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GOOD MEN THAT WON'T WORK.

Sitting in committee, not long since, in connection with one of our benevolent societies, in the prosecution of whose plans a domiciliary visitation of the town was proposed, the question was asked by the President, who will undertake this work? A number of hands were required for the self-denying task, but nearly all present declared themselves so occupied that they could not render any assistance. Members were then requested to suggest the names of suitable parties outside the committee who would be likely to engage in it, and a number of persons were successively nominated. But to almost every new nomination, some one present would interpose the objection,—“A very suitable person, but I’m afraid he won’t undertake it;” or, “He’s a good man,—but,—but he won’t work!”

So frequently was this repeated that we began to enquire within ourselves, what kind of *goodness* it could be to which these men and women lay claim who “won’t work.” *Good for what?* And so, turning up our New Testament in the hope of solving the question, we found ourselves more mystified than ever; for nowhere, in any of our Saviour’s discourses, or in the writings of His Apostles, could we discover any commendation of this anomalous class of church members. We met with words of cheer and loving approval for faithful servants,—for sowers, and reapers, and builders, and fishers of men, and workers of every kind in the vineyard of our Lord;—and also of rebuke and condemnation for “wicked and slothful servants,” who hide, instead of using their Lord’s money,—for those who “stand all the day idle, or, who, like the barren fig-tree, only cumber the ground;—but nothing either good or bad, of *good* men that “won’t work.” And we concluded, therefore, that the New Testament did not recognise that style of christian character at all.

Then we turned from the volume of Revelation to that of Nature, but here again we found the same truths taught us under other forms;—that bees which gather no honey, and trees that bear no fruit, and clouds that bring no rain, are regarded as anything but *good*; and that the great universal law of the animal and vegetable kingdoms is, *work, increase!*

Still we did not like to give it up. Charitably disposed people called these idlers good men, and we did not wish to dissent from their judgment. So, finding no present solution of the mystery, we at last left it, along with many others, to be cleared up by the light of a better world, often wondering, however, what the verdict of the Master will be, who said, "my meat is to do the will of Him that sent me and to do His work," and whether He whose life was such an unwearying round of benevolent activity, would recognize these do-nothing christians as His followers?

Unfortunately this description of good people is not confined to any one locality. We are told continually of Sabbath Schools languishing for want of teachers,—of Sabbath-breaking children whom it is somebody's duty to endeavour to gather in,—of poor people never invited to church,—of cities and towns almost without a tract distributor,—of the intemperate and the fallen, left to perish without a warning voice or a hand stretched out to help them,—of the fatherless and widows, unvisited in their affliction,—in fine, of abundance of work to be done, and but here and there one willing to do it.

This cannot arise from any lack of natural energy, for these good men are often preeminent for their earnestness and enterprise in regard to all material interests. They toil early and late in the pursuit of their own worldly advantage; it is only in regard to "the things that are Jesus Christ's" that they are thus apathetic. In fact it is urged that business is so absorbing, and its demands on man's time and attention so exhausting, that active engagement in christian work, after the labours of the day are past, or even on the Sabbath, is out of the question. "Anything of interest in your Sabbath-school class?" we asked innocently the other day of one whom we had long known as an earnest and successful teacher. "Oh! I am not teaching now," was his reply; "I am so over-done on Saturday nights, that I need Sunday to rest, and I have given up my class." It was not the only occasion on which we have received a similar answer.

Now, assuming this case to be a valid one, are we not fairly entitled to ask whether it can be right to allow ourselves to become so engrossed and exhausted with attention to business, as to leave no time or strength for works of love and mercy! Ought we not to be prepared to suffer worldly loss, if need be, rather than forego altogether the pleasure and advantage of engagement in some christian work? Better do *a little*, than *nothing at all!* Much as the cause of God needs our active cöoperation, the loss we sustain by such neglect is far greater than the loss we inflict by it. No christian man or woman can afford to be idle. Our spiritual like our physical strength depends upon our appetite, and that, again, depends largely upon the amount of exercise we take; so that we should scarcely feel as if we were taking an unwarrantable liberty with the Apostle's language were we to read it, "if any man will not work, neither can he eat." The dinner of herbs is far more savoury to the labouring man, than the stalled ox to the sluggard

and the glutton ; and unless we are mistaken, it will be found that the most fastidious and dainty of all hearers of the gospel,—the people who are always complaining that “somehow or other, Mr. So and So's preaching doesn't do them any good,”—generally belong to this class of “good men that won't work.”

But another difficulty meets us almost everywhere,—the lack of the *gifts*, as so many allege, to enable them to engage in christian work. With most of them bashfulness is the obstacle ; they are “slow of speech.” Moses at first suffered from a similar cause, until the Lord rebuked him, and promised, “I will be with thy mouth, and teach ‘hee what thou shalt say.” Their diffidence, however is not so easily overcome. They are sure they could never interest a Sabbath school class, or lead a district prayer-meeting, or do any good by visiting the sick, or distributing tracts ; and as to speaking to any of their poor Christless neighbours, that, they think, requires a very special talent, such as only the saintly Felix Neff, and Harlan Page, and a few others have possessed. To pray in their own families is more than some of them can manage and how can we expect them to open their lips elsewhere ? True, they did good service in the last political campaign, and some of their neighbours say they really waxed eloquent in the praise of their favourite candidate, but that was a very different thing, of course.

Oh ! this mock humility with which our churches are plagued ! What a hindrance it is to every kind of effort ! Were we only to believe all the excuses that are offered, we must conclude that the servants of Christ are the most useless and good-for-nothing class in the community,—labourers that can't work, builders that can't build, soldiers that can't fight, husbandmen that know neither how to plant, nor to water, nor to reap. Is it so, then, that Satan lets go all the worthless and indolent, and retains for himself all the noble and the gifted ? Or are the rewards he offers so much greater than the crown of glory presented to the eye of the believer, that he can call forth the energies of his servants with a readiness which even the love of Jesus cannot command ? Surely not ! And yet, how strikingly does our backwardness in serving the best of masters contrast with the shameless effrontery which the slaves of Satan display, in advertising themselves, and their numberless devices for leading men to the pit !

Now all men are not born alike gifted, but neither are there any born into the kingdom of God without gifts. Indeed, as a general remark, we may say that aptitude is quite as much a thing of cultivation, as of direct endowment. There's many an one who thinks *he* has no talent for public speaking, who, had he “stirred up the gift that was in him,” by diligent study and prayer, would have made just as good a preacher as the minister to whom he listens every Sabbath, and perhaps better. And so we might say with regard to every other gift. “Unto him that hath shall more be given.”

Ah! no, it is not the lack of *gifts*, but of *grace* that has developed this large and most unsatisfactory class of church-members, among whom, perchance, the reader himself is found. And how terrible then, if, after having been called, and sent into the harvest field to work, any of us should have to meet the Master at last with the mournful account,—

“ Nothing but leaves ; no ripened sheaves
 Garnered of life’s fair grain ;
 We sowed our seed,—lo, tares and weeds,
 Words, idle words for earnest deeds ;
 Reaping, we find with pain,
 Nothing but leaves ! ”

THE CASE OF MR. GEO. H. STUART.

This gentleman, so generally and favorably known through his connection with the Christian Commission, and his sympathy with all true Christians has brought upon him the censure of the church (Reformed Presbyterian), with which he is connected. At the meeting of the Synod of that church in Pittsburg, May last, Rev. Dr. Douglass offered the following :

“ Whereas, General Synod at its last meeting, re-affirmed the principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church on the subject of psalmody, and declared that the one hundred and fifty Scripture Psalms only are to be used in the public social worship of God ; and, whereas, Geo. H. Stuart, Esq., asserted boldly on the floor of this Synod yesterday, that he was in the habit of singing hymns of human composition, in direct contravention and defiance of the long established and re-affirmed law of the Church on the subject ; therefore,

“ Resolved, that he be referred to the session of the First Reformed Presbyterian Church at Philadelphia, to be dealt with for a gross violation of the established order of this Church in the use of human psalmody, according to the order and discipline of the Church in such cases.”

Mr. Stuart was *suspended* from his seat in the Synod, from the exercise of the functions of the Eldership, and from the communion of the Church !

We had supposed that the perpetration of such a piece of petty tyranny, at least by any church arrogating to itself the title of “ Reformed,” had been impossible, in this enlightened age. It seems, however, that the spirit of Popery will thrive, where not jealously watched and uprooted, even in soil claimed to be super-eminent Protestant. “ Hymns of human composition ” indeed ! as if Rouse’s uncouth version of the Psalms were divine ! We fear that if Paul had been a member of this Reformed Synod it would have gone even harder with him than it has done with Mr. Stuart ; for while the latter only used, Paul dared even to recommend the singing of “ Psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs,” in “ the public worship of God,” contrary to the statutes of the said Reformed Synod, in such case made and provided. Perhaps the Synod believes, however, that the *Psalms* he recommended, were John Rouse’s version, though we must express our doubts. And then what about the *hymns* and the *spiritual songs* ?

There is some force in the remark of one of our cotemporaries :—

“ That if the Psalms of David only are to be used in the musical part of Divine worship, what authority has the church for using any other tunes than those which David used ? And the same might be said in regard to praying and preaching. To be consistent the Reformed Presbyterian Church ought to confine itself to the prayers recorded in Scripture, and the reading of the discourses found therein. Of the latter, there are Christ’s sermon on the Mount, Paul’s discourse

on Mar's Hill, and one or two others. These ought to satisfy them. Any other on their theory, are a profanation."

To speak seriously, however, we think the Synod has not only committed a gross wrong, but a grievous blunder. Resistance to such a decision was inevitable. The Philadelphia and Pittsburgh Presbyteries have both withdrawn from their connection with the Synod, and have announced their purpose to maintain the severance until the act is rescinded. The Pittsburgh resolutions denounce the action of the Synod, as "disorderly, illegal, cruel, partial, and outrageous," contrary to all the forms, orders and precedents of the church, and "arbitrary and injurious to the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The congregation of which Mr. Stuart is an Elder has also rebelled, and refuses to receive the committee appointed by the Synod to enforce his suspension. How the case may end it is hard to tell, but in what ever way it may terminate, there is no doubt that it will tend largely to the promotion of more scriptural and enlightened views with regard to "our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus," and the constitutional rights of a Christian church. It is becoming more and more evident every day that the people rule, and the less Synods and Presbyteries meddle with them in regard to all matters of internal administration, the more will their authority be respected in other things. We know not with what religious denomination Mr. Stuart may be thinking of connecting himself, but if the Presbyterians wont have him, we beg to extend him a most cordial and brotherly invitation to "come with us," where no Synod, reformed or unreformed, will ever question his liberty to praise God in any way he finds most conducive to edification.

It is a little amusing to see the use to which this case, and the somewhat similar action of Bishop Potter in regard to Mr. Tyng, is being put in certain quarters. Our Baptist friends whose good instincts have prompted them to take the part of both Mr. Tyng and Mr. Stuart, have recently withdrawn fellowship from the Rev. C. H. Malcolm, a Baptist minister, in Rhode Island, for admitting un-immersed members of other denominations to the communion table. Whereupon Mr. Malcolm employs the *argumentum ad hominem* in the following trenchant fashion:—

"The Baptists perceive the unscripturalness of close communion as expounded by the Synod of Reformed Presbyterians, and express their sympathy for Mr. Stuart, who must either cease to commune at the Lord's Table with those who sing the sweet hymns of Watts and other sacred poets, and himself sing only the discordant versification of Rouse, or else remain under the discipline of his sect. Now, let Baptists in the name of justice, having looked upon this picture and upon that, and having protested against the exclusiveness of the Episcopal church, and the sectarianism of the Presbyterian Synod, be consistent, and have at least some remonstrance towards the severity of the Baptist Convention."

We know nothing of Mr. Malcolm's case, but if his sole offence has been the following out of the principle laid down in the 14th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, we cannot but think his argument a fair one, and entitled to the prayerful consideration of his brethren everywhere.

SPLIT YOUR KNOTS.

It is a very pleasant thing to have your wood cut and nicely split, and piled in your woodhouse; or to have wood in your yard of such a kindly nature as to be easily wrought into such a condition. Those who follow the wood business find a great deal of knotty timber, pieces from which branches have grown, and some twisted, cross-grained, or with gnarly excrescences. Every woodman's

experience is about the same, he does not find, or expect to find, all smooth, kindly timber. He cannot afford to cull it; therefore, if he has a conscience,—and we think all have,—at least when they begin the business of selling wood,—he naturally makes an arrangement with it, while he piles his knotty wood inside of his load and on the bottom, carefully building that of a more marketable quality around it, making his knots serve him, a good turn in keeping his load loose, and making bulk. Hence those who buy wood for domestic use, come in for a share of impracticable stuff, which will require time and patience to master, the inflexible qualities of which often result in its being let alone, and piled in some corner by itself, as not only being useless, but in the way.

Now, no man can have lived very long in the world without finding the same thing in the social circle, and in the church,—knotty, gnarled, impracticable specimens of humanity, who, after being tried and pronounced impracticable, are left alone. I suppose every minister who reads this will remember some just such tough subjects in his own congregation; individuals who have in a manner been given up, because nobody expects to make anything of them, crochety, opinionated, or hardened, of whom men say, “It is of no use saying anything to them.”

It is nearly twenty years since I learned a lesson on this subject which I never have forgotten. The Rev. W. F. Clarke, my visitor, at the time, discovered my pile of impracticables in the corner of the wood yard. Laying hold of the axe he laid vigorously into them, saying, “Brother, what are those left here for? I always split my knots as a mental exercise.” Following up his lesson with a practical illustration, blow following blow, he manifested that time, patience and determination will enable us to overcome difficulties. Since then I split my knots, and glory in the conquest of a stubborn one. Many a moral lesson and illustration has the subject afforded, both in and out of the pulpit. I have thought when a minister begins to complain of having used up about all the material in his congregation, have you no knots to split? no hard cases unscathed as yet by the Gospel? Many a removal might have been prevented had the minister got in good earnest to splitting those knots in his congregation. By determination it will be done; it will take time and patience. Sometimes in your wood yard you may think it won't pay, but it always pays in the congregation. The worth of a soul saved cannot be estimated. Moreover, these though impracticable natures, often under spiritual influences, make fine specimens of christian character. The very qualities which made them so difficult to conquer while graceless, will, when modified by the power of God, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, be made to serve important purposes in the church.

Brethren, split your knots! This is work for a *man*; a child cannot do it; he will give it up, and he may as well do so. Let those who have attained to the stature of a man in Christ, go into this work, “strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.”

It will be said, “no man unassisted by the spirit of God can do this thing.” True, God must open the heart, yet as this is a moral, not a physical operation, and God works by instruments effecting His purpose, very much depends on our wisdom, on our faithful vigorous dealing, on our indomitable determination, and persevering, patient waiting. So Paul intimates in his letters to Timothy and Titus.

A tough stick can sometimes be managed by assailing it on the other side. Sometimes we fail, because we have been trying to split it from the wrong end; or we have aimed to split off too much at once. Some very tough pieces can only be split little by little, will only yield you a chip at a time, but

such are conquered. Some are subdued by one good blow directed through the knot. So we must skillfully assail the hard cases in our congregation. Many a one wastes his strength by dealing heavy blows in the wrong place; less strength laid on with more skill might accomplish much. Many a man has been given up because he has been unskillfully dealt with. Crotchety, difficult men should not be given up, but be approached in a praying frame, in dependence upon God. Gentle, loving words wisely applied often do much; earnest, fervent words will be employed by the Spirit, who is characterized by tender concern for poor sinners.

There is no influence so bad in a man as the effeminating practice of relinquishing whatever is difficult, and nothing is so beneficial to our-elves as conquering a difficulty. It takes time and trouble; but in saving a soul it is time well spent.

Take then a list of those in your congregations that are unconverted, and whose conversion you have ceased to expect, and with Divine help resolve to conquer them. After every conquest you will find more strength, and faith and hope for the next attack. Remember you cannot fail if Christ be with you. Do not go at it doubting but determined, and confident. Do not stand to look at your tough work, and put it off because it is unpleasant; *go at it now*, it may be too late to-morrow. Brethren, split those knots! W. H. A.

Paris, March 19th, 1868.

We have much pleasure in presenting to our readers the two valuable and interesting papers prepared by the Rev. Messrs. Clarke and Lewis, at the request of the Union Committee, for our Annual meeting at Hamilton. The former of these papers was read before the Missionary Society and should have been noticed in the account of the proceedings of that body, but was, by a misunderstanding unintentionally overlooked by the brother who reported them.

We need hardly add, that although published at the request of the Union, the writers alone are responsible for the sentiments expressed in them. [Ed, “C. I.”]

“HOW CAN WE BETTER WORK OUR MISSION FIELD?”

A PAPER PREPARED BY REQUEST OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF CANADA, AND READ AT THE RECENT ANNUAL MEETING,
BY REV. W. F. CLARKE.

It is perhaps as well to have it clearly understood at the outset, that this paper has been prepared solely at the instance of the Committee of the Union, and that it is not the offspring of any special inspiration, call to preach, or itching to write, on the subject to which it relates. The question is confessedly one of great practical importance, but in its discussion the writer has not been aided by the feeling that he had in possession a key to its correct solution. In performing his allotted task he has had, Dr. Johnson like, to “sit down doggedly;” yet he is not without hope that he may be able to throw out a few practical suggestions of some value, and that he may succeed in stirring up other minds to such a consideration of the subject as shall be productive of beneficial results. Thus much premised, I shall, without more preliminaries plunge “*in medias res*,” and proceed to give several categorical answers to the question entrusted to me, and which I understand to be this: “*How can we better work our Mission field?*”

1. By selecting our posts more wisely. Ours is the position of a small army, supposed to consist of picked men, but compelled by their very fewness

to concentrate, and to occupy as far as possible points of vantage-ground. We cannot over-run the entire territory we are ambitious of conquering, and must therefore erect and fortify strongholds on eminences, seize passes that can be held by a handful of valorous defenders, and take possession of ground out of which we cannot be driven. To speak plainly, we must operate where we can make not only Christians but Congregationalists, and our Missionary churches must be planted where they will ultimately prove centres of influence, mother-churches that shall nourish and bring up children, perpetuating and disseminating the principles whose propagation is our special denominational work. It is by no means our duty to establish a post wherever a congregation can be gathered. Many who are glad for the time to hear a Congregational minister may be so attached to other systems that their permanent adherence to our body is not to be anticipated, and if, as is frequently the case, a whole neighbourhood is ecclesiastically pre-occupied, we are under no obligation to supply its lack of preaching. The responsibility for any existing destitution lies at other doors than ours. A locality where there is a nucleus of pious Congregationalists and an impenitent population to work upon is an inviting post, so is a place where there is religious destitution and prevailing ungodliness though we have no brethren there; our towns and cities are good posts because of the large unconverted element always to be found in them, and indeed wherever there is "much people" not ecclesiastically attached, we may fairly hope to succeed. Have we not sometimes broken ground where strength and permanence could hardly be hoped for? To harpoon a whale with a darning needle is to have some hold of him no doubt, but there is little probability of the finny monster being finally secured by such slender means. It is quite idle for us to hope for any considerable number of proselytes from other denominations. Occasionally one may come to us from conviction of the greater scripturalness of our system, and another from discontent and love of change, but for the most part they will stick to their own religious home. And we ought to be willing that they should do so. We should scorn to build up Congregational churches at the expense of other denominations, even though we consider they are unscriptural in some of their principles and practices. We ought to aim and may reasonably expect to exert a leavening influence on other Ecclesiastical systems. There is reason to think that we have already done much good in this way, and we may fairly hope for future usefulness in this direction, but it is easier to convert a sinner than a saint from the error of his ways, a more hopeful task to change the skin of the Ethiopian or the spots of the leopard, than the opinions of a bred and born Presbyterian, or a dyed-in-the-wool Methodist. Let us give up the idea which has certainly in some cases delusively captivated us, that we can ecclesiastically revolutionize neighbourhoods where other systems are firmly rooted, and be content so far as other bodies are concerned, to inoculate blossoms with a sprinkling of Congregational pollen, to insinuate a bud beneath the bark now and then, or mayhap to do a little whip-grafting. But in planting Mission churches, let us deal with the primeval forest, and the unclaimed wilderness, where there is material and scope for our work.

2. We can better work our Mission field by holding our ground more determinately when we have once taken possession of it. We cannot be too Calvinistic in our practice in this respect, but should carry out unalterable election and saint's perseverance most thoroughly. We ought never to take up a post except in the belief that the Master calls us to do so, and once convinced on this point, we should act out the negro's definition of perseverance "lay

hold, keep hold, hold fast, hang to it, and never let go.” The speedy retirement of our Missionaries from points concerning which they sent most sanguine reports to the Committee at the beginning, argues either want of judgment at the start, or want of energy and patience further along. We ought not to be soon daunted at difficulties. These will infallibly arise in connection with every effort to do good, and to flee when they present themselves, is, in most cases, to “give place to the devil.” Our eagerness to get self-supporting churches, occasioned in a great measure by the policy unfortunately adopted and most tenaciously clung to by the Colonial Missionary Society, has been very mischievous in its influence. Gourds and mushrooms may be grown in a night, but not oaks and cedars. A village of balloon houses and shanties may be built in a day, but not a Rome of stone edifices. It often takes half or three-quarters of a life-time to make a business on whose avails the merchant can retire, and out of which he can get a fortune to bequeath to his posterity. Need we wonder if it is a work of years to build up a church into independence and self-maintenance? Is it an unwise expenditure of capital and labour for a quarter or even half a century, which results in the establishment of a church that shall be fruitful of spiritual and eternal blessing to generations yet unborn, and continue its useful career down to the end of time? Much may be done by patient plodding, and among other lessons to which we need to apply ourselves this presents itself as of no small importance: “learn to labour and to wait.”

3. By taking means to develop more administrative ability in our Missionary Pastors. On our system, very much, *too much* indeed, depends on the Pastor, in the practical management of church affairs. Theoretically he is reduced to a sufficiently humble position, but actually he is the hub of the wheel, or to speak more elegantly, the centre of influence and power. In our town and city churches, there are usually to be found men and women of intelligence and experience who can act the part of Aquilla and Priscilla to the young Apollos, but these valuable helpers are seldom to be found in our Missionary churches. Very soon it may be after the Missionary Pastor's settlement some perplexing question arises, with which he does not know how to deal: he is without guide, rule, precedent, or adviser; nevertheless the case must be dealt with, and he must do his best. That best may prove a well-meant blunder, but the blunder is mightier than the motive that impelled it, and sometimes out of a difficulty very simple at first, a tangled web of trouble comes to be woven, in the midst of which the young and inexperienced minister finds himself very much like a caught fly,—legs and wings disabled,—and all power of movement gone. It is easier to state this want than to provide for its removal. We greatly need some recognized modes or rules of procedure—or if these do no square with our notions of Independence,—records of cases like those constantly consulted and appealed to by lawyers and physicians, which might serve as a guide in perplexing circumstances. Lawyers and physicians have their rules of practice—recorded methods of procedure and approved prescriptions, yet there is over them no authority by which their liberty of judgment and action is infringed, and they could not well do without the guides and helps just named. It is not often a case arises which is not to be found in the books. Our young Pastor is not thus furnished. He has indeed the one book. But how are its principles to be applied in given circumstances? If some way could be found to furnish Missionary pastors with a higher degree of administrative talent, it would contribute not a little to their efficiency and success.

4. The adoption of a modified itinerancy. There must be some clearly perceived advantage about this feature in the Methodist economy or it would not be so persistently maintained. I have long been of opinion that its chief value is in connection with Missionary stations and young ministers. New fields of labour have often very disheartening features, and it requires more sturdy stuff than most of us are made of to combat them for an indefinite period. The truest horse wearies of a succession of dead pulls, and the bravest soldier tires of charging time and again an unyielding column. Variety is pleasing, even though it be an exchange of one class of difficulties for another. When your toil seems like that of Sisyphus, it is a relief to exchange it for work of another sort. Moreover difficulties that will not yield to one agency may be overcome by another. These and like facts go very far to explain the philosophy of itineracy, and its strong hold on the different bodies of which Methodism is composed. I believe that we push the principle of permanent pastorates to an extreme, while our Methodist brethren do the same with the itinerate principle. Old established causes will flourish best under settled and permanent pastoral supervision; new stations will, in my opinion, grow into self sustentation more rapidly under the other plan. As it is, we have very frequent changes without the regularity of a system providing for them. Weak churches are often bereft of pastors under circumstances that cause uncertainty as to the future, and so the weakness is increased. Some plan of Evangelistic itinerancy to be succeeded in due time by a permanent pastorate, would if well wrought, infuse much vigour into our Missionary operations. And what Scriptural objection can be urged against this? May it not be justified by the precept, "do the work of an Evangelist?" Did time permit it would not be difficult to show other advantages in a plan of this kind beside those already hinted at: such as the opportunity thus furnished for gathering lessons of experience, the easy mode supplied of terminating an incompatible alliance between pastor and people, and the development of talent that would hardly be drawn forth on the permanent pastorate plan. The last named advantage can be illustrated and demonstrated by the case of a leading Methodist minister, who in the stage of development the "Country Parson" calls "veal" had thoughts of joining our body, but was wisely dissuaded from so doing, and advised to connect himself with a denomination where he could itinerate, and with the help of frequent change of station both apply his mind to study and gradually conquer his mental defects and crudities. The success of the individual now referred to, proves what may be done in like circumstances. The permanent pastorate for developed ministers and churches, and the itinerancy for the raw material, is I believe the course of sound wisdom. If it be asked how on our plan of church government this can be managed, the reply will be found in the next categorical answer to the question under consideration, viz :

5. By semi-presbyterial * supervision of Mission churches. I have purposely expressed this idea in language fitted to awaken the suspicion of heresy and innovation. Pure Congregationalism and Missionary Committees can hardly

* Several respected brethren on hearing the above paper were anxious that some other term should be substituted for "semi-presbyterial." On reflection, I not only see no cause to alter it, but almost repent having in any way apologized for its use. Are not our Presbyterian brethren at least *half right*? And is it not a fact that Presbyteries claim to exercise both a parental and a judicial supervision over congregations? Whatever may be said about the judicial, I for one certainly believe in the parental, at any rate in the case of Mission churches.

be made to square with each other. Call it what you will, there is a certain supervision of Missionary churches, which, accustomed to call a spade a spade, rather than a modern manual implement of husbandry, I have designated *semi-presbyterial*. The outcry against this on the ground that the youngest and smallest Congregational church is necessarily invested with all the functions and prerogatives of the oldest and largest church, has vastly more of sound than sense in it. As well might a male infant when able to talk, or before, claim all the rights of manhood. The Bible recognises an infantile Christian and church condition:—there is babyhood in Christ as well as perfect manhood in Christ: there is also Church infancy as well as church maturity. A babe is to be fed with milk, to be swaddled, nursed, carried, and trained, all of which a man should be able to do without. A child is under tutors and governors. While under age, a son is no better than a servant though he be prospectively lord of all. How it interferes with independency to recognize and act upon these facts, I cannot see. Is it very heretical to regard semi-Presbyterianism as adapted to the juvenile church state, and Independency as only suited to the manly church state? Are not those New Testament arrangements which were made for “the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,—that we henceforth be no more children,”—meant to be taken as precedents by us, or have no churches been infantile and juvenile but those of apostolic times? Is it unreasonable to contend that while churches hang on the breast of the Missionary Society, they should be in some degree under the management of the dry nurse? What are the facts? Are not these some of them; that left to themselves without any outside advice or guidance, they are often like the poor babes in the wood, and after a smiling, hopeful start, soon get bewildered, weary, and faint, pick berries for a while, and at last are found dead beneath the leaves? Why may not the Missionary Society sustain a parental or guardian relation to such churches until they gain ability to do for themselves? How often after a brief settlement does the pastor of a Missionary church in the exercise of his untrammelled Independency resign, and leave the few poor sheep in the wilderness, in the exercise of their untrammelled Independency to get another pastor as best they may, meantime having no prospect even of a transient pulpit supply. Weakness is thus made paralysis, which though in many cases galvanized into life again, *has* ended in coma, and demise. If there be heresy in these views there is heresy in the practice of having Missionary Committees, for it only needs that their supervision be recognized so far as to provide for vacancies, advise in difficulties, and be an umpirage in case of disputes, to accomplish all now urged. The supervision for which I plead in the infantile church state, to be followed by the council system in the adult stage of church development, must supplement our Independency or it will always be weak and crippled. Denominational recognition of this or its equivalent is much needed at the present time.

6. More liberal support of Missionary pastors. Either by larger grants, or a more vigorous resort to tent-making, these brethren should be put in a position to do the Lord's work with freedom from care and perplexity as to temporal things. Very many good people seem to think that such is the excessive buoyancy of ministerial souls, that they need a dead weight of solicitude to keep them down in their proper place, a very low one, in the dust. The church as a whole seems only to dread the ill effect of one kind of worldliness

in a minister, that, viz, of the Jeshurun type, whereas the other kind is quite as detrimental to piety and usefulness. One way or another we should aim to make Agurs of our missionary pastors. If the missionary exchequer will not do this, we should encourage them to self-help either with head or hands.—The tent-making minister is in the direct line of succession from the greatest of the apostles.

7. Revival efforts. There is a species of revival which both in means and result, is altogether of men, there is also a revival which alike in means and results is of God. Let us discriminate between a spurious and genuine religious excitement, and while we dread and deprecate the one, hail and covet the other. Do we believe that direct means for the revival of religion are Scriptural and may be expected to be crowned with Divine success? In other words have we faith in special prayer; in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit; in the power of truth; in the co-operation of believing men and women, to prevail with God, and be useful to man? If we have, let us show our faith by our works. While doubtless we should all hail a blessed revival season that came direct from a Sovereign God, are we ready to give the Lord no rest *until he arise* and make Jerusalem a praise in the earth? It is a matter of thankfulness that Jehovah does when it pleases Him send times of refreshing from His presence,—if he did not how much more barren our souls and our churches would be, but He is also a prayer-hearing God, who will for all these things be enquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them. Some of our most vigorous Missionary churches were cradled and nurtured by revivals, and oh! how they would all grow and thrive under such “showers of blessing!”

More pertinent and important than all other replies to the question before us is this one, that with more faith, love, prayer, and zeal, our Mission fields would be better wrought, and yield a richer increase. In the promotion of revivals on their several fields of labour, adjacent Missionary pastors may advantageously co-operate. Among the precious memories of our departed brother Climie, was his readiness to engage in such efforts, and his usefulness in so doing. Now that he is surrounded by the glorified fruits of ministerial toil on earth, think you that he regrets those extra labours, or that any of us, will repent of similar efforts when he that soweth and he that reapeth shall rejoice together in the skies? Without specifying measures, or multiplying words on this point, at once so vital and so obvious; permit me as a concluding word affectionately to conjure you, my brethren, to take up and press at the mercy seat the fervent petition:—“O LORD REVIVE THY WORK!”

HOW CAN A CHURCH BEST WORK ITS OWN FIELD ?

BY THE REV. R. LEWIS, OF LANARK, ONTARIO.

Few questions could be of more importance to our churches than this—apparently a simple question to answer, yet containing many points wherein Christian men very materially differ in opinion.

The means above all others will ever be the “preaching of the Word,”—divinely appointed, it shall continue to break up the “fallow ground.” The ploughshare of truth must upturn the down-trodden souls, must uproot the natural and spontaneous outgrowth of the evil, and overturning the worthless, prepare the ground of the heart for the good seed of the kingdom, that shall spring up and bear fruit “some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty.”

But many fields (for Christian labour) lie fallow, not so much to recruit wasted energies in the cause of God, as from an utter aversion on the part of Christian men to active and self-denying labour.

In this lamentable condition will be found many a field, where there is much outward show and apparent regard for the proprieties of religion. There a respect is shown to the Christian ministry, in fact it is expected that preaching is to accomplish the whole work. Great care is taken in *selecting* an intelligent and competent preacher; having obtained a suitable man, such churches sit down and wait to see their churches filled up by the power of the Gospel, or more truly speaking by the eloquence and intelligence of their minister. They think when their pecuniary obligations are met, that no more should be expected of them, especially if they have heard their pastor *once each Sabbath*

Others, a devout class of men, have little sympathy with the last named, and are actuated mainly by their feelings; they want no prosy, doctrinal preaching, no controversies, nothing to make men think; all they want is feeling. "*Zeal and feel*" is their test. With them, earnestness, in itself important, is everything. They would set all to praying, feeling, acting, and converting sinners; but not to thinking, reading and meditation, that all might excel in knowledge.

Then many have strong feelings in reference to the special type of doctrine that pastors are to preach; to please them, pastors must find election and reprobation in every text, or they do not declare the whole counsel of God. To please others, the freedom of the will must be taught from passages treating only of the sovereignty of grace. And to please others, these points must be reconciled, so that no difficulty need exist in any mind. These difficulties are found in every Christian community,—and in almost every Christian church,—so that the same pastor is now charged with preaching one extreme of doctrine and then another. We well remember an occasion when an excellent brother on a Sabbath morning, won for himself a good degree, in the estimation of a *connoisseur* of sound doctrine, for a masterly sermon on the doctrine of election, who in the evening of the same day, in the estimate of the same party, lost all his laurels by dwelling too strongly on "*whosoever will.*" The best course, we submit, for one in such circumstances, is to be wisely deaf. Yet we are compelled to say, would that all remembered that while the divine sovereignty is, "*excellent in working,*" as well as "*wonderful in counsel*" that it never can be a plea for idleness, "*or a refuge for those who are plainly unskillful in the word of righteousness;*" and that it never was intended to interfere with the broadest proclamations of a full and free salvation. Yea, rather that it should give assurance to the faithful preacher, that he shall not labour in vain or spend his strength for naught.

But while the preaching of the Gospel stands first as a means to bring men to Christ, the exigencies of the present day cannot be met by the Sabbath services of any, or of all the existing Christian organizations, though they meet ever so regularly for public services, and to give instruction in the things of God. Other means may and ought to be employed to accomplish the glorious object of the world's salvation. These means when they are of the right kind will be valuable auxiliaries to the success of the Gospel.

To the consideration of some of these means we accord the principal place in this paper. It is admitted that "*every one of us shall give an account of himself to God;*" and it is also admitted that the efficiency of each Christian church is the sum of the activity of the individual members of each church. Hence we shall throughout enforce the necessity of individual exertion.

To each church is entrusted a portion of work for the spiritual benefit of man, the only limits to these efforts being the capability to labour and the opportunities presenting. Christians, however, seem to have acquired the idea that churches have been established for their special benefit, where surrounded by every comfort they may enjoy, the ordinances of the Lord's house. And then while thanking the Great Giver of every good and perfect gift, they do not forget to felicitate themselves upon the great things they have accomplished in founding a church, and in erecting an elegant and commodious place of worship. Forgetting all the while that their engagements to the Lord have far wider relations, and that they should take steps, earnest, active steps, to fill the house they have built for the Lord, and to labour especially for the salvation of souls.

There are two aspects from which to view the subject. 1st. In relation to those who attend the means of grace. 2nd. In reference to the outlying non-attending portion of the community.

First. *In reference to those who attend public worship.* Of these there ought to be a much larger number brought into the church. This responsibility rests upon the whole church, not merely upon the official members. That a church may be thoroughly efficient, the pastor must "be a good soldier of Jesus Christ," and the deacons "men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom." With such "*bishops and deacons*" sustained by a pious membership, no church would long remain inert.

For a church to fulfil her mission there must be,

1. An effort to promote spirituality amongst its members. The spirit of worldliness that exists is a great hindrance to Christian progress. It is utterly impossible for any church to prosper while the spirit of devotion languishes, and while its members are only half in earnest, either as regards their own spiritual growth, or indifferent whether the word of truth has "*free course*" or not. "To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

2. It is the duty of the church to seek out the varied talents of all its members, and to assign to each his proper work, *e. g.*, some have an aptitude amongst the young, some for visiting the sick; others have a kind of natural shrinking from such duties but are ready to do anything to improve the place of worship. This disposition is not to be despised, but cherished, directed and used for God's glory.

By no means lose the influence or ability of any by allowing talent to remain "wrapped up in a napkin," or wasted by assigning work for which parties are unqualified.

3. The Sabbath School can be made a most fruitful field of labour. God has everywhere honoured it, but we have not by any means brought it to that degree of efficiency of which it is susceptible.

Many parties from an abundance of other labours, cannot give their attention and time to this work. In other places teachers are irregular in their attendance and the school suffers in consequence. Members of churches, as a whole, take little interest in, and seldom visit the Sabbath School. Often it is left to be conducted by a few young and inexperienced persons.

How much of the lack of interest in the school itself, and the always recurring difficulty, the loss of the elder scholars, are attributable to the cold indifference of Christian men and women toward this work and labour of love.

We know of no department of Christian labour that has yielded such blessed fruit, or where there is a surer prospect of speedy returns for self-

denying effort. The Sabbath School should hold a front rank in the efforts of every church. It is a fit auxiliary to the teaching of Christian parents, and a blessed means of grace to children whose parents have not learned Christ.

Indeed were the church as far as possible to devote a part of the Sabbath to the study of the Word of Life, divided into classes for mutual conference concerning the truth of the Gospel, it would, we believe, bring out much of the teaching talent of the church, and prevent the youth of both sexes from thinking they are too old to learn.

4. No church can be up to its duty, that does not respond to those efforts of a semi-religious character that in this age are so essential to stem the tide of evil, and which make men better citizens, if not better Christians. We hold decidedly that the day has come for every church to be fully committed to the cause of *Total Abstinence*.

The principle divinely inspired should now prevail,—“If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth.” How great the necessity when we consider the terrific results attending the use of intoxicating drinks. How has it proved a curse from Noah down to the present! How has it brought mischief and disgrace upon the churches of Christ! How has it degraded many promising and prominent ministers of the Gospel! How has it brought ruin upon thousands of church members year after year! How has it ruined its tens of thousands who but for it, would be prosperous and happy Christians; but who have sunk lower and lower in sin till they have at length filled the drunkard's grave, leaving that terrible sentence to be pondered, “*No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of heaven!*” —Christian men! *specially Christian ministers!* speak out upon this monster evil. If you cannot save those who have been addicted to strong drink, take hold of the young and save them.

5. Another means of usefulness is, to be prayerfully watchful of the effect of the word upon the unconverted.

Sometimes the word of truth may be spoken with more than usual energy and point, and may be specially suitable to some in the congregation. If Christians in such cases, without merely hearing for others, were to agree to ask of the Lord that the word spoken might have “free course,” who can tell but that a rich and effectual blessing might be poured out on the church and the whole field of labour? At such a time, a word from an earnest Christian to some anxious and tender heart, might change the whole current of life. Then as regards “the stranger,” notice him, speak to him, welcome him, without waiting for that piece of worldly formality, an introduction.

An eminent pastor has said “To worship in the same sanctuary should be sufficient introduction to Christ's ‘friends.’” How many young men and women too might have been saved from a life of sin, had Christians spoken kindly to them as they met them in the house of God!

6 By all means labour for and expect the conversion of the young. Christians have singular views on this point. Why wait until evil habits are formed? Why not seek early to lead the children to Jesus? Should they not be held, as one remarked, “as in a state of expectancy, as prospective members, as having a special relation to the Christian church?”

Do not Christian parents forget, that the promise is “to you and your children?” We fear also through an excessive tenderness for the feelings of some dear brethren, many churches keep the subject of Infant Baptism too much out of sight; is not this a mistake? Are there not too many Christian parents who do not sufficiently realize the relations and obligations into which

they enter, as they present their children for baptism? They often regard it as a matter of form, and are "glad when it is over;" while they ought to think, how shall we best fulfil our duties? how shall we best perform our vows, and bring up "*this child for the Lord?*" Were this responsibility felt as it ought to be, might we not expect that the children would earlier give themselves to the Lord?

7. Then in reference to special services, is there not among us an excessive dread of being thought revivalists?

We cannot approve of many of the efforts that are ostensibly made for the conversion of men. But do we not go to the opposite extreme? We think that the appointment by each church of occasional seasons of humiliation and prayer, would be attended with blessed results upon the churches, and their fields of labour. Yet we look upon such services principally from the point of expediency, because, above every other means to ensure the healthy activity of a church, is the *constant, habitual assembling together for prayer*. This is the touch-stone by which to test the life of any church. Let a church be faithful in this respect, and it will preclude the necessity for what are called "*special services*."

We say then, the church that diligently seeks to watch and fight, and pray, cannot be an unfaithful church. Where such a state exists Zion will travail in birth—sinners will be born again. Such a church will be as "a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over a wall;" and would not long content itself with the work within, but would rich earnestly turn towards them that are without. That is

Secondly. *To reach the non-attending portion of the community, and to bring them under the influence of the Gospel.*

We do not mean to say that even every *earnest* effort shall be crowned with success. For "the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." But we do say, that efforts earnestly put forth for Christ shall not lose their reward. The history of the church and the declaration of God's word, prove that God *blesses those most who labour most, and most wisely* in His service. *This cannot be denied, and ought, with an unlimited atonement, and the promise of a faithful God, to save to the uttermost whosoever believeth*, to give to each individual Christian an irresistible desire to take part in every effort; and to be an humble instrument in swelling that great multitude that no man can number.

Then let every Christian awake to his duty, and no longer think that he can work by proxy. No man can pay another to speak the word that he should speak himself. To reach the wanderers, there must be special effort on their behalf, *systematic effort*, not necessarily of an imposing character, least of all by pandering to a vitiated taste in conforming worship to the whims of godless men, or the silly fancies of those who would symbolize every act of worship. The most powerful influences are often the least demonstrative. The simplest word accompanied with evident sincerity, is more effective than the most eloquent address when the shadow of insincerity is suspected, and more convincing than the most elaborate arguments.

To influence the non-attending portion of the community, there must be no relaxation of those christian exercises that tend to keep alive the flame of love. Yea, to be truly successful in this department of effort, there is need of double diligence and watchfulness over the heart.

The reason, or one reason, that no more is accomplished in reclaiming the godless, as far as we can see, is the terrible inconsistency of professing Chris-

tians. The world is *often correct* in its estimate of what a Christian ought to be, and Christians as *often wrong* in their estimate of what is required of them. A very few points must suffice in this connection.

1. Christian men should be Christian men in their business, doing all things for the glory of God. If they would have the prosperity of Christ's kingdom at heart, specially in their own sphere, they must be above reproach. Few things damage a church more than the inconsistency of professing Christians in matters of business, when they are grasping and avaricious. The correct rule is plain: "not slothful in business, serving the Lord."

2. Christian men should countenance every effort that tends to elevate the people. It may not be possible for them to engage in every Christian effort. They may not in every respect feel as deeply as others towards some plans of usefulness, but they need not discourage those who are more earnest than themselves. There certainly should be a cordial support of every effort that even tends to bring men under the sound of the Gospel, rather than expressions only fitted to damp the ardor of earnest workers. How often has it been said of many of these efforts, "*It is of no use,*"—"You may as well let them alone." Christians should remember that had they been "*let alone,*" they would still have been "in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity."

3. To reach all the non-attending portions of the community, the workers must understand their ground; as far as possible a definite number of families should be allotted to each, and that without their work being trumpeted abroad. To succeed in this work there must be *system* without *ostentation*, or the semblance of it.

4. The church must show an interest in the welfare of the ungodly.—But how few do this wisely! It is often done officiously, in such a manner as unwittingly to induce a comparison with believers, to convince the non-professing what sinners they are. This can never be a successful mode of bringing men to Christ. But let a man realize that a sinner is *going down to hell*, and with the earnestness of one saving a drowning man, go to the sinner; and though he may not be able to say more than "*Friend! I am concerned for your salvation;*" such a word would be more likely to win a way to the sinner's heart, than an hours talk about the generalities of religion.

But we must not rigidly prescribe rules or boundaries for the exercise of individual gifts. Christians should be brought to realize their responsibility, to feel that every man is their brother, and fellow traveller to eternity. Though as we have said, some are unwise in the manner in which they speak to others concerning personal religion, greater sin lies at the door of those who never speak at all.

One word about what is being done. In our larger cities and towns, much has been accomplished through the organization of mission churches, and by visitation from house to house. Yet we submit with all deference, whether it would not be better in most cases, to drop the word "mission" for some designation equally appropriate, that would not give offence to the ear or eye of those for whom the effort is made. However Christians may think of these parties, depend upon it, they do not by any means think themselves heathen. A short expressive text of scripture upon the entrance, if an appropriate name could not be agreed upon, would be more inviting. Then let a few earnest workers make that place their home, contented to labour for souls, though they should seldom or never hear their favourite preacher; and with a neat and comfortable place of worship, free from the "*style*" of many city churches, we think that many more would be drawn to hear the Word of Life.

The greatest attractions to nearly all classes to attend Christian worship are good, hearty, soul-inspiring singing, fervent prayer, and plain, earnest discourses that present the Gospel faithfully, and from the fulness of a heart that has *felt*, and *feels* its power.

Lectures on fanciful themes, and essays on popular subjects can find a more appropriate place in the lecture hall of literary institutions than in the sacred desk. Not that we *decry* these lectures, or wish to separate the poor from the rich in Divine worship, by providing places of worship for each class—*God forbid*. We hold, emphatically, that in the house of God all men are equal, so far as worldly position is concerned. For God looketh not upon the outward appearance, but upon the hearts.

Yet as men do make distinctions, and often the poor are most ready to make them, by giving place to their superiors in worldly rank, let such a course be adopted as shall least isolate the classes and render them least obnoxious to one another.

In respect to smaller towns, villages and country districts, we consider that it is well nigh, if not quite as difficult, to induce the non-attending to come to the house of God as it is in the cities and large towns. Their hearts are the same evil hearts, and are as prolific in excuses as those in the cities.

Furthermore, these professedly adhere, to a greater extent, to one or other of the prevailing sects, and generally, when least pious, are most particular not to attend any other church than their own.

Then many are so far from places of worship that they easily, and too often, fall into a careless habit. We fear that a great number, if not the majority of professing Christians are at this moment incurring fearful responsibilities in the slackness with which they expect even their own households to attend the means of grace, while their wretched example does more to harden men in sin, and to keep the godless from attending public worship than any other cause outside of the sinner's own heart.

Were Christians awake to *act*, as well as to *feel*, that they are their "brother's keeper," that to bring the careless under the influence of the Gospel they must individually commend the Gospel by example and a prayerful and earnest solicitude for them that are without, then would we look for the dawning of that day when all shall know the Lord. Ere that day shall come what conquests shall be made for Christ! Already glorious victories have been achieved, but what are these compared with what ought to be expected, and with what the Church of Christ shall yet achieve? Oh! that the sense of individual responsibility may so take hold of Christians in this Dominion, and throughout the world, that they may be able no longer to neglect the duty of *individual efforts* for *individual salvation*.

Were each impressed with the necessity of this *individualism of effort* we should soon begin to prove the truth of the words of that prince of pastors, the late James of Birmingham, that "all that is wanted, under God's blessing, for the world's conversion to Christ is *an earnest ministry and an earnest church*." Then, brethren,

"Go, labour on, while it is day;
The world's dark night is hastening on;
Speed, speed the work—cast sloth away!
It is not thus that souls are won.

- “ Men die in darkness at your side,
 Without a hope to cheer the tomb ;
 Take up the torch, and wave it wide—
 The torch that lights time’s thickest gloom.
- “ Toil on—faint not—keep watch and pray !
 Be wise, the erring soul to win ;
 Go forth into the world’s highway,
 Compel the wanderer to come in.”

THE COMPATIBILITY OF ECCLESIASTICAL FEDERATION WITH FREEDOM.

BY THE REV. J. McEWAN STOTT, M.A.

[*Preached in Chapel Street Chapel, Blackburn.*]

The subjoined extract, from a discourse by the Rev. J. M. Stott, of Blackburn, England, whose presence at the meeting of the Union in Kingston last year, is so pleasantly remembered by us, will be perused with interest and profit by all our readers, and especially by those of them who had the privilege of forming a personal acquaintance with him.

The text upon which the discourse was founded, was

Acts xv. 6.—*The Apostles and elders came together to consider of the matter.*

Reading over these words and the whole connected Scripture, we are, as it were, walking over the scene of an ancient battlefield. Long since its clamours have died away, but still the struggle was an all-important one, so that the memory of it is of present and undying interest to us all. It was a vital matter that thus was settled. It was not merely the present harmony of the church ; rather was it the history of the church throughout all coming time. The decision of this council was a deliverance on the very nature of the Gospel itself. The decision was of the catholic sort. It was manifestly the mind of the Holy Ghost, even as it was the united judgment of the Apostles. It was significantly declared that eternal life hangs upon no other condition than the simple one of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ ; that ceremonialism has served its purpose ; that sacrifice is ended ; that we have but Christ, and yet that having Him, alike as individual Christians and in our collective capacity as churches, we are perfect and complete, wanting nothing. These few words must suffice as to the immediate purpose and blessed result of this first council.

We proceed now to notice in the second place, that around this council, itself convened to terminate controversy, a fierce and long protracted conflict has been waged. It has been very much as the citadel for the possession of which all the different sections of the church militant have contended the one against the other. This meeting of the Apostles and elders, with the brethren at Jerusalem, has been taken as the original, the justifying precedent of the councils of the Romish Church ; of Episcopalian Convocation and Congress ; of Presbyterian Synod and Assembly ; of Wesleyan Conference ; and of Congregational Union. Fully to discuss this matter were for us to go into the large, the almost endless question of the distinctive polity and order of all these different churches. Such, however, is very far from our intention. The sole interests for which we are presently concerned, are—1st—to show that none of these different communities can arrogate to themselves as their peculiar possession, this primitive Apostolic council ; and 2nd—to rebut so far as we may the charge of inconsistency with which we Congregationalists are assailed when we federate ourselves into our less pretentious district associations, or when we go up in full numbers, and aggregated strength, to the meetings of the Congregational Union of England and Wales.

1st, then—No Christian community can claim this so-called first council as its peculiar heritage and possession. When we consider of it closely we find that

it differs in several marked particulars from all the councils these churches constitute, from all the assemblies they convene. In each of these, in all of them there may be venerable men, wise men, men of deep piety, men of extensive learning, men of large experience, men of great practical ability. As being possessed of these qualities, these men severally approve themselves partakers of the Holy Ghost. But still, with all this, with all these measures of spiritual endowment, pre-eminent wisdom and Christian charity combined, they are not equal to the presence and the power of this first council. There were giants in those days. There were Apostles present in that council. They had powers we do not possess. They could do what it were not merely impudent but impious for us to pretend to. We may do our best to order our councils and assemblies after the worthiest fashion. We may combine in them the most unfettered discussion of vexed questions, with the most earnest prayer and supplication for Divine guidance. But, with all this, we know nothing for certain. The thorough understanding of the whole matter may not have been reached. The perfect lot upon it which heaven alone can give may not have been obtained. Imperfection in the council, imperfection impossible of being detected, even after the most scrupulous care, may have prevented the fulfilment of our petition. No council, therefore, can claim for itself, or should have accorded to it by others, the notion of infallibility. This first was the only infallible council. It was held; but now the times are changed. These men have passed away. Not even has their office been continued. No, this council was held, but the like of it has never been—can never be held again.

2ndly—This council was an exceptional one in the Apostolic history. We read in the Acts of the Apostles of but one council. If any other had been held I think we should have heard of it. It seems strange, however—decidedly against the latter usages of the Church—that it should have been so. The question of a modified Judaism, to be imposed upon the Gentile converts, was decided by this council in the negative. But this matter thus set at rest, there was another great and growing evil which claimed and called for adjudication. If Judaism had ‘waxen old and was ready to vanish away,’ then all the more might it have been left to itself. Philosophy, however, was living. It was rife with all the enthusiasm of its youth. It was not merely destroying superstition. It gave its colouring to the truth. It questioned some of it. It gave exaggerated and distorted representations of other portions of it. It rejected its simplicity. It despised the cross. Instead of seeking to save the sinful, it sought but to gratify the curious. Instead of resting on the facts, and seeking their establishment by accumulated evidence, and impregnable argument, it gave way to fancy, followed erratic courses, pried into mysteries, tried to explain the Godhead, busied itself with Christ’s second appearing instead of seeking to exhaust the infinite meaning and significance of the first; and thus relying on itself, seeking to be “wise above what was written,” it departed from the truth, and, even from the very first, gave manifest tokens of its tendency to consummate a “mystery of iniquity,” whose end with all who embraced it could only be that they should be accursed of God, “consumed with the spirit of His mouth, and destroyed with the brightness of His coming.” Why not then another council, in view of the present working, and against all the prospective mischief of Gnosticism? Why not another council? We know not why. No reason is given us. All we do know is that the evil was there, even while the Apostles were still alive, and yet that no Apostolic council was convened to deal with it. Is this the fact, or is it not? If it be the fact then, what is the inference? Surely it can be none other than this: the fewer the councils, the better; the best thing is that the Church be free.

3rdly.—In connection with this matter, let it be remembered that the reference was *voluntarily* made by the Church of Antioch. If any might have used the power of interference and control, it was these Apostles; appointed as they were on the one hand to the preaching of the gospel, and the instituting of churches, while, on the other, they felt themselves filled with all fullness of inspiration. So it was—and yet, as though their mission was but to be “ensamples” to the flock, and not lords over God’s heritage—these men were very far from arrogating

to themselves pre-eminence, from federating themselves into a standing council of reference, whether for the systematising and authoritative declaration of the truth necessary to be believed, or for the arbitrament of all differences among and between the churches. They did not do this on any ground; not on the ground of prerogative, and still less on that of expediency. They did not come together and say, the truth is imperilled; the name of Christ is dishonoured; the Church is disgraced; the coming of the kingdom is hindered by these unseemly differences and divisions: we really must call these Antiochian brethren to account, and to order. No; there was nothing of this sort. The message went up to Jerusalem of successful ministry, of great awakening, of manifold conversion down in Antioch. It rejoiced the majority of the brethren. But some, poor busy-bodies were there, with the least of Christ's spirit in them; these talked about the matter, criticised it, applied their own little measures and minds to it, and so condemned it. They met together; they took action upon the matter; they appointed a deputation and sent it to the Church. Not so the Apostles. These kept themselves to themselves till they were asked. They had their own thoughts on the matter, doubtless, but they forbore to speak them. They agreed to hear the case, or rather to discuss the question. Assembled with them, they gave both the contending parties full and free audience. And then, when there had been much disputing, the Apostles, first one and then another, gave their opinion. At the last they gathered their united judgment into one, and so their recommendation—for it was nothing more, went forth; a recommendation which any contumacious brethren of churches might have refused and disobeyed; but still a recommendation which to all the good and the true and the faithful was equally authoritative as the commandment of Christ himself.

Thus we come to notice, in the fourth place here, that the church at Jerusalem was made account of along with the Apostles, in the reference of the Antiochian church; and again that the company of believers in Jerusalem were associated with the Apostles in their deliverance. The party who sent the deputation is not quite obvious from the Scripture; but still from the analogy of all like cases, it is almost certain that it was the vexed community that determined on sending up to Jerusalem unto the Apostles and Elders about this question. The primary reference was doubtless to the Apostles, yet with them the Elders were associated, that is, probably, in the literal signification of the term; the older and therefore more experienced members of the Jerusalem Church. Nor is this all. The primary reference was to the Apostles, and yet these truly great men, discountenancing all invidious distinctions, forbearing all vain-glorious self-assumption, freely numbered with themselves all the members of the church. In the *Epistle* they sent forth, while precedence is given to those who were chief, those who had borne the principal part in the discussion—still we have the threefold designation—"the Apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren, which are of the Gentiles, in Antioch, and Syria and Cilicia." The fact is, this so-called first Council was nothing other, nothing more, than a meeting of the Jerusalem Church. It was a popular assembly, not an Apostolic conclave. If, then, those who had no need of their advice acted thus courteously by the people, it truly becomes us, who do have the necessity, inasmuch as we are not wise as they were, diligently to follow the example they have set before us.

It is a new thing in the present day, and as interesting as it is new, to see the various communities whose practice "hitherto has been otherwise, gradually conforming to this more excellent way." Our Church friends are instituting congresses to help out the notable weakness of Convocation, and if both together can do just next to nothing, still this is no immediate business of ours. Then, also, it is on this very admission of the popular element that the great Wesleyan body has been of recent years split up into its four different sections. The Presbyterians, too; though inveterate sticklers for the old, are likewise on the move. In their camp, not merely are voices raised for a revision of the standards, but further for liberty to be accorded the people in regard to the use of a liturgy,

and the introduction of an organ, as to the times of meeting and the order of service—and indeed all the other details of religious worship. In these things, we name no mere crotchet of individual men ; we speak the uttered and reiterated opinion of a considerable and growing minority in all the different fellowships. We hail the movement with delight. It is quite in the line of those principles for which we Congregationalists have always contended. With us, the voice of the people is the nearest approximation we can ever hope to have to the voice of God. Our view is that not only may the people be allowed to decide as to the accessories of worship ; but that with them lies the safest, the surest, the only right and reliable arbitrament as to the essentials of the faith. Logic may become sophistry. Reason may lose itself in transcendental speculation, or wander chartless into the void of utter scepticism. Sentiment may become sacramentarianism, and bow down before images and crucifixes. To stop the evil councils may decree the truth, and anathematize the disobedient ; or again, to help their conscious weakness these may call in the strength and vengeance of the civil power. This course has been tried times without number ; with what result the history even of our own day can abundantly testify. As for ourselves, however, even though the course were a success and not a pitiable failure—allowing, for instance, a solitary colonial bishop to snap his fingers in the face of a whole array of councils ; and so terrify even a Pan-Anglican Synod that they durst not, after coming from the ends of the earth to do it, take the slightest overt action upon the matter ;—I say even though if the course were a success and not a failure, we should still eschew it in all its forms. Our word is, leave the thing to the people. They may not have learning, but they have common sense. Hungry of soul, they will speedily detect and expose, or, at the least, avoid the man who gives a stone when they ask for bread. Having lives to lead, and finding it hard work for body, soul, and spirit, having difficulties to battle with and sorrows to bear, temptations to meet and sins to be forgiven ; a hell to flee, which yet seems gaping ever under their feet, and a heaven to gain, which yet seems very far away ; they will not be long deceived. They will soon tire of the novelty which is found to be empty, of the glare which dazzles and blinds instead of lightens. Disgusted at the absurdities of the eccentric, weary with the vagaries of the mere theorizer, they will betake them where the gospel in its simplicity is preached, whether it be in church or chapel, or back-street meeting house, and will still be found flocking thither, even as the doves flock to their windows.

Mr. Stott then proceeds to combat the objection which he supposes may be urged against Congregational Unions and Associations, as an infringement of the liberty which we have in Christ. While contending for these as affording a valuable medium for the inter-communion of churches, he “ repudiates the notion that this first council is the justification of those federations and associations which we form.” That he finds in the example of Paul, who, instead of standing upon his right as an Apostle, “ gave up his liberty for a higher good ; or rather used his liberty in the doing of that to which as a christian man he was free.”

He is strongly opposed, however, to all standing councils of reference :—

Nay, more than this, as an individual Congregationalist minister, I should never consent (so far as I can at present see), to any outside reference of a disagreement between me and my church, over which I was pastor. Rather should I feel it better to seek another sphere where ministerial usefulness would not have the disqualification of the disturbed feeling which such a state of things must, from the very nature of the case, necessitate. Such is my individual view. But, of course, it is open to others to have a different opinion. Some do judge otherwise. One with us, as to the repudiation of standing councils, their word is still for arbitration in cases of difference in or between churches. Our answer to this is, by all means let there be arbitration, if it is desired. Our only proviso is, that each church be left free, whether it is to follow this course or not. It may decide

the matter for itself; without any outside reference, if it so pleases. Or again, it may refer the matter, and yet refuse the judgment, if so it is disposed. In all this, however, we are not bound, we are free. I repudiate the charge that this is Presbyterianism. It is nothing of the sort. It is as unlike it as crimson is from green. Presbyterianism is the necessary and authoritative interference of the power without. This is but the voluntary, and still more the conditional, reference of the power within. Presbyterianism would never tolerate this sort of thing for a moment. It would have been Presbyterianism if the church at Jerusalem, or rather the council of the Apostles and elders, had themselves authoritatively taken up the case, and then laid down the law for the church at Antioch. This other, however, is but the return upon an old Congregationalism; yes, better than this, it is a return to that primitive practice which obtained before the distinctions of Presbyterianism and Congregationalism were known; when, if they might have been fancied, they would have been deemed impossible. Our voluntarily referring differences to the outside arbitration; whether of trusted individual Christians, or of neighbouring churches,—this is for the Free Church just to do what the Free Apostle did, when instead of deciding the matter summarily for himself, he consented, possibly even when suggested and sought, to refer it to the church with the apostles and elders at Jerusalem.

Then coming to the objects contemplated by Unions and Associations of Congregational churches, he concludes with the following eloquent words:—

We want to create a healthy public opinion upon all important questions. Would to God, brethren, that this spirit of friendly and fraternal conference were rarer amongst us than it is, and that the opportunities for its public expression were more frequent than they are. It is as affording one such opportunity on a grand scale that we approve the meetings of our Congregational Union. The presence of numbers is inspiring, the intercourse with brethren pleasant, the free discussion of important topics stimulative of the best that is in us. The blessing comes through men, yet none the less is it from above. We bring down with us no decree to bind the consciences, but yet oftentimes a fuller inspiration by which we may reach the souls of men. At such times, and by this consciousness, we are raised above all captious cavilling as to the course we follow. With grateful heart we bless God that he led His Apostle to set this example to us. We fervently pray Him also that He would make us every day more and more able to reconcile the apparent opposites of Independence and Congregationalism. Above all, that He would make us more Christian; that He would give us with all His true followers in every church to work together for that end and time, when the "divisions of Reuben" shall be healed; when the strife of the brethren shall cease; when "Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim;" when all the scattered tribes shall be gathered into one; and thus there be but one church, even as there is but one Christ, and this a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing."

The Home Department.

WHY STAND YE HERE ALL THE DAY IDLE?

BY REV. W. MORLEY PUNSHON, M.A.

Two fields for toil—the outer and the inner,
Both overgrown with weeds;

Who to the labour hastes, to be the winner
Of all the labourer's meeds?

To bathe in radiant mornings, daily spreading
Over the heavens anew,

To sit 'neath trees of life, forever shedding
Their bounteous honey-dew.

To rouse a spirit, formed from God, from slumber,
 And robe it for the light;
 The heirs of heaven from clay to disencumber,
 Which clogs their upward flight.

To lift a world, 'neath sin and sorrow lying,
 And "pour in oil and wine;"
 To warble in the dull ears of the dying,
 Refrains of hymns divine.

Work for a lifetime, in each path up springing,
 In low or lofty spheres!
 Hark to the Master's summons, always ringing
 In quick and heedless ears!

Cool brain, strong sinew, heart with love o'erflowing
 Shall we all in sloth escape?
 Like vine, which, fruitless through its wanton growing,
 Ne'er purples into grapes.

The daylight wanes and dies,—“Why stand ye idle?”
 Life hasteth to its bourne.

The bridegroom tarries—will ye greet the bride,
 Or in the darkness mourn?

Lo, in the fields the yellow harvest drooping
 As lilies in the rain.

Where are the reapers, that they come not trooping
 To gather in the grain?

Some in the festive hall disporting gaily—
 On slothful pillow some—
 Some in delays most blameful, and yet daily
 Exclaiming, “Lo, I come.”

And some, infatuate, 'mid the alien's scoffing
 Quarrel about their toil.

As wreckers, when ships founder in the offing—
 Grow murderous over spoil.

Meanwhile the harvest waiteth for the reaping.
 God's patience hath not tired—
 Ye cannot say—extenuate of your sleeping—
 “We wait, for none hath hired.”

Through the hushed moontide hour the Master calleth—
 Ye cannot choose but hear.

Still sounding when the lengthening shadow fal'eth
 “Why stand ye idle here?”

Up!—For a while the pitying glory lingers!
 Work while it yet is day—
 Then rest the Sabbath rest—where angel singers
 Make melody for aye.

THE BITTER, BITTER THOUGHT.

A minister of the Gospel whom we shall call Mr. H., was taking a solitary walk in a churchyard, one lovely day in the fall of the year. The air no longer rendered oppressive by the fiery heat of summer, was pleasantly cool and refreshing. The azure depth of the sky was here and there lightly draped with soft, white clouds; and the leaves of the trees and shrubs were dyed with the gorgeous colours, which like the hectic flush upon the cheek, are so

deceptive in their brilliant beauty. The very loveliness of the scene filled Mr. H. with a feeling of strange sadness, for, although, outwardly so fair, he saw in every thing around him signs of decay and death. The passing breeze as it came and went, stirring the already fallen leaves, seemed to him burdened with one sad song, "Passing away." As he looked at the graves, the last resting place of the silent dead, he thought, it is true, winter will soon assert his sway, desolating the fair face of nature, but at the voice of spring, she will again burst forth in bloom and beauty. But there is one voice alone, that will have power to penetrate the dull, cold ears of the dreamless sleepers.

Absorbed in reflections such as these, he was walking slowly along, when his steps were suddenly arrested by the sound of weeping: it was not loud or passionate, but it seemed to come from the very depth of a lacerated, bleeding heart. Looking in the direction from which it proceeded, he saw partially concealed by the overhanging branches of a neighbouring tree, a young girl bending over a newly made grave. He hesitated whether he should advance or retreat, fearing to intrude upon the sacredness of sorrow, and yet longing, if possible, to speak some word of heavenly consolation to the lonely watcher. Seeing that she had observed him, Mr. H. resolved to address her. She told him that it was the grave of her only sister, two years younger than herself; and that she had died very suddenly, after a few hours sickness. Mr. H. was greatly relieved to find that Helen, for that was the mourner's name, was trusting in the Saviour. Supposing that her sister had fallen asleep in Jesus, he said to Helen, "you are not sorrowing as those who have no hope, for there is a sure reunion awaiting all God's children." With a look of unutterable agony, and in a voice in whose tones the very essence of despair seemed concentrated, she replied, "Oh! Sir, that is the bitter, bitter thought; I have no hope of meeting my sister in heaven; and, I, who have known the Saviour for more than a year, allowed that precious time to pass without warning and entreating Alice to fly to the same refuge, I had found; and now day and night, waking and sleeping, I am haunted by that fearful reflection, that the opportunity is gone for ever." What could he say to poor Helen, torn by the dreadful pangs of remorse for neglecting a sister's salvation? Her's was a case from which every ray of consolation seemed shut out, excluding as it did the sweet hope of a heavenly meeting. He did not tell her, as some false comforters might have done, that God is very merciful, for while, oh! precious thought, in the Saviour he is all mercy and full of the tenderest compassion, out of Christ it is presumption to talk of God's mercy, for we are told He is a consuming fire. Mr. H. could only pray, that even in this dark hour, God would enable her to leave all in His hands, and that the fearful lesson He had given her, might be made the means of overcoming all sinful timidity in speaking for Jesus; and that she might never neglect any opportunity for doing good, but might "work while it is called to-day, for the night cometh when no man can work."

As Mr. H. slowly walked homewards with the words of poor Helen ringing in his ear, the universe seemed to sink into nothing in comparison with the inestimable value of one immortal soul, and the words of the Saviour came home to him with a new and living power, "For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

W. P.

A LITTLE boy, seeing a man prostrate before the door of a groggery, opened the door, and putting in his head he said, Proprietor, 'see here. sir, your sign has fallen down.'

HOW THE CHILDREN WERE BROUGHT UP AT GITZEN.

TRANSLATED FROM 'QUELLWASSER FÜR DAS DEUTSCHE VOLK.

Gitzen is the name of a small farm, situated on a sunny hill. It is reached by a road through a beech wood, at the end of which is an orchard, famous for its excellent fruit. Above the orchard stands the farm-house. It is old; with thick walls and small windows, the doorway arched, the hall floor laid with red marble flags. Peach trees and vines cover the walls on the sunny side. The owner of Gitzen and his wife are a worthy couple, and their children have grown up like the best trees in the orchard. I often go up there, eat fruit and bread, and drink old cider with George, and when Theresa, the good housewife, has leisure, she comes beside us. The eldest son takes charge of the field work, the daughter is busy in the house, and a merry boy of twelve years old goes to school. Everything goes on quietly and pleasantly in the family; the children obey and love their parents.

"You have brought up your children well, George", I said one day to him. "So people think," he replied; "my wife has helped me faithfully, and God has given us his blessing."

"You would begin early," I asked. "Yes, indeed," said he; "before they were in the world. Shall I tell you why? You have surely heard of one Lazarus Gitzner?"

"Yes; if it be the same who was once in the Low County with the Emperor Charles, and became town-clerk in Reichenhall." "Yes, the very same," said George. "But what had he to do with the education of your children?" "You shall hear presently. You may have heard of his being once told by a fortune-teller that he should be assassinated. "Yes; I have read so."

"Now, he thought he had enemies in Reichenhall, and so he gave up his situation there, and bought this farm of mine, and came to live up here.—From him it takes the name of Gitzen." "Well, what more?" "What more?" continued George; "the man had a son, and he was brought up very badly. The son one day stabbed his father in the field down yonder, 'the orphan's field.'—That happened one hundred years ago. When I thought of buying the property, twenty years ago, my relations were much against it. For, they said, children were never well-doing here—there was a curse upon the place. "No, said my wife; "do not believe them, there was no evil in the house, the fault lay with the inhabitants. Let us bring up our children well, that will be the best exorcism against the curse." In short, we bought the farm and lived upon it.—The fate of Lazarus Gitzner was always before my eyes, and as often as I came home by that field, I spoke to Theresa about it, and each time we resolved that, whatever children God should give us, we should strive to bring up well from the first."

"And," I asked, "what rules did you lay down upon which to proceed with them?"

"Our first principle was, that we two should be as one, and work together in all things. Believe me, sir, many children turn out ill, chiefly because their parents disagree. It is the same in all kinds of work in which two must be engaged. If I sow wheat in my field, and my wife comes after me and sows-tares, the crop will be good for nothing but to feed the pigeons; or, if I tie up straight a young tree that is growing crooked, and my wife loses the string, the tree will quickly fall back again to the wrong side."

"Yes," said Theresa, "husband and wife must keep fast together, and be of one mind, before they can bring up a child in the right way. From our marriage-day, George and I determined, by God's help, to be united in all things, to know each other thoroughly, and agree in all our plans. For it is not enough for married persons to put all their goods into one cupboard; they must open their heart to one another, and each know what is there.—Children always take part of their characters from father or mother. My good George was apt to be passionate in his younger days, as most good men have been, and our eldest boy was like him in this. It was not enough to say, "You are like your father;" no, we had to correct the fault, and his father himself had to help me in doing so."

"Yes," continued George, "so it is. But with many couples it seems quite otherwise. In their first married days, they are blind and deaf with love; they take it for granted they are both perfect beings. They are, as it were, intoxicated; but when that passes away, then sorrow comes, and they see nothing but faults in each other. Then children come, and the mother scolds the boys for their father's faults, and the father takes their part, and quarrels get worse and worse, and the children can come to no good."

"You are right," said I, "a happy marriage is like wine-making. The wine must ferment at first, in order to get milder and sweeter with age. If the juice has no acid to begin with, it will turn all at last to vinegar. I have often observed that the best marriages are those in which both parties were soon willing to perceive and confess their faults, and the worst those in which the first year was spent like foolish lovers. I know a woman who at first used always to compare her husband to the apostle John; when I met her ten years later, she considered him to be rather like Barabbas. I knew the man well; he was neither a St. John nor a Barabbas, but like the neighbours among whom he lived. The same thing had happened with him as to his wife. In the first year he called her nothing but my "dove," "my mayflower;" ten years after he spoke of his "crocodile," or his "nettle." "We call ourselves," said George, "just always man and wife, or George and Theresa, or father and mother."

"What was your next rule in bringing up your children?" I asked.

"Ha!" answered he, "that the child must be *obedient*. In that we were both agreed, so it was not difficult to teach. I reasoned thus,—all the sins of men arise from disobedience, for sin is either doing what God forbids, or not doing what he has commanded. Now, as God has appointed parents to stand in his place to their children, it must be of first importance that a child should learn to obey them. That I always maintained. I often repeated an old saying to the children, "A good child *will* obey; a bad child *must*."

"Once, after I had chastened my eldest boy with the rod for some act of disobedience, I repeated and explained the proverb to him. The first half, I said, is meant for your heart, the second for your back. He to whom the first is sufficient need never hear the second. Then the boy said, he would never need the second part again, and from that time it was enough to repeat, "A good child *will* obey," whenever he was beginning to rebel."

"Yes, you did right. With the first part of the proverb only, it is impossible to get on, for man from his birth is naturally perverse and refractory.—But we must try to require the second half as seldom as possible."

"I taught the lesson also to my boy through my horse. Haus always brought me my whip when I had occasion to go into the town. One day I sent him by himself; he had nothing to do but get a new cord put to the whip.

"Do not whip the horse," I said "if he does not need it." When he returned, he said to me, "I have never needed to use the whip at all, father; the horse went with a word; I was quite pleased with him." "Now," said I, "if an irrational animal can do this, surely you ought to be obedient at a word, who have a rational soul." That the little fellow easily comprehended. Soon afterwards, I bought an ass from the miller at Grunback, and the boy could not sleep for joy, for he was to fetch him home, and he had never seen an ass. "Take the whip with you," I said as he set out. "Oh, father, that will not be necessary; you say that an ass is much smaller than a horse." "Never mind," said I, "take the whip; if you do not need it, so much the better." "Ah," said he, when he came home, "my arm is quite aching, I have had a sad time of it with the ass. He would not move a step without being beaten." "Have you really been beating the poor young ass?" "Oh, you may believe, father I did not do it willingly. There was hail falling, and it was bitter cold, and I would have been so glad to get the poor creature into the stable with plenty of fodder. I spoke to him so kindly, and gave him half my bread, but that did no good. I was forced to take to the whip; I really beat him out of compassion for him, to make him come home."

"Now, see, Hans," said I, "just so I have often taken the rod to you as you did to the ass. I was grieved to do it, but it must be done, or you would never have become a good and obedient boy. See, therefore, God himself has said the father that loves the child will chastise him."

At this moment Hans came home from the field; he wiped his sunburnt face, and gave me his hand. We put him in mind of the ass story, and he laughed heartily. "I shall never forget it," he said. "We ought not to compare men with beasts, yet I know boys who are like the ass all over. I laugh at their mothers, when they think to make them obey by coaxing and sweetmeats. When I tell them about my ass, they get angry and say, 'Our boys are not asses, and when they come to understanding, then they will obey us, and thank us for our love.'" Take care, say I, that they be not exactly like my ass. So long as I gave him part of my bread he would follow me; but when I got hungry and tired, I thought, you have eaten my loaf, and now you may carry me part of the road. As soon as I mounted, he began to kick up, and as I could not hold on, he put his head between his legs and threw me off."

"You spoke truly indeed, Hans," said I, "many a mother has told me with tears the same sort of story. The most ungrateful children are always those whom the parents have most indulged, and never corrected." Hans walked off, he had to go to the stable and look after the horse.

"Now, George, what other rule had you in bringing up your children?"

"Yes; how shall I explain it? I hope you understand me, sir, when I say, that we strove hard to live as Christians ourselves, and make our children Christians also. But that cannot be done by words alone; a man must *be* a Christian, to let it be seen what he means."

"You mean," I remarked, "his life will then be the best sermon and explanation of the Bible, which will sink deep into his children's hearts."

"Yes," he replied, "that is just what I wished to say. I cannot bear hypocrites, and I like a man better who says nothing about religion than one who is always speaking of it and does not live like a Christian. In my early years I had to buy a number of fruit trees. A gardener praised one young pear tree in a special manner, and spoke as if I were hardly worthy of possessing it. In the third season, to my great joy, I saw it covered with leaves

and some fine blossoms, and promised our minister the first ripe fruit. But nothing came of it, except a few pears, as hard as stones, enough to break one's teeth upon. Since then I never believed the gardener's praise of his trees, and only bought those which I knew well had come from a good stock. I have often found it so with men; people who are always talking of their faith and their religious experience seem to me like trees full of leaves, where the blossoms seldom bear much fruit—all the sap goes into the leaves. My wife and I took a lesson from that, and determined that in our house there should be much fruit and few leaves. We resolved, by day and night, so to live and so to speak as if the Lord Jesus were dwelling in our house, and seeing and knowing all. He has said 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.' I have taught my children to understand this, and it has had more effect than many words. When they see their parents live in the constant presence of the Lord, that makes Christianity for them a living thing. I have always been much struck by the saying of God to Abraham: 'Walk before me.' When my son is working in my sight, so that he knows I see all he does, he will not be idle; and I taught the children that so they ought to walk as before Christ our Master; and not only in outward conduct, as eye-servants, but inwardly too, for he sees the hearts of all. When my boy or girl are going to visit their acquaintances, or anywhere else, I only say to them 'Walk before Him.' Believe me, sir, no more words are needed."

"No, certainly no more," I said; "the sins of all men come from this, that they forget the presence of the Lord, or disbelieve it; and nothing so helps to overcome temptation as the living remembrance that the Saviour is ever near."

It was late in the evening when I went away. The setting sun lighted up and gilded the beech wood through which I walked. How beautiful sunlight can make a forest, I thought; but how beautiful is a family circle who walk in the Heavenly light of faith and love!

BEGIN RIGHT.

Many a Christian is of little service to the church, because he did not begin right. Having started wrong, it is hard to get back on the right track, and make a new beginning. How much better when one enters on an immediate discharge of duty, as in the following from the *American Messenger*:—

"Our union prayer-meeting last Sunday evening was conducted by a member of the Young Men's Christian Association, a young married man, and an earnest Christian. After the opening exercises, the leader prefaced a few remarks by a modest allusion to his own experience. Just three years before, he began to serve Christ: and during these years he had been favored with the conscious presence and love of the Lord. He ascribed much of his freedom from the darkness and embarrassments which many suffer to the fact that he "started right."

On the very day in which he made a deliberate choice of God's salvation and service, he was joined by a clergyman who had addressed the meeting from which they were returning, and who walked home with him. After some conversation with Mr. W—— and his wife, who was also glad in a new-found hope, the minister said: 'Mr. W——, having chosen the Lord's service, it is your first duty to erect a family altar. Let us all kneel. I will

follow.' This was the very first act of Christian service; and to use Mr. W——'s own words, the fire has burned brighter and brighter on that altar to this day, as I trust it will continue to do so as long as we live."

A PLEASING PICTURE—A REMINISCENCE.

Pictorial representations are now very prevalent in publications of all kinds and sizes, not only for the young but adults. We see them in papers, magazines, and books. Children and youth are fond of pictures, and they look at them with delight. When in Great Britain two years ago, the writer saw many pictures, old and new, large and small, but none interested him so much as one he looked upon in Perth, while visiting Scotland; and he hopes his young friends will be pleased by a reference to it. It was a picture of Christ blessing little children. It was well executed and fraught with instruction. He gazed upon it again and again. It was a representation of one of the scenes recorded in the Gospels of our Lord Jesus Christ. It was a beautiful sight; the Saviour appeared so lovely, benignant and kind. Many children surrounded Him, and some of them very small—"little children,"—who stood near Him, looking up to Him, and seeming to be happy in His smiles. But there were others near, adults, or persons grown up, who did not seem so much interested. They had discouraged the approach of so many young people, from various motives, which we need not now consider. But the Saviour gently rebuked them, and encouraged the approach of these lambs to Himself for all time to come. "Suffer the little children to come unto me," said He, "and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of Heaven."

Truly, Jesus is the friend of children, and it behoves them to think much of Him, and come to Him in the exercise of faith and prayer. They cannot begin this *too early*. Many did come to Him when He was on earth, and sung His praises as He entered Jerusalem; and on many He placed His hands, and blessed them; some He took up in his arms. What a loving and kind Saviour! Great as He was, and thoroughly intent upon the work of human redemption, children were special objects of His regard; and ere He left the earth for Heaven, He bade Peter prove his love to Him, by the injunction, "Feed my lambs;" and the command is still in force.

Beloved children and youth, think of this picture. Come to this Saviour; run to Him; trust in Him; devote yourselves to Him. A dying father once said to his little daughter standing by his bedside: "Love Jesus and meet me in Heaven." We know the little girl, and hope she will indeed love this precious Saviour, and secure His friendship and guidance. We have read the memoir of a little boy named Rogers, who loved Jesus when very young, and died at the age of three years and five months, giving evidence of piety. The great Jonathan Edwards mentions the case of a little girl named Phebe Bartlett, who was converted when four years old, and lived nearly sixty years to give evidence of the reality of the change. And we have heard and read of many similar cases. Let the youngest reader be encouraged to look up to Jesus, and seek His blessing, for He waits to be gracious, and delights to help. He is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever."

JAMES T. BYRNE.

June 15th, 1868.

British and Foreign Record.

DEATH OF REV. DR. VAUGHAN. — Late English papers bring us the unexpected and unwelcome intelligence that this eminently good and great man, who for nearly half a century past has occupied a foremost position in the Congregational body in England, has just gone to his rest, after a very brief and sudden illness, at the age of seventy-four. His hale appearance, on the occasion of his visit to this country in the summer of 1865, the fervor and power with which "the old man eloquent" discoursed to us, and the announcement but a few months ago of his having undertaken the pastorate of a newly-formed Congregational church at a fashionable English watering-place—Torquay—had led us to hope he might have been spared to the church and to the denomination for many years to come.

It was our privilege, at the time of the meeting of the National Council of Congregational Churches at Boston, to which Drs. Vaughan and Raleigh were sent as delegates by the English Union, to ride in company with the former of these honoured brethren out to Plymouth Rock, an excursion to which had been kindly provided for by the Committee of Arrangements. We well remember the intense interest with which the Dr. surveyed the Harbour, the Rock, Burial Hill, Clark's Island, and every surrounding object which the feet of the Pilgrim Fathers had made sacred. To the whole company, but especially to him, who was so historically familiar with every foot of the soil, the place was like "holy ground." Nor can we ever forget the impression produced upon our minds by the christian manliness of his address before the Council at Boston, or by the eloquent words uttered by him under the inspiration of the scene at Plymouth Rock.

The following particulars of his life and labours, ministerial and literary, we condense from a biographical sketch of him in the *Christian World* :

Dr. Vaughan's name, says the writer, was suggestive at once of high intellect, steadfast character, intrepid devotion to principle and statesmanlike moderation, which reflect lustre upon an entire denomination. He owed his elevation solely to his own energy and merit, and it was a book picked up on a stall that kindled his intellectual ambition, and roused to active exertion those forces of the mind which never relapsed into repose until death bid his tireless and ardent brain be still. He received his training for the ministry under the Rev. W. Thorp, of Bristol. His first ministerial charge was in Worcester. He then occupied for many years the pulpit of Horton-street chapel, Kensington. At this place his extraordinary powers of mind made themselves known to a gradually widening circle, and he attracted to Horton-street chapel a very superior class of hearers. He began also to attain distinction as an author. He published a biography of Wycliffe,—opened, in his "Memorials of the Stuart Dynasty," that vein of historical inquiry which he subsequently worked to so much effect,—and moved forward into a place of importance among Nonconformists by his seasonable and vigorous works on "Religious parties in England," "Congregationalism and Modern Society," and "The Modern Pulpit." He became Lecturer on History at University College. His recognition as one of the most eminent living Nonconformists may be dated from the period when he was invited to become Principal of the Independent College, Lancashire. In this situation he continued for fourteen years. He subsequently held a pastoral charge in Uxbridge. His attention was, however, largely devoted to literature, and he established the *British Quarterly Review*, a periodical intended to serve the interests of intellectual culture, and the highest mental and moral progress, in connection with the Nonconformists of the United Kingdom. The *British Quarterly* has since continued to rank among the ablest and most influential periodical publications

of the day. In 1862, Dr. Vaughan published a volume upon "English Nonconformity," with special reference to the expulsion of the Puritans from the Church of England in 1662. The most remarkable of his recent publications are an historical account, very highly esteemed, of the Revolutions of English History, a volume of family prayers, and a deeply pathetic and beautiful memoir of his gifted and lamented son. On two occasions the Nonconformists of England evinced their sense of the importance of his services, and the excellence of his character, by presenting him with testimonials,—first, when he ceased to be Principal of the Lancashire Independent College in 1857; and, secondly, on his retirement from the editorship of the *British Quarterly Review* in 1865.

Just twelve months ago, Dr. Vaughan was asked to supply for a few Sabbaths the Belgrave Congregational Church at Torquay. Hardly anybody but one of Dr. Vaughan's known abilities would have been thought of, at such an advanced age, as a candidate for the vacant pulpit, but a very short visit satisfied all parties that he was the right man for the place. Soon an earnest invitation was extended to him to settle there. After some hesitation he accepted the call, and entered with thorough heartiness into the undertaking.

He went to it, says an intimate friend, not like an old man, but like a young one. It was grand to see the veteran who had done so glorious a day's work girding himself for his new enterprise. And like "a giant refreshed," he entered upon it. "It is a noble example and a lesson to all of us old folks," writes one who witnessed it, "never to think our work done." "He preaches wonderful sermons, and all equally good: we never have an indifferent one."

He had hardly entered fairly upon his duties, however, when he was called away. The nature of his illness is not given, but it was evidently but very brief, for the newspapers of the one week announce a marriage solemnized by him in the church, and those of the next his death! He rests from his labours, and his works do follow him.

THE IRISH ESTABLISHMENT.—The House of Lords has, by the very decisive vote of 192 to 97, rejected Mr. Gladstone's Irish Church Suspensory Bill, the object of which was to prevent the making of any new appointments, or the filling of any vacancies that may occur, whereby the future disendowment may be embarrassed.

Of course everybody expected the Lords would do just what they have done. Their obstructiveness upon all questions involving anything of the nature of reform, either political or ecclesiastical, and especially the latter, is proverbial, and will continue to be so as long as the Bishops, from whom the opposition principally proceeds, are allowed to retain their seats among the Peers of the realm.

A new election, however, for the Commons is at hand, and there can be but little doubt that when the new Reform Parliament meets, as it is expected to do in November, Mr. Gladstone will be sustained in his disendowment scheme by a still larger majority than he now possesses. The Lords must ultimately yield. We are surprised that Mr. Disraeli and his friends do not see this, and "agree with their adversary while they are in the way with him," for they could certainly drive a better bargain with the present moribund Parliament than they can hope to do with the next. Nonconformists can afford to wait, if they can. Our fear is, however, that they are blindly invoking a conflict with the representatives of the people that may, if persisted in, endanger the peace of the nation. We shall watch the issue with intense interest.

We are glad to note that in her reply to the address of the Commons upon this subject, the Queen says, "Relying on the wisdom of the House, her Majesty desires that her interests in the temporalities of the Irish Church will not in any way prevent parliamentary legislation on the subject."

SPURGEON ON THE DISENDOWMENT QUESTION.—The following pungent extract from a letter to Mr. Bright, M.P., sufficiently explains itself:

"The one point about which the Dissenters of England have any fear, is one which I trust you will mention to-night. We fear lest any share of the Church property should be given to the Papists. To a man we should deprecate this. Bad as the present evil is, we would sooner see it let alone than see Popery endowed with the national property. Not one single farthing ought any religious denomination to receive, and the whole matter will be imperilled if those in power are not quite clear as to any *douceurs* to the Pope. We are not agitated by the dead horse of 'No Popery,' which knaves would raise that fools may be their instruments; but we are very determined that it never shall be said that under the guise of removing the grievances of Ireland, we made an exchange of endowed churches, and put down the Anglican to set up the Roman image.

May you, dear sir, be sustained as the champion of the people; and as you have already lived to see many of the dreams of your youth become realities, so may you survive to see the matters in question enrolled in history as triumphs of the right and truth! Yours, with profound respect,

C. H. SPURGEON.

To John Bright, Esq."

THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON RITUALISM has just presented its second Report, together with the evidence on which it is based, in a Blue Book of 686 pages. We all remember what important discoveries (?) these learned Lords and Bishops gave to the world in their former report on clerical vestments, and to these we have now to add the following:

1. That while "there have been candlesticks with candles, on the Lord's Table, during a long period, in many cathedrals and collegiate churches and chapels," &c., the candles have very rarely, if ever, been lighted at the celebration of the Supper, until within about twenty-five years past.

2. That in parish churches the candles have never been lighted at the communion, until within the period just named.

3. That the use of incense in public worship is very rare and recent, and at variance with the church's usage for three hundred years.

They therefore recommend that "all variations from established usage, in respect of lighted candles and incense," be restrained. Aye, but how to do it?—that's the question. The plan proposed is, by giving aggrieved parishioners—afterwards explained as meaning one or more churchwardens, or five resident members—the right of making formal application to the Bishop, and in case of his refusal to interfere, of appealing to the Archbishop *in camera*, to abate the evil.

But nobody knows better than these commissioners themselves, how tedious, uncertain and expensive are the processes of ecclesiastical law. So with the recent Mackonochie decision before them, the Ritualists may put themselves quite at ease, assured that the Royal Commission will not hurt them.

SURREY CHAPEL.—Newman Hall's church has secured during the winter a series of twenty-four lectures and entertainments for the working classes, attended by an aggregate of forty or fifty thousand working people from the neighbourhood of Surrey Chapel. They have been free, with the exception of a few reserved seats;

and the course has included subjects of scientific, political, biographical, literary, social, and general interest, also musical and elocutionary entertainments. Here is a suggestion for other churches.

"TELESCOPIC PHILANTHROPY."—Commenting upon the noble sums recently promised for Home Mission work by Mr. Morley, Mr. Crossley, Mr. Juke, Mr. Coote, Mr. Joshua Wilson, and others, the *Unitarian Herald* says, "Unitarians sometimes twit the orthodox Dissenters with neglecting the mission to the heathen at home for "telescopic philanthropy" abroad, and say, self complacently, that they "concentrate their efforts at home." When they give for their exclusive work of home missions of every kind on the scale on which our Independent friends give for home missions, as only one part of their missionary effort, it will be time enough to talk. It is not the whole amount they raise that deserves our special consideration. The force of any appeal on that ground might be weakened by the idea, that the difference is only proportional to the greater extent of their body. It is the scale on which they give that is worthy of note. These sums are indeed something like "offerings" to God's service! They carry out the good old thought, "I will not sacrifice unto the Lord of that which doth cost me nought."

B. & F. BIBLE SOCIETY.—The sixty-fourth anniversary of the British and Foreign Bible Society was held May 6th.

The report begins by an allusion to the distribution of the Scriptures at the French Exhibition. Copies in 170 different languages were sold, and 91,000 copies were circulated. Bibles were also formally presented to some of the leading statesmen of France, and also to the Emperor who expressed his desire that his subjects should enjoy perfect religious freedom. The receipts from ordinary sources for the year ending March 31, 1868, have reached nearly \$900,000, being \$38,000 in advance of the previous year. The ordinary payments have amounted to \$890,000; and adding the sum paid on account of the Jubilee, China, India, and Paris Exhibition Funds, the total has reached \$928,000. The issues of the society for the year are as follows: From the depot at home, 1,351,989; from depots abroad, 1,048,887; making a total of 2,400,876 copies. The total issues of the society now amount to 55,069,865 copies.

AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY.—The Fifty-second Anniversary of this Society was held at Steinway Hall, on Thursday morning, the 14th May.

The number of books printed at the Bible House has been 1,121,961; in foreign lands, 183,386—total, 1,305,347 volumes. There have been issued from the Bible House 312,525 Bibles and 643,336 Testaments. The foreign issues and circulation amount to 177,733, beside 24,607 volumes sent from the Bible Society, in about 50 languages and dialects.

The total issues and circulation, domestic and foreign, during the year, reach 1,186,194 volumes, and during the 52 years since the formation of the Society, the number has amounted to 23,855,120 volumes.

AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY.—During the year the Society has printed 1,072,780 volumes, 9,335,934 publications and 545,000 copies of monthly periodicals. The number of publications on the Society's list is 3,981, of which 802 are volumes, besides 3,834 publications, in 141 languages and dialects, for circulation abroad. For gratuitous distribution \$56,616 worth of books and tracts have been given away. 273 colporteurs have been sent out, who have visited, in 23 States, 254,862 families. Cash grants to the amount of \$10,000 have been made to 30 different missions.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION OF YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS met in Detroit June 24th. About 500 delegates were present, among whom were a goodly number from Canada. H. Thane Miller was again chosen

president. The venerable Dr. Duffield, to whom was assigned the giving of the address of welcome, sank down as he was delivering it, and two days afterwards expired. This event, while casting somewhat of gloom over the meeting, appears also to have added to its earnestness.

The confederated Associations now number 525 (an increase of 280 since last year), with a membership of 57,000. 52 daily prayer meetings are held, and 3,000 conversions are reported.

The first question discussed by the Convention! "How can the Associations best be kept steadfast in their work?" brought out thoughts of which the following is a summary: By abiding in Christ; making religion a matter of principle and not of feeling; by such a state of the heart as will make the coming of Christ's kingdom its greatest desire; by a firm belief in the necessity of work, and in the power of Gospel truth.

In discussing the duties of Associations toward strangers, and how best to perform them, the following thoughts were suggested: The best time to reach one is when he feels himself a stranger; go after them, even into saloons; divide every locality into districts; work through the churches by volunteers from them; don't wait for an introduction; shake hands with them; don't approach them condescendingly.

The importance of lay preaching and open air meetings was enlarged upon: Mr. Moody is expected to inaugurate a movement in this direction, the present season. The use of tobacco was discussed, and generally denounced, and liquor drinking, selling, and licensing were strongly condemned. Belief in the divinity of Christ was regarded as essential, and no union of effort with societies denying this doctrine was deemed practicable.

The next meeting of the Convention will be held in Portland, Me.

Official.

Congregational College of B. N. A., Session 1868-69—1. The Session in the Literary Course will begin on Wednesday, September 14th, in the Faculty of Arts, McGill College, on which day the entrance Examinations will be held.

2. The Session in the Theological Department will begin on Wednesday, Oct. 7th.

3. Applications for admission should be sent to the Secretary on or before August 25th.

Montreal, July 10th, 1868.

GEORGE CORNISH, M. A., Sec.

Widows' Fund.—Sums received since last announcement:—Southwold Church, \$2. 40; Listowel Church, \$4. 00; Guelph Church, \$16. 08; Lanark Village Church, \$9. 27.

Montreal, July 18, 1868.

J. C. BARTON, *Treasurer.*

Congregational Union of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.—The Twentieth Annual Session of this Union will (D.V.) be commenced at Sheffield, N. B., on Friday evening, the 4th September, and will probably be continued till the Tuesday following.

Ministers, delegates and friends, who purpose being present will be kind enough to communicate with the Secretary previously, in order that the necessary accommodation may be provided.

ROBERT WILSON, *Secretary.*

Sheffield, N. B., 15th July, 1868.

News of the Churches.

Warwick.—The Rev. D. Macallum, who has, for nearly sixteen years past, occupied the pastorate of the Congregational Church at Warwick, and for a time, that at Plympton also, resigned his charge on the last Sabbath in June. Our brother "has laboured, and has not fainted," and relinquishes the field only under the strongest conviction that it is his duty to take this step. We deeply regret any such necessity, but trust the Lord may guide him to some other position of greater promise and usefulness.

A Word from Kelvin—This church, which has been vacant since the removal of the Rev. S. Snider, is at present supplied by Mr. Wallace (Congregational College). The dissolution of the relationship between Burford and Scotland has brought advantages with it, securing stated worship at Kelvin and New Durham, which were not able to support a pastor themselves. The people of Kelvin seem to appreciate the "breaking of the bread of life," and the house is filled every Lord's-day with attentive worshippers.—The ladies of Kelvin celebrated the anniversary of our Dominion by a strawberry festival, which was a complete success. Notwithstanding the oppressive heat, 5 o'clock brought together crowds of the pleasure-loving inhabitants, who, if we may judge by their smiling countenances, enjoyed themselves very highly. The beautiful grove of Mr. Almas afforded a cool retreat from the scorching rays of "old sol," and here were found tables filled with most delicious fruit, served in the best possible manner. After enjoying a sumptuous repast, and reading and prayer by the chairman, the company was entertained by racy addresses from several gentlemen present. Foremost among these was the Rev. Mr. Armour, formerly the beloved pastor of this church. Then followed the Messrs. Malcolm and Eadie in a happy strain, the Chairman concluding by an address on "the advantages connected with our Dominion." The exercises were enlivened by music at the hands of the Misses Terwilligar of Norwichville, and Spencer of Hamilton, and were brought to a close by the singing of the National Anthem. In all respects the 1st July 1868, will ever be pleasantly remembered by the friends in and surrounding Kelvin.

R. W. W.

Ottawa.—A letter just received from the Rev. E. Ebbs, of Aurora, Ill., and lately of Paris, Ont., confirms a rumour that had previously reached us, of his having reconsidered, at the earnest solicitation of the Ottawa church, and of many brethren in the ministry, his declination of the call from that place. He now accepts the invitation, and will (D. V.) enter upon his new charge on the last Sabbath in this month, (August.) The rejoicing of his Aurora friends on the occasion of his declining the call will now, doubtless, be turned into mourning. We sincerely sympathize with them, as much, that is, as in the circumstances we can be expected to do. But their loss is our gain; and as we only lent him to them for a time, and retained therefore a kind of preemption right in him, they must not expect too much of us. He is undoubtedly the choice of his brethren, just as much as he is of the Ottawa church, for the capital of Canada.

Hamilton Church.—At the Monthly Meeting, held on Friday, 3rd July, the delegates to the meetings of the Congregational Union, held in this city and in this place of worship, reported to the church. After which the meeting unanimously passed a resolution of sympathy with the Rev. T. Pullar, pastor of the church, under the unseemly attack made upon him, by certain parties of the Union, on the ground of his decided maintenance of the terms of communion hitherto observed in the Congregational Union of Canada, and also in the Congregational Union of England and Wales; and his resistance to the attempt made by some brethren to introduce into the Union a second class of ministers, who,

although tolerated, yet on account of their theological sentiments are not to be appointed to represent the Union on public occasions.

The church also expressed their entire approbation of their pastor's action in tendering his resignation of membership to the Union, in the circumstances in which he was placed.

Hamilton, July 20, 1868.

J. B. LAING, *Secretary*.

[We regret that we cannot see with the Hamilton church and its pastor, in respect to the course pursued by him, in tendering his resignation of membership. The acts of "*certain parties in the Union*," however "*unseemly*," can hardly be properly regarded as a sufficient reason for withdrawal from the Union, unless that body should deliberately assume responsibility for them. That the Union did not sustain the "*attack*" complained of may be seen in the fact that the brother, whose remarks were the chief cause of offence, felt constrained to record his protest against the inaction of the Union, just before its final adjournment. The motion to amend the report of the Nomination Committee was carried, not "*on account of the theological sentiments*" of the party first nominated, but on entirely different grounds.—Ed. "C. I."]

Canada Presbyterian Church.—The Rev. D. K. McVicar, pastor of the Coté Street congregation, Montreal, has been appointed Professor of Theology in the new Presbyterian College in that city.

The organ question has been settled for the present, after a long discussion of the overture from Knox Church, Montreal, asking permission to introduce an organ, by the Synod voting, 126 to 31, to lay the overture on the table. Result, —Knox Church is using the organ *volens volens*, and several other congregations, it is said, will follow suit.

The Synod also agreed to send down the Book of Psalms and Hymns for public worship, sanctioned by the English Presbyterians, to presbyteries and sessions, for their consideration, with a view to its adoption at the next meeting of Synod.

Marriage with a deceased wife's sister has once more been condemned by the Synod, on an appeal from the Presbytery of Paris, by vote of 52 to 37. The resolution prudently abstains from all reference to the scripturalness, or otherwise, of such marriages, but affirms "the continued adherence of Synod to the declaration of the Westminster Confession on the subject.

The Rev. W. J. McKenzie, of Baltimore, Ont., has withdrawn from the Synod, with strong tendencies in the direction of the Episcopal Church.

Presbyterian Church of Canada (Kirk).—One of the most pleasing incidents in connection with the meeting of Synod at Kingston, was the interchange of deputations with the Wesleyan Conference, which met in the same city. These fraternal greetings are among "the signs of the times," and do great good, if in no other way, by promoting the *entente cordiale* which ought to exist between the different denominations. We have sometimes thought, however, that a little more frankness with each other on such occasions, in respect to distinctive principles, would do no harm, and might even help the cause of truth. Is there not some danger of professions of union and cordiality being regarded as hollow, without such explanations? We differ,—differ honestly and intelligently,—why ignore the fact?

The attention of Synod was largely occupied with devising means for meeting the losses to the Temporalities Fund, and Queen's College (amounting in each case to about \$4,000 per annum), through the failure of the Commercial Bank.

Voluntary brethren who, like ourselves, were opposed to the Government endowment scheme, and therefore had no Clergy Reserve money to lose, will accept our congratulations on having, at least in this instance, escaped harm and loss by sticking to principle. We fear more of that money will be lost yet.

Queen's College has 12, and Morrin College, 3 divinity students.

An attempt is to be made to secure closer ecclesiastical connection with the Presbyterian brethren in the Lower Provinces.

The Wesleyan Methodist Church.--The most notable feature in connection with the meeting of Conference at Kingston, in addition to what we have noted above, was the presence and able presidency of the Rev. W. M. Punshon. All his utterances seem to have been worthy of the man, but his address at the ordination of the young preachers seems to have been specially excellent, "and excited," says the *Christian Guardian*, "the strongest and holiest emotions of our better nature. It was listened to with reverend and profound attention, and we are sure that many a high resolve, from cleric and lay of the vast audience, was uttered by strong men to live nearer to Christ, and to work more faithfully for him."

We rejoice to learn from the *Guardian* that "the narrow and unpatriotic policy of the Legislature of Ontario," as that journal is pleased to call it, "has only tended to intensify their devotion" to their College; that a movement is on foot to secure for it the right kind of an endowment—by private liberality—to the extent of \$100,000, and "that the highly gifted and accomplished President of the Conference, whose very name is a tower of strength and a pledge of success, is prepared to devote his splendid talents, as far as is consistent with his high office and due regard to the interests of other departments of the work, to the accomplishment of this work." The declaration, however, that they "have no thought of abandoning their right to their just share of legislative aid, and will be prepared at the proper time to unite with other denominations in demanding" a renewal of the government grant, sadly mars the satisfaction with which we should otherwise have regarded so noble a project.

The net increase in membership for 1867-8 was 1,982.

The Sabbath School Association of Canada, it is now announced, will hold its next annual meeting at St. Catharines, Ont., in October. Particulars will be given in our next number.

Obituary.

MR. A. RANKIN.

Died, in Lanark, July 5th, after a short sickness, Archibald Rankin, Deacon of the first Congregational church in this place.

The following is an extract of a sermon, preached by the pastor on Sabbath, July 12th, 1868.

In his younger days he did not openly profess to be a follower of Christ, though at that period, he respected religion. Coming from a land of Bibles and Protestant principles, and of orthodoxy of creed, it would seem that from earliest days, he respected the preachers, and revered the preaching of the ever-blessed gospel. It was not till he had reached the age of thirty-seven that he assumed the profession and put on the badge of Christianity. But his was a profession that carried a living reality with it. The kernel of his faith was formed before the shell appeared. It is remarkable that the period of his regeneration exactly divides the time between his natural birth and his death. Thirty-seven years elapsed between his coming into the world and his conversion, and thirty-seven between his conversion and his death. And thus the day when he became Christ's is the pivot that balances the former with the latter years of his life.

His life was a living example of a man who grows in grace. The longer he was in the service of Christ, he became the more attached to His Saviour. His path was as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. And who ever saw him absent from the public worship of God in the sanctuary,

except under the pressure of an unyielding compulsion? He loved his Lord too much to infringe the divine injunction, "forsake not the assembling of yourselves together."

Death was often to him a subject of meditation, and his eye never veered from looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of his faith. Sometime ago, he asked me to preach a sermon, on the "uncertainty of life," adding the words, "We do not know how soon we may be called away from earth, into the presence of God." His spirit was already inhaling the fragrance of the Rose of Sharon.

He was exemplary in his attendance on prayer-meetings, and on all other gatherings of the church. Had he felt inclined, no one could have given a more feasible reason for non-attendance than he. His hands were always full; and his life, up to his last sickness, was one of incessant toil. But in spite of the work that devolved on him, and in spite of his old age, he was always present with us in all our assemblages. How badly does his life condemn those who bring silly excuses for absenting themselves from the house of God.

Though a man of years, he had a fondness for children that sprang from his christianity. Sometime ago, we needed a Superintendent for our Sunday School; and the question was, "who is the person, and whom can we get?" Every eye was turned to our now deceased brother. Every one knew that he would cast his whole heart into the work if he undertook it. We asked him to assume the management of the School. He was not the man to flinch when he saw the finger of duty pointing him to that office.

Brethren, the church has been bereaved of one of her best ornaments. We will feel his loss. Not only will we miss his saintly face in the pew, not only will we miss his activity, his zeal, his liberality, and his devotement to the church, but we will miss his prayers, those utterances of his heart and lips to God for us.

Not only the church but the locality has been bereaved of one of its warmest friends. He was the friend of all good men, whether they belonged to his own or to another church. He had too much large-heartedness to entertain the view that goodness could not be found except within the pale of his own communion.

In his sickness God was with him. The comforts of the gospel were vouchsafed to him, to cheer him in distress, and to fortify him in the hour of dissolution. His will flowed in the same channel with that of his blessed Redeemer.

Pleased was he to live, or pleased to die, as God willed it. And while the conviction was deepening in his mind that his sickness would terminate in death, the smile rested serenely on his face, at the contemplation of life in Jesus. His confession, just before his death, was, "*My feet stand firm on the Rock of Ages.*"

Gleanings.

POKING FUN AT SCIENCE.—Lord Neaves, an eminent judge of Scotland, has written a volume of songs to ridicule the new theories now floating about the scientific world. Mr. Darwin's theory of the origin of species by natural selection is thus made to explain itself:

A deer with a neck that was longer by half
Than the rest of his family's (try not to laugh)
By stretching and stretching became a giraffe.
Which nobody can deny.

A very small pig with a very long nose
Sends forth a proboscis quite down to his toes,
And he then by the name of an elephant goes.
Which nobody can deny.

An ape with a pliable thumb and big brain,
When the gift of the gab he had managed to gain,
As a lord of creation established his reign.
Which nobody can deny.

Mr. Mill suggested that matter may be a "possibility of sensation," Lord Neaves enlarges upon the idea in these stanzas:

AIR: *Roy's Wife of Aldavalloch.*

Against a stone you strike your toe ;
 You feel 'tis sore, it makes a clatter ;
 But what you feel is all you know
 Of toe, or stone, or mind, or matter.
 Mill and Hume of mind or matter
 Wouldn't leave a rag or tatter ;
 What although
 We feel the blow ?
 That doesn't show there's mind or matter.

Had I skill like Stuart Mill,
 His own position I could shatter ;
 The weight of Mill I count as nil,
 If Mill has neither mind nor matter.
 Mill when *minus* mind and matter,
 Though he make a kind of clatter,
 Must himself
 Just mount the shelf,
 And there be laid with mind and matter.

HOW THEOLOGY IS OUTGROWN.—We hear of some dapper preachers who claim that the age has outgrown doctrine. They have advanced around the circle to the place from which they started, and hope they are ready again to enter the kingdom of heaven like little children, as far as ignorance is concerned. Let it be remembered that systematic theology has its essence simply in clear thinking and speaking on the subject of that religion which is revealed in the Scriptures. A man can outgrow systematic theology, therefore, either by ceasing to be clear-headed, or by ceasing to be religious. I suppose some escape in their haste, by both ways at once.—*Prof. A. A. Hodge.*

LIVING FOR SELF.—Thousands of men breathe, move, and live ; pass off the stage of life, and are heard of no more. Why ? None were blessed by them ; none could point to them as the means of their redemption ; not a line they wrote, not a word they spoke, could be recalled, and so they perished. Their lights went out in darkness, and they were not remembered more than the infant of yesterday. Will you thus live and die, O man immortal ? Live for something. Do good, and leave behind you a monument of virtue that the storms of time can never efface. Write your name in kindness, love, and mercy on the hearts of those you come in contact with, and you will never be forgotten.—*Chalmers.*

DRESSING FOR CHURCH.—Mrs. H. B. Stowe very fitly says the following :—Very estimable, and, we trust, very religious young women sometimes enter the house of God in a costume which makes the acts of devotion in the service seem almost burlesque. When a brisk little creature comes into a pew with hair frizzed till it stands on end in a most startling manner, rattling strings of beads and bits of tinsel, she may look exceedingly pretty and *piquante* ; and, if she came there for a game of croquet or a tableau-party would be all in very good taste ; but, as she comes to confess that she is a miserable sinner, and that she has done things she ought not to have done, and left undone the things she ought to have done—as she takes upon her lips most solemn and tremendous words, whose meaning runs far beyond life into a sublime eternity—there is a discrepancy which would be ludicrous if it were not melancholy.

An old writer advised :—"If any one speak ill of thee, flee to thine own conscience and examine thy heart. If thou be guilty, it is a just correction ; if not guilty, it is a fair instruction ; make use of both, so shalt thou distil honey out of gall, and out of an open enemy create a secret friend."

