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THE CANADIAN INDEPENDENT.

(NEW SERIES.)

VOL. IV.]

TORONTO, MAY 1, 1885.

[No. 7.

EDITORIAL JOTTINGS.

"THOSE were two good sermons you gave us last Sunday," said a friend to the editor, who, being called away, had left a respected brother to fill his pulpit. We felt repaid for our endeavour to give the best we could, and rejoiced in the compliment paid to our choice—a truer compliment than the sickening "Ah, well, we would rather have had yourself," which too often is a lip service, only that and nothing more. Of course, a church likes to see its pastor in the pulpit, but true devotion will also appreciate the friend who steps in to aid the pastor. The compliment paid by depreciating such an one is to a true heart an insult.

AN attempt is being made by two of the Toronto papers to begin a Sunday issue, advantage being taken of the present interest in our North-West troubles. Sunday, 19th ult., a report was spread that General Middleton had been defeated, and a rush was made for the paper for an account of the same. We remember among the London cries of our earlier years how two newsboys were walking on either side of the street one Sunday morning, the cry of one being "Dreadful Murder," the other responding "Louis Philippe." Of course the paper sold, and the reader read of a murder, it is true, and some item regarding Louis Philippe, but the connection was only in the cry of the boys. We are in danger of repeating this spirit of recklessness in the endeavour to force sales amid severe competition. It is, however, to be noted with thankfulness that the *Globe* has come squarely out against the issue of the Sunday paper, deprecating, as it well may, the demoralizing tendency of having every day given up to the excitement of work and news and worry, and giving its great influence to the cause of national integrity. We trust that the common sense of our people will, as the excitement passes, frown

down the attempt to worry us with news during the quiet Sunday hours for the sake of catching a penny.

A RECENT number of the *Nonconformist* has an article "Off to Canada," in which an account is given of the sending off of more than a score of emigrants, "*bona fide* labourers and mechanics," who, aided by the Emigration Scheme of the London Congregational Union, are on their way to Canada for employment. There is one word we would say regarding this work from a longer experience than "a pioneer missionary work of twelve years," and in some respects a more practical one also. There is room on this great continent, and under the British flag, for any number our brethren may send out of *the right stamp*. Others will be paupers and vagrants here as they are at home, and the men we want are those who expect to work for their living, attend to their business, leave purely English notions behind them, and be ready to adapt themselves in all honesty to the circumstances in which they will be placed. We do not want the men who come here for a living and then abuse and draw comparisons, ever unfavourable, against our climate, customs and resources; nor do we need those who must be in a city, or some select spot. We have too many of that class already, and would gladly aid them in emigrating. We have agricultural resources, however, practically boundless for two or three generations, and they who come out ready to aid in developing them and the industries which spring therefrom will not find gold in the streets, nor beds of ease by day, but what is far better, manly independence, hard work, honest rest, bread to eat, raiment to wear, elbow room for themselves and family, good schools, and "freedom to worship God." Our friends must remember the old notion that "anything will do for Canada" has been long exploded here, there is

no room for the "ne'er do weel," except to cumber the ground and die.

WE now read in an exchange that the revised Old Testament will be issued during the present month (May), and two papers published in the *Manchester Guardian*, apparently from one who knows, prepare the public for greater departures from the authorized version than even the revised New Testament presented. This will be no surprise to those who have even but imperfectly studied the Hebrew Old Testament. For our own part we are satisfied from our very desultory study of the revised New Testament that, assuming the work of the revisers of the Old Testament version to be equal to that of their coadjutors, the continued use of King James's version after the issue of the complete revised version will be a sacrifice of faithful translation to the sentiments of association and prejudice. Contemporary with this version, there has been carried on in Germany a similar revision of Luther's German Bible, the results of which are now known, and from which we may forecast some probable changes of our forthcoming revision. We give one. Job xix. 25, 26 is thus rendered in the German revision: "I know that my Redeemer liveth; and at the last He will take his stand over the dust. And after this my skin hath been destroyed, I shall see God without my flesh."

UP to April 4th, when our Executive met, the receipts from churches and individuals for the Home Missionary Society amounted to \$2,300, the amount expended \$5,000. Of course, we expect many remittances yet; but churches must exert themselves if we are to face our annual meeting with a clear balance sheet; \$2,700 deficiency is not to be trifled with.

THE following letter appears, addressed to Mr. Henry Richard, M.P., of Britain. We have sympathy with its utterances:

LIEGE, March 27th.

SIR,—The idea of a war between England and Russia about a village lost among the steppes of Central Asia is a thing so utterly absurd that one remains confounded and in despair at the prospect. . . . There never was a question so well adapted for arbitration as this of the Penj-deh and the tracing of a frontier between the Afghan and Russian territory, for the two parties to the dispute themselves

acknowledge that it is an open and an obscure question. Lift up your voice, dear sir, and make yourself heard among the working men, the commercial men, among all those who are threatened by the culpable folly of a war which can lead to no solution even though it were crowned with the most undoubted success.

Yours devotedly,

EMILE DE LAVELEYE

Mr. Henry Richard.

THE ALLEGED DECADENCE OF CALVINISM.

From various quarters it is proclaimed with much confident assertion that Calvinism is dying out. Statements of this kind very naturally find their way into Methodist journals, where they are sometimes paraded with an air of denominational triumph. Our esteemed neighbour and contemporary, the *Christian Guardian*, whose weekly visits we greatly prize, and whose well-filled columns we read with much interest, has of late been putting some of these statements into conspicuous prominence. A selected article in its issue of April 8th not only expresses the opinion—said to be "now largely prevalent,—that the influence of Calvinism is decreasing," but quotes Dr. Dale, of Birmingham, as declaring that "among the present aspects of theological thought in the Congregational churches, none is more obvious than the general disappearance of Calvinism." We are fully warranted then in taking up this subject—if not in duty bound to do so—and we desire to discuss it, not at all in a controversial spirit, or one of denominational partisanship, but with a simple and sincere desire to arrive at the historical and actual truth.

At the outset we take leave to say that much which is apt to be hastily regarded as indicative of the decadence of Calvinism, is in reality only the modification of it. All schools of theological opinion comprise both ultraists and moderates. Time was, and not so very long since, when ultra-Calvinists were in the majority, and moderate Calvinists were limited to a small and unimportant minority. But the tables are turned, and moderate Calvinism is now in the ascendant. This is not only the case throughout the Christian world at large, but in particular portions of it having Calvinistic creeds. Superficial observers have got the idea that the Scottish Presbyterian bodies have outgrown their Calvinism, but those who are thoroughly conversant with the facts

know this to be a mistake. If a convention of all the Presbyterians in Scotland were to revise the Confession of Faith, those portions of it which teach, or seem to teach, the divine authorship of sin, human inability, limited atonement, absolute election, reprobation, and the like, would, no doubt, be suppressed, but these are only the excrescences of Calvinism, which, when removed by skilful surgery, would leave the vitality of the system not only unimpaired, but vastly invigorated. The United Presbyterian body has added some supplementary statements to the Confession, but a recent, and apparently well-informed reviewer testifies that even these exhibit "most loving adherence to the Calvinism therein taught," and adds, "acceptance of this system of doctrine is, at the present time, as general and as emphatic as at any time in our national history." The same is no doubt substantially true of the American, Canadian, and other Presbyterian bodies.

We have to complain of our contemporary the *Christian Guardian*, and we do so without an atom of unkind or unfraternal feeling, that most of its exhibitions of Calvinism are of the extreme order, such as the great mass of those who consider themselves good, sound Calvinists unhesitatingly repudiate. This remark applies, perhaps, more especially to certain selected articles, but even the editorials are not wholly free from this fault. We do not for a moment imagine that our usually fair-minded neighbour would wilfully misrepresent or caricature a doctrinal system, but we do think the fact is overlooked—for a fact it is—that the cardinal and essential principle of Calvinism can be and is held most tenaciously by multitudes who no more believe in universal fore-ordination, limited atonement, or arbitrary sovereignty, than the most decided Arminian. It would be difficult to find a Calvinist prepared to accept such statements as: "salvation is unconditional," "it in no sense depends on anything that man can do, but upon the decree of God," "predestinated to perdition by a divine decree," "a salvation which God has decreed they shall never share,"—and many more like them which might be quoted from recent editorials of the *Christian Guardian* as descriptive of Calvinism. In further illustration of this point we may cite a reference twice made to Albert Barnes, the eminent commentator.

The most noticeable of these references was in an editorial on Mr. Moody's visit to Toronto, as follows: "Mr. Moody's theology, so far as he may be said to have a theology, is drawn from Puritan and Calvinistic sources. But there is to Methodists this comfort that when a man gets thoroughly aroused, and is pleading with sinners to come to Christ, Calvinism, as Barnes said, cannot be preached." Now, we are under the impression that Barnes never made any such statement. He did say, and he urged it as a forcible objection to that excrescence of Calvinism, the doctrine of limited atonement, that it could not be preached in times of revival when men were aroused to declare the Gospel with special earnestness. How could he make the broad, sweeping declaration attributed to him when he was himself a pronounced Calvinist? His commentary gives no uncertain sound on this subject, and the same may be said of his published sermons. Injustice is also done to the memory and work of Whitefield to back up the assertion that "Arminianism is the only possible conception of the doctrines of grace in a great revival." We are told that "Whitefield's Calvinism retreated at once from the centre of operations and became a spent force." This is historically incorrect, for "Whitefield's Calvinism" entrenched itself in the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion which was gradually merged in the Congregational and other bodies. As to the assertion that "Arminianism is the only possible conception of the doctrines of grace in a great revival," it is contradicted by the great revival in Jonathan Edwards' day, by the great revival under Finney's labours, by the Irish revival, and even by the *Guardian's* own statement concerning Mr. Moody, that "so far as he has a theology at all—and he must have one underlying his presentations of truth, however dexterously it may be hidden—it is drawn from Puritan and Calvinistic sources."

To come now more particularly to the doctrinal position of Congregational churches, it may suffice for the present to say that the Declaration of Faith adopted in 1833 is a distinctly Calvinistic document, as witness Nos. 14 and 15 of the "Principles of Religion" contained in it. Yet these paragraphs are entirely innocent of the ultra views usually held up as an exhibit of the Calvinistic system by Methodist journals, the *Christian*

Guardian included. Though never used as a binding creed, or as a standard to which assent should be required, this Declaration is still accepted as embodying "the leading doctrines of faith maintained by Congregational Churches in general." In regard to Dr. Dale's testimony, referred to at the outset of this article, there can be no doubt of his competency as a witness. But one would like to know what he means by "the general disappearance of Calvinism." Does it relate to the beliefs of the ministry and membership, or to the current teaching of the pulpit? There has been of late years a general disappearance alike of Calvinism and Arminianism from sermons, because of a greater earnestness in the proclamation of those truths of the gospel which are common to all Christian denominations. We would not on this account infer and proclaim the decadence of Arminianism, especially in the face of such a statement concerning Methodism as recently appeared in the *Christian Guardian*, to wit:—"Not one of her doctrines has she eliminated, smoothed over, or sought to teach as something else, during all of her past; but openly and freely she has always taught them, and they are as fresh and pure to-day as when John Wesley formulated them." Still, we feel sure that free-will, falling from grace, entire sanctification, and in fact all the "five points" are less conspicuous in Methodist preaching to-day than they were a quarter or a half-century ago—sufficiently so, we think, to justify a *nota bene* as to the "general disappearance of Arminianism." The real truth probably is that there are doctrinal approximations, unconsciously, perhaps, to some extent, on both sides; for has not Arminianism its ultrasisms, its extreme points, equally with Calvinism? We, at any rate, think so? Will the time ever come when the projecting, jagged edges being polished off, these two conflicting systems will "fit like smooth mosaic"? At present, there seems not much probability of this, but time works wondrous changes.

We firmly believe that Congregationalists generally cling not merely with faith, but *with a warm love*, to the doctrine of saints' perseverance. This logically implies the essential principle of Calvinism. The mildest and most moderate statement of this essential principle of which we have any knowledge is that found in Finney's Theology, which bases

election to eternal life on God's foreseen ability to bring certain persons to the knowledge of the truth by such means as He can consistently use for their salvation. But a gracious discrimination lurks even in this gentle proposition. All are not treated precisely alike, as Arminianism maintains. Between Finney's position and the one essentially characteristic of Arminianism, which bases election on foreseen faith and repentance, there is apparently a wide difference. Is it irreconcilable? Can no *tertium quid* be found that will abolish it? Who is the Author of faith and Giver of repentance? Is the divine influence which induces faith and repentance a matter of accident or of purpose? If of purpose how far back does it date? And why do some have more of the divine influence than others? Around the last of these queries there hovers the hitherto impenetrable mystery out of whose depths the Arminian conjures up the abhorrent ghost of Calvinism in its worst form. Nor will it down, with our present lights. Shall we have clearer lights in the not-far-away future? We Congregationalists do not despair of this, for we hold to the grand sentiment of the Pilgrim Father, Robinson: "God hath yet much more light and truth to break forth from His Holy Word." The alleged decadence of Calvinism does not trouble us very much, because we call no man master, and pin our faith to no human standard. Moreover, we look for the ultimate decadence of all *isms*, and the triumphant ascendancy of truth over the errors that more or less impair the creeds of Christendom. Among the purified and crystallized forms of religious thought which will prevail in the golden age of the church when the watchmen shall see eye to eye, there will be found souvenirs of all evangelical systems of doctrine, and to that invaluable collection Calvinism will not fail to contribute its full quota.

Our little systems have their day,
And slowly totter to their fall.

It will be our wisdom not to be too prodigal of trust and glorying in these. Rather let us raise the eager heart-cry:—

O Lord and Saviour of us all,
Whate'er our name and sign,
We own Thy sway, we hear Thy call,
And form our lives by Thine!

We faintly hear, we dimly see,
In differing phrase we pray,
But dim or clear, we own in Thee,
The Life, the Truth, the Way.

AN ADDRESS TO THE STUDENTS OF
THE CONGREGATIONAL COLLEGE OF
B. N. A.

BY REV. JOHN MORTON, HAMILTON, ONT.

Let me say frankly, gentlemen, that I am not going to speak to you on any theological or philosophical subject, for though I were able I am sure you have got enough of this during the session from your distinguished Principal and Professors. Nor shall I launch out on any question connected with the spirit of the age, for it takes a strong swimmer to keep his head above the water in that ocean. My aim is humbler. I desire to throw out a few hints which may be of use to you in view of the work that lies ahead. I shall begin by congratulating you on the completion of the session, on the health you have enjoyed, on the work you have accomplished, and on the pleasure you have in feeling that your bow is unstrung for a little. I trust that the rest which lies before you will enable you to gather up strength of body and mind, and will bring you back to the next session like strong men to run a race.

Make the best of these months of relaxation, not in entire idleness, not in forgetfulness of your sacred calling, but by nursing your heart in the love of God and man, and entering into deeper sympathy with the work to which you have devoted your lives.

But I have to congratulate you also, and specially, on your connection with the *Christian ministry*. There is no nobler work on earth. It is a work which is dear to the Saviour's heart. It is a work which is to bring comfort to men. It is a work which is to make bad men good and good men better, and to save society from moral corruption. So much does social welfare depend on it that one is almost afraid to contemplate what the world would be apart from the Christian ministry. Be proud, then, of your calling. Seek to catch the spirit of Paul when he said "to me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

I have said that it is a work which is dear to the Saviour's heart, and I wish to emphasize the thought, simple, and self-evident though it be. It is true He is in love with all workers. He has pleasure in the farmer going out with his plough to prepare the soil for the grain. He has pleasure in the merchant distributing by car and ship the products of the soil, and bringing food and gladness within the reach of all. He has pleasure in our legislators seeking to secure justice between man and man, and may I not say that He has pleasure in the soldier obeying the call of his country, taking his life in his hand and going to her defence. It is a glorious truth that our Saviour has pleasure in all genuine workers, and the more this

truth is realized by workers of all kinds the more will labour be ennobled and ennobling.

But the thought for you is that our Lord distinguishes between your work and all others and takes special pleasure in it. Imagine the Saviour looking down on a country. He has many desires for it. He desires that the people should be happy and contented, that they should have food and to spare, that they should have the innocent luxuries of life, that they should enjoy the blessings of health, that social order should prevail, and that they should have schools and colleges to educate the rising generation. Christians delight to remember that our Lord takes a personal interest in all these things. But His chief desire is that the people should be holy and happy. This alone will satisfy Him. He sees that this is the radical cure for all the ills of man.

Since then this is the great central desire of the Saviour's heart, since it was for this that He became one of ourselves, and died in our stead, it is clear that must have a special pleasure in the work of the Christian ministry. I have said that this is a work which brings comfort to aching hearts. Having yourselves been comforted of God, it will be yours to carry peace to the troubled, hope to the despairing, and strength to those who have sunk down on the long, long, weary road of life and are not able to rise. It will be yours to take the dying man by the hand and give him courage in view of the dark valley; and it will be yours to bring the light of heaven into the house after it has been desolated by death.

The need for this work will not cease while the world lasts. Let shallow men harp on their secularistic harps, let them proclaim that all this is priestcraft and worse, let them laugh their hollow laugh over the tender words of the pastor at the bedside of the dying, human hearts in their hour of weakness will still thirst for the consolation of Christ.

Preachers have been divided into three classes, lamps, pitchers and trumpets. Lamps pour light into the understanding of men, trumpets rouse the conscience, but the pitchers are probably the most useful of all, because they carry comfort to sorrowing hearts.

But in order to increase your love for the work, I wish to remind you of the relation in which it stands to social order. We often speak of the troublous times in which we live. There are lawless men in all civilized lands, who are ready for any kind of diabolical work. The presence, and the rapid increase of these men, is not to be pooh-poohed as a matter of no importance. They are dangerous to the peace of society *already*, and with the increase of destructive weapons they will become more dangerous as the years roll on. Now, what is to save us from these men? What instrument are we to use to put an end to them? "The gallows" is the answer which

most readily comes. Put them down by the strong arm of the law. This has been tried in Russia, in Prussia and more recently in England, but it has not been entirely successful. Nor can it be successful, for men can plot in their hearts, and it is only a few of the guilty who are arrested. And in the future, as science increases the ability to construct diabolical machines, the greater the difficulty in arresting and punishing. There is nothing clearer to me than that the ultimate safeguard is a *wider recognition of the authority of Christ*. Let men take Him as their Lord, let them bow before Him in lowly obedience, and lawlessness will cease. Who ever heard of a devout servant of Christ placing dynamite in a parliament house?

So then, young men, this work which you have entered is dear to the heart of your Lord, it is the means by which these trembling hearts are to be made strong for the conflict of life and the mystery of death, and by which the peace of society is to be secured.

In all these respects it has been tried and found a success. It has been tried on a large scale and under its beneficent influence nations have been elevated. Take the map of the world and mark off the countries where civilization has reached its highest point, and you will find that they are the countries where Christianity has had the fairest play. It has been tried on a small scale.

Many a man has sat down to the Bible with a burdened heart, and has risen rejoicing in the light of God.

We ourselves have tried it, and we have found that it has satisfied our deepest longings, that it purifies our hearts, and that it gives us courage to face the conflict of life and do our best.

So much I have said regarding the work *itself*, to remind you of its importance, to stir your enthusiasm for it, and to make you feel that if any man has a right to set his feet firmly down, and to look the whole world in the face with the consciousness that he is no drone in society, it is the Christian minister. The world can ill spare any of its workers, but if there be one class which it needs more than another, and on which the very existence of society depends, it is the ministers of Christ. So then while you are humble as a child in yourself, be strong as a lion in the importance of your work.

I shall now pass on to speak of some of the qualifications for the work; and I shall assume that you are moved by the love of Christ. No man ever succeeded in any work to which his heart did not lie, and for which he had no love, except for its emoluments.

He who accomplishes anything in painting, in poetry, in banking, or in any of the ten thousand enterprises open to man, must take to the work as a

bird takes to the air, not merely to make his living, but because it is his element.

The true poet may be restrained from singing by the force of circumstances, but the moment the restraint is removed he will be at the singing again. And so Christian ministers will love the Master and the Master's work. Circumstances will determine whether they will work in one place or another, in a pulpit or out of it; but, whatever be their circumstances, so long as they are in the flesh they seek to bring the consolations of Christ to the hearts of men. It is their element, and in some form they will engage in it whether they make their living by it or not.

So then the true minister does not depend on a church for work. When he leaves a church he is not out of employment till he gets another place. His opportunities may be fewer, but he has still plenty to do. A true minister, let me insist, can never be thrown *idle*. I remember having this truth impressed upon me by a very simple and, in some respects, a laughable incident. I was walking on a country road near Edinburgh with a minister who was, as we term it, out of a place, and waiting a call. Depending on a salary for the support of himself and his family his case was hard, and you may be sure he had no surplus cash. As we walked towards Inverness station, we met a working man, trudging along on his bare feet, carrying his boots strung on a staff over his shoulder. He stopped and addressing my friend, to whom he was nearest, said in a very manly tone, "Could you help a working man on his way in search of a job?" My friend replied; "My good man, I am sorry that I cannot, I am out of a job myself." We walked on, but often I have said to myself since. "A Christian minister out of a job!" And surely there is something absurd in the conception. Could we conceive of the Apostle Paul living in a country where there are thousands of hearts aching for the knowledge of Christ being out of a situation? Like all true ministers he did not wait till he was called to it by men, or till he was paid for it, but began and did the work that lay to his hand, because he loved to do it. As love of country gives zest to the patriot, and makes him labour when he gets little credit, so the love of Christ gives zest to work for which there may be no earthly reward. To some of you it will be given, I trust, to occupy commanding positions where there will be no stint of the rewards which this world can give; but to the majority there is the small church, obscure labour, and none of the favouring breezes of popularity. You will indeed have many things to give you strength. You will live in the hearts of your people, and you will rejoice that you are sowing seed the fruit of which will be seen in eternity; but that which above all else is to sustain you is the love of Christ.

Assuming then that we have men with the root of

the matter in them, lovers of their Lord, as eager for the work as a horse was for the battle, counting nothing too dear to lay on the altar, what more is necessary? A great deal—much training—years of practice and hundreds of failures; all of which will take time and patience. I shall say a word or two about preparation of *body* and *mind*, and then throw out a few suggestions about the *spirit* in which you should look forward to the work.

What about the body? Let it not be abused or neglected, for much depends on it for efficient work; in a certain sense all depends on it, for nothing can be done without it. How sad to see a young man who has, after years of labour, fitted himself for the work, dropping into the grave before he preaches a sermon. But though nothing so bad as this should happen, there may be a low health which will tell on every sermon preached. Uninteresting preaching—preaching that wants buoyancy—is often the result of weak health. The good man thinks that his faith is failing when the root of the trouble is nervous depression, when all that he needs is a month on the mountains, or a bath in the ocean brine. Heaven itself cannot stir the heart of a man who by ill-health has lost the power of being stirred. If you wish to speak with interest, if you wish to be able to look an audience in the face, and strike chords in the young and strong, as well as in the weak, you must keep the juices of your body sweet, and build your soul on a solid physical basis.

Passing from the body to the mind, I shall say little about the training of the intellect, because both here and in the university you have been under teachers better qualified than I to instruct you. And I know you are being prepared to meet the enemies of our faith who will spring up here and there, and obstruct your path. As a rule you will let these men alone, believing that the truth itself is the best defence, but you are ready when the worst comes to the worst to slay the enemy. And I trust to some of you it will be given to strike a sword in the very heart of some of those false systems of philosophy which teach that man is absolutely a product of the past, that he is what he is by forces over which he has no control, that the conformation of his brain determines his character, and that he is no more responsible for his moral state than the pigeon is for the colour of its feathers, or the fish for the shape of its fins.

But it was not this that I intended to say about the intellect. I wished to say that you are to be careful not to be too friendly with doubts in your student days. I know you cannot entirely avoid them, nor would it be wise, for you must know their faces in order to warn people against them. But, to use a Scotch phrase, do not let them "too far ben." "Never ask them to sit down or to spend a night with you." If

you do there is trouble ahead. If you make yourself familiar with doubts regarding the essential truths of Christianity, if you turn them over and over in your heart till you fall in love with them, and find it easier to think of *them* than the fair face of your Lord, you are sowing the seeds of a spiritual disease which will make you weak in the day of battle. Some day when you are climbing the pulpit stairs they will come back. In vain you will try to keep them out. They will enter and take the heart out of you. What I say is true, for I knew a man fourteen years ago and more, who was not lifted up to the third heavens, but dragged down to the confines of hell, and the memory of that time comes back at seasons with a strange trembling fear. Take warning, and do not make doubt your bosom companion.

At one time of my life I was greatly enamoured of the maxim: "believe nothing till you have proved it." I had learned it in the school of science, and it commended itself to my young judgment. I began to apply it to various Christian doctrines in the following manner: "I am told that the Bible is inspired but I cannot prove it for myself, and I must suspend my judgment. In regard to miracles there are learned men for them and learned men against them. I cannot settle the matter for myself and so I must suspend my judgment. With respect to the Resurrection of our Lord there is a dispute among the ablest men, and as I have not the means at present of examining the evidence, I must hold my mind in suspense." And thus I went on suspending till all the comforting companions of my soul were suspended. What a fool I was. Instead of the maxim: "believe nothing till you can prove it to be true," I would much rather have this: "doubt nothing in Christian faith till you can prove it to be false." Christian faith is a gift which has come to us from our forefathers, and which made them strong to do the right; it is wise for us to take it home to our souls, and to give it our generous confidence. Suspense of judgment is a proper attitude of mind in relation to many questions which ask for a solution, but if carried to an extreme it becomes ruinous. In my time I have read of many kinds of spiritual food, but among them all the poorest fare for an immortal soul is I-don't-know. He who feeds on this colourless gruel will do little either for God or man.

And now, leaving the intellect, let me say a word or two regarding the proper spirit of theological students.

I trust you value your classes, even that part of the work which you are in the habit of calling dry. But if you value it now you will value it more highly by-and-bye. Speaking for myself, I say with shame that I did not fully appreciate my classes till I was nearly done with them. In my first year when I was humbler I was receptive; but in the second and third I was impatient on account of the spirit of the age,

which I was drinking at another well. In the fourth and fifth I came into a better temper. I trust you will be wiser; and prize your opportunities beyond gold. If you will not object to the illustration, let me remind you that you are yet but babes in theology, and require to take hold of the breast of your Alma Mater. And mothers will tell you that the more determinedly you go at it, the more likely you are to be strong and healthy.

Be receptive rather than critical. It is said that sometimes critics review books which they have never read, and I know among the students with whom I used to be familiar there was a tendency to pick faults in a lecture before the principle of the lecture was understood. Having felt the breath of the thought of the age, as it is grandly called, they thought that the professors ought to have given them something up to the times. But those students have learned that the professors were wiser than they, and that it was good for them, while having their minds open to all the light that comes, to be firmly grounded in those eternal verities which can never be shaken.

So then be receptive. Let your motto be "swift to hear." The time for criticism will come after, and if there be, as without doubt there are, some Christian doctrines which need to be re-stated, and brought into harmony with the enlarging thought of the day you will be all the better qualified for the work because you have thoroughly learned the doctrines.

One other point I desire to emphasize. Learn to take Christ's view of life, and be more anxious to know His mind than the mind of any of the lights of the present day. I remember an incident which brought this strikingly home to me. A number of ministers and students were in a parlour spending a social evening, and among them was an eminent doctor of divinity, a man of world-wide reputation. In a corner of the room two students were discussing an important doctrine, I forget now what it was, but I think it was the doctrine of future punishment. Others joined till there was quite a circle, and each in turn was giving his view of the matter. One of the students went to the doctor in another part of the room and asked his opinion. The wise man saw that too much stress would be put on his opinion by an admiring student, and replied "it is a comparatively small matter to find out what I think on this solemn question, but it is of immense importance to find out what Jesus thinks," and then he proceeded to call attention to some of the sayings of the Great Teacher. I can never forget the lesson I learned from this incident, and often when I am eager to find out this man's view and the other man's view, I say to myself: Have I not the word of the Master?

A near relative, an old man of sturdy habits of thought, has become one of my audience since I came

to Canada; and sometimes I get very plain talk from him about my sermons. More than once he has said to me: "we don't want to hear what you think, we want to know what the Bible says."

By these incidents I wish to lift into prominence the duty of absolute submission to the Lord. You are to be His ministers, and you are so to preach that you will make the people realize that they are dealing with the exalted Master, and not with man whose breath is in his nostrils. Be close companions of Him every day and every hour of your life, and preaching about Him will be your native air.

And now, gentlemen, permit me to say, in conclusion that I set a high value on you, higher perhaps than you imagine seeing I know none of you personally. I value you because I see that if you are true to your holy calling, true to your exalted Master, influences will go forth from you which will roll on and out to the end of time, and which, when time is no more, will make music on the eternal shore. You are but a handful, but we are told that a handful of corn on the top of the mountains will shake like the cedars of Lebanon. Amen.

A CALL TO SPURGEON.

The congregation of Smith's Corners met lately for the purpose of extending a call to a minister. There was a fair attendance, and a considerable amount of interest was taken in the proceedings, as it had been rumoured for some time that the Corners people would probably ask the great London preacher to become their pastor. The meeting having been duly opened, the chairman, after a few remarks on the importance of the work before them, asked those present to proceed to business.

Mr. Diotrefhes Highflyer then rose, and said he had a motion to make which he felt sure would secure the support of all present. They had now been vacant for over two years, and had heard about fifty candidates. Some of these were good enough men, but none of them came up to the standard required at Smith's Corners. They needed a first-class man in their church, and there was no use in calling any other. The Methodists were getting a good man, and they must have the best possible talent in their church or they might as well close it. Their people demanded the best pulpit ability in the country, and they were willing to pay for it. They could raise, at least, three hundred dollars a year and no doubt they could get a supplement. He had been carefully looking over a list of those who had preached and of the most effective men in the Church, and he was persuaded none of them was suitable. They wanted a man of peculiar aulities to fill the Corners pulpit, and he was convinced they would have to go to another country for him. He had been looking into the record of a few

of the best men in the British cities, and, on the whole, he thought Spurgeon had made about as good a mark as any of them. He moved that they call Spurgeon.

Mr. Aminadab Stuckup seconded the motion. He wished to direct the attention of the meeting to the financial aspect of the question. Spurgeon, if he accepted their call, would no doubt draw, and the more people the more money. Spurgeon would draw on the other churches and bring their people in, and a considerable amount of the funds now going into the other churches would flow into the Corners treasury. His opinion always was that the minister should raise the money. Two things had to be kept in view—*tone* and *money*. A minister coming from London would give tone to the Corners Church and the money would come in. He had great pleasure in seconding the motion.

Mr. Straightlace said he was opposed to calling Spurgeon. It was well-known that Spurgeon *smokes*, and no man who uses tobacco would stand in the Corners pulpit with his consent. No Christian would smoke. Smoking produces idiocy, insanity, and crime, and sends thousands to the gaol, the gallows, and an early grave. Spurgeon might be a good preacher, but what does a man's preaching amount to if he smoke. If Spurgeon were called, he and his family would leave the Corners Church.

Mr. Smallbore made the same objection. If they called Spurgeon he would stop his subscription. He had never paid less than two dollars a year; but if they called Spurgeon, or any other smoker, he would withdraw his subscription and then where would they be?

Mr. Humdrum said he had another objection. Spurgeon was sensational. He published his sermons in the *Globe* every week. He would have nothing to do with sensational preachers.

Mr. Dry-as-dust said his objection was of another kind. Spurgeon often said humorous, racy things in the pulpit. He could give any number of illustrations of this fault from his published sermons. In a sermon on Jonah ii. 9, he said Jonah was a Calvinist, and added that he hoped none of his Arminian friends would have to learn Calvinism where Jonah learned his. It was not in good taste to make such allusions. He believed in pulpit dignity. He was opposed to putting a man in the Corners pulpit that said such things in his sermons. He liked to see a stiff, dignified, ecclesiastical-looking man with a proper amount of clerical starch in his composition. Spurgeon looked like a business man, and never talked in "pulpit tone." He would never sign a call to such a man.

Mr. Theophilus Pedant, B.A., said Spurgeon was not a graduate of any University, and, for his part, he never wished to hear a man that was not a graduate. He admired "culchaw" and had reason to believe that Spurgeon was not a scientist. He would not vote for Spurgeon.

Mr. John Talkative said his objection was of a more practical kind. It is well-known that Spurgeon does not visit his congregation. He had lately read some remarks of Spurgeon's that made light of visiting and tea-drinking in the congregation. Now, he (Mr. Talkative) believed in visiting. He liked the minister to come often and bring his family and spend the whole afternoon. He would not press too heavily on a minister and ask him to read and pray when he visited. Nor did he believe that a minister should catechize families and speak to them on matters of personal religion. That was tedious and laborious and could not be expected. What he wanted was that the minister should spend half-a-day occasionally talking about *current events*. That was the way to build up a cause. If Spurgeon had spent the time going round among the people that he spent in writing books, and editing his magazine, and working at his orphanage and Pastors' College, how much better it would have been! If there was any reason to hope that Spurgeon would improve his methods and do more visiting, he would not oppose the call, but Spurgeon was too old now to reform. He would not sign the call.

Mr. Veal said he was opposed to Spurgeon on account of his age. He had already passed the dead line of fifty, and a man over fifty was not capable of filling the Corners pulpit. Spurgeon might have experience and piety and a fair amount of pulpit ability, but he could not be magnetic at fifty. What they wanted was a magnetic young man. A young man was always better at getting up socials, helping at tea-meetings, and all that sort of thing. Spurgeon had the rheumatism in his toes and could not get around lively for dishes and things when the Corners people were getting up their annual tea-meeting. What they wanted was a young, active man.

Mr. Gusher said he had a more serious objection to Spurgeon than any that had yet been urged. Spurgeon was combative. He gave the Ritualists, Rationalists, and other people of various kinds some fearful knocks. Now, he did not like a minister of that kind. He liked a minister that said, "Dear brother," or "Dear sister," to everybody. There was nothing he liked so much as to speak at a "Union meetin'." He had no sympathy with these men that were always exposing errors and denouncing abuses. For his part he was ready to join hands with Ritualists and all other men, and sing: "Blest be the tie that binds." That was the hymn he liked. This business of contending for the truth was behind the age. Spurgeon would be sure to make trouble with somebody if he came, and therefore he would not sign his call.

At the close of Mr. Gusher's remarks, the meeting adjourned.

Moral.—Objections can be made to calling even Spurgeon.

NO CHANCE TO DODGE.

One evening, a few years ago, Dr. John Hall preached in a large city across the lines. The church was crowded and the Doctor was at his best. The sermon was intensely practical and sent the truth right home. In the closing part he took up the current excuses that men make for not believing on Christ, and fairly tore them to tatters. Iron logic and strong common sense, mingled with an occasional gleam of humour and the least touch of sarcasm, made the excuses, or at least some of them, appear supremely absurd. The great audience were visibly impressed. At the close of the service a rather careless looking American citizen made this remark to a friend: "The old man gives a fellow no chance to dodge, does he?" Probably that Yankee unconsciously paid Dr. Hall the highest compliment that has ever been paid to him. What better thing can be said of a preacher than that he gives careless sinners no chance to dodge? That style of criticism is so seldom heard that it is both fresh and refreshing. We hear a great deal about the preacher's manner, his voice, his style, his delivery, especially if we worship in a church that is hearing candidates, but we rarely hear it said of preachers that they give sinners no chance to dodge. Perhaps the critics are not in search of those qualities that prevent dodging. Possibly, they don't admire such qualities. There is a remote possibility that some of them would not care to call a man who gave no chance to dodge. And yet what higher encomium could be passed upon a preacher than to say that he gives his hearers no chance to dodge.

"His elocution is simply perfect. His tones are pure, his articulation distinct, his emphasis well timed, his inflections perfect, his pitch just right, his gestures graceful, his delivery faultless." Good! Good elocution is a great thing. The Lord's message should be delivered in the best possible style. A man ought to be ashamed to deliver the glorious doctrines of grace in a slovenly, slipshod manner. But to say that a preacher is a first-class elocutionist is not half as good a thing to say of him as that he *gives sinners no chance to dodge*.

"The sermon was well composed, the diction chaste, the sentences well rounded, the logic faultless, the illustrations well chosen and light-giving, in fact, the literary execution was high." Capital! It is a good thing to have high literary work on a sermon occasionally. At all events it is a good thing for a preacher to be able to do good literary work if he wishes to. But did this well written sermon give the *hearers a chance to dodge*? That is the main question.

"As a piece of homiletic work, the sermon was simply perfect. The introduction was suitable and of the right length. It led naturally up to the subject. The division was faultless. The discussion would have gratified Shedd or Dabney. The unity and

progress would have satisfied even Dr. Proudfoot. The application was a model. It gathered up the truth discussed, increased in strength and ended in a fine climax. It was just such an ending as would have pleased Phelps." Splendid! That is the kind of sermon one likes to hear. But listen: Did this model of homiletic art give the sinners a *chance to dodge*?

One characteristic of good preachers is that they never give hearers a chance to dodge. Nathan didn't give David a ghost of a chance to dodge when he said, "Thou art the man!" Elijah gave his congregation on Carmel no chance to dodge when he rang out the challenge: "How long halt ye between two opinions?" Peter gave the Jerusalem sinners no chance to dodge in his Pentecostal sermon. Paul gave Felix no chance for dodging. Spurgeon never gives any one a chance to dodge. The man who can dodge Talmage must be a very artful dodger. Of course any hearer can dodge if he tramples down conscience, truth and the strivings of the Spirit; but if he does so the responsibility rests on him. The great problem is to present the Gospel in such a manner as to make dodging impossible unless the hearer deliberately takes the responsibility upon himself. That American citizen felt in his heart of hearts that if he dodged, the fault was his own—not Dr. Hall's.

Dodging began when sin began. Adam dodged when he hid among the trees of Eden, and too many members of the Adam family have been dodging the truth ever since. One of the surest ways of dodging the sermon is to go asleep every Sabbath. If a man can get himself soundly asleep he has no further trouble. A man who goes asleep in the early part of the service gives his minister no chance. An unfortunate preacher who had a number of sleepers of that kind in his congregation, addressed them in this way: "Brethren, this is not fair. You go to sleep before I begin. Can't you wait and see whether the sermon is worth hearing or not? Give a man a chance." That brother was right. You have no sort of chance if a hearer dodges you by going to sleep before you begin.

But a hearer may be asleep for all the purposes of the sermon without having his head down or his eyes closed. He may dodge the truth by thinking about his farm, or his office, or his store, or his election, or any one of a hundred other things. The problem the preacher has to solve is to keep him from dodging in that way. It is no easy problem. A ship-builder said he could lay the keel of a vessel while listening to any preacher in Scotland but Guthrie. Guthrie, he declared, would not allow him lay a *single plank*. He meant precisely the same thing as the American citizen did when he said John Hall would not let him dodge. Without the slightest disposition to find fault, may it not be asked if the art of bringing divine truth to bear directly on the hearts and consciences of men is sufficiently taught in our theological halls? An essay

of an impersonal abstract character is of very little use in the pulpit. Men will dodge the essay every Sabbath without the least effort. The art of putting things, the art of bringing doctrinal truth so to bear on the heart and conscience as to influence the will and change the life, is really the main thing in preaching. The very highest work of the pulpit is to do what John Hall did that evening—present the truth so that a hearer has no chance to dodge.—*Knoxian*, in *The Canada Presbyterian*.

Mission Notes.

THE PEOPLE OF SOUTHERN INDIA.

BY REV. GEORGE H. GUTTERSON, MELER, MADURA MISSION.

[The following striking account of the people in the Madura district among whom our missionaries labour is given in a familiar letter from Rev. Mr. Gutterson, who was, at the time of writing, on a missionary tour and in camp near the village of Mangalum.]

As I pen these lines, the village near my camp is astir. It is early morning and the day's work begins, for work the people must to keep body and soul together, although some of them are scarcely aware that they have any soul. Do they begin work with a hearty meal? Not they. A cup (earthen) of cold rice gruel, or a handful of cold boiled rice seasoned, with a red pepper, is all they have, and they are glad enough to get even that.

I wish that some of our good [Christian men and women from America could see this material out of which we missionaries are trying to build the future Christian civilization of this district. Let us look about us. A dozen men, more or less, and some young women are the first comers, They are sharpening their bill-hooks on the broad root of a banyan-tree near the tent, preparatory to their day's work of wood-cutting in the mountains, four or five miles away. The men are naked, except a scanty cloth about the waist and a few rags over their shoulders. The women are not much better off. They will work all day, returning at nightfall with as much firewood as they can carry on their heads, and to-morrow they will carry it from seven to ten miles to market, and receive from seven to ten cents for two days' labour! Not one of them can read; they are dirty and might be called ragged if they had any clothes at all!

Next appear the village cattle and the children who herd them, followed by the old women, shrill-voiced, and vile-tongued, who come to gather cow-dung for fuel! If one desires to see how wretched and disgusting it is possible for old age to appear, let him visit the Queen's dominions in India. These old women, haggard, unkempt, unclothed, makers of mischief, promo-

ters of quarrels, aiding in all sorts of sin, covetous, sticklers for caste and custom—how can one love their souls, or feel a Christian interest in their welfare sufficient to endure it all and work for their uplifting? These before my tent are quarrelling glibly over their respective shares in the fuel business aforesaid. I shall have to request them to leave; one can neither think, read, nor pray, with such a din in his ears. Yet they are not the poorest of the poor, and they have heard the gospel message many times, but they are as if they had not heard it, steeped in ignorance, yet so exalted by their caste that they would never allow a Christian, however clean, to even *touch* one of their cooking utensils! This is caste—the great barrier to our work.

I asked some villagers recently their idea of the hereafter, and they had never heard that there was a hereafter. Death ends all for them, and the present is useful in so far as it affords means of satisfying hunger, passion, and love of money and power. Yet I do not say that they are not a worshipping people, for they are, in a way. I was asked to visit and give medicine to the wife of the chief village official, who was dangerously ill. The man is said to be worth \$10,000, yet I found his wife lying upon the ground, with only a mat under her, in a little den so close that I could hardly endure it, a bundle of straw for a pillow, and an old crone sitting by, and her pulse at one hundred and twelve degrees! Her husband would not touch her nor scarcely approach her.

As I write this, the morning sun gleams from the white walls of their great temple three miles away on the mountain side—a temple built to the god Vishnu. They throng its great festivals and sacrifice to its royally appareled god; they raise the hands in worship to priestly Brahmans who minister in its dark recesses. From this, and other ancient places of worship in this strange land, goes forth an influence felt far and wide among a people who are naturally religious; but their religion is that of fear, not of love, and it is powerless to change the heart. Yet as the years pass away, our faith is that God's Word is here to stay, and that the heaven is working downward through the whole mass.

I should lose courage if I could not feel that promising attempts are being made to secure good ground by teaching the young.—*Missionary Herald*.

News of the Churches.

ST. THOMAS.—Received with thanks from the London, Ontario, Congregational Sabbath school, through Mr. Marshall, and Mr. Johnson, the Superintendent, for the Congregational Church, St. Thomas, \$31.76.

WILLIAM GLASS.

TORONTO, MOUNT ZION CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.—The contract for the addition to our church building

is let, and the work is to be completed by August 1st. The cost will be about \$600—one-third more than we contemplated. Besides the aid acknowledged before, other friends, especially of the city churches, have kindly assisted us, and still others have promised. Their contributions will all be acknowledged together at another time, if *THE CANADIAN INDEPENDENT* will graciously allow its columns for the purpose. Mrs. Revill, of the Northern Church, gave us a fine lift by getting up a concert for us in St. Matthew's Hall in our locality on the evening of the 9th April, which realized clear of costs the handsome sum of \$40. The people of the neighbourhood expressed their interest by a large turn-out. Though the church is weak, and is struggling for self-existence, it has heartily entered into partnership with the body of sister churches by engaging to make four collections each year, at regular intervals, for the Provident Fund, the College, the Union, and for Missions. Though we have lost some members lately, their places are being supplied, so that there is a gradual increase in every way, and we realize most distinctly that the Lord is with us.

E. B.

BRITISH COLUMBIA.

MR. EDITOR.—Within the past few months two Congregational ministers in Washington Territory have of their own accord written to me about the opportunities and needs for Congregational mission work in British Columbia. I am fully persuaded from all that I can learn that in no part of the Dominion is there a greater claim upon the efforts of our Missionary Society than that of the Pacific Province. Can we not at least send one man and make a beginning in that Province this summer? Who will go and who will furnish the means? The last letter received on the subject I will give below and let it speak for itself.

Yours truly, SAMUEL N. JACKSON.

DEAR BROTHER—Secretary J. B. Clark, of New York, has at my request given me your name as the Secretary of the Canada Congregational Missionary Society, and I take the liberty of writing you a word with reference to our work in British Columbia. From all that I can learn, our denomination is doing little, if anything, to help save that region for Christ. As you are doubtless aware, the region north of Washington Territory is fast being opened by settlers, and is destined, with the completion of the Canada Pacific Railroad, to become a thickly populated region. Victoria is growing rapidly and will no doubt be the largest city in the Puget Sound country. It is practically the terminus of both trans-continental railroads—the Canadian and the Northern Pacific. There is a desire upon the part of quite a number of Congregationalists in that city now to have a Congregational church organized. For the sake of Christ and dying

souls we ought as a denomination to be doing something in that city and in many other important and destitute places in British Columbia.

I know not what your plans may be with reference to this work, but I hope that something may speedily be done. Western Washington has over twenty Congregational churches, and I hope the time is not far distant when we should be able to join with our sister churches in British Columbia to form a Puget Sound Association. I shall be only too glad to help in any way possible to bring about this result. Hoping soon to hear from you, I remain

Yours in the service,
C. C. OTIS, General Missionary for W.T.
Seattle, Washington Territory, April 9, 1885.

THE LABRADOR MISSION.

The Ladies' Association, to which this unobtrusive but very useful mission was committed some years ago, held their annual meeting in Emmanuel Church parlour, on Monday, 23rd March. The report of work done was truly encouraging. The summer station at Bonne Esperance, and the winter one on the bank of the Esquimaux River, had been well occupied by the Rev. Geo. Rogers and his wife, and Miss Corry, the teacher. The work among the sailors visiting the coast in fishing vessels during the summer is a feature of special interest; not only do they attend the religious meetings in great numbers, but a large amount of the best kind of literature is distributed among them. In the long winter the families gather around the church and mission premises that they may avail themselves of the school and religious services. In September last an empty treasury raised the question whether the missionaries should not be withdrawn, but faith prevailed, and they were left at their work for Christ and that little flock on the dreary coast. The report stated that the Good Master had smiled upon this act of faith. An anonymous contribution of \$150 was received, £15 sterling from the Colonial Missionary Society, and an equal special subscription through the Canada Congregational Missionary Society, mainly from the proceeds of a quiet sale of useful articles in Emmanuel Church, \$50 from the Ladies' Bethel, Newburyport, Mass., toward cost of boat *Elizabeth Jones*, and a number of contributions from Sunday schools in Montreal, and the Province of Ontario, together with subscriptions from ladies' associations in Calvary and Emmanuel Churches, had amounted to a sum which enabled the society to pay everything until the supplies are required early in May. Toward those St. Andrew's Church, in Montreal, has promised \$40, and sends clothing for the people on the coast to an equal amount. Among the subscriptions from Sunday schools, special mention should be made of \$40 from Sunday schools connected with the American Presbyterian Church.

In the year 1882, the legacy of the late Mr. Joseph MacKay of \$800, greatly helped the society for that and the following year. Meanwhile, occasional grants from the Colonial Missionary Society, London, have now ceased, so that the future, under the kind providence of God, is dependent on the spontaneous liberality of His people. There is no cost whatever for administration; every dollar contributed goes directly to the support of the mission. The treasurer is Mrs. (Rev. Dr.) Wilkes, Montreal.

Since the annual meeting a letter has been received from Mr. Rogers, in which he states that they have had a mild winter so far (date, 10th February). During the preceding three weeks the thermometer had seldom been below the freezing point. In that place however, such weather was not healthy, hence much sickness. Moreover, they would have a hard struggle to obtain food until spring. The five hundred barrels of flour sent by Canada and Newfoundland were a great help, and by a merciful Providence they had an unusual supply of white partridges. Outwardly the mission was prosperous. The congregation often numbers sixty; and spiritually they had been much blessed. He says: "God has been visiting us in a very special way for several weeks past; people have been revived wonderfully; mouths have been opened to pray that have been silent since we came here. Others who never before confessed Christ are taking their stand on His side, leading our devotions in the presence of companions and relations." He speaks of prayer meetings after service, at which persons remain to be conversed with. Fearful that there were no funds they have not sent their usual order for supplies for summer. This is to be lamented. He concludes: "We hope the Lord has opened the hearts of His people to send in what is needful to carry on our mission."

N. B.—On account of expense the ladies do not think it well to publish their report, but the following financial statement should be made: January 31, 1883, balance in hand, \$287; January 31, 1885, received in two years, \$1,205; total, \$1,492. Expended up to January 31, 1885, \$1,216; amount in hand at date, \$274; with salaries due missionaries up to June 1885, \$400. Sums received since January will be acknowledged in next number, and afterwards every three months.

OUR STUDENTS.

The following items are given for the information of the churches:

Of the four students who have finished their college course, Mr. James W. Pedley, B.A., is expected to settle at Georgetown, Ont.; Mr. George White, at Manilla, Ont.; Mr. A. W. Gerrie, B.A., is for the present assisting the Superintendent in special mission

work, and Mr. W. T. Currie goes as missionary to Central Africa.

Of the other students, four have mission fields assigned to them during the summer in Nova Scotia, five in Ontario, and one in Quebec, as follows: J. P. Gerrie, Baddeck, Cape Breton, N.S.; A. P. Solandt, Manchester, N.S.; James McAdie, Cornwallis, N.S.; W. J. Watt, Maitland, N.S.; Frederick McCallum, Brockville, Ont.; J. K. Unsworth, Alton and North Erin, Ont.; J. O. Hart, Tilbury, Ont.; Alex. McLeod, Turnbury and Howick, Ont.; H. Pedley, Hawkesbury, Vankleek Hill, Ont.; H. E. Mason, Scotland, Ont.; Thomas Pritchard, Danby and Ulverton, Que.

We hope to hear from them all during the vacation, meantime commending them to Him from whom all blessings flow.

OBITUARIES.

MRS. THOMAS WEBB, TORONTO.

Entered into rest March 4, 1885, after long failing health, borne with un murmuring patience.

Mrs. Webb was a native of Gosport, Hampshire, England, and was brought up in the church ministered to by the Rev. Dr. Bogue, where her father was an honoured deacon.

Shortly after settling in Toronto in 1842, she united with Zion Church, and remained until the close of her life a blameless member of it.

Mrs. Webb possessed a superior intellect, great business ability, and was ever a diligent worker in the cause of Christ. Her intelligent and earnest piety shone in all her relations in life as wife, mother, and friend; and her removal has thrown a shade of sadness over a large circle, to whom she was endeared by her cheerful, even piety and loveliness. Mrs. Webb, though suffering great pain and weakness, attended divine worship and sat down also at the Lord's table on the Sabbath before her death, which occurred on the following Wednesday. Her pastor on the next Lord's Day discoursed on "I am the Resurrection and the Life," and paid a fitting tribute to her character. Her husband, daughter and two sons survive her, to whom she has left the precious inheritance of a good name and a bright Christian example. Her memory will long be affectionately cherished by all who knew her.

Life's race well run,
Life's work all done,
Life's victory won,
Now comes rest.

H. D. P.

MR. GEORGE STRATHERN.

Zion Church, Toronto, has again sustained the loss of an honoured member by the death of Mr. George Strathern, hardware merchant, who departed this life at the age of thirty-five years.

Mr. Strathern was a useful and consistent Christian, a good citizen, and an upright man of business. He rendered good service in the Sabbath school in Old Zion, and valued help in the Finance Committee in connection with the new sanctuary, where his seat on the Lord's Day was never vacant until he was laid aside by illness. His sufferings were severe and protracted, though it was only recently that his family and friends were slowly compelled to believe that he would not recover. Mr. Strathern died as he lived, in the faith of Jesus Christ. A large concourse of mourning citizens followed his earthly remains to the Necropolis on Good Friday.

H. D. P.

Official Notices.

CANADA CONGREGATIONAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

1. The annual meeting of the Canada Congregational Missionary Society will be held in the Congregational Church, Hamilton, on Thursday, June 11, at two p.m. All persons who annually subscribe \$2 are members of the corporation, churches subscribing annually \$10 may be represented by one delegate and those subscribing \$50 by two delegates.

2. The annual public missionary meeting will be held on Thursday evening, when addresses will be given by the Rev. Dr. Stevenson and the Rev. Charles S. Pedley, B.A., and a collection taken for the funds of the society.

3. A meeting of the General Committee will be held on Wednesday, June 10, in the vestry of the Hamilton church, at four p.m.

4. The Executive Committee meeting will be held in the vestry, Hamilton, on Tuesday, June 9, at two p.m.

5. The last half-yearly reports from pastors and all applications from churches for missionary aid must be in the hands of the Secretary on or before the 1st day of May next. Those who may require blank forms for the same will receive them on application.

6. The Treasurer's accounts will be closed for auditing on or about the 15th day of May, therefore the collections from all the churches and the proceeds of trust funds should be in his hands at that time in order to appear in the accounts of the year.

SAMUEL N. JACKSON, Secretary.

Kingston, April 20.

FLORIDA has entered the list of competitors for the Northern flower market. A horticulturist at Tangerine has recently shipped thirty thousand tuberosc bulbs to dealers in the North.

THE family of the late Count Arnim have been for several years engaged in litigation with the German Government respecting the heavy claims of that unfortunate diplomatist against the Foreign Office. The case has now been finally decided in favour of the Arnim family.

PULPITEERS.

I draw, with no unfriendly hand,
Some portraitures of men who stand
In modern pulpits, to declare
God's word to those beneath their care.

First, Mr. Dullman comes in sight,
With sermons common-place and trite,
Who never either melts or glows
At the saints' joys or sinners' woes.

Next, Mr. Boisterous appears,
Who, above all things, tameness fears,
Yet, by monotony of sound,
Creates a listlessness profound.

Third, Mr. Dreadful takes his text,
Not about 'his world, but the next,
And preaches terror with a vim
Which shows the theme has charms for him

Hear Mr. Tedious, as he draws
Out his divisions, clause by clause;
While he a school of patience keeps,
His congregation yawns and sleeps.

Now, Mr. Learned, full of lore,
Proceeds to prove himself a bore;
The wisdom of this would-be sage
Comes not from Inspiration's page.

Lo! Mr. Claptrap pops in view,
With the sensational and new,
While "itching ears" of monstrous size,
Listen with rapture and surprise.

See Mr. Horner stand erect
In conscious pride of intellect;
The full-grown "Jack," who ate his pie,
Saying, "What a brave boy am I!"

Hera, Mr. Funny plays the clown,
While fools applaud, and angels frown,
In such a place to "court a grin"
Must be a Heaven-provoking sin.

There, Mr. Solemn rears his head,
Oppressed with mighty fear and dread
Lest, by a "touch of nature," he
Should wake his hearers' sympathy.

Let Mr. Christlike close the list,
Whose eloquence none can resist;
His "gracious words" of love and truth
Arrest and charm both age and youth.

Oh! come the time when we shall see
All pulpits manned, as they should be,
By Christlike preachers, bold yet meek,
Through whom the living God shall speak!

Speedside.

W. F. G.

ANTON RUBINSTEIN has been in Holland during the last month on a concert tour. He has finished a new oratorio which is to be brought out under his own conductorship at Antwerp during the Exhibition.

HOUSE stealing is not uncommon in Dakota. Last week James Caughey, in Aurora county, was absent a few days, and, on his return, found his house gone. He traced it to another county, and had one James McGuire arrested and fined \$20 and costs.

Children's Corner.

Counting the Pennies.

Ah, what shall I do with my pennies,
For see, I have such a store!
I never have sold my basket
Of walnuts so soon before.

How often I've trudged for hours,
And taken a secret cry,
Because I was tired and hungry,
And nobody cared to buy!

I dreaded to think how mother
Would look, as I came and said
That I hadn't enough of pennies,
To bring her a loaf of bread—

How Nellie, my little sister,
Would watch at the door and say,
"I've thought and thought of the apple
You promised to bring all day!"

But, now, I can fill my basket,
For there's never a nut behind;
One loaf—two loaves—and a dozen
Of apples—the sweetest kind—

And a pat of that yellow butter;
Its dainty and fresh, I know;
How good it will taste to mother!
And Nellie will like it so.

Five pennies—ten—fifteen—twenty—
And thirty—and thirty-five;
Just think of it!—here are fifty,
As certain as I'm alive!

It must have been God who helped me
To sell my nuts so soon,
Or else I'd been trudging, trudging,
The whole of the afternoon.

But now I would like to thank Him,
So kind He has been—so true!
Let's see if I cannot spare Him
A few of my pennies too.

Why, surely I can, here's forty
For mother and Nelly—and then,
*Dear Jesus, to help Thy heathen,
I give Thee the other ten.*

Damascus—The Oldest City in the World.

DAMASCUS is the oldest city in the world. Tyre and Sydon have crumbled; Baalbec is a ruin; Palmyra is a desert; Nineveh and Babylon have disappeared from the Tigris and the

Euphrates. Damascus remains what it was before the days of Abraham—a centre of trade and travel, an isle of verdure in the desert, "a presidential capital" with martial and sacred associations extending over thirty centuries. It was near Damascus that Saul of Tarsus saw the light above the brightness of the sun; the street, which is called Strait, in which it was said he prayed, still runs through the city. The caravan comes and goes as it did thousands of years ago; there is still the sheik, the ass, and the water-wheel; the merchants of the Euphrates and the Mediterranean still occupy the streets "with the multitude of their wares." The city which Mohammed surveyed from the neighbouring height, and was afraid to enter, "because it was given to man to have but one paradise; and for his part he was resolved not to have it in this world," is to-day what Julian called the "Eye of the East," as it was in the time of Isaiah, "the head of Syria."

From Damascus came the damson, our blue plum, and the delicious apricot of Portugal, called damasco; damask, our beautiful fabric of cotton and silk, with vines and flowers raised upon a smooth, bright ground, the damask rose introduced into England in the time of Henry VII.; the Damascus blade, so famous the world over for its keen edge and wonderful elasticity, the secret of whose manufacture was lost when Tamerlane carried the artist into Persia. It is still a city of flowers and bright waters; the streams of Lebanon still murmur and sparkle in the wilderness of the Syrian gardens.

Joining the Church.

THUGHT I to make a public confession of faith and join the Church? This most important question is, no doubt, agitating the minds of hundreds among the readers of these columns. The first person with whom most of you would discuss this question would be your own pastor. He would probably say to you—yes, my friend, you had better do so, provided that you had already *joined Jesus Christ*. If the Son of God be within your heart then you are spiritually alive; you have experienced the new birth; you are prepared to live the Christian life because He liveth in you. If you only make membership of a church the

main thing, if you unite yourself to nothing stronger than a company of frail, fallible fellow-creatures, and expect them to tow you along by the power of their prayers and fellowship, then you have but a poor chance of success in this world, or of heaven in the next.

The first question for you to settle is—Have you been born anew by the Holy Spirit? Have you, by sincere faith, united your heart to the omnipotent Saviour? If that be so, then your public acknowledgment of this fact, by connecting yourself with a Christian church, is the completion of the process of *joining the Lord Jesus*. Heart-union first, then open confession. Christ demands both, and when both steps are taken you have become one with Him. Your heart is, by a mysterious, but real process, linked to His infinite heart of love. You join your weakness to Christ's strength, your ignorance to His wisdom, your unworthiness to His merits, your frailty to His watchful oversight, your poverty to His boundless resource of grace. Your spiritual destiny is bound up with your Lord's; because He lives you shall live also; and you will be kept by the power of God through faith unto full salvation. A glorious conception is this; and if, by God's help, you are making this a reality, then go forward. The sooner the better.

Lepers in India.



LADY member of the Woman's Union Mission writes from India:

While in a distant hill station for a change, I was glad to see something of the work of others for the heathen and Mohammedans. The thing that interested me most was a large leper asylum. The missionary in charge told me there were 160 inmates. Very comfortable, separate houses are provided for men and women. They have a church and school-house, and surrounding their barracks

the hill sides are terraced, and here those who are able to work do something toward raising their own grain and vegetables. About seventy have been baptized.

Of course, no compulsion is used in getting them into the place, nor in keeping them there, so only those remain who fully appreciate the kindness which cares for them in their terrible affliction. Many of the poor creatures are in a state which makes the sight of them revolting, and I rejoiced that there were those willing to go among them. It could only be done for the love of Christ.

It seems a small matter to give money to help this class of unfortunates, when one considers what the sacrifice would be to go among them daily and try to help their sufferings and to arouse their dull minds. Funds are lacking sometimes, and always great effort has to be made to raise sufficient to meet the needs. The healthy children of the lepers are taken from them and brought up separately in a school, where many have grown up bright, healthy boys and girls, showing no signs of their terrible inheritance. This asylum is one of several in India for this class of people, all under the care of missionaries, but receiving aid from many Christian residents outside the missionary circles.

In our own work in the zenanas we sometimes meet with women and girls who have leprosy. In one school I have a dear little Mohammedan girl who is beginning to show signs of it. It makes me sad to look at her, knowing how hopeless her disease is and to what extent it may go before death ends her sufferings. Her mother, in whose house the school is held, has no trace of it, but the father, whom I never see, may be a leper. At all events, they make no difference between this child and the others, who are well as yet.

THE labour of the righteous tendeth to life: the fruit of the wicked to sin.

NOTICE.

THE CANADIAN INDEPENDENT, published fortnightly will be sent free to any part of Canada or the United States for one dollar per annum.

All communications regarding the subjects matter of the magazine, to be addressed to Rev. J. Burton, B.D., Editor, Box 2648, Toronto.

All business correspondence to be directed to the "Business Manager," Box 2648, Toronto, except those regarding advertisements, which are to be addressed to C. Blackett Robinson, 5 Jordan Street, Toronto.

Pastors, Secretaries of Churches, or any interested friend of the cause, are requested to send for insertion items of Church News. To ensure insertion in the coming number, such items, correspondence, etc., must be on hand not later than the 10th or 25th of the current month.