is willing and ready to supply them all. Then there is *the remembrance of past mercies*. The Psalmist found such a remembrance in ver. 2 of our lesson, and it was that which inspired him with confidence to go against the Philistine Goliath—1 Sam. 17 : 37. Who has not at some time or other felt the good hand of the Lord in blessing and saving; let this be a ground of confidence for the future. And have we not *The Promises of God*, exceedingly sweet and precious to rely upon; promises which never were, and never can be broken—for Scripture illustrations of this, see *Main Lesson* below. David said in ver. 13 that he “had fainted unless” he “had believed,” not simply hoped, but had the confidence of faith “to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.”

On the third topic, we may teach that one fruit is *Deliverance from fear*, as here David says: “Whom shall I fear?” ver. 1. “My heart shall not fear,” ver. 3; and so in the face of all the evils that come against him of men and devils the Christian can say “of whom shall I be afraid?” *Safety from harm*, that is from all spiritual and eternal harm. God may see fit to let the wicked prevail against the temporal well being, even the life of his people, though even in that there appear to be, at times, wonderful interpositions, but be that as it may, the soul is invulnerable to all the attacks of the wicked, and no evil of that kind shall come nigh them that trust in the Lord. Finally there is, “*Peace and joy*,” in ver. 6, David would “offer sacrifices of joy, I will sing, yea, I will give praises unto the Lord,” and in the darkest hour as well as in the brightest, in sufferings, in loss, in whatever outward circumstances come, the Christian has peace; “great peace have they that love Thy law,” to them God “will speak peace,” Psa. 85 : 8, and in His “name shall they rejoice all the day,” Psa. 89 : 16.

INCIDENTAL TRUTHS AND TEACHINGS.

Light in the darkness of the soul, salvation for the sin of the soul, the great need of man.

Light on the way home, the privilege of believers.

Their final and complete salvation, is also assured.

Conscious helplessness and danger, should draw us near to God.

Where God is, there is His Temple, those who abide in Him abide in His House.

In time of trouble there is none to flee to like God.
 Happy the heart that responds to the voice of God.
 Earthly friends may fail us, the Lord never will.
 Those who wait on the Lord, shall be helped in His own
 right time.

The past has a voice to the future, telling of trust and
 confidence in God.

Main Lesson.—The great ground of our confidence,
 the faithfulness of God—Deut. 7 : 9 ; Num. 23 : 19 ;
 Josh. 23 : 14 ; Psa. 114 : 89, 90 ; Matt. 24 : 35 ; 2 Tim.
 2 : 13 ; Heb. 6 : 18 ; 10 : 23.

MARRIED.

At Belleville, July 4th, in the Congregational church, by
 the Rev. Wm. Stacy, assisted by the Rev. D. Mitchel, the
 Rev. Geo. Robertson, B.A., pastor of the Congregational
 church, Melbourne, Quebec, to Kate Georgina Hopkins,
 third daughter of William Hopkins, Esq., Brooklyn, N. Y.
 and niece of the late Geo. Ross, Ameliasburg.

Children's Corner.

EVENING PRAYER

Now the day is over,
 Night is drawing nigh,
 Shadows of the evening
 Steal across the sky.

Now the darkness gathers,
 Stars begin to peep,
 Birds, and beasts, and flowers,
 Soon will be asleep.

Jesus, give the weary
 Calm and sweet repose,
 With thy tenderest blessing
 May our eyelids close.

Through the long night watches
 May Thine angels spread
 Their white wings above me,
 Watching round my bed.

When the morning wakens,
 Then may I arise
 Pure and fresh and sinless
 In Thy Holy eyes.

Glory to the Father,
 Glory to the Son,
 And to Thee, blest Spirit,
 Whilst all ages run. Amen.

NONE OF THEM DRINK.

A lady living in Wake county writes to
 a female relative in Greensboro', whom she
 had not seen in a number of years. Both
 of them have raised families of children, of

whom several are now grown up young men.
 In such a case a letter would be wanting
 in completeness that failed to include
 an account of the young men. So the
 letter, besides relating many family inci-
 dents of the family life, refers particularly
 to the young men ; and this very expressive
 sentence is given : " None of my sons drink."

This is certainly a very favourable account,
 but it suggests a very grave thought. If these
 young men did not furnish something of an ex-
 ception to the general course, the statement that
 " none of them drink " would scarcely be rele-
 vant. So when this proud mother writes thus
 of her sons, it is the same as to say that they
 avoid the common practice. " Other people's
 sons drink, but mine are an exception."

We have called the woman a " proud
 mother," and she had a right to be under the
 circumstances. Mothers are apt to be proud
 of their sons, but oftentimes, alas ! the ground
 to stand upon is very narrow. We have
 somewhere seen an affecting poem, every verse
 of which began with,

" He makes his mother sad."

We can almost take the risk of saying that
 the larger half of the sadness of the world is
 borne by mothers, and that these are the
 mothers of wayward sons, sons that do drink.

Some of these mothers, away back near the
 cradle scene, were once proud of these same
 sons. The breath of childhood is sweet as
 the fragrance of the new-mown hay as it ex-
 hales from under the morning dew, and gives
 to the mother sweet promise of an uncontam-
 inated life—a promise not always realized,
 for, in instances fearfully frequent,

" He makes his mother sad."

Poor, disappointed mothers. What a long
 train of mourners they would make along the
 street of any city. How well fitted to this
 place is one of the brief sayings of the Wise
 Man—" A foolish son is the heaviness of his
 mother." This inspired writer never uttered
 a saying, perhaps, that is more frequently
 realized than the one quoted above. It is not

the dead son, or the maimed son, or the invalid son, for these things are submitted to as unavoidable afflictions. It is the "foolish son" that brings the "heaviness" to "his mother." "Heaviness" is the right word, for sadness and sorrow are burdens indeed under which many a poor aching frame goes bending toward the tomb, to lie down in that bed where

"The weary are at rest."

NEWS OF THE CHURCHES.—Continued.

BELLEVILLE.—Rev. William Stacy has resigned the pastorate of the church here, having preached his farewell sermon on the last Sunday of June. At a strawberr festival, held on the evening of the following Wednesday, a farewell address accompanied by a purse containing fifty dollars was given. The address expressed regret at the inevitable separation; expressed appreciation of the faithful labours of Mr. Stacy, and prayed for the future comfort of both him and his wife. After the closing service of Sunday evening, Mr. Stacy gave at their place of meeting, a farewell address to the Salvation Army at Belleville.

BRANTFORD.—This month we have to record the death of Mrs. William Mellish, who was for thirty years a consistent member of our church. She was born in the city of London, England, in the year 1812. Married her partner who survives her, in 1835. Came to this city some thirty years ago. They identified themselves with our church, and have remained loyal to it through all its vicissitudes. Our sister was distinctly christian from her youth up. A faithful wife, an affectionate mother, and one who feared the Lord greatly. During the last years of her life, she was called upon to endure great physical suffering, which by the grace of God she bore patiently. On the twenty-fourth day of June, after nine months weary sitting in pain and heaviness, her spirit passed away to that blest land "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." Our pastor was away during the month of June, in company with his family visiting his former field in Lancaster. Their visit was an enjoyable one, made so by generous hospitality, boating, fishing, driving, etc. They returned very much refreshed. During their absence a Lawn Social was held under the auspices of the "Ladies' Aid" on the beautiful lawn of Mr. Whitney. It was a great success. Our church is undergoing needed repairs. Work on the new vestry has not yet begun.

MELBOURNE.—On June the 3rd, 1884, a council met in the Congregational Church, Melbourne, at eleven a.m., for the purpose of installing the Rev. George Robertson. Pastors present: Rev. L. P. Adams, William McIntosh, George Skinner, C. R. Brainerd, George Purkis, and the pastor elect. Rev. L. P. Adams, was chosen Moderator, and Rev. G. Purkis, Scribe. A letter was read from the Rev. J. G. Sanderson, expressing his regret at being unable to be present on account of recent sickness.

The meeting was opened by reading of the Scriptures and prayer by Rev. William McIntosh, after which a copy of the letter calling the Council was read.

Mr. Alexander, one of the deacons of the Melbourne Church, stated on behalf of the churches of Melbourne and Durham, that the call to the Rev. George Robertson had been unanimous from both churches.

Mr. Robertson gave a statement of his having received and accepted the call, and his reasons for so doing, believing that it was by the leadings of God's providence that he had come here. He then gave an account of the training through which he had passed preparatory to the work of the ministry. He also gave a brief statement of his doctrinal views, and his views of the responsibilities assumed by the minister of the Gospel.

It was moved by the former pastor of these churches. Rev. W. McIntosh, seconded by Rev. C. R. Brainerd, that having heard Mr. Robertson's statement, and being fully satisfied with the same, this council do most cordially recommend these churches to proceed with the installation. This was carried unanimously; the council then adjourned, and met again at three p. m., when a good congregation assembled. The Rev. G. Skinner, opened the exercises by reading the Scriptures and prayer. The call to the pastor was then read. Deacon Alexander, on behalf of the churches, declared their adherence to the call, and the pastor elect testified his willingness to abide by his acceptance of the same.

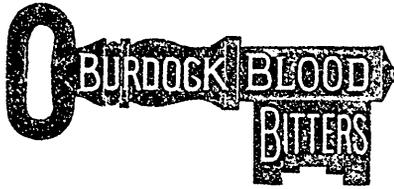
The installation prayer was offered by Rev. C. R. Brainerd. The right hand of fellowship was given by Rev. L. P. Adams; the charge to the pastor by Rev. G. Purkis, and the charge to the people by the Rev. William McIntosh.

In the evening a tea-meeting was held at which addresses were delivered by the several pastors present.

It was felt to be an enjoyable and profitable season. May the union thus formed between pastor and people be abundantly blessed by the great Head of the Church.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *London Academy* points out that Lord Rosebery the other day revived an old error by attributing to Lord Beaconsfield the invention of the phrase, "the gondola of London," for a Hansom cab. The phrase occurs in Balzac, applied to the Paris *fiacres*, and was borrowed from him by Mr. Whitley, from whom Disraeli probably stole it.

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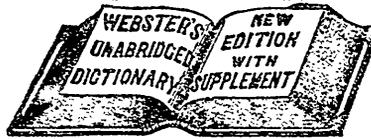
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