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“WHAT SHOULD BE DONE BY OUR CHURCHES WITH A VIEW TO THEIR GROWTH?”

(A Paper read before the Central Association)

BY THE REV. T. M. REIKIE.

This question may awaken the thought, in some minds, of a comparatively weak and feeble existence. Whatever may have been the growth of our Churches in this country in the past, there is undoubtedly room for expansion, and it is our duty in a manful and Christian spirit to go forward, attempting great things in the name of God. If there exists any particular defect hindering our progress, let us by all means search it out, and cast it from us. That there is a goodly measure of loyalty to our principles is undeniable, yet our surroundings may have been unfortunate, our fidelity may have been limited, and our disappointments have certainly been frequent, all, however, calling loudly for a calm investigation of this question—“What should be done by our Churches with a view to their growth?” There can be no growth without life. Life in, to and for Christ. This is imperative. Churches must walk in the fear of God and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost to be multiplied. The beauty of a growing, living Church is very attractive. Out of Zion the perfection of beauty God hath shined; while the ever-ripening clusters of the fruits of holiness show the mellowing influence of the Sun of Righteousness.

For the purpose of a clear understanding, we will divide our subject into two branches, considering, first, some points requiring prayer and effort in each individual Church; and then asking two questions of a general character as likely to stimulate inquiry regarding what it is best to do in order to the progress of the denomination—or, in other words, of our Churches—throughout the land.

Each individual Church should—*Seek Reviving*. A Church to grow, must exist in the enjoyment of spiritual blessings, or not having that, pray and work for a revival. Spiritual power alone can build up. Take hold of Divine strength. We can do all things through Christ strengthening us. The tree that grows must have its roots deep in the soil; so when rooted and grounded in Christ we may expect to draw nourishment from Him. Walking in Him and with Him will constrain others to know that we have been with Jesus, and that will give influence. Every person has an influence of some sort; a hallowed, Christ-like power will act as a magnet to draw into fellowship those of spiritual insight and impulses. The importance of setting forth the great doctrines of salvation—seeking to save the lost—cannot be over-estimated. All at work, and always at it. The utmost effort should be put forth by the whole available resources of the Church for the purpose of saving souls; and the Lord will add daily of the saved.

Each Church should—*Endeavour to possess such outward appliances as are neces-*

sary to attract and command respect. This requires thought and prayer, lest plans be adopted that savour more of the world than of the Church. Mere attraction does not settle the question, but the right, the true, the good. It is possible for the favour of men to cross the boundary line, and so to lose all distinction between what is legitimate in Church objects, and what tastes strongly of the frivolous, the sensational, the theatrical. Arrangements for the Sunday School and for the development of the social element require to be under the control of Christian wisdom and law. A failure to develop wisely in these directions is sure to retard ultimately, whatever may be the immediate promise. At this point we cannot but express the opinion that the existence of a comfortable and beautiful church-building is an important element of success. To grow, we ought to keep pace with the times, and one prominent feature of our day is a marked improvement in ecclesiastical architecture. People do not now prefer an old barn to a beautiful house. Of course it should not be burdened with a load of debt, but a house built for the Lord and devoted to Him, possessing the requirements which this age demands. The existence of such a place is an argument with a community of no ordinary force; it speaks for itself, telling of an interest felt by the people who worship in it, and of vigour and willingness to advance the objects for which they are banded together: while a place out of repair, or lacking in all the elements of a refined taste, and perhaps of comfort, proclaims that those who are content with such a house of worship, when by a little exertion they could have it otherwise, deserve to be left behind in the race. There are instances in which new life and interest have sprung from a movement to arise and build.

Every Church should—*Bring a devout and enlightened spirit to the carrying out of our Church polity.* The New Testament contains rules for Christian assemblies, but through ignorance or oversight of them much damage has accrued to some Churches. Our growth has been retarded, and our very existence in some places imperilled, by a false representation of the practical working of our system. Brotherly love, mutual forbearance, and a supreme regard to the mind of Christ, would do much to produce an impression on outsiders, constraining them to say "We will go with you, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." Canvassing, holding caucus meetings, circulating illegitimate papers for signature, gossip, and so forth, after the manner of politicians and the world, are quite alien to the spirit of a Scriptural Congregationalism. The spirit of party ought to be cast out. No clique should dominate in the affairs of Christ's Church, while a family compact is sure to enervate and weaken the healthy action of the membership. "Do all things without murmurings and disputings." This brotherly feeling will make it a joyous service to continue steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers. A regular and faithful attendance on all the means of grace on Sabbaths and week-days will also strengthen the hands and hearts of pastor, deacons and members, producing the signs of a healthy and advancing Church.

Finally, on this branch of our subject, *the financial arrangements of every Church ought to be well considered and faithfully carried out.* The want of system and of conscientious discharge of duty in money matters have been causes of much damage to small country churches. Perhaps more trouble has sprung out of money difficulties than any other. To steer clear of shipwreck on this rock will usually only require a wise understanding of obligations, and a carefulness to abound in the grace of liberality: "Knowing the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, He became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich."

We now proceed to the wider aspect of our subject, namely, that bearing on our general position and prosperity. Now, the first question we ask under this division of our theme is WHY SHOULD WE EXIST? Pardon the supposition of non-existence. We dare not cherish the thought, although it is by no means unusual to meet the idea. Sometimes, perhaps, the wish is father to the thought. As Churches planted by Christ, we expect their preservation and extension. We exist

to discharge all the blessed duties, and to maintain all the gracious truths for which other denominations of Christians live. There is a heritage in common in which we all rejoice. We would fulfil our own share of the world's evangelization. Further, we have a history of our own of which we are not ashamed. Right nobly did our fathers, in Britain and America, maintain the principles of liberty and boldly resist the tyranny of despots. Freedom to worship God has not been bought without a hard battle. Of our share in the struggle no man can stop our boasting. Even in this Canada of ours, no unworthy part has been played by our denomination in securing the secularization of the clergy reserves, and the abolition of State grants for sectarian education. Apart from these considerations, which speak for themselves, we have deeper reasons for seeking a vigorous and extended growth in this country. We take it that the Scriptural nature of our system warrants our efforts to hold our ground and extend our borders. Certainly a faith in our polity ought to prevail among us. An emphatic and prominent recognition and assertion of our distinctive principles should be a part of our programme. Were we to judge by the actions and style of talking indulged in by some ministers and members of other denominations, one would suppose that we ought to make apologies for being in existence—a state of things for which the words and ways of some of our own men in the past have given too much place. If there are no great objects for which we exist, then let us by all means vacate the ground, and not be guilty of dividing the Church of Christ. If our ecclesiastical position can vary according to geographical lines, then does our existence become a matter of grave doubt; but as bound by the Word of God to maintain principles which we find there, and which, in our opinion, have only to be properly worked to give a fair expression to men of the true nature of Christianity, and to promote largely the diffusion of Christian ideas, we cannot retire from the field, or lower our flag, discouraged by changes on the part of any who have been formerly with us.

One effect of strong views of the Scriptural nature of our polity will be to secure the abiding loyalty of our ministry. It must be confessed that an element of great weakness to the cause is to be found in our being abandoned by men who have been prominently on our side. Our membership should also be educated to understand, and stand up for the liberty which they have in Christ Jesus. There are three great points to which we will advert in this connection, justifying our existence and our attempts at extension. We possess a goodly amount of freedom in forming and expressing theological opinions, which does not exist in some of the leading denominations—at any rate as expressed in their creeds and formulas, and as carried out by Church Courts and officials. Then we claim a capacity in our system, well adapted to a free country, to develop a high degree of Christian manhood—forming efficient workers in every department of aggressive work for Christ—and promoting a beneficial individualism, fitting for taking part in Church business and voting intelligently. Further, we think that Christ has decidedly guarded and preserved the fellowship of His people by putting it into their hands as a direct Christian duty to maintain purity of communion, and given them clear commands in their corporate capacity to exercise discipline on offending members—duties which, in our view, can only be Scripturally obeyed by the concurrent action of the body, assembled in the name of the Lord.

The second question bearing on the general position and prosperity of the Church is—HOW CAN WE DO OUR WORK WELL? Unreserved and entire consecration is required. We have a great work to do, so that we cannot retire from it. Soul-winning demands a wisdom only found by drinking into the Spirit of Jesus. An all-absorbing pursuit of the great interests of eternity is likely to meet with success. Let our lips be touched with the live coal from the altar; let our tongues become tongues of fire through the baptism of the Spirit; let our hearts throb with intense love for men; let our all be devoted to our Master and His cause, and wonders of grace will be seen, producing the cry—“What hath God wrought!”

Without for a moment losing sight of the paramount importance of the spiritual

aspect of this question, we may be permitted to touch on two or three particulars affecting our general position which may have somewhat to do with our growth.

First, *might not a well-considered plan of action in our denominational affairs, and a faithful carrying out thereof, secure to our body some advantages possessed by other denominations in which we have been supposed deficient?*

While maintaining intact the Scriptural independency of the Churches in managing their own affairs, means might be found to give greater prominence to our oneness in Christ. This, especially in the settlement and dismissal of ministers, ordinations and recognitions, services to be in order among us requiring the presence and countenance of the bishops and delegates of the Churches in the immediate locality, although not excluding that of leading brethren from a distance : and further in aiming to secure the essential point of good and regular standing in the ministry, by a mutual understanding of general principles to which all submitted.

Second, *the cultivation of a stronger denominational spirit among us would tend to strengthen us generally.*

A deeper interest would be felt in our work. Desertions from our ranks would be less likely to occur, especially among members removing from cities to country places. Our public denominational gatherings, such as Associations and Unions, would become more attractive, especially if, instead of constitution-making and amending occupying a large part of the time, thought was concentrated on whatever tends to deepen and extend the work of God in ourselves and others.

Third, *our missionary operations require to be calmly and prayerfully reviewed, that we may be aroused to prosecute them with stronger faith and maintain them vigorously.*

If any improvement can be made in our machinery, by all means let us adopt it. If special evangelistic services are found to be honoured of God in saving souls, let efforts be made to hold them. If our reliance on pecuniary assistance from England has been found to impede our development in self-help and Christian vigour, let us set about awakening such zeal and love in the hearts of all that our treasury will be replenished by offerings demonstrative of Christian willingness and consecration.

THE CASE OF THE REV. D. J. MACDONNELL.

BY THE EDITOR.

The case of the Rev. D. J. Macdonnell, of St. Andrew's Church in this city, who, some months ago, was charged before the Toronto Presbytery with having departed from the standards of the Presbyterian Church, in regard to the doctrine of "Future Punishment," came up for a hearing again on the 4th ult., that being the time fixed by that body at which he was required to report as to his agreement, or otherwise, with the teachings of the Confession of Faith. In accordance with their requirement, Mr. Macdonnell submitted the following statement :—

"1. So far as the language of the Confession of Faith on this point is concerned, I find that it is almost entirely borrowed from Scripture, and I declare my adhesion to it, understanding the phrase 'eternal torments' to have the same meaning as 'everlasting punishment' in Matthew xxv.

"2. While I do not consider myself debarred by the teaching of Scripture from hoping that God may in some way put an end to sin and suffering, I am satisfied that it is not a part of the message with which I am entrusted as a minister of the Gospel to hold out any hope of future pardon to those who have in this life rejected Christ, 'Now is the accepted time.' What God may do hereafter is apparently not among the things revealed, or intended to be known.

"I hope that this statement will prove satisfactory."

This statement was considered by some as sufficient and satisfactory, and a motion was offered to accept it as such. By others, however, it was regarded as vague and even evasive, and one gentleman characterized it as "very clever," to which Mr. Macdonnell replied that "he was sorry to hear his statement characterized as clever. He had not deserved that. He wrote the statement without intending to make it clever. He had endeavoured to make an honest statement. He could have made a clever statement by saying that he adhered to the language of the Confession of Faith on the points under discussion. If the Presbytery required him to say he had got rid of difficulties on these points, the matter could be settled that evening, because he did not expect to get rid of such difficulties. He had been advised to make a more cautious statement, in all simplicity and honesty, by more than one friend. He had followed the dictates of his own heart and conscience in submitting the statement he had drawn up, because it let the Presbytery know what were his thoughts. If the statement was inconsistent, then his thoughts were inconsistent."

The non-contents, however, prevailed, and an amendment was moved by Prof. McLaren, and carried by a vote of 17 to 9, to appoint a Committee to confer with Mr. Macdonnell, and report upon his statement of views at a subsequent meeting.

The Report of that Committee was submitted to a special meeting of Presbytery on the 18th ult. The document is a lengthy one and dealt with three questions, viz:—1. Did Mr. Macdonnell's paper embody a statement of views which the Presbytery should accept as satisfactory? 2. If there is indicated in said paper a deviation from the received doctrine of the Church, is it of such a nature as can be tolerated in one holding the office of a Gospel minister? 3. What action should be taken by the Presbytery in the premises?

In regard to the first of these the Committee reported that "they cannot recommend the Presbytery to accept Mr. Macdonnell's statement as satisfactory" for several reasons, chiefly because Mr. Macdonnell "did not declare his adhesion to the doctrine of Future Punishment as taught in the Confession of Faith, in the well understood and historical meaning of its language," and because he did not properly define in what sense he understands the phrase "everlasting punishment."

Appended to the report they also submitted the following "Notes" by Mr. Macdonnell in explanation of his former statement:—

"1. I substitute the words, 'everlasting punishment,' or, rather, the Greek words in Matt. xxv, 46, for 'eternal torments,' because the former expression is in Scripture applied to the punishment of wicked men, and the latter is not. There is an obvious distinction between 'punishment' and 'torments.'

"2. The word *aionion* may, of course, mean 'absolutely endless.' I do not deny that there is strong ground for assigning to it that meaning in the passage quoted. But it has often in Scripture a more limited signification, and if there is room for even a shadow of doubt as to whether the Saviour intended to teach that evil would be endless, there is room to 'hope,' however vaguely, that God may in some way put an end to sin and suffering."

Upon this section of the report an earnest and lengthened discussion arose. Mr. Macdonnell expressed himself as "immensely disappointed" at the character of the report. "He was disappointed for his own sake, and he thought he might honestly say for the Church's sake, as much as for his own. It seemed to him that while the Committee, acting, he had no doubt, with the fairest intentions, had given full weight—too full weight, in his judgment (but a man was never a fair judge in his own case)—to the doubt which he had expressed, and did express, concerning that word, and presented it in the most unfavourable light, there was not a word in the report about the declaration to which the Rev. Mr. Bain had called attention and which he thought a most important practical point, as it bore on the teaching—'I am satisfied that it is not a part of the message with which I am entrusted, as a minister of the Gospel, to hold out any hope of future

pardon to those who have in this life rejected Christ ;' that whatever his secret hope might be, whatever he might hope that God would reveal, whatever he might doubt, to whatever extent he might doubt as to the meaning of what God had revealed, he was satisfied that for the present his business was to warn men and to preach Christ crucified to men, and to tell them there was one way of salvation and no other, as he had been telling them, and did tell them every Sunday, notwithstanding what was said in that one sermon in which views which had been perplexing him for years were too frankly and injudiciously stated.

"The question," he said, "had been put to him by the convener of the Committee,—'What do you understand by the word "everlasting"?' and he had answered substantially thus :—'The word everlasting means for ages of ages, possibly endless, possibly not.' He did not deny that the words might have the force which they all, he supposed, ascribed to them ; that they might mean endless ; but if there was even a shadow of doubt as to these words having their awfully full signification, then there was so far a shadow of room to hope—and he *did* hope."

Mr. Macdonnell's explanations, however, were declared not satisfactory by the Presbytery, and Professor McLaren next moved concurrence in the second section of the Committee's report :—"That in the opinion of Presbytery, Mr. Macdonnell's statement embodies a deviation from the teaching of the Scriptures, and the received doctrine of the Church, which this Court is not at liberty to allow in one of its members."

The intent and meaning of this resolution was already plain enough, but that there might be no misunderstanding it, Mr. Macdonnell asked whether it was intended to declare by it that no person making a statement such as he had made should remain a minister of the Presbyterian Church.

The Moderator.—"It means that such a deviation as that which the Committee has found from the Confession of Faith, and the teaching of Scripture, in your statement, cannot be allowed in any minister of the Church."

Rev. Mr. Macdonnell.—"The legitimate conclusion is that a person holding that should find his way out of the Church as quickly as possible—should find his way out, or should be put out. This seems to me to be the critical point, and I desire to understand it for my own guidance, and that of others who are going to vote."

After some discussion, the drift of which was strongly in the direction of the proposed resolution, Principal Caven suggested the suspension of the vote, and the appointment of another committee to confer with Mr. Macdonnell, and report in half an hour, which was accordingly done. The committee, however, had nothing to report, as the result of their interview, but merely asked to be allowed further time, which was granted, and they were ordered finally to report on the 2nd May. There the case rests for the present. We sincerely hope that, for their own sake, and the sake of the Church generally, the Presbytery will not feel compelled to expel so able and excellent a man as Mr. Macdonnell, on the ground of so slight a divergence from the Standards of the denomination, as the "hope" he cherishes. Had Mr. Macdonnell finally and avowedly rejected the doctrine of Future Punishment, the case would be a very different one ; but that he has not done, and we entirely agree, therefore, with the *Globe*, when it asks—

"In such circumstances might Mr. Macdonnell not be allowed, without any danger to either Church or individual, to cherish a hope which is for himself alone, and which could not possibly be stated in public without being seen to be in manifest conflict with his own avowal of what his message as a Christian preacher is ? Could he not be allowed to hold that doubt, that difficulty, and that hope, when, as a man of honour, he says he will not disturb the peace of the Church by it, or seek in any way whatever to make it a subject of public discussion or pulpit prolection." We shall soon see what Presbyterian liberty amounts to in such a case.

OUR GUILD.

BY PROF. AUSTIN PHELPS.

“Brethren,” as the old divines used to say in their polite perorations, “permit the word of admonition.”

Ought not the sense of gentlemanly honour towards “our guild” to go to the relief of our Home Missionary fellow-workers? Their privations to us would be sufferings. They do not call them such. In their reticence they resemble that class whom Dickens calls “The Quiet Poor.” Their hardships have no counterpart in the life of some of us. They are unparalleled in the average experience of missionaries to the heathen.

It is more than a twice-told tale. Yet it is always new; suffering is never old. And this comes to our ears continually in some new variety of self-denial. The last which has made my ears tingle is the case of a refined and scholarly man, descended, in the third or fourth generation, from a line of scholars and gentlemen, the peer in culture of any metropolitan pastor of the East, writing sermons of which every page is ripened and adorned by good taste, in a log cabin of but two rooms and a loft above, and pausing in his work to consider, with anxious forethought, whether he can afford to spend twenty-four cents for eight postage stamps.

No money for new clothing; none for the study table, to take the place of the pine box; none for books and periodicals; none for the over-worked wife; none for the visit to the dying mother; none for the journey to the sea which failing health requires; none for the second-hand piano to cultivate the rare musical taste of the daughter; none for the room large enough to contain it, if it could be obtained; none for the education of the boy; none for the entertainment of the summer guests; none for the beef-tea, so sorely needed by the young mother; none for the “butcher’s meat,” or the sea-food, so often craved by the exhausted brain; none for the invalid child who ought to be in a sanitarium; none for the horse to take the place of the one that died, and without which the pastor cannot minister to two churches, as he does now; none to replace the old cow which has furnished one-fourth of the family’s living; none for the journey to the council, the conference, the association, the anniversary, the college class-meeting, all of which would illuminate the pulpit with fresh ideas, and put courage into the fainting heart. These privations are endured year after year by uncomplaining men and women—women of culture and men of solid learning; our equals, brethren, in many things, and our superiors in some. We have sent to the wilderness and the prairie men who risk their lives in fording swollen streams, with Greek Testaments in their pockets. Missionary magazines are laden with their labours and successes, on the dark underground of their hardships and sufferings, of which the half is not told us.

What is our side of the story? True, our pecuniary resources are not burdensome to any of us. We know where every dollar of our income goes. We think we practise self-denial, after a fashion. At least, we none of us have more money than we want. As a class, ministers are a contented set of men. Few of us who are at work are grumblers. But we are men; and, like other men, we want all the money that we fairly earn. Perhaps the want and the need are different affairs. But we like to be paid for our labour, and we do not feel that we are overpaid.

Yet some of us have larger incomes than day-labourers and skilled mechanics, with the least of whom our missionary brethren are to be classed pecuniarily. We count up our fifteen hundreds, our two thousands, a year and more; and a few of us have risen to the dignity of paying an income-tax. Some of us are living like princes in comparison with “our guild” on the frontier and in the mountains. We are to them what the comfortable Calvinistic pastors of Holland were to the Puritan refugees from England, to whom they opened their homes and scanty purses.

Cannot such of us as are blessed above skilled mechanics in our incomes do something more than to give our prayers to those of our brethren whose pay does not equal that of day-labourers? Those graduates of colleges, with the tastes of cultured gentlemen, could earn more money with a pick-axe than they are receiving for the service of Christ to which *we* have ordained them. Does not the old law of Christ come home to us with reproachful significance: "Bear ye one another's burdens?" If each one of the pastors, editors, secretaries, professors, and other clergymen of exceptional income, who are comparatively well-to-do, would select *one* home missionary to be his special charge, to whom he should remit some portion of his income, as the Lord has prospered him, might not a considerable fragment of this home-missionary privation be relieved? Can we not share with them to some extent the economy of clothing? With our more ready access to libraries, cannot some of us spare books for their scanty shelves, and periodicals for their bare tables? The picture which our taste craves for the parlour, or the bust for the study, does our usefulness or our culture so imperatively demand it that we cannot dispense with it, in order that our brother in the mountains may have fresh meat three times a week, instead of once? The journey even; doubtless we need it badly enough, but perhaps not so sorely as he does. Let us try to judge *fraternally* of these things. A conscience searching for a self-denial as an *opportunity* will surely find something which can be spared from our comfortable homes with no detriment to our health of body or mind or soul.

These men are our brothers in God's sight, in a sense nearer than that of kith and kin. We cannot forget who said, "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father, the same is *my* brother." Can we not do something to relieve our own painful sense of inequality between their lot and ours? Do not those words of our Lord come home uncomfortably at times: "There are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last?" If the laymen will keep the Home Missionary Treasury from dishonour, cannot some of the clergy be a *corps de reserve* to look after, *seek* after, cases of peculiar hardship? It would be no more than men of other professions, and of the trades, are doing for their guilds.—*Advance.*

THE TRAINING OF THE YOUNG CONVERTS.

This great religious awakening will result in much good to our churches. But if it is to become the blessing that it ought to be, there is one thing that requires earnest and immediate attention. It is—*The training of these new converts for usefulness as Christians.* By proper attention and effort, all of these thousands who have come, and who are still coming into the churches—that is, all the genuine converts—may be made efficient workers in the kingdom of Christ. On the other hand, if little or no attention is given to training them, a fearful majority of them will be practically lost to the work of the churches. Their coming into the churches will bring no influence, no power for good, no impetus to Gospel work.

A great responsibility, in regard to this matter, rests upon pastors, and upon old and experienced members of churches, whose position and spiritual attainments fit them for influencing and guiding the new converts that come among them. This responsibility can be met only by going earnestly, prayerfully, immediately, and persistently to work, by all suitable and available means, to make a useful Christian of every person received into the churches, whether that person be male or female, old or young, rich or poor, ignorant or learned, bright or dull, and whether his character before his conversion was good or bad. Every regenerated person can be made useful in a church. To labour for the conversion of sinners is but half of the duty of pastors and churches. These sinners, when converted and brought into the churches, must be trained and instructed and fitted for Gospel work.

If the work of training converts is to be successfully prosecuted, it must begin as soon as they are received into the churches. It must begin while their hearts

are warm and tender, while their love for the Saviour is new, and the precious sense of the forgiveness of sin is fresh. It must be commenced before they begin to grow cold, and to form habits of indifference and neglect of duty. When they first give their hearts to Christ they are zealous and humble, they feel deeply their obligation to serve their Redeemer, and are ready to do anything that their pastors and instructors may show them to be duty. Experience shows that it is easy to take Christians at this stage of their spiritual life and train them for usefulness, while it is very hard, if not impossible, to make efficient church members of persons who have passed through this period without training. They become confirmed in inactivity, and in the opinion that there is little, if anything, that they can do.—*Religious Herald, Richmond, Va.*

EXPOSITORY PREACHING.

The advantages of this method of pulpit discourse are numerous. I name, first, the fact that *it brings both preachers and hearers into direct and immediate contact with the mind of the Spirit.* The great object of the minister ought to be to set before the people the mind of God. Now, in so far as he is successful *that* is what the expositor does. In the topical sermon there may be many matters of doubtful disputation, or of private interpretation; but when in the expository discourse he has succeeded in convincing his hearers that he has given the true meaning of the passage, he can say, "This is the mind of Christ," and the force of that, both on himself and them, is overwhelming. Indeed, only when he succeeds in producing that impression has he clothed himself with that peculiar might. Other men have genius, or information, or logic, or invective, and so long as the minister is wielding these alone he is as they are. That which gives him his distinctive might over men is that he has the Word of God behind him; and only when he has made his people to know and believe that does he rise above the level of the political orator and the literary lecturer. Hence, as the special and distinctive engine of the preacher's influence, I advocate the systematic exposition of the Sacred Scriptures.

A second advantage of this method is that *it secures variety in the ministrations of the preacher.* Every man has his idiosyncracies, and yielding to these, he will be in danger of confining himself to a few favourite themes, and ringing the changes on them until his hearers are tired both of him and them. But if he follow the course of some book, or trace out consecutively the chapters of some sacred biography, he will discover the same old truths, with ever-fresh surroundings, and secure that variety in unity which is the charm of God's Book of Revelation, as much as of his Book of Nature. There is an immense difference between the study of geology in the systematic treatise and on the actual survey of a country. Now that is just the difference between the teaching of systematic theology and biblical exposition. In the former you have everything arranged by the scale; in the latter you come upon truth *in situ*, and there is much of interest in the discovery, and of instruction in the surrounding. He who preaches merely upon subjects must treat them in a more or less stereotyped manner, and so will soon exhaust himself; but the expositor, while never far from the great central themes, comes upon them always from new angles, and so keeps his freshness and secures variety.

A third advantage of this method is that *the preacher in following it will be compelled to treat many subjects from which otherwise he might have shrunk, but which ought to be dealt with by him, if he would not "shun to declare all the counsel of God."* He can utter timely truths, without the imputation that he has gone out of his way to present them. He can reprove evil that may be the besetment of some one individual, without the charge that he has turned aside for the purpose of reaching him. Besides, he will be delivered from the danger of onesidedness in his presentation of the truth. He will not exalt God's love at the

expense of his righteousness; or his righteousness at the sacrifice of his love. He will not deal with the sovereignty of God to the ignoring of the free agency of men; neither will he so constantly urge the invitations of the Gospel as to lead men to forget that the Holy Ghost is needed by them. Half-truths are the most insidious forms of error, and many of the half-truths that are so popular in these days have had their origin in the neglect of a thorough and systematic expository treatment of the Word of God.

A fourth advantage of this method is that *it will promote biblical intelligence among our hearers.* We are in great danger of overrating the Bible knowledge of our hearers. There are whole books of Scripture which are as much an unexplored territory to many of them as the interior of Africa. Ask the average worshipper to find the prophecies of Zephaniah, and see what a weary work he will make of his search. The truth is that in the closet, the parlour, and the counting-room men are overlaying the Word of God beneath the mountain of new books that are forever issuing from the press; and, therefore, ministers in the pulpit should give it only the greater prominence, and seek to increase at once the acquaintance of their hearers with it and their reverence for it.

But, as a final advantage of this method, I mention the fact, that in the course of preparation for his expository discourse, *the preacher will acquire great store of materials which he can use for other purposes, and especially will have suggested to him fresh subjects for topical sermons.* He will be able to gather up many "chips" from his expository "workshop," which after the fashion of Max Muller he can work into independent productions. In writing an ordinary sermon the preacher is giving out from a store which he had formerly accumulated; but in preparing an expository sermon he is adding largely to his resources. Besides, many topics are suggested to him by the contact of his theme for the time with his mind, as it is affected by the experiences through which he has been passing; and so he will gradually accumulate a store of subjects, which will save him from that most horrible of all drudgeries, the hunting for a text. In my own experience for many years no difficulty has been experienced by me on this score; and I trace that to the fact that I have steadily devoted one service every Lord's Day to the consecutive exposition of some portion of the sacred Scriptures.

But, in reply, to all this, it is said that such preaching is not popular. To this objection two answers may be given. First, the minister has to consult the benefit of his hearers, as well as their tastes; and when the two conflict, he has to prefer that which will promote the former, rather than that which will gratify the latter. But, second, why is this sort of preaching not popular? Is it not because too many of those who have attempted it have done so without any adequate idea of its difficulty, and have gone on with it in the most slovenly manner? They have taken to exposition because they believed it was easier than sermonizing. They have had recourse to it with the feeling of him who said: "I like to take a whole chapter for a text, because when I am persecuted in one verse I can flee to another." Now such preaching does not deserve to be popular, and it is a proof of our people's good sense that it is not popular. No man can succeed here without great labour. But here also labour, wisely carried on, will conquer all things. Let the preacher remember, however, that he must not turn the pulpit into the chair of the exegetical professor, and spend a long time in hunting down some poor Greek particle or digging up some obscure Hebrew root. Processes are for the student; results are for the pulpit. Do not gather into your discourse all the opinions of all commentators, ancient or modern, German or American; for that will both confuse the mind and exhaust the patience of your hearers. State your own conclusion, with the grounds on which it rests, and then go forward to press the practical application of your theme to the consciences of your hearers and the circumstances of your times. This sort of preaching—as the examples of many who have tried it prove—will be both popular and profitable, feeding alike both preacher and people, and giving to both a new relish for the Word of God.—*Dr. W. M. Taylor.*

Editorial.

The Canadian Independent.

TORONTO, MAY, 1876.

A FACT FOR IMPATIENT CONTRIBUTORS.

A recent visit to the church in the township of Kincardine, where the Lord has recently poured out His Spirit in so remarkable a manner, has deepened our conviction of the necessity of maintaining our weak and struggling country churches. We gave expression to our views upon this subject in our January issue, and shall not, therefore, repeat what we then said; but the church to which we have just referred is a case so much in point that we must be excused for briefly alluding to it again.

The little church on the 10th concession of Kincardine was organized just twenty years ago, by its late venerable pastor, the Rev. N. McKinnon, with a membership of twelve persons. Its numbers at one time reached twenty-eight, but for several years past have fallen again below twenty. Its little log chapel, and the lot on which it stands—*res angustæ*!—is set down in our statistical table at the modest valuation of \$200; and it has, of course, always been dependent upon the Society for missionary aid, though the amount latterly granted has been very small. Once and again it seemed as if the Committee must drop it, out of consideration from what appeared to be more urgent claims upon them; but a voice from the Master

said, "Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it!" And so it has been nurtured and cared for, as far as we have been able to do so, and our readers have already seen what God hath wrought by it in that remote country settlement.

It is true, indeed, that not much over one-fourth of the two hundred persons believed to have been converted in the revival have united with the Congregational Church, the rest having preferred to connect themselves with the churches which they were previously attending. But the great point is to have brought them to Christ and to salvation; and if that have been gained, the Lord will keep them, and find work for them anywhere, and may, perhaps, make them even more useful among others than among ourselves.

One most noticeable feature of the revival in Kincardine is that it began among the more elderly people of the congregation, in whose hearts the seed of the kingdom had long been sown by the lately deceased pastor. Most of the converts, indeed, had sat under his ministry for longer or shorter periods, so that our brethren who aided in reaping the fields reaped very largely what he had sown. Has our money, then, been spent in vain? Nay, has it not yielded us a hundredfold?

We observe, by the discussion going on in the columns of the *Advance* (Glasgow), that a similar impatience exists among our Scottish brethren in regard to some of their long dependent

churches. And some one has taken to figuring on the subject, and has found that several of them cost the denomination nearly £3 per annum per member, and that, even at that outlay, the membership is rather decreasing than otherwise. In fact, he has ascertained just how much it costs "per head" to save souls in Aberfeldy and Laurencekirk, and thinks they are paying too dearly for them! We suppose that is the "business" way of looking at missions, but we confess it grates sadly on unbusiness ears. Is it the way of Him who asked, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Can we improve upon that?

Looked at, however, even from that point of view, we believe that the success of our Missionary Society, in the great ends of its organization, has been quite equal in our country charges to what it has achieved in our cities and towns. The habits and character of the people of the rural districts are, for the most part, more simple and more favourable to the reception of the Gospel than those of the town. And although, for a variety of reasons, they may be longer than some of the town churches in arriving at the point of self-support, and longer often than they should be, it must not be hastily concluded that they "don't pay." Wait till God makes up the account!

The withdrawal of Drs. Storrs and Budington from the New York Association of Congregational ministers is very generally regarded as a mistake. To say the least, it has the appearance of

rashness and ill-temper. The Association wished to avail itself of the proposal of the Brooklyn council, and appointed a committee of three for that purpose. The seceding members, on the other hand, thought that the Association itself should institute a new and independent investigation into the scandal, the council not having been properly constituted, in their judgment. Is not this more a wrangle about forms than anything else? Both parties desire a fair and thorough sifting of the whole matter, so as to settle it, if possible, forever, and we confess that, waiving the form of procedure, we can see no reason why the gentlemen named should not submit the case, with the utmost confidence, to the tribunal proposed. The committee of three announces to-day (April 24th), that in compliance with a request to them from the Examining Committee of Plymouth Church, they will constitute a Commission according to the plan and under the provisions named in the result of the council. The names have not yet been made public.

It is proverbial that "extremes meet," here is an instance: The high-church parson of Stratford has just "christened" an infant child that had already been baptised by the pastor of the Congregational church in that town. About the same time, the high-baptist minister, of the Immersionist persuasion, in the village of Tiverton, rebaptised, according to his favourite method, a young convert who had not many days before been baptised, on profession of her faith, by the Rev. Robert Mackay,

the Congregational Evangelist. Who is the ritualist? Or are they not twin-brothers?

Under the heading of "Baptist Bigots in America," the *Christian World* says:—

"The bigotry of the close communion Baptists in the United States, by which Dr. Behrends has been driven from the denomination, seems to be passing all bounds. A short time ago, the Genesee Baptist Pastors' Conference invited the Rev. R. C. Palmer to read an essay before them on the communion question, and, discovering a leaning towards liberty in his utterance, they by formal resolution pronounced him unworthy of a place in the Baptist ministry, and called upon his church to dismiss him from his pastorate. The church, in compliance with this insolent interference, have given him three months' notice to quit, and forbidden him in the meantime to administer the Lords' Supper. This incident is only one of many recently reported in our American exchanges, of which the great majority of the English Baptists will read with grief and indignation. The open communion brethren are everywhere being exhorted to "leave the denomination," and this is frequently conveyed in language exceedingly vulgar and offensive. At a recent ministers' meeting in New York, a liberal pastor turned the tables upon the bigots by proposing a string of sarcastic resolutions, one of which ran thus: 'That we repudiate the conduct of any newspaper editor who may publish the sermons of one Charles H. Spurgeon, at least without prefacing the same with the statement that the paper must not be held bound by any sentiments whatever contained in said sermon, or committed to any views held or suspected to be held by one whose heretical views on one subject render him untrustworthy on all.' The mover of the resolution was Dr. J. B. Thomas, whose well-aimed succession of deadly shots at the foes of liberty closed with the following: 'Whereas there linger among us some historical phrases which seem to have reached the sense of glittering generalities, such as "right to inquire," "right of private judgment," "liberty to dif-

fer," &c.; therefore, resolved, that by "right to inquire" is meant the right to search the Scriptures for the confirmation of old opinions held by the majority, and not for their modification, or the formation of new ones, which may be individual; and that as the entertaining of individual opinions in private entails the suspicion of unmanly insincerity, and their expression the odium of a desire to produce dissension, and as it is difficult to avoid either speaking or keeping silent concerning them, we repudiate the conduct of any brother who may venture to form an individual opinion at all. Resolved, that by "right of private judgment," we mean not the right of man to judge for himself concerning his own opinions and conduct, but the right to judge for another man what opinions that man holds and ought to hold, and his duty as consequent thereon. Resolved, that by "liberty to differ," we mean liberty to differ from other denominations, and not from one another, especially not from the majority of this Conference."

Dr. Taylor, of the Broadway tabernacle, in his fifth lecture on preaching, to the Yale Theological students, says that the clamour for brevity in sermons is a bad omen for the churches. "No great theme," he says, "can be treated in fifteen minutes. Therefore brevity means the banishment of doctrinal instruction and systematic exposition, and, as a consequence of that, spiritual dwarfs, and a piety from which manhood has disappeared.

Our readers will be much grieved to observe in our present number an obituary notice of the Rev. D. D. Nighswander, of Granby. Mr. Nighswander was one of our youngest and most promising ministers, having reached only his twenty-ninth year. Shortly after the death of his wife, which occurred in the month of May last, he was laid aside for some

weeks by severe illness, from which it is said, he never fully recovered. Our brother can be ill spared from among us just now, but "the Lord buries his servants and carries on His work."

Mr. Nighswander leaves an infant child, for whom, however, provision has been happily made by a policy of life assurance, and a claim on our Orphans' Fund. Well may each of us pray,— "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

THE REV. F. H. MARLING.—The N. Y. *Examiner* says: "The Rev. Mr. Marling is making a success of his new ministry in the Fourteenth Street Presbyterian Church, New York. The congregation was at one time very fashionable, and was presided over by Dr. A. D. Smith, now of Dartmouth College. New York changes, which spare no church, and no ancient thing, drove out the church-going population, and surrounded the edifice with a class of people who have little regard for the Christian Sabbath. The fine congregation scattered, the church dwindled, and it

was feared that the society would be dissolved. After various attempts to revive matters, Rev. Mr. Marling, of Toronto, was invited to the pastoral charge. He is a man about fifty, although he does not look over thirty-five. He has a great deal of executive force, preaches without notes, usually in a familiar; expository style. The mission schools are in a very successful condition, and the whole outlook of the church work indicates success."

Any of our subscribers, or others, wishing complete files of the *Canadian Independent* from volume V or VI to the present time, can obtain them by immediate application to the Editor, at the rate of 40 cents per volume, for single volumes, or 30 cents per volume for sets. We intend very shortly to sell off the bulk of our back numbers, so that those wishing any of them must apply at once.

We are in need of a few copies of the *January* and *March* issues of the present volume. Any parties, therefore, not keeping them for binding, will oblige by sending us their copies.

Correspondence.

RETIRING PASTORS' FUND.

DEAR SIR,—In view of the approaching Union meetings in Montreal, I think it desirable to present a summary of the results of the movement inaugurated some four years ago to secure a fund for the purpose of providing an allowance for

the benefit of retired or aged and infirm pastors. No active steps were taken till the fall of 1873, when the Rev. Mr. Clarke offered his services, and was engaged for the purpose of visiting the churches in Ontario and the liberal friends of the denomination by personal application, and he succeeded in securing

promises and contributions to the fund amounting to the handsome sum of \$3,821, of which there has been paid \$1,984, leaving to be collected hereafter \$1,837, in instalments as originally provided for. This has been done at the cost of \$470 82, which leaves the Retired Pastors' Fund with a capital of \$2,000, invested in the Provincial Loan and Investment Society's shares, bearing interest at 10 per cent. per annum, and thus provides an income applicable to the extent of \$200 for distribution.

It will be desirable if the friends interested in this movement will give a little attention to the subject prior to the Union meetings, so that the wisest and best course may be adopted for allowing those needing the help to derive the benefit without further delay.

A detailed list of subscribers would be too long to inflict upon your columns now; but one will be ready, alphabetically arranged, for the annual meeting, and will appear in the Year-book for the satisfaction of subscribers.

Yours truly,

J. C. BARTON,

Treasurer Retired Pastors' Fund.

THE LABRADOR MISSION.

The "Zion Church Ladies' Missionary Association," Montreal, beg to remind all interested in the Labrador Mission, that

at the beginning of this year a large number of certificates were prepared, to be given to Sunday Schools, or individuals subscribing \$10 (ten dollars) or upwards. The above contribution to the Society entitles the party or parties paying it to a life-membership, which is recorded on the certificates. These have been made as attractive as possible. A magnificent and naturally-tinted iceberg forms a characteristic setting for the view of the bold Labrador coast in the background. At the foot of the snow-clad hills stands the Mission House, while a canoe and a fishing-boat are nearing the shore. Further out, the flight of sea-birds, and the seals disporting in the water and on the ice, serve to bring vividly before the imagination these icy climes to which we again call your attention. The certificates furnish a handsome adornment for the walls of the school-room, and provide also an elegant and appropriate gift to an esteemed pastor, friend or teacher. The number prepared for the Society was two hundred, of which only *twenty* have been disposed of. It is desirable that in writing for the certificates, express instructions should be given as to whether they are wanted with blanks to be filled up *by the applicants*. If preferred, they can be filled in before they are sent, the only requisite being the name of the donor and that of the recipient, distinctly written.

Actos of the Churches.

MONTREAL.—ZION CHURCH.—RESIGNATION OF THE REV. CHARLES CHAPMAN, M. A.—At a special meeting of the Church and congregation, very fully attended, held in the lecture-hall of Zion Church on Wednesday evening, the 22nd March, 1876, Rev. Dr. Wilkes in the chair—

A letter was read from the pastor,

the Rev. Charles Chapman, announcing to the Church that he had received a very cordial and unanimous invitation from the Western College, Plymouth, England, to accept the Theological Professorship therein; and that from the fact of professorial work in connection with the Church of Christ being with him an object of special desire, as well

as one for which his friends had always thought he had great aptitude, he had decided to accept the call. And though greatly regretting the severing of the tie which so happily existed between him and the Church, he requested to be relieved by the Church from his engagement, so that he might carry out what he believed to be the call of the Master, whose servant he was, to an important work in the general Church of Christ.

Having listened to the reading of Mr. Chapman's letter, and several members having expressed their deep regret at the severance of the tie, yet, seeing it is the evident desire of their pastor to be relieved of his charge, and engage in professorial work, and believing that he is eminently fitted for so important a post, the Church felt it to be its duty to submit to the loss it will sustain in being deprived of Mr. Chapman's ministrations, and consented to relieve him from his engagement.

It was unanimously resolved that the deacons be instructed to draw up a resolution, assuring Mr. Chapman of the high appreciation in which his ministrations are held, by both church and congregation, upon whom they are exercising a healthy and beneficial influence, as is evidenced by the fact of a considerable increase to the Church, more especially during the past year. The Church also convey to its pastor its cordial sympathy, assuring him of its entire confidence in the judgment he has arrived at, and the hope and confident expectation that it will prove a blessing to the Church of Christ, and conducive to his own happiness and well-being. The Church moreover desires to express the high honour put upon it in having so important a position so cordially offered to its pastor, manifesting as it does the high esteem in which he is held by those who have known him so long, and sought his valuable services from so great a distance. The Church comes to this decision with very great regret on its own behalf,—while it is confident that in doing so, the prayers and sympathy of the pastor will be with them in their endeavour to find a successor; and that the Hand which has led and kept it hitherto, will guide it in all the future; and doubtless in His own good time will

open the way for another faithful and qualified labourer entering the field and filling the vacancy which is thus created.

MONTREAL.—EMMANUEL CHURCH.—LAYING THE CORNER STONE OF THE NEW CHURCH.—An era in the history of the Congregational Church was marked on Saturday afternoon (April 15th) by the ceremonies attendant upon laying the corner stone of Emmanuel Church, corner of Stanley and St. Catherine Streets. The gloomy aspect of the day contrasted unpleasantly with the fine weather of the past week, and the heavy clouds that rolled over the city during the morning had the effect of deterring many from taking part in the ceremony, under the impression that copious showers of rain would mar the ceremony, and perhaps necessitate a postponement. Notwithstanding this, however, there were present the Rev. J. F. Stevenson, LL.B., pastor of Emmanuel Church, the Rev. Dr. Taylor, the Rev. Gavin Lang, Rev. Mr. Black, Rev. Henry Laing, Rev. Mr. Wells, Rev. Mr. Williams, Professor Murray, and a large number of ladies, together with Sabbath School scholars and the choir of the Church.

At the request of the pastor, Rev. Mr. Stevenson, the Rev. Gavin Lang, pastor of St. Andrew's Church, offered the opening prayer.

The Rev. Mr. Williams, of the Eastern Congregational Church, read a portion of Scripture, after the congregation had united in singing the hymn commencing:—

"An earthly temple here we raise,
Lord God, our Saviour! to Thy praise;
Oh, make Thy gracious presence known
While now we raise its Corner Stone."

The Rev. Dr. WILKES, Principal of the Congregational College, said:—By the favour of God we live in an age and country in which no question will arise as to our natural and legal right to lay this stone and erect this building. Yet, seeing there are so many churches in the city, and even within sight of the spot, in which the same great truths of Revelation are taught as will be proclaimed in this building—in which, moreover, the same Divine Jehovah is worshipped whom we reverently worship, the ques-

tion may be asked, Why do you arise and build, and thus add to their number? And such a reasonable question should be answered.

In doing so, we, in the first place, utterly repudiate all idea or intention of opposition to our brethren of Evangelical communions, who, like ourselves, seek with prayer, toil and self-sacrifice the advancement of our Lord's kingdom. Our prayer for them is "Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ." They are of the Israel of God, and we seek their good; as far as we may, we hope to work with them in our Lord's service. But they will agree with us in the conviction that in our rapidly growing city there are not too many of these resorts of the people in holy convocation assembling, and that it is well even rather to anticipate wants that are sure to arise, than to be found wanting when those wants become clamant. They will further agree with us in the opinion that diversity in non-essential matters meets the wants of the people, who, thinking for themselves, under no pressure of authority on the part of their fellow-men, naturally differ from one another in their tastes and preferences, and who can work for Christ better where those tastes and preferences are somewhat met and the want they create is supplied.

But our reply to the supposed question takes higher ground. For first, as Independents or Congregationalists we have a history of a character which ought to be represented in this rising Dominion. The Independents of England, and the branch of them by whom New England was settled, have a splendid record of works and sacrifices for the cause of truth and righteousness, and for the maintenance of the rights of conscience. This is the estimate of all large-minded and unprejudiced men who know the facts of the case. To them, it is admitted by such men, the mother country is greatly indebted for her civil and religious liberty. And to them our neighbours are indebted for the best of their institutions and for those great principles which lie at the foundation of their national greatness, and which at this present must be con-

served and maintained, in order to do effective battle against the system of spiritual gloom and tyranny which is seeking the mastery there as well as here. The religious character of our Dominion would not be complete without the admixture of the element supplied by the successors of these sturdy maintainers of human rights against all foes, civil or sacred.

Second. Without comparing ourselves with others in the matter, it should be noted that our estimates of church life, and our treatment of the truths of Christianity, seem to give us a mission in the promotion of the purity and vigour of the one, and in presenting the others with a robust and manly freedom from human trammels. We have no faith in a church life that is not made up of the life of living spiritual members. We believe in regeneration and sanctification by the Holy Spirit as well as in redemption by our Lord Jesus Christ; and we regard the membership of visible churches as only properly based, not on the reception of a creed, but on the reception of Christ the Lord as a personal Saviour, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit as the regenerator and sanctifier. This secures a holy and consistent life.

In relation to the other point named, we do not tie up the minds and hearts of either ministers or people with the ligaments of any ancient or modern human formulary of doctrine, but we rather seek to promote a devout, robust and godly life, and hence a similar dealing with the truths of Revelation. We believe that there is yet more light to break forth from God's holy word; more than our fathers or ourselves have yet learned; and therefore, though we greatly venerate our fathers, we do not take them for our guides any further than they seem to us to follow Divine teaching.

Now, in the present time of a very general profession of Christianity, it seems to us that the first of these considerations is of the greatest importance, and that church life should be pure and strong and Christ-like. And further, it is our view that at a period of such free inquiry, such searching to the bottom of things, and such impatience of what is old, because it is old, our untrammelled

treatment of Divine Revelation, being always reverential and devout, is a valuable factor in the Christian instrumentalities of the day.

Third. Success, by the blessing of God, in our city and country, induces the conviction that we are called to go forward. Forty-eight years ago the speaker left business, and proceeded to the University and Theological School in Scotland to prepare for the Christian ministry. That same year he directed the attention of an able Independent minister, who was preparing to migrate to America, to the wants of Canada. He came that way, and settled in our Eastern Townships. In 1831, he conferred, when in London, with the late Rev. Richard Miles, who had recently returned from the Cape of Good Hope, and the result was his migration to this city, where in a school-room occupied daily by Mr. Bruce, an estimable successful teacher, he commenced his ministry. In a few months a more commodious place was found in the unused Assembly Room in the Mansion House, College Street. Measures were early adopted to secure a suitable site for a church building, and there followed the erection of the structure in St. Maurice Street, now altered and occupied as a shoe manufactory. Forty years ago, in 1836, the speaker was called from his pastorate in Edinburgh, Scotland, to take the pastoral oversight of this church, and to act as agent in Canada of the Colonial Mission of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, formed at that time. The congregation steadily increased in number, requiring after a time the erection of galleries. At the end of ten years we had erected and entered Zion Church, then considered an experiment as to distance from the centre of the city. Parallel with our work in the city was diversified effort by an increasing number of ministers and people in this and the Western Province. Thirty-seven years have elapsed since we began training young men for the Christian ministry. The Head of the Church has greatly blessed and enlarged us, and we find ourselves to-day in the city four bands; one of which, encouraged by the past, and trusting in our loving Saviour for the future, lay

the corner-stone of their new and to be beautiful edifice to-day. May the Head of the Church bless the work of their hands, and prosper their enterprise and efforts for His glory! "God be merciful to us and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us, that Thy way may be known on earth, Thy saving health among all nations."

The Rev. Dr. TAYLOR, of Erskine Presbyterian Church, briefly addressed the assembly, after which

Mr. HENRY LYMAN announced the contents of the stone to be copies of the *Gazette*, the *Star*, the *Witness*, the *Herald*, *Starke's Almanac* the Congregational Year Book for 1876, Historical Sketch of Emmanuel Congregation and Directory of the Church, and current coins of the realm and Dominion. The names of the church officers also were signed to the documents inserted.

The Rev. J. F. STEVENSON proceeded to the corner stone, and with a magnificent silver trowel completed the ceremony, the Rev. Dr. WILKES assisting by the customary three blows on the stone, and declaring it well and truly laid.

The ceremony over, the Rev. Mr. STEVENSON in a few words, thanked the clergymen of other denominations who had, by their presence, aided in the ceremony and given countenance and encouragement to the congregation. He trusted that nothing would ever be preached in the church other than the simple Gospel—by which he meant the Gospel as understood at the present time, as the message sent to Christians from the other side of the veil that divides humanity from the spiritual after life—the Gospel as taught to our fathers and handed from them to us. He was of opinion that our fathers, in common with ourselves, and Christians of the present time, would advance still further in a knowledge of God's will in future years. After defining the relative positions of secular and religious affairs, the reverend gentleman said it was his opinion in this advanced age of freedom of thought that Christians should thank God and take courage to do greater work in Christ's kingdom. He trusted the new church would be one of those to go forward and do the work of the blessed Redeemer, and in conclusion he

invoked God's blessing upon his hearers, and trusted their efforts would succeed.

The Rev. Mr. ANDERSON, of Shaftesbury Hall, offered the closing prayer, after which the doxology and benediction by the Rev. Dr. WILKES brought the proceedings to a close.

The new church will be a handsome stone structure, built from designs by Mr. W. T. Thomas, architect. The height is ninety feet at the front, and the windows will contain stained glass panels of the usual designs. At each side of the building are two large square pinnacles. The external breadth of the nave is four feet; main body of church, 66 feet; at the two extreme transepts, 36 feet; extreme exterior length, 128 feet; interior, 111 feet. The cost of the structure will be \$50,000, and the seating capacity something like 760 persons. In one of the transepts will be placed the organ and choir gallery, while in the basement will be the school and lecture room, with ceiling 14 feet high. The roof of the building is after the "hammer beam" pattern, and will be an exceedingly substantial affair. The contractor for the masonry is Mr. Lamontagne, while the carpentering and joining department is in the hands of Mr. A. Penrose Macdonald, contractor, a gentleman whose ability in this class of work is unquestioned, and who has already had so much success in work of this kind as to guarantee a first-class finish to every department of his contract. The pews will be in circular form, radiating from the pulpit.

The trowel presented to Mr. Stevenson was a handsome silver instrument, nearly the usual size of masons' trowels, and was inscribed with the words on the margin, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it."

On the centre was the inscription, "Presented to the Rev. J. F. Stevenson, on the

Occasion of the laying of the Corner Stone of Emmanuel Church, Congregational, April 15, 1876."

The mallet presented to the Rev. Dr. Wilkes contained the words:

"Emmanuel Church, Congregational, April 15, 1876."

—Condensed from *Gazette*.

CONGREGATIONAL COLLEGE OF B. N. A.—CLOSING OF THE SESSION.—The closing exercises of the thirty-seventh session were conducted in Zion Church on the evening of the 12th April, the Rev. Charles Chapman, M.A., chairman of the Board, presiding. After devotional exercises conducted by the Rev. W. Williams, the Principal stated that the number of students on the roll was fifteen, of whom fourteen were in attendance until Christmas, since which time several had required temporary leave of absence from causes beyond their control. The usual lectures in Systematic Theology, Church History, and Homiletics, together with weekly Homiletical exercises, had engaged the attention of the class under Dr. Wilkes; and Professor Duff had given daily instruction throughout the session in the departments of Biblical Introduction, and Hebrew and Greek Exegesis. A valuable course of weekly lectures has been given by Rev. Charles Chapman on Apologetics, and one of from twelve to fourteen lectures on Historical Theology by Rev. K. M. Fenwick. The results of written examinations on all these subjects had proved eminently satisfactory. Nine of the students in attendance are undergraduates of McGill University, and all the others attend lectures to which they are directed by the Faculty, and on which they go up for the regular examinations.

The College Library, which is very valuable, and is being catalogued by Professor Duff, has not received many additions during the year, though Mr. Hodge and Dr. Thomas Nichol have given books. A stated sum ought to be expended on this library, and in order thereto, a fund expressly contributed for the purpose is required. This is commended to the attention of the friends of the College, for the pressure on the ordinary income interferes with any regular appropriation for this important object.

The prize given by the late George Robertson, Esquire, last year, was competed for, and Mr. J. B. Silcox was the winner.

The Endowment has made very slow progress. The amount subscribed is \$23,500, but \$21,000 is a large estimate

of what will be probably realized. The amount in hand, in money invested, is \$8,250, and in land \$240. The additional sum of \$6,500 is required before we can obtain the generous promised gift of \$5,000.

During the session the students have engaged in work for Christ in the Sunday schools of the three churches, and in that of the American Presbyterian Church at the Tanneries; also in preaching occasionally when required. Their Christmas vacation was for the most part occupied in preaching in the several localities to which they repaired.

In regular course, three students should now receive the usual certificate of the College on completing their curriculum. But two have been prevented by illness from bringing up their lost half sessions, and they purposed returning for this purpose for a short time towards the close of the next session. Mr. Andrew O. Cossar, therefore, is the only one to receive it, and he is presented therefor by the Faculty with expressions of high gratification and confidence. He proceeds to labour at Belleville. One of the three goes to the new Western Church at Toronto. The third is now preaching at Manilla: the students who are to return will prosecute their vacation ministry at Frome, Kircardine, Stouffville, Cobourg and Cold Springs, Vankleek Hill, Ontario; Eaton and Franklin, Quebec; Canning, Nova Scotia; and the Coast of Labrador.

The Principal concluded by saying that applications for admission next session might be sent as early as convenient from this time, and by expressing his sense of the loss which the College would sustain in the removal of one of the lecturers, the Rev. Charles Chapman, to an important College position in England.

Professor Duff uttered some earnest words on the duty of parents devoting their sons to this great work, and prayerfully training them up with a view to it, should God be pleased to call them. Mr. Cossar received the College certificate, accompanied by kind remarks of the chairman, and delivered the valedictory.

Intermingled with these exercises, an anthem was sung by the choir, and se-

veral hymns by the congregation. The closing part was the delivery by Mr. Chapman of the following farewell address:

"The position which I hold as Chairman of the College Board usually devolves on me the duty of conducting the proceedings of this annual meeting, in accordance with the programme previously arranged by the Faculty, and of saying a few introductory words more or less suitable to the occasion. But, as you may have noticed, this evening I have abstained from making any observations of my own until the present moment. Had this been to me an ordinary annual meeting, I should have let myself and you off with a very few words indeed; but it has been urged upon me by those whose judgment I am accustomed to respect, to say something at the close of this service, seeing that it is the last opportunity I shall ever have in my life of speaking to our young brethren, the students, and to you on behalf of the College. I need hardly tell you that there is to me something exceedingly grave and touching in being placed in such a position.

Looking at the College in its relation to our churches at this time, there is one aspect of it on which, I think, I may congratulate you all, that is, the growing interest which is being felt throughout the churches in its efficiency and prosperity. There is always a danger of the claims of a Theological College being overlooked, because of its necessarily quiet and even course of usefulness. Those institutions which in their every action are ever beneath the public eye and are kept up chiefly by frequent and large assemblies of interested friends, such are likely to be high in favour, and to secure a large share of sympathy and material aid; whereas only those who look beneath the surface of things, and foresee the bearing of quiet student life on the future destinies of the Church of God, are disposed to lend to a college of this kind the benefit of an intelligent sympathy and a liberal hand. It is, therefore, pleasing to observe around us signs of not only undiminished but even of growing interest in this Institution.

And while on this topic I may be

permitted to say a word on the supreme importance of all earnest Christian people cherishing a strong interest in this department of the work of the churches. I say the work of the churches, for it is the business of the Church of Christ to provide, so far as human agency goes, for the regular supply of pastors and teachers. It seems to me to be a most culpable error of conduct to either leave the uprising of a ministry to the action of what, for the sake of circumlocution, I will call Christianized chance, or to manifest indifference as to the range and quality of the training to be provided for future pastors. It certainly seems only decency that, so far as men are concerned, we are bound to procure for the Lord's special services the very best in spirit and strongest in moral and mental force we can possibly lay our hands on, and, when we have found them, to secure for them the immense advantage of the most thorough discipline their nature is capable of, and the specific character of their life-work may legitimate. The faith and love, the dependence on the Spirit, the Cross of Christ as the only means of redemption, the weak things of the world, *i. e.*, are deemed by the world weak and foolish things; but they are not in themselves weak and foolish, nor when we see how the Divine choice fell on a man so intellectually strong and highly cultivated as was the Apostle Paul, for effecting more paramount results than could be affirmed of any other man, can we escape the conviction that the more men of his mental and moral stamina we can find and train, the better will it be for the Church of God in the highest interests of mankind. The world is wide and free for everyone to exercise his gifts without a training in college if he will, and no one will grudge his success if he can build up the Church of God better than those so trained. But while individuals are responsible for their own free action in this particular, the Church is responsible to God for the exercise of all diligence and care in securing for the future such men as may, by the blessing of Heaven, carry out intelligently and devoutly the labours inaugurated by the Apostle Paul and his confreres.

In saying this, I am, as you know, not uttering anything that is of the stamp of a *new* opinion. For the past five years I have endeavoured, when occasion offered, to state and enforce the same thing, and I feel that, as this is the last time that I shall have the pleasure of meeting with you on the occasion of your annual meeting at the close of a session, I cannot do a better thing for the College and the country, than commend the cause of the Christian ministry to your earnest, broad and prayerful consideration. The small part I have been enabled to take in your collegiate affairs has ever afforded me pleasure, whatever little advantage it may have been to you. The natural limit put to my exertions by considerations drawn from my pastoral work and regard for strength for the varied purposes of life, has not been the measure of the interest I have felt in the students and in the general prosperity of the College; and now that in the providence of God I am soon to consecrate the rest of my days to this new service of educating men for the ministry in my own *Alma Mater*, I beg to assure you of the deep, loving sympathy I shall, by the help of God, ever cherish for your efforts in this land to raise up a generation of preachers and apostles that, in due course, shall far surpass us in intelligent toil, devoutness of spirit and solid success.

And now, referring to matters more personal, I wish to say that during the whole of the time I have had the privilege of assisting in the work of tuition, I have met from your venerated Principal a kindness and generosity of spirit that will ever remain as a bright reminiscence of my labours here. Not the shadow of a shade of uneasiness or contrariety has ever darkened our intercourse. I cannot but esteem it a great boon to this Institution to have the services of one so capable of blending the charm of a happy spirit with the ripe experience of years.

And now, dear brethren, what shall I say to you? You won't expect from me any exposition of the special duties that rest upon you in your position of expectants of the Christian ministry. All that comes from others in due course. I just

wish to assure you of my personal interest in the future which lies before you. It has been my privilege to conduct your thoughts through some rather hard and intricate pathways, and thereby I trust to have both furnished you with knowledge, and, what is more, braced you up to close and continuous thought. May I not cherish the hope that if you do entertain any regard for me or my memory, you will manifest it in a zealous continuance in those studies while at college, and in a life of thoughtful devotion to Christ when you are called to enter on the permanent work of the pastorate? I shall always entertain pleasant remembrances of your serious, courteous attention to my instructions, and of the unchecked, and, I trust, complete harmony that has subsisted between you and myself. I shall count it a mercy if, in the important relationship I shall soon enter upon elsewhere, I am able to carry on my work amidst as much kindness and consideration as have prevailed here. You know that by reason of the manifoldness of my duties in the pastorate, the great stress of work put upon you during the session, I have not been able to keep up a close personal acquaintance with you under the forms of social and domestic intercourse. But you and I are men, and we know that duty well discharged in a common cause is the strong band of mutual regard. I am not ashamed to tell you that, so far as you are concerned, I am sorry to have to go away. I should like to have a further hand in building up your intellectual and moral character. This, however, cannot be. Yet I shall not cease to think of you, and to ascertain in due course how it fares with you both as students and as pastors. I shall be glad if I find that you are giving practical illustrations of the truth you know I have ever inculcated, i.e., that clear thinking and accuracy of expression, allied to a warm heart, are most valuable elements to permanent usefulness in the kingdom of Christ. The interests of the Church in days to come will lie a good deal in your hands. Go on, dear brethren, as you have begun, and I doubt not that you will find joy and all that is worth having in your work, and though we may be separated

by rolling waters, we shall each have the blissful consciousness that, according to the best of our ability, we are doing something for the honour of our Divine Lord, and for the salvation of our fellowmen."

The proceedings were brought to a close by prayer, the doxology and benediction.

Montreal, April 13, 1876.

GALT AND SPEEDSIDE.—The Rev. R. K. Black, who spent the winter in Galt, at the request at once of the Missionary Committee, and of the people there, writes us on the expiry of his engagement :—" Concerning the Galt church the readers of the *Canadian Independent* know but little save its unpleasant complications with the Methodist body in regard to church property. They will therefore be pleased to hear, that the preaching of the gospel here during the past winter has not been without blessing from God. Not being desirous of an immediate settlement, after a prolonged and most pleasant pastorate at Milton, N. S., but still desirous of doing work for the Master, we accepted a temporary engagement to minister to this interesting church during the winter months. Encouraged by some striking conversions, the revived religious interest in the town and country around, and the grace of God as shown to members of our own family circle, we commenced special services early in the year, which were kept up for several weeks. Although we laboured at very great disadvantage from the fact that no ministerial brother could come to our help, while some of our own people did not fully sympathise with Congregational methods of conducting such services, and others were intimidated by the threatening attitude assumed by the Methodist body, yet as many as ten or twelve professed a hope in Christ. It is believed that much more good would have been done had not the meetings been brought to an abrupt termination by a peremptory demand made by the Wesleyans to deliver up the chapel property, and threatening legal proceedings in case of refusal. Arbitration was proposed by the people, but has been rejected by the Conference authorities, and

now the little church which God was blessing is in trouble again. Surely it will receive the prayers and sympathy, and if need be, in the securing of its rights, *the material assistance of the sister churches of our denomination.*

In the midst of these trying circumstances, and while simply "holding the fort," we received from Brother Duff a telegram asking us to come and assist him in holding special services in Ermosa. Thither we gladly went and with the exception of one Sabbath, on which day we did duty in Galt, we have been for three weeks helping Brother Duff in a most interesting work of grace. For this the field was well prepared by the most acceptable labours of our brother in preaching services, and conducting district prayer meetings during the winter months. We found on our arrival that since our brother's return to Ermosa last autumn, thirteen had been received into the church, while five stood proposed for membership. It was known too, that many were thoughtful. Meetings every night for preaching, prayer, and enquiry, was begun on my arrival there, and the Lord has greatly blessed them. The church members have been greatly quickened and there are known to be at least thirty-six hopeful conversions. Most of these are young people of both sexes, the children of Christian parents, but there are also a few who may be regarded as "trophy of Divine grace," because of intemperate habits, or outside the pale of Christian influences. In some instances whole houses are being blessed, and one of the deacons recently gave thanks that now all his ten children and all the men and women in his employment, in his house, and on several farms, and in a flour mill which he owns, are now professed followers of the Saviour."

After Mr. Black had assisted for three weeks, the Rev. J. I. Hindley, of Owen Sound, came and rendered valuable aid for some days. Concerning the results of the services, a correspondent says:—"Five new members were received at our last church meeting, and twenty-five stand proposed for membership at the coming one. The work has been a blessed one and indeed has not yet ceased, I do not like to speak with definiteness as to the

conversions; but we hope, as in the past, constantly to gather in the future into the fold of Christ."

SOUTHWOLD.—Special services have been held in this church for several weeks successively, during the months of March and April, by the Rev. E. D. Silcox and his brother, Mr. J. B. Silcox, pastor elect of the Western Congregational Church, Toronto. The results have been very encouraging. A number of hopeful conversions have taken place, and others were anxiously inquiring the way of life at last accounts.

PARKER, ONT.—On Thursday evening, March 16, a meeting was held near this small village, in the Township of Peel, Co. Wellington, for the purpose of organizing and recognizing a new Congregational Church here. This was mostly the fruit of a revival that took place during the fall and winter. It was thought, too, that a church would have been organized at Drayton, about seven miles distant, ere this; but various circumstances have prevented it so far. The Parker church has twenty-two members, from eight different families. Rev. E. Barker presided at the public service; Mr. John McGregor, of Elora, and Rev. W. Manchee addressed the friends assembled; Messrs. Allchin, Robertson and Powell, candidates for the college and ministry, also took part. Revs. Messrs. Duff and Griffith were detained at home by unavoidable circumstances. The church received a unanimous recognition from delegates representing Ghelph, Elora, Fergus, Garafraxa First and Douglas churches. At present they worship in a school-house, and they have been supplied on Sabbath by Mr. McGregor, of Elora, who has just left to enter upon the ministerial work at Inverness. The young men just mentioned have now undertaken the supply in turn.

PARIS.—The new Congregational Church was opened on the 26th April, with a sermon by the Rev. E. Ebbs, one of its former pastors, in the morning, and a lecture by the Rev. H. Sanders, of Hamilton, on Reason and Faith, in

the evening. The opening services were to be continued on the 30th April, when the Rev. Dr. Jackson, of Toronto, and the Rev. Mr. Ebbs, were to preach. Particulars must be reserved for next month.

ELORA.—The pastor, the Rev. E. Barker, reports this once promising little church as almost depleted by the removal of members from the place. Only two families remain of those who united in its organization a little over a year ago, and these two are about removing. Mr. Barker says, however, "I am upheld by precious promises, as 'When I sit in darkness the Lord shall be a light unto me.'"

YORKVILLE.—Evidence of the Divine guidance in the planting of a church here has been abundant and satisfying during the month just closed. At the first monthly church-meeting six candidates were proposed for fellowship. More will follow next month. From the 5th to the 14th of April, special evangelistic services were held nightly, preceded by a Bible-reading each afternoon. Miss Geldard and Miss Mudie, two devoted Christian ladies, conducted these meetings. Very much might be written that would be profitable to the readers of the *INDEPENDENT*, concerning the addresses they delivered. Suffice it to say that, the spirit of the Master breathed through them all, and that instances of the quickening and saving power that attended them have been again and again testified to. The seed has been sown; may the harvest be truly golden!

The Annual Social of the teachers of the several Congregational Sabbath-schools of the City of Toronto took place on March 27th. About 150 invitations were accepted. The Superintendents of the Northern, Zion, Bond Street, Western, Elizabeth Street, and Chestnut Street Schools were all present. The Superintendent of the Yorkville School presided, and was supported by these brethren and by Mr. Hague. Miss Geldard and Miss Mudie spoke effectively on the privileges and duties connected with Sabbath-school work. The church choir rendered valuable and efficient service. Refreshments, served at a

quarter before ten o'clock, brought a most enjoyable evening to a close.

ST. CATHARINES.—The Lord's work is going on steadily; but surely. Since the County Sabbath School Convention was held here, special meetings have been held twice a day, and are still going on in the church in which the Convention was held, viz., Knox Church. The deep earnestness seems also to be spreading into our own church. The Spirit is working in the hearts of His people.

We commenced a morning prayer-meeting yesterday (Sunday) for the first time, and it was well attended, about twenty being present. Our Sabbath School is also under special prayer, and we are faithfully waiting for the outpouring of the divine blessing on our work there.

MARKHAM.—We regret very much to learn that owing to ill-health the Rev. Robt. Bulman, pastor of the Congregational Churches at Unionville and Markham, has tendered his resignation, and will leave these charges at midsummer. The Rev. gentleman has been very zealous in his work, not only as a minister of the Gospel, but in the cause of temperance and education. He is chairman of the Board of High School Trustees, a zealous officer of the Good Templars, and originator of the large and noble Band of Hope of little folks. In fact, his over zeal for the interest of his fellow-beings is the cause of his being compelled to resign his ministerial charges in order to recuperate. May his health be restored, and he be long spared to complete his mission amongst us.—*Markham Economist*.

MIDDLEVILLE.—A short time ago several teams from Rosetta section drove into the parsonage yard, and left about eight cords of wood, thirty-two bushels of oats, and a large amount of household provisions, for the pastor's family. A few days after, the friends in Middleville section hauled nineteen loads of wood in the log into the same yard, thus showing their kindly feeling for their pastor, the Rev. R. Brown, and their appreciation of his ministry.

INVERNESS.—Mr. John McGregor is temporarily supplying this vacant church, by invitation of the Home and District Secretaries. It is hoped that he may settle among them.

ST. JOHN, N. B.—Rev. C. B. Woodcock, of New York City, who has been supplying the Congregational Church, has accepted the call to take the pastoral oversight. The ordination of Mr. Woodcock has been fixed for Thursday, 4th May.

MAITLAND AND NOEL.—The pastor says in a recent letter: "I am pleased to still be able to report additions to the churches in this county. On the 19th ult., seventeen members were added to the South Maitland Church. Ten of these came by profession of faith, six from the old organization, and one from the First Presbyterian Church. On the 2nd inst., two were received to the Maitland Church. One of these came by profession, and the other from the Second Presbyterian Church.

The people in Noel are getting the timber on the ground for their new Congregational Church. They expect to have the outside of the church finished by the last of June.

"The people in Lower Selmah are also about commencing a new church. They have up to the present owned and occupied a house in connection with the Presbyterian Society. But it being a continual source of contention, our people feel that it has become necessary to have a house by themselves. I feel exceedingly anxious to see these churches completed, that we may be able to worship God without contending continually for our legal and moral rights."

BROCKVILLE.—The Rev. Mr. Mackay and the Rev. T. M. Reikie are at present engaged in a special evangelistic effort in connection with the Brockville Church, which it is hoped may be resuscitated and revived, under God's blessing, by this means. The services commenced on Sabbath, April 16th. The field is not a very promising one, judging by appearances; but the Lord saveth by many or by few, as it pleaseth Him, and we trust all our brethren

will pray that a blessing may follow the effort.

CENTRAL ASSOCIATION.—The Ontario Central Association of Ministers and Churches met in the Congregational Church, Georgetown, on Tuesday, 4th April, at two P.M. Eight ministerial members and four delegates were present; as also Revs. R. K. Black and Dr. Sharl, who were asked to sit as honorary members. Rev. T. M. Reikie presided. Announcements of the meetings had been made by posters through the town, and all local arrangements were perfect. Still the attendance was not large; though it must not be understood there was a failure in this respect. A very excellent sermon, solid and clear, was preached on the first evening by Rev. J. A. R. Dickson. Essays were read by Rev. T. M. Reikie, on "What shall be done by our churches with a view to their growth?" by Rev. H. J. Colwell, on "Prayer;" Rev. W. W. Smith, on "The Pastor in the Household;" and Rev. J. A. R. Dickson, on "The Confirmation of Scripture from the Monuments." Rev. B. W. Day, not being prepared with an essay, on account of impaired health, was allowed to present the substance of a sermon on "Deliverance from Sin." On each of these subjects a discussion was had, in every respect profitable and pleasant. At a public meeting, on the evening of the 5th, several speeches were made by the ministers present, on practical religious themes. The narration by Rev. R. K. Black, of revival work in Galt and Eramosa, was most opportune and interesting. Mr. Black consented to remain at Georgetown over the Sabbath. The members present during the whole or part of the session were the Revs. Messrs. Reikie, Unsworth, Day, Dickson, Jackson, Wood, Colwell and Smith. Next meeting in September, at Pine Grove.

S.

REV. JAMES DAVIES.—The friends of the Rev. J. Davies will learn with much pleasure that he has been entirely restored to health again, and has resumed his work in South Caledon. A letter just received from him says:—"It is

with heartfelt gratitude that I pen these lines regarding my safe return once more to my field of labour. Glad to say, I return fully restored to health and strength, feeling nothing whatever of my former complaint. I would be glad if you kindly make a notice of my return in your next issue of the *Canadian Independent*.

"I remain,

"Dear brother,

"Yours sincerely,

"JAMES DAVIES."

The Rev. J. Howell desires us to say that after forty years' active service in the work of the ministry, he is retiring, for the present at least, from pastoral work; but will be open to engagements with pastors or churches needing occasional services. His address will be Guelph, Ont., his first field of labour in Canada.

THE REV. G. T. COLWELL has closed his labours at Bowmanville, and returned

to his home at Danville, Quebec, where friends may address him.

THE REV. JAMES HAY has returned from Barbadoes, and is desirous of a settlement again on Canadian soil. He may be addressed for the present at Derby Centre, Vermont.

THE REV. S. T. GIBBS has returned from Nova Scotia, where he has spent the winter, with the churches at Chebogue and Wilton. Both of them were anxious to secure him as their pastor, but family ties have led him to decline their invitations and to return to Ontario. He is still open to engagement.

THE REV. C. P. WATSON, late of Cowansville, has accepted a call to Sheldon, Vermont.

TORONTO, BOND ST.—The Rev. S. Leroy Blake, of Concord, N.H., has declined the call of Bond Street Congregational Church to be its pastor. Great disappointment is felt at the result.

Official.

CONGREGATIONAL UNION.—The annual meetings of the Congregational Union of Ontario and Quebec will be held in Zion Church, Montreal, commencing on Wednesday, the 7th June, 1876, at 7.30 P.M.

At the service, on Wednesday evening, the Chairman, the Rev. C. Chapman, M. A., will deliver his retiring address.

For delegates attending the Union, the Grand Trunk, Great Western, Toronto Grey and Bruce, and Northern Railways have signified their consent to carry out the arrangement of last year, viz., one fare and a third for the double trip, on presentation of a certificate signed by the Secretary of the Union.

The two last-mentioned companies require a guarantee that fifteen delegates will make use of their lines. Although the Navigation Company has not yet been heard from it is almost certain that their arrangement of last year will be renewed. A certificate from the Secretary will be required for each delegate in every case, application for which it is hoped will be made as early as possible. The name of each delegate, and the proposed route, should be sent with the application.

The attention of ministers and churches intending to apply for connection with the Union in June, is specially called to the *first standing rule* sub-

joined to the constitution, as well as to the report of the membership committee, adopted by the Union, found at the bottom of page 56 of the Year-book for 1875-6.

Applications, with the required documents, should be in the hands of the Secretary by the 1st June, and if not sent to him on or before the 5th, will not be submitted to the Union, except with the special consent of the Union.

KENNETH M. FENWICK,
Secretary-Treasurer.

CONGREGATIONAL UNION—STATISTICAL RETURNS.—Blank forms have been forwarded to all the churches through their pastors, or other officers, but if any churches have been omitted, or if additional blanks should be required, the undersigned, on application, will immediately send them. The importance of obtaining reliable denominational statistics is growingly felt. This year let every brother carefully and promptly attend to this matter. The indifference or the carelessness of a few will seriously detract from the completeness of the work, and lessen the value of the whole effort.

KENNETH M. FENWICK,
Sec.-Treas.

THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION MEETING.—DEAR SIR,—As Secretary of the Committee appointed to make arrangements for the forthcoming meeting of the Congregational Union of Ontario and Quebec, to be held in this city, I am to request you to intimate in the next issue of the *Independent*, that all ministers, members of the Union, intending to be present at the meetings, are particularly requested to report their names to Henry W. Walker, Esq. (Grand Trunk Railway office here), Chairman of Reception Committee, on or before the 20th May, also giving the name of the lay delegate who shall accompany him.

Delegates not receiving previous notice as to the families with whom they shall be accommodated during their stay in the city, are requested to report, on arrival, to the Reception Committee on Zion Church, Radegonde Street.

I suppose the Secretary of the Union

attends to making arrangements with Railway and Steamboat Companies for reduced fares.

Very truly yours,
WM. J. B. PATTERSON.
Montreal, Ap. il 17th.

CONGREGATIONAL COLLEGE, B. N. A.
—Received on account of current session since last acknowledgment :—

| | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Liverpool, N. S. | \$16 90 |
| Fergus. | 5 00 |
| Garafraxa First Church.... | 4 64 |
| “ Douglas “ ... | 3 50 |
| “ W. C.,” per Dr. Wilkes.. | 5 00 |
| Alton..... | 2 75 |
| North Erin..... | 2 54 |

R. C. JAMIESON,
Treasurer.

Montreal, April 21st, 1876.

ALUMNI COLLEGE ENDOWMENT FUND.
—Received since last reported in the CANADIAN INDEPENDENT :—

| | |
|-------------------------|---------|
| Rev. F. H. Marling..... | \$20 00 |
| “ K. M. Fenwick..... | 50 00 |
| “ D. Macallum... .. | 6 00 |

\$76 00

Will not some of the brethren enable us to present a more satisfactory statement at our approaching annual meeting ?

KENNETH M. FENWICK,
Secretary.

RETIRING PASTORS' FUND.—Received since last announcement :—

| | |
|---------------------------|--------|
| Athol and Martintown..... | \$5 00 |
|---------------------------|--------|

J. C. BARTON,
Treasurer Retired Pastors' Fund,
Mon. real, April 25th, 1876.

LABRADOR MISSION.—The following sums have been received :—Juvenile Missionary Society, Erskine Church, Montreal, \$20 ; Northern Congregational Church Sabbath School, Toronto, \$10 ; Congregational Church, Garafraxa, \$3.

Obituary.

THE REV. D. D. NIGHSWANDER.

On Monday morning, April 17th, after a short illness, from typhoid fever, the Rev. D. D. Nighswander, the much-loved pastor of the Granby Congregational Church, was taken away to dwell for ever in the presence of Jesus.

Scarcely nine years have elapsed since he was first brought to know the Saviour, and swear fealty to Him as his Master and Lord, at Stouffville, Ontario. It was in the spring of 1867, at the time of a religious awakening in the Congregational Church. Many had already turned to Christ, and among them was his loved partner, called home such a short time before him. She was first in the kingdom of grace, and first also in the kingdom of glory.

One night the pastor of the church was preaching on the parable of the Prodigal Son; and as the glorious truths therein contained were being unfolded, they seemed to come home with power to his heart. He felt their appropriateness to his own case, and as he listened to the truth, so absorbed did his attention become, that, unconsciously to himself, he partly rose from his seat, and in this posture, with his eyes intently fixed upon the preacher, he drank in the message of the Saviour. That was indeed the turning point in his career. He arose and went to his Father, and that Father who, while he was yet a great way off, had gone after him, received him to His loving embrace and adopted him into His family, and he became "an heir of God, and a joint heir with Jesus Christ."

He immediately united with the Church, of which, up to the time of his entering college, he was a faithful, consistent member. Very early in his Christian course was he called to fill a responsible position as superintendent of the Sabbath School, and in this, as well as in every other department of church work, he did good service.

Again, when called, as we firmly be-

lieve he was, of God to the work of the ministry, he entered upon the preparatory instruction of the college course in no self-confident spirit, but with fear and trembling. He realized the solemn and responsible nature of the pastor's office, and was ever ready to say:—"Who is sufficient for these things?" While in college, he gave himself very earnestly to study, and gained the esteem and respect of both professors and students by his manly, Christian character and deportment. His vacations were also spent in labouring amongst the churches, ever doing efficient service for the Master.

At the completion of his college course he was called to the pastoral oversight of the Granby Church, and in entering upon this work he earnestly sought direction and help from the great Head of the Church. Those who took part in his ordination well remember how deeply his heart was moved as he stood before the assembled congregation, and there unfolded his desires and purposes with regard to his future labours in the Redeemer's kingdom. He felt his own weakness, and realized the greatness of the work upon which he was just entering. But the Lord, who is ever faithful to His promise, stood by him, and he realized the truth of that Scripture—"As thy day, so shall thy strength be." He shrank not back from any amount of service, but where the Lord pointed out the way, he was ready to go. On more than one occasion his thoughts were turned very seriously to the work of foreign missions, and he was prepared, had the occasion offered, to go forth and proclaim among the heathen the glad tidings of salvation.

His labours in the sphere to which the Lord called him were abundantly successful. He had many seals to his ministry. Believers were built up, and souls added to the Church of such as shall be saved. In no period of its history did the Church enjoy greater prosperity and peace than during the

pastorate of our dear departed brother. Almost up to the day of his death was he engaged in active service, for only a few short days elapsed between the time of his being stricken down and the hour when he was called home. He died on the field of battle, as a soldier fighting for his king, and has now gone to receive his reward.

In September, 1873, he was united in marriage, by the writer, to Miss M. J. Stock, also of Stouffville; and on May 26, 1875, he was called to lay her mortal remains in their final resting-place in the village where the early life of both of them had been spent. This, though a very sore and grievous affliction, was yet borne in a humble, submissive spirit. He expressed his confidence that the Lord had some good purpose in view, and was thus leading him from earthly cares to draw him closer to Himself. He murmured not, but kissed the hand that held the rod.

In the following December a very urgent and pressing call came to him from Emmanuel Church, Brantford, to assume the pastorate of that new enterprise; but, in obedience to what he believed to be the voice of the Master, he declined the call, and decided to remain amongst the people of his first love, who now so deeply mourn his loss. Their hearts are indeed sad over the loss of their much-loved pastor, as are many also in Brantford, and here in his native place. To his near relatives and friends the blow has come so unexpectedly that they are almost stunned. May the Lord pour into their hearts the consolations of His grace and, lead them into close communion with Himself!

Thus has passed away our dear brother. On the Wednesday following his death, a funeral service was held in Granby, attended by a very large congregation, and conducted by Dr. Wilkes, the Principal of the College. Every one

of the ministers of the place took part in it. On Friday evening his mortal remains were laid to rest by the side of his loved partner in the Congregational burying place, Stouffville, the Rev. Mr. Wood, of Toronto, and the writer officiating on the occasion. On the following Sabbath his former pastor also preached a funeral sermon, from the words, "The Master has come and calleth for thee." A large assembly of his relatives, friends and former companions and associates crowded the church, and many of them doubtless felt that the Master had come, and was calling them by this solemn event. May the call not come in vain!

B. W. DAY.

Dr. Wilkes, under whose tuition Mr. Nighswander was prepared for the work of the ministry, bears warm and loving testimony to his excellent deportment and diligence as a student, and also as to his success in the work to which he had devoted himself. "He was always genial," he says, "pleasant with the professors, and active in good works. He spent the Sunday afternoon, for several years, at the American Presbyterian Sabbath School at the Tanneries, and much endeared himself to its Bible class, which he taught.

"He was active and zealous at Granby, and, as I learn, continually improved in his preaching. The Episcopal minister bore to me a spontaneous high testimony to his earnestness, faithfulness and urbanity. His people loved him much, and feel his loss greatly. The members of his Bible class, some twenty or more young women, clad in mourning garb, were the chief mourners at the funeral, following the hearse. He seems to have been much esteemed by the entire community. It was said again and again that he had done a good work at Granby."

Home and School.

ROCK OF AGES.

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,"
Thoughtlessly the maiden sung,
Fell the words unconsciously
From her girlish, gleeful tongue :
Sang as little children sing ;
Sang as sing the birds in June ;
Fell the words like light leaves down
On the current of the tune—
"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

"Let me hide myself in Thee,"
Felt her soul no need to hide ;
Sweet the song as song could be—
And she had no thought beside ;
All the words unheedingly,
Fell from lips untouched by care,
Dreaming not they each might be
On some other lips a prayer—
"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me"—
'Twas a woman sung them now,
Pleadingly and prayerfully
Every word he heart did know,
Rose the song as storm-tossed bird
Beats with weary wing the air,
Every note with sorrow stirred—
Every syllable a prayer—
"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,"
Lips grown aged sung the hymn
Trustingly and tenderly—
Voice grown weak and eyes grown dim.
"Let me hide myself in Thee."
Trembling though the voice and low,
Ran the sweet strain peacefully,
Like a river in its flow.
Sung as only they can sing
Who life's thorny path have pressed ;
Sung as only they can sing
Who behold the promised rest—
"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,"
Sung above a coffin-lid ;
Underneath, all restfully,
All life's joys and sorrows hid :

Nevermore, O storm-tossed soul !
Nevermore from wind or tide,
Nevermore from billow's roll,
Wilt thou need thyself to hide.
Could the sightless, sunken eyes,
Closed beneath the soft gray hair,
Could the mute and stiffened lips
Move again in pleading prayer,
Still, aye, still, the words would be,
"Let me hide myself in Thee."

THE OLD STORY.

It is a pity, alas ! that, every year, we need to repeat even to readers of a religious paper the lesson of this New Year's narrative, from *Hearth and Home*.

It is of a young man, a member of the editorial corps of a city paper, who, a year or two ago, set out one bright winter's morning with a friend to make New Year's calls. It was his first glimpse of fashionable, or, indeed, any gay, social life. John had hitherto had no time for play. First errand-boy, then reporter, critic, night-editor : many young men have push and vim enough to run that course before twenty-two, but few carry into it the steady integrity and hard practical sense which set this Scotch-Irishman, John——, apart from his companions and won their respect. Outside of the office, few people knew him. Occasionally you would see him in his dress-suit (of a long-ago cut and fashion) up in the second tier at a grand concert, with an old gray-haired man beside him. The father and son enjoyed the treat as boys would their Christmas outings. In his grave, silent way, John comprehended and cared for music ; his father only cared to be with John. The old fellow read his paper from end to end every day ; he read, in fact, nothing else. Journalism in America, to him, meant John.

In society, the young man was not likely to be dazzled or tempted by influences which drag mere hot-blooded, brilliant young fellows astray. He was of slow, cool, enduring habit of body and

mind ; had a dry wit ; a keen yet tender humour when you knew how to tap the vein ; an indomitable Scotch pride ; he meant some day to be a husband and father, and there was no man likely to be more deeply loved as both.

When he went out to make New Year's calls, therefore, the young girls felt no scruples in urging wine upon him, nor any offence when he refused it. It would have been against nature to find such a man value the pleasure given by liquor. It was an old lady who succeeded in making him drink, a friend of his mother's—a well-bred, delicate woman as any of those who keep open house on New Year's, to whom a drunken man is simply an object of disgust. The drink was nothing but a glass of rare old sherry.

But there was one fact which neither she nor John knew, that the taste for liquor was hereditary in his blood, as scrofula might be in that of another man. Alcohol was simply a physical poison to his stomach and brain, and acted physically on both, weakening first the nerves which influence the will.

The story is soon told. The man went steadily down—down : loathing the liquor ; not tempted by the elation it produced, but drinking to satisfy the intolerable craving, and, in order to drink, thrusting aside the arguments of astonished friends, his old father's feeble hold on him, every chance he had in this world or the next. One night late in the fall he was arrested in some wretched haunt on a false charge of theft, and in the morning thrust into the prison-van to be carried to the city gaol. When the "Black Maria" stopped at the gate, a body was dragged out covered with rags, and with a gash in the throat which men did not care to look upon. "It is not the face of a beggar," they said, covering it over.

The first mention which his old father saw of him in print was that he had so died.

Why do we break in on the gracious, genial sunshine of the New Year, with such a tale as this ? Because there is not a house where liquor is offered to-day in which its beginning and sequel may not again be true. Eight out of every ten American men, physicians assert, are predisposed by hereditary in-

fluence, by the effect of climate, overwork, neural affections, and the mad haste of their lives to alcoholic poisoning, a disease as incurable as consumption. Yet on every side fair women, friendly, pure women, Christian women, have met them on past New Year's days, holding out the cup of death with entreaties that would not be denied. In the coming holiday must this be again ?

The late Moses Stuart, after having been addicted for thirty-five years to the use of tobacco, broke himself of the bad habit and wrote these words, which should be pondered by every smoker and chewer of the weed : "I do not place the use of tobacco in the same scale with that of ardent spirits. It does not make men maniacs and demons. But that it does undermine the health of thousands ; that it creates a nervous irritability, and thus operates on the temper and moral character of men ; that it often creates a thirst for spirituous liquors ; that it allures to clubs and grog-shops and taverns, and thus helps to make idlers and spendthrifts ; and, finally, that it is a very serious and needless expense, are things which cannot be denied by any observing and considerate person. And if all this be true, how can the habitual use of tobacco as a mere luxury be defended by any one who wishes well to his fellow-men, or has a proper regard to his own usefulness ?"

SO MANY HYPOCRITES.

BY MARY P. HALE.

A Sabbath-school teacher was conversing with one of his pupils upon the subject of personal religion. In answer to an enquiry, the young man gave as his reason why he did not embrace religion, that there were so many hypocritical professors. Then he added the names of persons prominent in social position and in the Church, who had been guilty of great dishonesty and other vices.

"What profession do you intend to follow, my young friend ?"

"The mercantile."

"But there are so many dishonest and over-reaching merchants, is it not a wonder that you choose such a calling ?"

"That is one reason why I intend to prove that there can be an honest merchant."

"And will you not, for the same reason, choose a religious life, if only to prove that there can be one consistent Christian?"

How many are like this man; making the sins of professors an excuse for not embracing religion. One would think, to a reasoning mind, the reverse would be the case. For if there be so few real Christians, there is the more reason why you should become one, and your class-mate become one, and so on.

Suppose nearly all the physicians in your region to be little better than quack doctors, although having received their degree of M. D. in regular order. You have a proclivity for the study of medicine, but will give no attention to it, because there are so many quacks in the profession.

Another has a great leaning toward the profession of the law; but says: "There are so many rogues and cheats in that department, I will not be a lawyer." But would not the true reasoning and aim be, "Because there are so many ignorant and unprincipled ones in the profession, there is more need of educated and upright men among them. Therefore, having a talent for such a profession, I will take it up and strive to be thorough in the knowledge of it, and upright in all its transactions."

"I will not be a mechanic or artisan of any sort; there are so many poor ones. I will not follow any trade, profession or calling whatever; there are so many rogues in them. I will starve and die rather."

Who would argue thus?

Yet, young man, by neglecting religion or resolving not to make it a personal duty, you seem willing to starve your soul here and die eternally because there are so many false professors; so many seeming hypocrites.

Will this plea avail you before the bar of eternal justice? Does it stand firm, even at the bar of your own conscience and under the close scrutiny of your better judgment and moral sense? Although there were not one true Christian upon earth, not one sincere professor, are not you under solemn obligations

before God to become a consistent follower of Jesus? Are not you personally accountable? Must not you answer for yourself alone? Yea, for "every man must give an account of himself to God."
—*S. S. Times*

THE BLIND BOY'S PATIENCE.

The other day I went to see a little blind boy. Scarlet fever had settled in his eyes, and for many months he had not seen at all. He used to be a sprightly little fellow, upon the run everywhere.

"Well, my dear boy," I said, "this is hard for you, is it not?"

He did not answer for a moment; then he said, "I don't know that I ought to say *hard*,—God knows best;" but his lip quivered, and a little tear stole down his cheek.

"Yes, my child; you have a kind Heavenly Father, who loves you, and feels for you more even than your mother does."

"I know it, sir," said the little boy, "and it comforts me."

"I wish Jesus were here to cure Frank," said his little sister.

"Well," said I, "He will open little Frank's eyes to see what a good Saviour He is. He will show him that a blinded heart is worse than blind eyes; and He will cure it, and make him see, and enjoy beautiful heavenly things, so that he may sit here and be a thousand times happier than many children who are running about."

"I can't help wishing he could see," said Lizzie.

"I dare say; but I hope that you don't try to make Frank discontented."

"Frank *isn't* discontented," said Lizzie, earnestly; "he loves God. And love sets everything right, and makes its own sunshine; does it not, Frank?"

"I don't feel cross now," said the little blind boy, meekly. "When I'm alone I pray and sing my Sabbath-school hymns, and sing, and sing; and God is in the room, and it feels light, and—and—I forget I'm blind at all;" and a sweet light stole over his pale features as he spoke. It was heavenly light I was sure.
—*The Christian*.