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THE
CANADIAN INDEPENDENT.

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No. 6.

JOSEPH ALLEINE.

The approaching bi-centennial anniversary of English Nonconformity, is being heralded by various publications, designed to impart knowledge and awaken interest in reference to our Puritan forefathers. Having beguiled the tedium of a voyage across the Atlantic, with the perusal of one of these—“Stanford’s Life of Alleine,” we propose while the memory of it is fresh, and the impressions produced by it vivid, to transfer a little of its inspiration to the pages of the *Canadian Independent*.

Many, with ourselves, will remember Joseph Alleine’s name in connexion with a little book entitled “*An Alarm to the Unconverted* ;” one of the most awakening blasts ever blown by a spiritual watchman. Never shall we forget its loud reverberations through the dreary recesses of a soul unreconciled to God! All who share with us such recollections, will be glad to know somewhat more of this faithful Boanerges of a bygone day.

The subject of this sketch was born at Devizes, early in the year 1634. He was the fourth child of Mr. Tobie Alleine, a tradesman “of credit and renown,” and a staunch Puritan, who did and suffered much for conscience sake, in times that “tried men’s souls.” Joseph’s boyhood was passed amid troubled scenes. Civil war prevailed much of the time. Before he was eleven years old, his native town underwent two severe sieges. The presence of danger, and the prevalence of fear respecting “the life that now is,” seem to have been divinely used as means of awakening religious feeling in many minds, that of Joseph Alleine among the rest. “His early setting forth in the christian race,” is traced by his biographer very much to this. The death of an elder brother, who was a clergyman, seems also to have contributed to the same blessed result. Young Joseph became anxious to “succeed his brother in the work of the ministry.” Parental consent was gladly given, and in 1649, the Protectorate under Cromwell being established, and peace restored, Alleine began his curriculum in the then *Puritan University of Oxford*. While at College, he was accustomed to “toil terribly.” Thoroughly in earnest, and deeply impressed with the value of time, he so worked that his profiting appeared to all. Flattering offers of preferment were made him before the completion of his course, but, he had a “passion for seats,” and steadily kept the work of the ministry in view. Before leaving college, he preached much in adjacent villages, and spent a good deal of time in labouring for the spiritual good of the prisoners in the County Jail. In the

summer of 1655, we find him settled as co-pastor with Mr. George Newton, of the Church of St. Mary Magdalene, in the town of TAUNTON,—a name redolent of Puritan memories, both in the old world and the new. In October, he was married to “Mistress Theodosia,” daughter of that reverend man, “Mr. Richard Alleine, kinsman of Joseph, and Parson of Batcombe.” She was “a religious woman,” and proved a faithful helper and solace to her husband during his toilsome, self-sacrificing, and in many respects, suffering life.

Co-pastorates are not always happy and effective, but this one seems to have been peculiarly so. No jealousy sprung up between the ministers,—no partizanship among the people. Alleine addressed himself to his work with great singleness of purpose, and earnestness of heart. His sermons from the beginning, breathed the spirit of deep concern for the unconverted, which is so conspicuous in the “Alarm.” He did not preach simply for the comfort of “God’s dear people,” but as his venerable associate tells us, was “infinitely and insatiably greedy of the conversion of souls, wherein he had no small success in the time of his ministry; and to this end, he poured out his very heart in prayer and in preaching; he imparted not the gospel only but his own soul.” He regarded every man as a free and responsible agent, having life and death set before him. Though a Calvinist, his views of Divine sovereignty in no way obstructed the address of free gospel invitations to all. On this point, Mr. Stanford remarks, “although even the most rigid followers of the Genevese reformer preached the “glad tidings” to the unconverted, they often did so in strains made so cold and mysterious by subtleties of qualification, and led the people round to the waters of life through such a tangled brake of logical refinements, that their invitations seemed hardly to be given in good faith; and they sometimes even seemed afraid, lest through their own mismanagement, some of the wrong persons might get saved after all.” Are there not preachers in the present day who may take to themselves the piquant rebuke of the passage just quoted, and learn much from the example of Alleine, who, “on the other hand, feeling no embarrassment, and no reserve, and shackled by no theoretic misgivings,—with shouting voice, flashing eye, and a soul on fire with love, proclaimed a completed and gratuitous salvation to all who were willing to accept it?” “The Spirit of God gave his message great effect, and multitudes, through all the days of heaven, will remember Taunton Magdalene as the place where they first beheld that great sight—“the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world!”

Alleine was very laborious in pastoral visitation, and took great pains in juvenile catechizing. Not only did he perform this last-mentioned duty from house to house, but he had a custom with which we do not remember to have met in the record of any other Puritan pastor’s labours, that namely of catechizing the young publicly on each Lord’s day afternoon, and sometimes in the evening also,—taking as the basis of these exercises, the morning sermon, the assembly’s catechism, and sometimes written questions given out the previous week. “Some called him a legalist, because, with young and old, high and low, he was severely practical, both as a preacher of righteousness, and a fearless reprove of sin. When any person had been detected or suspected of promise-breaking, deceitful trading, or of not being diligent in his calling, he would be sure to hear of it from his minister whatever the event might be. “The failings of professors touched him to the very quick, and brought him

low; drew prayers, tears, and lamentations, both by word and letter from him." Life, he told the people, was not to be spent in saintly reverie, and "Religion was not a thing that knew only how to kneel, but not to walk or work."

His personal habits were noteworthy. When in health, "he did constantly rise at or before four of the clock." It greatly troubled him if he heard "craftsmen" at work before he was at communion with God. From four till eight he spent in prayer, holy contemplation and singing of psalms. Sometimes he would lay aside the usual round of engagement, and devote a whole day to these exercises of private devotion. He had "a poet's love of nature, but only along with a Puritan's love of the Bible." His character and life were not only irreproachable but exemplary. He had "an indescribable gravity and look of command, resulting from a mind ever in awe before God." He was wondrously generous, giving largely as a constant habit, and acknowledging every special mercy by a "thank-offering." His scholastic labours and attainments were by no means slight. He excelled in "the three languages which Christ sanctified at the cross," and became acquainted with much of the learning contained in more than one living language. He wrote a voluminous theological work in Latin, attained a considerable skill in anatomy, and besides the "Alarm" already adverted to, became the author of a number of tracts and treatises on practical and experimental religion.

After the Restoration, a series of persecutions began to be directed against the Puritans, notwithstanding the royal pledge that no man should be "disquieted or called in question for differences of opinion in matters of religion which do not disturb the peace of the kingdom." The clouds grew darker and thicker, until at length they burst in the passage of the "Act of Uniformity." By this infamous measure, every minister who was not prepared to "declare openly and publicly his unfeigned assent and consent to every thing contained in the Book of Common Prayer" was deprived of his charge, and commanded to preach no more. This Act, "by strange fatality or daring defiance," was to take effect from the feast of St. Bartholomew, Aug. 24, 1662. From that day, two thousand of England's worthiest ministers, took their station in the ranks of Nonconformity. Joseph Alleine was among them. He loved his work, and was tenderly attached to his Taunton flock. It was thought by many, even by his own wife, that he would conform, "he often saying that he would not leave his work for small and dubious matters." But those clauses of "unfeigned assent and consent" were too much for one in whose spirit there was no guile. He *did not* believe every thing contained in the Prayer Book, and to say that he *did*, were to LIE. This was the alternative *purposefully* put before those noble men of whom the profligate Bishop Sheldon said, "*we will make them all knaves if they conform.*" But they were men of uncompromising conscientiousness. They could be made *martyrs*, but not *knaves*. No doubt *some* knaves were made by the Act in question, when it first came into force, and it may be doubted whether it has *ever* tended to the promotion of moral honesty from that day down to our own: for let it not be forgotten, *it is still in force*. Some men from education or otherwise, can give the "unfeigned assent and consent" with perfect honesty, but what of such as must sophisticate conscience with far-fetched explanations, and inward reservations. The present position of many in the Establishment is most painful to contemplate. What shall be said of the man of

Evangelical convictions, whom the baptismal service staggers, or of the surpliced sceptics who declare our Lord's resurrection a myth? Acts of Uniformity are not manufacturers of honest consciences.

Loss, want, and peril marked the future history of the men who would not for the sake of their livings, become liars and knaves. Glorious confessors of the sole supremacy of Christ in the realm of conscience! Their names will be found at last among those "of whom the world was not worthy."

For nine months after his ejection, Alleine preached, and prayed, and visited from house to house, often threatened, but never interrupted. At length he was seized and imprisoned. His trial was a piece of mockery, and as the "bellwether of a naughty flock" he was heavily fined and condemned to lie in jail till the mulct was paid. His heroic reply to the Judge's sentence was, "Glory be to God, that hath accounted me worthy to suffer for his Gospel."

Though imprisoned and threatened, Alleine was not silenced. Like Bunyan, he improved his imprisonment by writing. It was his custom to send his people a letter once a week, which served for a sermon. Besides this weekly work, he wrote several of his smaller publications while in jail. He also preached from the iron gratings to such as assembled to hear, and often had a large audience. His labours among his fellow prisoners were unwearied. Thus able not only to suffer for Christ's sake, but to work amid the suffering, his prison life was one of contentment and abounding joy. Like Paul and Silas, he and his companions often prayed and sang praises to God, and made the jail walls resound with unwonted strains of holy gladness.

After a twelvemonth's imprisonment, we find him again at large. Without delay he is at his Master's business. Four times did he preach to his old flock the very first Sunday after his release. A month after his liberation, the Conventicle Act came into force. This prohibited all religious meetings not allowed by the Liturgy, or practice of the Church of England, and punished by fine and imprisonment all attendants on such unauthorized assemblies. Many of the Taunton flock were fined and imprisoned. Soon after this Act came into force, Mr. Alleine fell ill, and for eight months was utterly disabled. When but partially recovered, he re-commenced preaching, and ere long was surprised and apprehended in the very act. He was sentenced to jail again "for threescore days." In his feeble state of health, as might have been expected, confinement in a damp, ill-ventilated prison, produced the worst results. Soon after his second liberation, he was stricken down with fever. Paralysis followed. For weeks he could not move a limb or lift a finger. Convulsions and terrific pains then for months alternated with paralysis. After this he rallied somewhat, but it was only the last bright flicker of a dying flame. He was removed to Bath, to try the virtues of its famous waters. But he was past recovery and soon sank very low. The convulsions returned, continuing two days and nights, "not ceasing one hour." On his restoration to consciousness, he had, like John Knox, when on his death-bed, a terrible conflict with Satan. His religious experience all through life had been marvellously unclouded, but at the last, it suffered a brief eclipse. Through grace however, he was brought off triumphant. "Away thou foul fiend! Trouble me not! I am none of thine! I am the Lord's! Christ is mine and I am his!" With such expressions as these on his lips, "the great victorious spirit passed away." It was the death of a martyr as truly

as any that lighted up Smithfield. Only it was inflicted by Protestant hands, and endured "in fire kindled by legislative enactment, the fire of sickness and sorrow, that stung both body and soul—a slow, silent fire that lasted for years."

The memory of such men may well be precious to us. Their names ought to be as familiar and dear as household words to us and our children for ever. "For us they suffered, and for us they died." Our heritage of civil and religious liberty is their bequest. Let us not merely garnish their sepulchres and build them monuments, but emulate their example, catch their spirit, and carry on their work. If we can infuse into this supine, self-seeking age, an element of boldness and of bravery as to inward convictions,—*a true and manly conscientiousness*,—we shall do something toward proving that we have not forgotten our spiritual ancestry.

W. F. C.

CONGREGATIONALISM.

ITS PRESENT POSITION—ITS SOURCES OF WEAKNESS AND STRENGTH.

An Address by the REV. J. HOWELL, retiring Chairman of the Congregational Union of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, delivered at the Annual Meeting of that body, held at Yarmouth, N. S., August 22-5, 1861.

BELOVED BRETHREN.—I have thought that no subject could be more important, or more suitable for us now to consider, than that of "Congregationalism or Independence—Its present position—Its sources of weakness and strength."

Before proceeding to notice "its present position," let us briefly state what we mean by "Congregationalism." The term we apply to the polity of the churches of Christ, formed, as we conceive, upon the model of the earliest or apostolic communities of christians, as recorded in the New Testament History. Those churches, we submit, were formed of individuals who had, from inward conviction, embraced Christ the Lord as their Saviour—their Supreme Teacher—and their King. Having implicit faith in His vicarious sacrifice; His instructions; and the suitability, propriety, and goodness of His laws: acknowledging in matters of faith, no authority as equal to, much less as superior to, *His*. Those who now embrace these principles, unite together in fellowship for mutual encouragement and strength; and that they may enjoy together the privilege of divine worship; and attendance upon the ordinances of Christ's appointment.

Again, "Congregationalism," in the language of Dr. Vaughan, "regards every church as a self-governed body, and a body, accordingly, which should be pervaded by the amount of intellectual and moral culture necessary to that end." In other words, the members of those churches should be known by the possession of an intelligent piety, by which they can not only "give a reason of the hope that is in them, with meekness and with fear;" but also the reasons for such fellowship, and for maintaining the laws of Christ as the rule of conduct and of life.

A Congregational or Independent church, then, we conceive, is not a body for making laws for Christ's people, but an executive body for carrying out His laws. They may declare what *they* believe those laws may mean or require; and for the better carrying of them out, they may agree among themselves to adopt certain rules, or modes of action; and in these things *only* do they, in entering into such fellowship, yield their individual liberty to the will of a majority of those with whom they so unite.

"The aim of a Congregational church," (again quoting the language of Dr. Vaughan,) "should be, to make all men christians; and to render all christians competent to a wise observance of the duties arising out of christian fellowship.

For such a church is not to resemble an eastern despotism, where everything is done for the people, and nothing done by them; but may be rather compared to those free states in which men were accounted citizens—in which *each* had his public duties to perform; and all were made to pass through a preparatory education, that they might know how to discharge them." * * * "Thus it should be in Congregationalism. *Leave it in the hands of ignorance and worldliness; and it must be disgraced, corrupted, and destroyed (!!!)* Like every system of the same free and generous complexion, it is equally open to use and abuse, and was evidently meant for the wise and not for the unwise. It has its different spheres for those who hold offices, and for those who possess greater ability, or greater weight of character, than their brethren; but it has *no place for the utterly passive and useless; and none, accordingly, for minds without instruction and without virtue.*" None, therefore, we remark, should be in our churches, but the apparently holy who desire to know *all* truth, and to make God's word the rule of their faith and their life.

Our churches, I need not remind you my brethren, acknowledge no external control other than that of Christ himself, as their Great Head. Yet we may say as the result of experience, that it is to their mutual advantage, strength, and increase, to meet together in social fellowship, personally or by delegate, at occasional or stated periods, for mutual counsel and encouragement, as we are meeting on the present occasion. There are, too, periods, when in cases of difficulty they may meet together in council. The decisions, however, of such council can, from our constitution, *only* be advisory; yet should the church so advised, falling upon its own independency, neglect to act in a Scriptural manner, according to the view and advice of the churches represented in such council; they can, and in most cases probably would, withdraw their fellowship from such a church; and here we may explain that churches refusing to associate themselves with other churches for such fraternal aid, counsel, and fellowship, are called "Independent," rather than Congregational: but often suffer much, as we can conceive, from such isolation; and help not in promoting the prosperity of other, and sister churches.

To some, the principles espoused by our churches for their government, may appear unattractive and they may think inexpedient; nevertheless there is, we conceive, such an adaptedness in them to the condition and circumstances of every people, and of every nation; that from this feature, in connexion with their scriptural character, we believe they will ultimately be adopted by all professing christians of every land and every tongue; even by those who now oppose and traduce them and their advocates.

What then, we ask, secondly, Is the present position of Congregationalism or Independency?

In reply we may remark, that compared in the aggregate with all other sections of the christian church, our churches may be found in the minority, and perhaps greatly so. In some districts, too, much more so than in others, as is doubtless the case in these Lower Provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. But *this* is where all who at first embrace great and good principles must expect to be found. Yet these principles of ours are spreading, and more rapidly, perhaps, than they appear to do. In South Britain, large bodies who once were connected with the Calvinistic or Wesleyan Methodist Conferences, or with the Episcopal Church, have become Congregational or Independent. In Scotland, many who were connected with Presbyterian Churches have also become Congregational, having, like the late Rev. Henry Wight of Edinburgh, whose obituary has so recently appeared, found the trammels of that system too galling for christian liberty and usefulness. In England and Wales we find, on the authority of the Congregational Year Book, that the Congregational churches there have increased from 2,011 in 1852, to 2,591 in 1860, or upwards of 500 churches in 8 years. In various parts of Europe these principles are spreading, especially in Sweden, France, and Italy; though, perhaps, not altogether after the type of British

Congregationalism, or that of the United States. Our churches, too, are being multiplied in many portions of the field of Foreign Missions, and in the British Colonies apart from the Provinces of British North America.

In the north-eastern portion of the United States, they have been quite the most numerous since the days of the Puritan Fathers, either as Paedo or Anti-Paedo Baptist Churches; and are so, we believe, to the present day.

Time and want of access to documentary evidence, forbid my entering into more full details on this point. But the returns published by the American Congregational Union, show an increase in the number of churches reported during the past 4 years of 419 churches, and 27,840 members, as existing in this Northern Continent, or (including the British Provinces) a total of 2,734 churches, and 260,389 members, in the year 1860. In the Western States of the Union, Congregationalism is greatly on the increase; and as an example I would refer to the State of Michigan, in which for two years it was my privilege to labour. There, some few years since, scarcely a Congregational church existed; and a leading minister of the New School Presbyterian Church now living, used to tell ministers of our body looking for fields of labour, "that there were no churches of our order there, but plenty of Presbyterians who would be glad of their services; and as there was no difference in the doctrines professed by the two bodies, but only in church order and discipline, and that comparatively trifling, they would find but little difficulty in their conforming to such order, &c., and perhaps at length even of giving it a preference." Thus, many Congregational ministers commenced and continued their labours there. By some means, however, great numbers of the churches became Congregational, many of their members probably, as well as their ministers, having brought their principles from the East; and have gone on increasing, so that at the present day their numbers are almost if not quite equal to the Presbyterian Churches. This, perhaps, is only a type of the facts in other Western States; and may account for the anxiety lately manifested by the Presbyterian Synods to send out "Missions in *advance* of all others;" and to employ their own men and means, apart from all aid (if necessary) from the funds of the American Home Missionary Society, which, until very lately, had been a centre of united action for both bodies.

We must, however, now look at the Provinces of British North America on the Atlantic side; and here beginning with the Western Provinces, we find that within the past 23 years our churches in the Canadas have increased from about 7 to 78 (or 82 according to some returns), and containing 3,376 members. The Missionary Society here, being called upon continually to open new ground, and as few if any of the churches are becoming extinct, the number must continue to increase.

How is it, however, in our own Provinces? Here alas! we cannot report encouragingly. In New Brunswick we have not more, perhaps, than six churches, if indeed so many; and in Nova Scotia, we believe, not more than ten; and five or six of which at the present time, we fear, are without pastors. Some of them, too, much decayed; and yet the oldest among them can date back nearly or quite 100 years. There is reason also to believe, that in this Province our churches have been much more numerous than they now are, having been swallowed up among other denominations. The causes of our present weakened condition are doubtless various, and may be referred to under our next enquiry. While, however, as Paedo Baptists our numbers may be but small, yet our Congregational principles are recognised and adopted to a great extent by the Anti-Paedo Baptist Churches of these Provinces, and which are very numerous. The Presbyterian Churches, too, whose views of doctrine, including that of baptism, greatly correspond with our own, are also numerous; and considering that very many of the inhabitants of the Provinces are either directly the natives of Old Scotia or their descendants, we cannot wonder at this fact. Considering, too, that this body is conservative of the great and precious truths of the gospel, we cannot but rejoice in its increase, although it with others may have swallowed up some if not many of our ancient Congregational churches in the Province.

We pass on, however, now to consider our *third* point, viz., The sources of weakness (if such there are) in Congregationalism or Independency. It is sometimes a charge brought against us, that there is a weakness attached to our principles which prevent their permanence and increase; and there may be cases or districts where possibly the charge may seem to be established. From what we have advanced concerning these Provinces, it may appear to many that there are evidences of weakness here, if they are not to be found elsewhere. Though doubtless elsewhere there may be similar facts, traceable to like causes.

If, however, there may appear to be any sources of weakness in Congregationalism, they are not to be found in the *principles* themselves. For "our principles," says the Rev. Thomas Binney, "have a history, and one not at all mean in its character or result. They may be traced, some of them, through various stages of growth, development, apprehension, utterance, for many generations, always *in spite of the weakness and error of their advocates*, doing a work and leaving a result in the thinkings of the community beyond the sphere within which they were themselves accepted or professed—(yes) over and above what they effected there. It might not, perhaps, be owned at the time—it may be denied *now*; or the accidental evils that always attend the advent and appearance of great thoughts in the world, or their perversion or corruption by the half-disciplined or unfaithful; *these things* may be remembered, insisted upon as the sole results; and stigmatised as the natural products of what was inherently bad in principle." "With those who thus speak (he continues), we are not disposed to argue, nor careful to answer them in this matter." Yet, while with our much esteemed and talented brother, we would not argue with those who malign our principles, because they cannot understand them; as regards ourselves, if there be "weaknesses" and "errors" manifested by the professed advocates of our principles, or "accidental evils" which may and do attend their advent, or *perversions or corruptions* of those principles by the *half-disciplined or unfaithful*; it becomes us to review our position, and look with circumspection to our conduct for the future.

It may be that each of these, to a greater or less extent, has proved a source of weakness to us as a body, in these provinces, and all of them may possibly be summed up as a want of that "deep and intelligent piety," referred to in the former part of this address. Yes! Beloved Brethren, if there has been the manifestation of apparent weakness in the working of our Congregational principles, here or elsewhere,—this *want* we conceive will prove to be its true source.

It is possible that we and our predecessors in office as ministers of God's Truth, may have been too contented with the results of our labours, if we have succeeded in awakening thought and suitable enquiry about the state of the soul, leading those who were its subjects to seek earnestly, diligently, and perseveringly for eternal life. This indeed is the *first* great matter of our mission, without which result, all our other efforts were vain and worthless.—But this is not *all* we have to accomplish: though *this* from the history of our once called "New-Light Churches," seems to have been for the most part, all that has been attempted by their leaders—excitement in religious duties and exercises, has been desired and laboured for, rather than growth in the knowledge of *all* Truth, and the consequent development of its fruit, in the life and character. Not that we would in any way undervalue zeal or earnestness in religion, or any of its duties; or stifle all expression of warmth of feeling. Any one who will read the life of the late Rev. Henry Allim, (though a most worthy and useful man,) and review the character of his labours and his co-associates, tracing the history of our body as far as practicable since their day to the present time, will be led I think to similar conclusions. The *consequence* of all this, has been, that a love of religious excitement has been fostered—with many the conclusion has been arrived at, that Religion cannot exist or spread without it. A species of indifference as to correct views of doctrine and church order, has been also encouraged. A want of deference to the teachings of the inspired volume has been yielded to, even going

so far as to refuse to acknowledge its authority when running contrary to their preconceived opinions. The peculiar license taken with the word of God, by some who have been its professed expounders may have led to much of this—and its effects are grently to be deplored.

Among the consequences of the state of things we have been referring to may also be included, a corresponding coldness and deadness as to spiritual things, when times of excitement have died away; and in some cases the conclusion has been reached, that one branch of the church was as good as another; or *that* perhaps would be the best, where at any given time the most religious enthusiasm prevailed.

These things I hesitate not to say, have proved sources of weakness everywhere that they have prevailed; and have done so, I fear, to a lamentable extent in this Province.

Another source of our weakened condition in these provinces, has been we think, (not as some of our opponents have stated, our want of Church Courts, that could utter an *authoritative voice* as to doctrine or discipline, but) the absence in years gone by of the spirit of confederation for mutual counsel, cooperation and extension; as a result many of our churches have long been left without Pastors, or at best, it may be, but indifferently supplied; and many not knowing where to look for aid or counsel have become increasingly feeble, or have languished and died out;—while the state of spiritual deadness before referred to, has we fear in many cases led to departure from the spirit of love and unity, even to discord and deadly animosity.

To all this we regret, and most deeply so, to have to add, that the course adopted in more recent times, (by some who deploring this state of things, came to this Province professedly to revive and re-establish these churches;) does not appear to have been the wisest or most judicious; and in some cases the end has proved worse than mere failure. What need then for wisdom and grace, by those who succeed them; and to this end, of prayer on their behalf from all the united churches, and from all those who sympathize with them.

We have cause to rejoice that this Union has been formed, and likely as we trust, to prove more efficient from year to year; and doubtless will, if we steadily keep in view, what we profess to be our aim, viz., the prosperity and increase of the churches, and the glory of God. But some of us feel that our meetings are too infrequent to prove as efficacious as we need, though at present, it appears to be impossible to propose a remedy; and some of our churches are perhaps too jealous of our present organization, to enter heartily into any further combination having these ends in view. The distance also of our churches from each other and their scattered condition greatly increases the difficulty.

Our fourth and last point, however, now remains for discussion, and that we must attempt very briefly, viz., “The sources of the strength of Congregationalism.”

Do we not see what need there is of a more familiar acquaintance with the word of God, and its teachings in all matters relating to our polity; as well as a more experimental knowledge of its truths, as affecting the life and character, by members of our churches and congregations; and especially that their families may be brought under such influence, *here* would be a Tower of Strength.

With regard to the former, we need perhaps the opportunity of meeting together in a more social and familiar manner as churches and congregations, for the more careful study of the word of God. Is it not to be feared that we, who minister in holy things, confine ourselves too much to the hortatory and didactic style of teaching? The speaker has long thought that if one of our week evenings or Sabbath services, could be taken up with a kind of general Bible class exercise, with our congregations, when freedom of thought and enquiry could be encouraged, it might prove of most decided benefit to our churches and our flocks at large. What the Bible really teaches on *all* matters connected with the Kingdom, could then be brought out in a manner that probably would be far more effective, than our most laboured pulpit discourses.

But with regard to the young: Christian Parents having sought to understand these matters for themselves, should feel themselves bound to instruct their children in a knowledge thereof. The speaker feels to this day the value of such a course adopted towards himself in the days of his youth, by his late dear and honoured Father, when such works as "Palmer's Protestant Dissenter's Catechism, and others of a kindred character formed our text books. In this matter too, our Ministerial and other Bible classes for young people, might become perhaps more effective than they now are. For as we have attempted to show, "The want of an intelligent piety, is the greatest source of our denominational weakness," so a people thus instructed in our principles from God's word, would prove a source of strength within us, not easily to be daunted, discouraged or overcome.

We have before referred to the want of more frequent aggregate meetings of our churches as a source of weakness. If however this be true, and their more frequent occurrence be impracticable, could not more sectional or district association be attempted in the interim? Last year in making arrangements for meetings in connexion with our Missionary operations, some of us hoped that we might have secured something of this kind, so that the churches of different sections of the province might meet once a year about half way between the annual assemblings of this Union. Such meetings would tend to cement us more closely together, and give us the opportunity of elucidating our principles, and encouraging and strengthening each other in the service of our Lord.

But lastly—In order to promote our principles, we who are planted as watchmen in Zion, must have a right understanding and appreciation of them ourselves. Be not only familiar with them but able to present them attractively and with authority from God's word. Yes my Brethren! we need not only to be watchmen, sounding the trumpet of the Gospel in Zion, but as workmen building up the church in all things as those who need not be ashamed; rightly dividing the word of God: "and as scribes well instructed in all the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven; or as rulers, ruling and guiding well the church of God.

How much my Brethren depends on us! If in this or any other matter, "The prophets prophecy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means, and the people love to have it so, what shall we do in the end thereof?" Jer. v. 31. Thus it may have been in days gone by, but shall it be so now?

How solemn and important then at this time is our Mission! The *prosperity, stability and extension* of the church on earth on right principles, as well as its consequent increase in heaven, depends greatly upon ourselves.—Who then? Who, we may ask, is sufficient for these things? We have not, like missionaries in heathen lands, so much now to plant *new* churches upon the model of the New Testament; but have in some measure to undo much that has been done, and to seek to lay the foundations broader and deeper than before on scripture truth. We may find habits of long standing, and great and strong prejudices to contend with: we shall need much grace and wisdom. But blessed be God, these are promised without measure. Let us earnestly seek and we shall find. Never forgetting, however, that our church polity, valuable and Scriptural as we rightly deem it to be, is subordinate to the work of saving souls and the glory of God. But only subordinate to this, and indeed one way of promoting that glory is, by establishing the principle—that Christ alone is the Ruler and Lawgiver of his church; through which we are to seek that He may rule the nations, and cause His truth every where to triumph.

If, then, this may best be promoted by the principles we profess, and which we conceive shall at length every where prevail; shall we despise the day of small things? Or yield to despondency because of the greatness of the work before us? Nay, my brethren! Let us redouble our energy and pursue the path marked out for us with patience and zeal; and then, in dependence on divine grace, we as churches shall rejoice with the joy of harvest. For the promise shall come, though it may seem to tarry long. Yes! according to the charge to Habakkuk, ch. ii., v. 2-3, which we think, without presumption, we may appropriate,

“Let us write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, and at the end it shall speak and not lie, because it shall surely come, it will not tarry.”

Finally, my brethren, much as we would commend and enforce our peculiar principles, and desire to have our congregations to understand and value them; let us seek not obtrusively to force them upon the attention of others, but rather to exhibit their fruits—and side by side with those whom we trust also love Christ, but who in these things may conscientiously differ from us; let it be our aim to labour *with* them where we may, or alone (without opposing them) where we cannot—in the great work of the conversion of the world to Christ—to uphold and increase the purity of the church by a revived and earnest piety; which after all is the great want of this day. The more this is cultivated, the more we shall, in spite of denominational differences, love all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, and the more strenuously shall we seek for His glory in all things. That He whose right it is to reign, may take to himself the kingdom, reigning in every heart, and extending its bounds from shore to shore, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. Amen! and Amen!

The following *addendum* to Rev. W. F. Clarke's account of the Union Meetings in Birmingham, arrived too late for our last issue:—

CLOSE OF THE UNION MEETINGS.

P. S.—In order to complete the account of the doings of the Birmingham Assembly, I send this postscript by the Cunard steamer. On Thursday evening, the Union sermon was preached in Carr's Lane Chapel, by the Rev. A. Raleigh, of Canonbury, London, from the text, “Behold the man!” After glancing at the circumstances in which this language was used, and adverting to the character of Pilate as exhibited in connexion with the trial and condemnation of our Lord, the preacher announced the following divisions: “Behold the man, whom the world desired; whom the world crucified; whom the world will crown.” Could anything be more happy, exhaustive, and simple than this? It struck me as the very perfection of arrangement. The whole discourse was as admirable as the divisions. If any part of it were more impressive than another, it was the description of Christ under the first head, as the “desire of all nations.” But all was forcible, earnest, impressive, and though read throughout, was life-like and replete with energy. This was the only gathering of the Union in the chapel so long rendered attractive by the ministry of John Angell James.

On Friday morning, a public breakfast was held in the Music Hall. The coffee and its concomitants being disposed of, the Chairman, W. Willans, Esq., introduced the business of the morning in a brief address, after which the Rev. Principal Unwin of Homerton College, read the Annual Report of the Congregational Board of Education, and made some comments thereon. After him, the chief speakers were, Reverends Dr. Vaughan, Paton and Dale, E. Baines, Esq., M.P., Thomas Barnes, Esq., M.P., and Samuel Morley, Esq. The chief topics discussed were the question, whether popular education came within the legitimate functions of government,—the alleged failure of the government scheme,—the new Educational Minute,—and the preponderance of State patronage and State pay which fell to the Church of England. There is difference of opinion among our British brethren as to the right and duty of government to regulate educational matters. Dr.

Vaughan, who has for years advocated the propriety and wisdom of a government scheme, announced his partial abandonment of former positions, and said he had favoured government provision only as a temporary arrangement, to last until the people were prepared to take things into their own hands. British mind had so far advanced, and the government management had proved at once so extravagant as to cost, and so inefficient as to results, that he was prepared now to lend his co-operation to independent and voluntary measures. This change of position was hailed with rather unseemly exultation by some of the Anti-State-Education men, but called out from Mr. Dale and others a very strong avowal of continued adherence to the opposite principle. Brother Marling and I were anxious to draw their attention to the subject as it looks from a Canadian standpoint, but time could not be had, and we think of drawing up a joint statement for the *Patriot*. A strange distinction for a nation exercising so largely self-government, is drawn between the *government* and the *people*, and the idea seems never to present itself that a people may be self-educated, even under a State-prescribed and superintended plan. We should occupy a very anomalous position in Canada, were we joining hands and making common cause with the Roman Catholics for sectarian education. Does Nonconformity really demand opposition to a State provision for popular education? Mr. Morley, who is a strong Anti-Government-Education man, said, in a brief conversation I had with him, that our position in Canada is wholly inconsistent with our principles, that we are gathering a host of difficulties about us, and when it is too late shall be obliged to come to his ground. We shall see. But though there are difficulties in its practical working, and our unsectarian government plan requires supplementing by vigorous religious training in the family, Sunday-school and Church, I confess I am not yet prepared to abandon a system which has wrought untold good for Canada, and the chief defect in which is the provision for separate schools under certain circumstances. Just as legislation may and ought to be based on divine truth, and government in the discharge of its functions recognise and acknowledge God, so may there not be an undenominational system of education which yet is not godless? And may not the State create, foster and direct such a system, without invading the prerogatives of conscience and the realm of religious duty and worship? These are questions towards the solution of which we should be glad to have some aid from our British brethren, while they may not improperly ask themselves, whether their peculiar relations to a Church Establishment have not driven many of them into morbid jealousy and indefensible ultraism on the Education question. Notwithstanding, it cannot be denied that the voluntary efforts so earnestly and liberally put forth have done and are doing, no little good.

Birmingham, October 12, 1861.

W. F. C.

Trans-Atlantic Retrospect.

The resolution adopted by the Congregational Union of England and Wales, at its late meeting in Birmingham, concerning the bi-centenary of "Black Bartholomew," supported as it was by the noble speech of Dr. Vaughan, has

attracted considerable attention, and called forth numerous suggestions as to the most appropriate method of commemoration. The paper which opened the subject at the meeting was prepared by Joshua Wilson, Esq., and read by the Rev. R. Ashton, and contained the following recommendations:—

The year 1862 should, in his opinion first of all be celebrated by carrying on the work of building chapels, gathering congregations, and organising churches more energetically. A hundred new ones should be built, and the foundation-stones of as many might be laid on August 24. Secondly, vigorous measures should be taken for diffusing the knowledge and extending the practical adoption of their principles. This should be done by lectures by the ministers on Puritanism and Nonconformity; by the circulation of cheap and popular tracts; by exciting a more general and lively interest among the members of our congregations in our historical literature; by the erection of a Cenotaph in Bunhill-fields; by the erection of a Congregational Hall, in London, for the accommodation of our Denominational Institutions and for the Congregational Library.

The resolution founded upon these recommendations was as follows:—

“That this assembly, in anticipation of the 24th day of August, 1862, the Bicentenary day of the ejection of two thousand ministers from their homes and livings as ministers of Christ in the Church of England, under the stringent, inhuman, and unjust provisions of the Act of Uniformity, deems it a most suitable opportunity for commemorating the zeal, self-denial, and consistency of those noble men, to whom the Nonconformity of this, and every subsequent age, is, and will be indebted, and of magnifying the grace of God in their high and conscientious attachment to religious truth and freedom; and would earnestly call on all the pastors and churches of the Congregational Order in England and Wales, to make such provision for a due observance of the event as to them may appear desirable, not doubting that it will be deemed proper that sermons should be preached on the subject in all our places of worship; and recommending that efforts should be made in all the parishes or localities from which ministers were ejected, to gather up such particulars of their histories as are likely to be instrumental in reviving the spirit they displayed, and that attempts be made by prompt and timely measures, to originate new and additional chapels in the midst of large populations, to perpetuate the memory of men who, by their sufferings and zeal, secured to their descendants the liberties we so happily enjoy; and this assembly instructs the committee of the Congregational Union, in conjunction with the committees of the London and English Congregational Chapel-Building Societies, to convene, at an early day, a conference, with a view to decide on recommendations to carry this latter object into effect, and to adopt such other measures as may appear proper for the commemoration of Bartholomew's-day in the coming year.

It has been objected that chapel-building, however good in itself, is scarcely an appropriate way of celebrating so glorious a manifestation of “suffering for conscience sake;” at any rate that it should not be confined to that. There are the masses, whom it is stated, Congregationalism fails to reach; some are asking that the special feature of the celebration be the inauguration of a vigorous and earnest effort to get at the working classes, and to free our body from the reproach of lukewarmness to them. Then it is hoped by Mr. James that the Colonial Missionary Society will come in for a share of the effort; a hope to which the Colonies—Canada included,—will no doubt, heartily respond. Others are urging that the year be marked by a “gigantic effort” for the removal of Church Rates, and every civil disability which now affects Nonconformists, that the work so nobly begun by the Confessors of 1662, may be completed by their descendants in 1862. It is proposed by one member to

make it a *year of prayer*, not simply a week but a year of prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit; while some appear to be desirous in a vague sort of way, that the occasion should be "improved" by the inculcation of the principles which the Two Thousand held and so nobly illustrated. The whole subject is at present in a crude state. We see nothing to prevent the whole of these objects being attempted, and if entered upon with hearty vigour, successfully carried out. What are we to do in Canada? We have the same glorious heritage as our brethren in England; the Confessors of 1662 are our spiritual ancestors. We look back upon them with pride and gladness; and though Canada is not the holy land of spiritual independence, yet the dust of that land clings to our feet, and every association is sacred to our memory. We, in our freedom, in our deliverance from a dominant church, from church-rates, from tithes, from parish taxes and endowments, are reaping the fruit of the seed sown in our fatherland two hundred years ago, and we desire equally with our brethren there, to commemorate that glorious stand for liberty of conscience, and that manifestation of the power of conscience. We do not doubt that it has engaged the attention of some leading friends here, and that in due time it will assume shape and consistency; of one thing we are certain, that all who prize liberty of conscience, and who are grateful for its supremacy in our midst, will join in a hearty celebration of Bartholomew's Day.

Official.

MISSIONARY MEETINGS: WESTERN DISTRICT, 1862.

The following are the arrangements for the *Western Section* of this District, as approved by the Committee:—

Jan. 6.	Bosauquet.....	}	Rev. Messrs. McGregor, Snider & McCallum.
" 7.	Warwick		
" 8.	Watford		
" 9.	Plympton		
" 10.	Sarnia.....	}	Rev. Messrs. Ebbs, Clarke, Baird & Wood.
" 13.	London		
" 14.	Stratford		
" 15.	Listowel	}	Rev. Messrs. Ebbs, McGregor, Baird & Durrant.
" 16.	Molesworth.....		
" 17.	Howick, A.M.,.....		
" 17.	Turnberry, P.M.		
" 14.	Southwold.....	}	Rev. Messrs. Watson, W. F. Clarke, & Wood.
" 15.	Bothwell		
" 16.	Dresden.....		
" 17.	Thamesville.....		

For the *Eastern Section*, the following programme has been approved:—

Feb. 3.	Hamilton.....	Rev. Messrs. Baird, Hay, & Wood.
" 3.	Barton	" " Ebbs, Durrant, McCallum, Snider.
" 4, 5.	Hamilton.....	Meeting of the Western Association.
" 6.	Scotland.. ..	Rev. Messrs. Pullar, Baird, Snider.
" 6.	Kelvia	" " McCallum, Ebbs, Durrant.

Feb. 7.	Burford.....	Rev. Messrs. Pullar, Ebbs, Baird,
" 7.	New Durham.....	" " McCallum, Durrant, Snider.
" 10.	Brantford.....	} Rev. Messrs. Clarke, Ebbs, McGill, Hay, Wood.
" 11.	Paris.....	
" 12.	Guelph.....	
" 13.	Eramosa.....	Rev. Messrs. Clarke, R. Brown, & Wood,
" 13.	Eden Mills.....	" " Hay, McGill, & J. Brown.
" 14.	Garafraxa.....	" " Clarke, McGill, J. & R. Brown, Wood.

The Annual Missionary Sermons will be preached in each place, where practicable, on the Sabbath previous to the missionary meeting.

Collecting cards have already been sent to the several Pastors, and it is to be hoped that collectors will be set to work as soon as possible, so " that there may be no gatherings when we come."

JOHN WOOD,
Secretary, W.D.M.C.

MIDDLE DISTRICT.

Programme of Congregational Missionary Meetings for 1862.

Bowmanville.....	Monday, January 13.	} Deputation. — Rev. Messrs. J. Unsworth and R. Hay, and the Pastors of the Churches
Manilla.....	Tuesday, " 14.	
Brock.....	Wednesday, " 15.	
Whitby.....	Thursday, " 16.	
Base Line.....	Friday, " 17.	
Sheridan.....	Monday, " 20.	} Deputation. — Rev. Messrs. Allworth and Byrne, and the Pastors of the Churches.
Trafalgar.....	Tuesday, " 21.	
Georgetown.....	Wednesday, " 22.	
Churchhill.....	Thursday, " 23.	
Osprings.....	Friday, " 24.	
Pine Grove and St. Andrews.....	Sabbath, " 26.	
Alton and South Caledon.....	" " " 26.	
South Caledon.....	Monday, " 27.	
Alton.....	Tuesday, " 28.	
Albion.....	Wednesday, " 29.	
Pine Grove.....	Thursday, " 30.	
St. Andrews.....	Friday, " 31.	
Markham.....	Monday, February 3.	} Deputation. — Rev. Messrs. H. Denny and R. Hay, and the Pastors of the Churches.
Stouffville.....	Tuesday, " 4.	
Newmarket.....	Wednesday, " 5.	
Bell Ewart.....	Thursday, " 6.	
Oro.....	Friday, " 7.	
Oro.....	Sabbath, " 9.	
Menford.....	Sabbath, " 9.	
Williamsville.....	Monday, " 10.	
Menford.....	Tuesday, " 11.	
Owen Sound.....	Wednesday, " 12.	

As it is desirable to secure all the funds we can when the Deputations visit the stations, brethren are requested to make *prompt* arrangements in relation to subscriptions and donations, that everything may be in readiness. Let *due notice* be given that we may have a large attendance, and a good time spiritually.

JAMES T. BYRNE,

Whitby, Oct. 26, 1861.

Sec. M. D. M. C.

THE WIDOWS' AND ORPHANS' FUND.

The following collections have thus far been received on behalf of this Fund. Some others also have been reported, but being as yet incomplete, are not yet remitted.

Warwick.....	\$5 20	Listowel.....	\$2 00
Liverpool, N.S.....	2 00	Cowansville.....	} 8 58
Markham.....	7 00	Farnham.....	
Stouffville.....	6 00	Brome.....	} 7 00
Barton and Glanford.....	4 00	London.....	
Newmarket.....	10 00		
Cobourg.....	8 50		\$66 78
Granby.....	6 50		

Montreal, Oct. 24, 1868.

P. W. Wood.

CANADA INDIAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The Rev. R. Robinson (late of the French Canadian Missionary Society), has been appointed agent to the Canada Indian Missionary Society and is earnestly commended to the kind sympathy of the christian public in the prosecution of the duties devolving upon him in that capacity.

JOSEPH HOOPER, *Secretary.*

CONGREGATIONAL COLLEGE, B. N. A.

RECEIPTS SINCE OCTOBER 30, 1861.

<i>Per J. F. Marling, Esq.</i> :—Second Church, Toronto.....	\$27 00
<i>Per Rev. T. Baker</i> :—Church at Newmarket.....	18 00
<i>Per Mr. J. M. Smith</i> :—Oakland.....	3 00
<i>Per Mr. McGregor</i> :—Church at Indian Lands.....	12 25
<i>Per Rev. W. H. Allworth</i> :—Church at Stouffville.....	14 13
“ “ Church at Markham.....	11 00

PATRICK FREELAND, *Treasurer.*

Correspondence.

CELEBRATION OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF DR. WILKES' PASTORATE IN MONTREAL.

To the Editor of the Canadian Independent.

SIR,—An expressed desire on the part of friends that a more full report of the proceedings of the meeting to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Dr. Wilkes' pastorate over the Congregational Church in this City, induces me to send you the following report for publication in your journal.

Yours,

H. L.

Montreal, November, 1861.

A meeting of *Zion Church* and Congregation was held in this city, on the 2nd of October, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the pastorate of the Rev. Dr. Wilkes.

The lecture room of the church was most tastefully decorated for the occasion in floral designs, evergreen wreaths, fruits and flowers in profusion, and in every possible variety of artistic effect.

After tea the congregation assembled in the church, and the chair was taken, on request, by one of the deacons.

Appropriate selections of music were very successfully given by friends, who kindly volunteered their services for the occasion.

The Scriptures were read, and prayer was offered, by the pastor. The chairman then addressed the meeting briefly upon what he termed *THE SILVER WEDDING* of the Church; after which he called upon Henry Vennor, Esq., to present an address to the pastor, of which I subjoin the principal features in a condensed form.

The Deacons, on their own behalf, and as representatives of the Church and Congregation, availed themselves of the 25th anniversary of the present pastorate to review the dealings of providence with them as a church, and to give a public expression of their gratitude to God for His great goodness to pastor and flock. On the resignation of the pastorate by the Rev. R. Miles, 25 years ago, a unanimous call was directed to him (the Rev. Henry Wilkes) then the pastor of a church in Edinburgh, Scotland. At the same time friends in London, who were about to form the Colonial Missionary Society, solicited his assistance in that enterprise, with the view specially to act as its agent in this colony.

Providence thus seemed to designate with tolerable distinctness his future sphere of labor, and which was doubtless entered upon with a devout spirit, and animated by a strong desire to promote the spiritual interests of Canada. At that period the church was small, but united, consisting of but 48 members, with a limited congregation, meeting in a small building without galleries or vestry. Many pecuniary difficulties were encountered, and there occurred many dark days; but through the Divine blessing they were successfully met and passed, and the present spacious edifice erected, and now becoming rapidly filled. The membership had increased from 48 to 319: the number received by letter and profession of faith during the period under review was 650. During these years great changes in membership had occurred; many sleep in Jesus, and many have removed to distant places, who nevertheless remember with interest their connection with this Church of Christ.

However, not only had the pastoral relation remained unbroken, the church had also enjoyed an unusual degree of harmony; differences of opinion had existed, and had been frankly expressed, but under his kind, impartial and wise management, the peace of the brotherhood remained unbroken. The review of the past quarter century in regard to the spiritual fruits of the ministry, called likewise for devout gratitude to God, who had followed His servant's abundant labours with His rich blessing. A large number of the present membership could regard the pastor as their spiritual father. One important feature of this success, and one for which they could not be too grateful, was its *young membership*;—few congregations of the same size contain so large a proportion of the youth brought to a saving knowledge of the truth, and trained to activity in Christian effort. The inculcation of a missionary sentiment, and the fostering of a spirit of enlarged benevolence, prompting to energetic efforts for the diffusion of the Gospel at home and

abroad, had occupied a prominent place. Thus, and otherwise, his labours had taken a wider range than the requirements of his own congregation; for while these were not neglected, every catholic effort for the spread of the Gospel had felt the benefit of his sympathy, prayers and active coöperation.

In his official position of Agent for the Colonial Missionary Society, he had been enabled to aid efficiently and strengthen the interests of the denomination throughout the Provinces, while his own labours had been correspondingly increased.

The number of Congregational churches existing in Canada at the period of his (Dr. Wilkes') settlement, in 1836, was only *nine*, and now they are increased to more than eighty. They congratulated him upon the fact, that the latter years of his ministry had been his best years, not only as indicated by an increased attendance upon the means of grace, but also by augmented efficiency in every department of the church's work; and they ascribed all the glory to God, through whose blessing alone any good had been accomplished.

The chairman next called upon John Dougall, Esq., to present a Silver Testimonial to the pastor.

In making the presentation, Mr. Dougall expressed his pleasure in being made the medium through whom the gift of the Church should be placed in the hands of the Pastor. He said they had Scripture warrant for the proceeding in which they were then engaged. He read in 1 Samuel ix, that when the asses of Kish were lost, Saul, his son, went to the man of God to enquire, and took a quarter of a shekel of *silver* in his hand. Commemorations like the present, he remarked, were like milestones in the progress of human affairs, and, properly considered, were very interesting and affecting. Anniversary seasons were thus fitted to awaken serious reflections; and one of the most obvious was the steady advance of time carrying us on with ceaseless and resistless force. He reminded the pastor that the progress of the Christian unlike everything beside in this world, was one which suffered no decadence,—it was onward and upward—it was as the dawning light which shineth brighter and brighter unto the perfect day, and was brightest at its close. He continued to address the pastor in a most happy manner for some minutes, and concluded his remarks with the presentation of a Silver Pitcher and Salver, upon the former of which the following inscription was engraved:

PRESENTED TO

REVEREND HENRY WILKES, M.A., D.D.,

BY MEMBERS OF ZION CHURCH AND CONGREGATION, MONTREAL, TO COMMEMORATE THE
25TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS PASTORATE, AND TO DENOTE THEIR APPRECIATION OF

HIS ABLE AND ZEALOUS LABOURS

FOR THE SPIRITUAL INTERESTS OF HIS CHARGE.

Montreal, October 2nd, 1861.

Dr. Wilkes replied as follows:

Brethren and Friends—I heartily thank you for this cordial and loving address on the completion of my quarter century pastorate. Its tone is one of thankfulness to God, and most heartily sympathizing in that tone, let me run over the points to which you call attention. The *personal* is obviously unavoidable, and will be excused if we feel the sentiment, “Not unto me O Lord, not unto me, but unto thy name be all the glory.” You naturally allude to the *beginning* of the now

completed period. May I tell you *now* that for some years I was secretly doubtful whether I had done right in becoming your pastor. A prophet is not without honour save in his own country. And though Montreal was not my birth place, I had lived in it six years in youth and young manhood in mercantile connections. From 1822 to 1828 it was my abode amid the activities of commerce. Many knew and remembered me in these relations, and of course associated them with me, an undoubted disadvantage in the matter of popular impression and influence in the Ministry. Another consideration was that I might have come out unfettered as to place of labour. This little church, then less than four years old, had, in calling me, given me the option of coming myself, or of acting for them in the endeavour to procure a pastor; and at the time of my arrival there was a vastly more promising sphere in the West which was vacant and open. Further, and this was the gravest and most trying part of the case, it was many years before the cause in Montreal equalled in strength that which I had left in Edinburgh, and more sad and startling still was the fact, that no period of my ministry here had been so successful as that three years pastorate in Scotland, in which I took charge in 1833 of one hundred and forty members, and left in 1836, no fewer than two hundred and forty. It is not many years since our number here first reached two hundred and forty.

It may be asked how was the case met? My younger friends may be instructed by the reply that nothing was said about the doubt;—that was kept in my own bosom. It had been foolish and mischievous to have troubled my flock with that which could do no good, and the tendency of which would have been to interfere with sympathy and cooperation. The mental process was to fall back on the measure of light enjoyed when the decision was made, to call to remembrance motives, and also sincere prayers for guidance, and then to leave the matter with the Lord.—All such doubts have long since passed away.

You allude to our *pecuniary struggles and difficulties*. In the year 1836, I found a debt on St. Maurice street Church building of £1100, it had no galleries, no vestry, and half its basement was rented as a storehouse. There was exceedingly little wealth in the congregation. My salary was less than the one I had left in Edinburgh. We paid off the debt—£300 of it in one year—erected galleries and a vestry, being indebted to the courtesy of our friends of the American Presbyterian Church for the use of their building for some weeks while this was being done—Having done this, ultimately the place became too strait for us, and in 1844 we resolved upon the erection of this capacious edifice. After we had undertaken it and were in the midst of its responsibilities, commercial changes and disasters of a most crushing nature came upon our community, preventing some from paying what they had subscribed, driving many from the city, and effectually crippling the energies of all. Thus, in 1846, we opened Zion Church with a most formidable debt of between four and five thousand pounds; the interest of which was a most serious item of annual expenditure. At such a juncture churches have been frequently dispersed by the loss of a pastor because unable to support him. The Lord provided in your case. At the time and for a number of years, other sources of income enabled your pastor to live on an inadequate salary; and by the time those sources were dried up, and he was dependent on his professional income, you were in a condition to sustain him. I need not remind some of you of the pastor's six months work in England in the year 1849 which yielded not far from five thousand dollars towards the liquidation of the debt, and which, humanly speaking saved our property from the sheriff; nor of the vigorous, untiring, and prolonged labours of our ladies in this matter, the results of which annually greatly relieved us. Moreover, the Lord has increased your number, and greatly augmented your ability, so that now what remains of the debt is gliding away, and your financial concerns, though still involving effort and liberality, proceed without difficulty or struggle.

You allude to the unbrokenness of the pastoral relation and work, and to real harmony notwithstanding differences of opinion. I hope that I am grateful to

God and also to my parents whose early training was so judicious, for an excellent constitution and well nigh unbroken health. I think only two Sabbaths in 25 years have I been prevented by illness from occupying the pulpit: and one of these was the day after a dangerous fall from my horse, and the other was the effect of medicine too largely administered the preceding day. Our harmony is worthy of special note because of our divers nationalities, and hence the diversity of early associations and habits. Christian love has prevailed, and where this exists differences of sentiment have real value as a training element. We praise God for these great blessings.

You allude to spiritual fruit. We are sadly imperfect agents—"earthen vessels:" so that if there be any spiritual fruit of our labours, it is most manifestly of the Lord. Yet it would be ungrateful not to mark its bestowment. It is a blessed reward; no other, not even your affection, is to be compared to it. I hope that the aim of my ministry has been usefulness, not popularity; and I praise God that it has been to some considerable extent attained. Many have been savingly converted; but lest I should be puffed up thereby, my personal agency has seldom very distinctly appeared. The whole institution seems rather to have been the instrument than any particular sermons of mine. It has been a very precious and successful part of my work to comfort the weary, the cast down, and the sorrowful, and to guide the inquiring. There has been edification. And many have been trained to usefulness various in degree, but the aggregate of which is very large. But in all this I have had your hearty cooperation. You have not fainted, nor have you failed in the day of trial. If I have been honoured to teach and preach, you have responded nobly, and are ever doing so. This appears prominently in your missionary spirit and in your liberal giving to the cause of Christ. This imperfect review would be more imperfect if the *youth* were not mentioned. A considerable number of you whom I baptized in your infancy have been during the last few years received into the church, and are now active in its work.

You allude to the relation of this pastorate with the prosperity of our own denomination in the land, and also with the furtherance of catholic objects. On these points I must not dwell. You mention the interesting fact that the latter years have been the best. May it continue to be that "at evening time it shall be light!"

At the conclusion of Dr. Wilkes' address a thanksgiving hymn was sung by the congregation, and prayer was offered by Rev. Mr. Marsh (Baptist), of Quebec, and the meeting concluded with the doxology and benediction.

The occasion was one of deep and well-sustained interest throughout, and will be long remembered by those who were privileged to enjoy it.

H. L.

INTEMPERANCE.

To the Editor of the Canadian Independent.

DEAR EDITOR.—An official announcement of the action of the Congregational Union, at its late meeting, in reference to the alarming prevalence of *Intemperance*, can scarcely be rendered sufficiently emphatic, to arrest due attention, in the form of an extract from the Minutes. Permit me therefore, in lieu of such notice, to say a word or two, in reference to this sin of *our times* and of *our land*.

Though other lands may be as chargeable as our own, there exists so formidable a foe to Godliness, Social Virtue and Prosperity among *us*, in the prevalent use of *intoxicating beverages*, that the Ministers of Religion and Morality, cannot proclaim the whole counsel of God in its bearing on the

Canadian people, without very full and frequent testimony against this prolific source of evil. It is a sign of progress towards a better state of public morals, that the Ministers of the Gospel of all the Evangelical Denominations are gradually falling into the ranks of the *Total Abstinence Reformers*. Many of the Clergymen of the Church of England, and not a few of the most influential of the Presbyterian, and Wesleyan Methodist Churches, together with the entire body of Baptist and Congregational Ministers, are now, in some way identified with this Reform. Many years ago, it was avowed, that every Minister of our Denomination, in the Province, was practically a total abstainer from intoxicating beverages. May this never cease to be one of our characteristic platforms of hearty agreement and coöperation. It is one thing, however, to be sound on this question, and quite another, to be effective promoters of the reform. Are we letting this light shine forth from our pulpits, and in our pastoral and social circles, in all suitable ways? While the Union would not recommend the institution of the Total Abstinence Pledge, as a test for admission to Christian Communion, it has repeatedly avowed its deep sense of the importance of a *Christian testimony*. If there be in our churches, any members not yet prepared to adopt this our characteristic principle, let no covenant of peace be made with the social wine cup, nor with the traffic, for their sakes. Let us press the truth upon their consciences and hearts, in all suitable ways, until they discover their duty. Let us be patient towards all men, especially towards those who love the Lord, and His people, and so far as they understand His will, endeavour to walk with us in all His ordinances and commandments; but at the same time, be diligent to provoke one another to zeal and steadfastness in bearing a faithful testimony against the dangerous drinking customs of our country.

Let us endeavour as much as possible, to combine with the Church of Christ, the advantages of separate Temperance organizations; maintaining in our several local churches, a *Church testimony*, such as all our adherents must feel; particularly directing our influence upon *heads of families*, and upon the *youth* of our Sabbath Schools. Let "Bands of Hope" be organized in connection with these schools, enlisting the young people; whose zeal, if rightly developed and directed, will prove a living fountain, most effectively influencing the adult portion of our several congregations. In my own pastoral sphere, this plan works admirably. Between 70 and 80 young people have signed the Total Abstinence Pledge, and enrolled themselves as members of the *Band*; and at their last monthly meeting, of their own accord, added a pledge of abstinence from the use of *Tobacco* in every form. Their meetings are well attended; and brief addresses, recitations, or extracts read by themselves, occupy most of the hour, sometimes with considerable enthusiasm. The pastor's presence, and an occasional word from a teacher, or other visitor, supply all the motive force, and regulation required. "*The Band of Hope Review*" published by S. W. Partridge, Paternoster Row, London,—a most attractive Juvenile Temperance paper, adds greatly to the interest of my young people, in their monthly meetings. Messrs. W. C. Chewett & Co., of Toronto, supply me.

Besides the efforts made by the pastor and his fellow labourers, in his own flock, is it not possible in many places, for the Ministers of several denominations to combine in delivering series of monthly Lectures, or holding public Meetings in advocacy of this Reform? Good as the "Good Templars"

may be, and efficient as the "Sons" and "Daughters of Temperance" may be, there is need of maintaining the *old-fashioned Temperance platform*, for the coöperation of all Total Abstinence Reformers, in the earnest work of arousing the slumbering zeal of some, and enlisting the energies of many others who have not yet realized the importance of this movement. Let there be no jealousy or controversy of parties, and "orders," who wish, in common, to stem the tide of intemperance. If all cannot pronounce this, and the other party shibboleth, *all can join* in the advocacy of the Apostle's maxim—"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth or is offended, or is made weak." And further, all parties, can, with a great degree of unanimity, join together in such a declaration, as the following, adopted at our late Union Meeting:—"That it is, indeed, a brand of disgrace, and subject for shame and sorrow, that an enlightened and christian country like ours, should, by law, patronize, sustain, and protect the traffic, which entails upon its inhabitants miseries the most appalling, crimes the most fearful, and the ultimate destruction of the bodies and souls of mankind."

In conclusion, I would commend to all the Ministers of our Body, not present at the Kingston meeting, the observance of the resolution unanimously adopted by the Pastors present, to *preach on this important subject on the THIRD SABBATH of DECEMBER*. May a clear and earnest note of warning be sounded throughout our borders on that day, especially in anticipation of the increased temptations of Christmas and New Year.

EDWARD EBES,

Sec. C. U. of C.

P. S., 22nd Nov., 1861.

Reviews.

NICHOLS' SERIES OF STANDARD DIVINES. Montreal: B. Dawson & Son.
Toronto: W. C. Chewett & Co.

It was a happy proposal of Mr. Nichols to issue the works of the glorious old Puritans, in a style which should render them a desirable addition to any library, and at a price which should place them within reach of the bulk of the ministers and students of all Evangelical denominations. Some of the treatises proposed to be issued, are very scarce, and held at prices which render them little better than vexatious temptations to those who have not a little California to lay out in old book stores, (and how many, or few ministers have!) we felt therefore when we received the prospectus that if the publisher carried out the scheme in the spirit and manner promised, it would be a great boon to all who are fond of the writings of men, of whom it is truly said, that "their fervid devotion, their masterly grasp of the subjects they expound, their profound knowledge of human nature, their richness of illustration, their great learning, and their untiring industry, will ever cause their memories to be cherished as those of men who were honoured, in the providence of God, to render a service to the cause of pure and undefiled religion, which has never been surpassed." Three volumes of the series have now been

issued, and they are in every way worthy of the support given to the scheme; they are carefully edited, well printed on good paper, and sufficiently well bound to be used without further expense in that direction. They consist of the works of Thomas Goodwin (which are to comprise 15 volumes), and contain his sermons on the first chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians (vol. i.). On the second chapter of the same Epistle, (vol. ii.) and "An Exposition of the Book of Revelations, Certain select cases resolved, and the Vanity of thoughts discovered," (vol. iii.) with a general Preface by Dr. Miller, Rector of St. Martin's, Birmingham, and a Memoir by Dr. Halley, Principal of New College. The other three volumes for this year are to contain the practical works of Thomas Adams, and will be accompanied by a Memoir by Mr. Spurgeon. We heartily recommend this undertaking to our readers. No one can read a half a dozen pages of either of the volumes already issued, without being struck by the grasp of thought, the copiousness, and what is better than all, the deep devotion of the writer. Christ Jesus, and him crucified, was the theme of the preaching of these men, the centre around which their thoughts revolved, this was the secret of their power, and of the success with which their labours were so blessedly crowned.

LIFE AND LETTERS OF JOHN ANGELL JAMES. Edited by R. W. Dale, M.A.
New York: R. Carter & Bros. Toronto: W. C. Chewett & Co.

It has always appeared to us that one of the most difficult tasks a writer can undertake is the biography of an eminent man, especially if he were a preacher of the gospel. Every admirer views him from his own stand-point, and sees not alone the man but his own ideal of him, and anything found in a biography jarring with that ideal, (however incorrect it may be,) is considered sufficient to lessen the value of the work and to indicate the editor's unfitness for his task. Hence it arises that the most popular, the most satisfactory biographies are those of men of whom we knew or heard but little during their life-time, of whom we had no preconceived opinion, and whose memoirs are presented to us with that charm of freshness which at once fixes attention and disarms criticism. We are not surprised, therefore, that Mr. Dale has not succeeded in giving satisfaction in his capacity as editor of this book; Mr. James was known by his preaching or writing to many thousands, to a large number of whom he was as a spiritual father, one whom they loved and revered more than any other man; such, having never perhaps thought of any flaws in his character, of any littlenesses or weaknesses, are grieved to find that these did exist in him, that however honoured and useful, he was but a man, and they are disposed to charge upon his biographer an unfitness for his duty. While thinking that the editor might have done his work somewhat better, especially in a more judicious use of the autobiographical portions of the book, we are far from joining in some of the severe criticisms to which he has been exposed; the work, it is abundantly evident, has been a labour of love, and where he has erred it has arisen from the feelings of reverence with which he remembered his saintly predecessor. It is of course impossible to give anything like a sketch of Mr. James as portrayed in this volume. We find him not alone the popular preacher and the successful author, but as the pastor of a church consisting of nearly a thousand members, and in that great number "of very few of whom he could not give a clear

account," every practicable means was used to further this end, feeling as he did its great importance: it would be well for the churches if all our ministers took pattern by Mr. James in this respect. As a preacher, he did not think it sufficient to ascend the pulpit on the Sabbath and give to an expectant people the crude results of a few hours' meditation; had he done so the result of his ministry would have been sadly different. No, no, "He had a profound sense of the greatness of the preacher's vocation—he thought of it, too, as the highest employment of man's natural powers, demanding from all who are called to its responsibilities and glories, the consecration of every faculty and every noble passion. He permitted no side pursuits to divert his strength or abate his enthusiasm. With some preachers, preaching seems a mere parenthesis in their life, interrupting the pursuits to which they give most of their energy and nearly all their heart; Mr. James expended his utmost resources in making his sermons attractive and powerful," (p. 606.)

Mr. James, though scarcely a voluminous writer in one sense, yet issued a goodly number of works from the press; some of these were not of course permanently interesting, but by some of his writings he will be held in affectionate remembrance for generations to come, and our children's children will call him blessed. We need hardly say, that of all his works "The Anxious Inquirer" is the one that has been most extensively read, and has, perhaps, under God done more to awaken and alarm the sinner and direct him to the Saviour, than any other merely human book. Thousands, with the editor of this *Life*, and the writer of these lines, have on their knees and in keen distress about their personal salvation first read the "Anxious Inquirer." Most numerous as are the recorded instances of its usefulness, who can doubt, that in the day of the revelation of all things, it will be found how small a portion of the good it accomplished was ever known on earth. Mr. James says, "Had I preserved all the letters I have received both from other countries and my own, of its usefulness, they would have formed a book. One instance out of many I may here relate. In one of the back settlements of America where a stated ministry had not yet been fixed, a single copy of the 'Anxious Inquirer' had found its way. It was lent from one person to another, and seven-and-twenty persons were thus hopefully converted to God by the perusal of the solitary copy found among them." (p. 309.) Other instances of the extraordinary usefulness of the book are given, which our space forbids us extracting.

Mr. James, while blessed with great results to his preaching and writing; having a happy, prosperous, united church, was not without trials and chastening from the hand of his Heavenly Father. He was twice married, each time to an excellent, estimable woman, who was a help-meet for him, and the death of each of these was a great and severe affliction. The writer was a hearer at Carr's Lane Chapel at the time of his second wife's death, and vividly recalls the solemnity of his grief, the tone it gave to his prayers and preaching, to everything that he did and said. "His grief though profound, was not violent and uncontrolled. The discipline of the previous six or seven years, had prepared him to bow, with submission, under the mighty hand of God." (p. 326.)

The discipline referred to, was the appearance in 1840 of a disease which threatened him with protracted physical torture, which he expected would shorten his life, and which produced two most impressive letters, addressed

respectively to the Church and Congregation, and to the Deacons of Carr's Lane Church; they are inserted at the close of the volume. There was also the greatly increased sufferings of his daughter, who had been an invalid almost from childhood, and to whom he was fondly attached. All his trials were the blessed instruments of his sanctification, and he came forth more perfectly fitted for his Master's service. The words of the Rev. J. G. Miall, at the close of his address at the late meeting of the Congregational Union in Birmingham, may fitly close this notice.

"We bless God that our denomination fostered and revered him. We bless God that he revered and valued it. Ever, we believe, till the last day shall close the history of time, will inquirers, and converts, and church members, and students, and pastors, and missionaries, and the whole body of Christ, adore the Power which made and sustained such a servant of God, and admire the grace which was in him. Only one statement can fully realise our desires respecting his beloved coadjutor, and respecting each successor in the Church to which he belonged—'The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha!'

'Ye who caught it as it fell,
Bind that mantle to your breast;
In you may his spirit dwell,
On you may his influence rest.'"

WEE DAVIE; THE GOLD THREAD; THE BLACK SHIP; KITTY'S VICTORY;
PARLIAMENT IN THE PLAY ROOM. New York: R. Carter & Bros.
Toronto: W. C. Chewett & Co.

Children's books of the right stamp; instructive, amusing, and thoroughly safe, well suited for Sabbath school Libraries. The first two are by Norman Macleod, and are reprinted from "Good Words," of which he is editor. "Wee Davie" is one of the most touching little things we have ever read; it will be very popular. C.

News of the Churches.

COMMEMORATION AT COWANSVILLE, C. E.

On Saturday evening, the 19th October, the members and friends of the Congregational Church, Cowansville, E. T., invited their Pastor, the Rev. A. Duff, and family, to partake of supper, in the Vestry of the Church, in commemoration of the fifth anniversary of his pastoral charge over that Church and people. The ladies displayed their usual liberality and taste in furnishing the tables. After supper the Rev. A. Duff delivered an address, in which, with his happy and interesting manner, he reviewed the past twenty years of his ministry, three-fourths of which he had spent in his native land, Scotland. The lucid description he gave of that country, and the warm hearts left there, found a responsive echo in the breasts of his hearers, many of whom were born or had dwelt 'mid the heath-clad hills and dales of "auld Scotia." Some of the lay members then addressed the friends present; after which all joined in singing "The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want." Prayer and the benediction closed one of the most edifying, heart-stirring social tea parties it was ever the writer's good fortune to enjoy; and he but expresses the fervent wish of all then present—that many annual gatherings of these people with their present pastor may be held, sanctioned and blessed by our Father in heaven.—*Communicated.*

CONGRATULATORY SOIRÉE IN THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, GUELPH.

A Congratulatory Tea Meeting was held in the School Room of the Congregational Church, on Wednesday evening, to celebrate the return of the Rev. Wm. F. Clarke from his recent visit to the Father Land.

After the good things of the well furnished Tea-table had been discussed with evident relish by the guests, an adjournment to the Chapel took place, when the Rev. Wm. Clarke of Dresden (father of the pastor), was called to the Chair.

The Chairman introduced the pleasing object of the meeting in a feeling and appropriate address, when the following resolution, moved by S. Hodgskin, Esq., seconded by Alex. Thompson, Esq., and supported in an effective address by Rev. R. Robinson, was carried with demonstrations of pleasure and unanimity.

"That this Meeting of the congregation and friends of the Rev. W. F. Clarke, most cordially welcome his return from England, to his family and flock. They gratefully acknowledge the Divine Hand in the protection of his person, and in the results of his visit, especially in the complete vindication of an important principle and the restoration of peace and confidence among brethren."

The Pastor replied under the influence of strong emotions. He referred to the very gratifying reception he had obtained both in private and in public, not only from members of his own flock, but from numerous friends belonging to other congregations. Through God's good Providence he had not only been permitted to return in peace and safety, but the great object of his visit had been fully realized. He returned to the chosen scene of his labours, with a mind relieved from a weight of care that had long oppressed him. Peace and confidence had been fully and happily restored between himself and honored brethren in England. The principle for which he had contended had been fully vindicated, and the rights of humanity and privileges of christian citizenship accorded to men of every class and colour in connection with British Missions. Fully restored to his previous status and placed in a high position for usefulness, he thanked God and took courage. He felt that he could now, with heart and soul, co-operate with his brethren both in Canada and Britain, in all their efforts for the glory of Christ and the salvation of souls. Singing and prayer and the benediction concluded the meeting.—*Guelph Herald*.

THE AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS.

The fifty-first annual meeting of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions commenced its sessions in the First Presbyterian church of Cleveland, Ohio, on the afternoon of the first of October. Judge Strong, of Pennsylvania, presided, in the absence of the President and Vice President. The treasurer's report and an abstract of the report of the Prudential Committee were then read. The receipts for the thirteen months ending August 31, 1861, have been \$341,988, and the expenditures \$369,874 leaving a debt of \$27,895, much less than was anticipated two months ago.

GENERAL VIEW OF THE MISSIONS.

In *Western Africa* the older brethren, though deeply sensible of the obstacles that have long stood in their way, still cling to their chosen field and work. The continuance of the mission is a good deal owing to this fact. Where the Lord is pleased to give such a spirit to his servants, it is reasonable to believe that he has a work there for them to do. It may yet appear the duty of the Board to sustain a mission on the West African coast, that shall be composed wholly of colored persons. In *Southern Africa* the mission is very differently situated. The climate, people, government, under the grace of God, give promise of a harvest in proportion to the degree and skill of cultivation. The twelve stations are all not very far from the sea, occupying somewhat more than a hundred miles of the maritime district. Most of the brethren are able to preach in the native language. The ten small churches are gradually gaining numbers and strength.

The Missions to *Western, Central and Eastern Turkey*, may be spoken of as if they were one mission. There are 23 stations; 80 out-stations; 48 missionaries, including three unordained physicians; 56 authorized native preachers, of whom 10 are pastors; and 139 other native co-laborers in different capacities, as catechists, teachers and helpers. Of churches there are 42, containing 1,546 members; of whom 198 were received the past year. One hundred and fourteen schools for preparing pastors and helpers, and 30 are in two female boarding-schools for educating wives for the native ministry. Nearly sixteen thousand dollars (two-thirds furnished by Bible and Tract Societies,) were expended in publications in the Armenian, Armeno-Turkish, Bulgarian and Modern Greek languages, amounting to about 165,000 copies, and 13,000,000 pages. Dr. Goodnell has revised his Armeno-Turkish version of the Old Testament. Dr. Schaffler has nearly completed his Arab-Turkish New Testament, for the use of the Moslems, and the government, after much hesitation, has consented to its being printed at Constantinople. Dr. Riggs, besides preparing and editing Bulgarian tracts, has been mainly occupied with revising the version of the Scriptures in that language. The Armenian Bible, with marginal references, electrotyped and printed in New York by the American Bible Society, is highly prized; and that Society is also electrotyping the New Testament in a similar form. The American Tract Society at New York has also electrotyped and printed several works for the mission, which are admired for their beauty. At *Marash*, in a house of worship erected chiefly by the people, Dr. Dwight saw forty persons admitted to the church at one time, and preached to a congregation of nearly fifteen hundred people.

The Mission in *Syria* has not witnessed any new outbreaks of fanaticism. The terrible distress among the nominal Christians, and the bountiful contributions for their relief in this country, and still more in England, made it necessary for the brethren to act as almoners, at different times, to about 75,000 people. They had thus such opportunities as never before, for a wide publication of the gospel. The *Nestorian* mission, with its thirty-one out-stations, and forty-one native preachers, is prepared to throw new and increased responsibilities upon its native force. In the difficulty of forming a mountain station, owing to the severity of winter on the more elevated ridges, and the heat and insalubrity of summer on the lower western slopes, the mission is considering how it shall evangelize the mountains by means chiefly of the native ministry, sent forth and directed from the plain of Oroumiah.

The *Ahmednuggur* district of the *Mahratta* mission has been blessed the past year with a continuance of that spiritual prosperity, which it had enjoyed during the five previous years. One hundred and thirty-one new members have been added to the eighteen churches in the mission, increasing the whole number to five hundred and four; and it is interesting to know that the baptized children of the church number three hundred and fifty. The native Christians, under the auspices of the British government, are gradually coming into possession of their social and civil rights. Good progress is made in training a native ministry.

In the *Madras* mission Dr. Winslow has dismissed his English and Vernacular school under the apprehension of pecuniary embarrassments from the civil war.

More than a million of souls in the *Madura* district, and nearly the whole territory, somewhat larger than the State of Massachusetts, is, by general consent, under the exclusive care of the *Madura* mission. The 145 "Christian congregations" number 7,500 souls. Of these 800 are able to read. The 28 churches received 76 new members the past year, and contain 1,109. Six of the churches have native pastors. The contributions of the native Christians, during the year, amounted to five hundred and thirty-two dollars; besides the Jubilee offering to the Board, which increased the sum to nine hundred and twenty-two dollars. They have a Home Missionary Society to aid feeble churches in the support of their pastors. The schools contain twelve hundred pupils, one hundred and fifteen of whom, of both sexes, are in the higher training schools. The wonderful work of God, that has been in progress in *Tinneelly*, south of the *Madura* District,

has extended to the neighboring churches within the bounds of our mission, and even reached the seminary at *Passumalie*; and the brethren have great hopes in respect to all their churches. It is remarkable that the *Ceylon* mission should have suffered no more from its necessary, but somewhat sudden, disruption from the means of secular advancement for native Christians in 1855. The mission schools contain fourteen hundred and ten pupils and are all now vernacular, the native bearing the whole expense of their English schools; and one of their effects is to displace the old hereditary village teachers. The Oodooville Female School has forty-seven pupils, and the Theological School at Batticotta has twenty.

The three *China* missions are all struggling, in their respective fields, to gain the attention and awaken the interests of that great and singular people. Mr. Bonney, in company with three English gentlemen, lately travelled from Canton to Shanghai, by way of the Tong Ting Lake and the great Yangtse River, about two thousand miles, without any serious obstruction. Mr. Blodget occupies a station at Tiensin, only seventy-five miles from Peking, and has visited the Chinese metropolis. The climate there approximates to that of New England and the Middle States. The *Sandwich Islands* have suffered a great loss in the death of Dr. Armstrong. But the past year has been one of special revival. The addition to the churches have been 1,465, raising the whole present number of church members to 19,767. Add the deceased church members from the beginning, to the living, and the number is 37,454. More than \$21,000 were contributed by the twenty-three churches, during the year, for the support and propagation of the gospel. Ecclesiastical bodies have been formed on the four larger Islands, more or less conformed to the Presbyterian or Congregational models. A new station has been commenced among the *Dakotas*, under favorable auspices.

The labors of the year have not been in vain among the *Ojibwas*. The past year has been one of trial for the *Seneca* mission. The educational interests of the Senecas are kindly and faithfully cared for by the State of New York. The Orphan Asylum is accomplishing much for those who are admitted to its privileges. In agriculture and domestic comfort, the Cattaraugus Indians are constantly advancing.

Bills from the Fountains of Israel.

BUNYAN'S PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.—No. 8.

THE HILL DIFFICULTY.

By REV. JOHN WOOD, Brantford, C.W.

ISA. XL. 31.—“*They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint.*”

After parting company with Formalist and Hypocrisy, who only derided what they seemed to think Christian's groundless fears as to their obtaining admission at the celestial gate, the Pilgrim went on his way, “sometimes sighingly, and sometimes comfortably,” communing with his own heart, and often reading in the roll he had received from one of the Shining Ones whom he had met at the cross. He had not forgotten the injunction to look on it as he ran; and he now finds how helpful to him is the good hope it represents, as he pursues the heavenly race. The want of this happy assurance of our acceptance with God, makes the road heavy to many, who, *with* such an assurance, would be singing with David and Habakkuk,

“*He maketh my feet like hinds' feet,
And he will make me to walk upon mine high places.*”—Hab. iii., 19.

Soon he came to a Hill called Difficulty, right over which the narrow way would lead him. There were, indeed, two other ways, the one to the left, and the other to the right of it, by taking either of which the toilsome steep might be avoided.

But Christian, cautioned against turning aside by Evangelist, and warned of the danger of so doing, by his own bitter experience, resolved on pursuing the straight path; and having refreshed himself at the spring at the foot of the hill, began the ascent, singing,

"Better, though difficult, the *right* way to go,
Than wrong, though easy, where the end is woe."

Formalist and Hypocrisy, who followed close behind him, viewed the matter differently. The hill was too steep and high for them, especially as they saw, on either side of it, a much easier path. So, taking it for granted that these two ways would meet again with that up which Christian went, on the other side of the hill, they resolved to try them; whereupon one of them lost his way in a great wood, and the other among dark mountains, upon which he stumbled and fell, and rose no more.

And so has it happened, times without number, to those who have preferred the dictates of expediency and worldly wisdom,—or what *seemed* to be so, for in reality it is always *expedient* to do *right*,—to those of conscience and the Holy Scriptures. Wisdom's way is a plain and a pleasant one, but it often has its difficulties. The Lord has not promised that we shall meet with nothing in it to try our faith and patience, for "the trial of our faith is much more precious than of gold that perisheth." The hills of Difficulty, and the valleys of Humiliation, which lie along the path we travel, are a necessity of our spiritual life; and all the engineering, and grading, and levelling, which easy-going christians have resorted to in order to avoid them, have made the way nothing the smoother or easier; for if it be *difficult* to gain the heavenly city *in God's way*, it is surely *impossible* for us to reach it *in our own*. No amount of contrivance, or of special pleading, will ever make a *wrong* thing *right*, or release us from the obligation to stand up for truth and duty. "We ought to obey God rather than man." To do so may cost us the loss of friendships, and worldly influence, and gain,—may provoke the tongue of slander, or raise the finger of scorn at us for our puritanical strictness;—but the reproach borne for Christ, and the loss endured from a regard to his will, will be esteemed at last, "greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." The path of duty is always the *safest* and the *easiest*, in the long run; for he that is always trimming his sails for the latest breath of popularity, or is disposed to conform to the world as far as his profession of religion will allow him to do it, will meet with a *hundred* temptations, where the man of principle, who will climb the hill of Difficulty, rather than step aside from the way, will meet *one*. How often, for example, will a bold avowal of the principle of total abstinence, save a man from the *offer of wine*, and the temptation to drink, before which so many, who would rather deny their convictions than seem impolite, have fallen! So too, will a steady non conformity to the sinful, and questionable pursuits of the world, save us from even the invitation to join in them, and very often from the sneer with which refusal to participate in them, from other considerations, would be met. Let him then, that desires safety, ease, and "the honour that cometh from God only," copy the example of Christian, and overcome the difficulty, instead of avoiding it. All by-paths, compromises, and worldly policies, are only snares of the devil, to ruin the unwary!

Christian, as we have said, began to ascend the hill. For a little while he ran, but his natural strength soon gave way, and "he fell from running to going, and from going, to clambering upon his hands and his knees, because of the steepness of the place." In such difficulties "even the youths shall faint and grow weary, and the young men shall utterly fall." The strongest and most resolute are frequently overcome when contending single-handed with temptation. But "the Lord giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength." So about half-way up the hill, when well nigh overcome with the fatigue of the ascent, Christian came upon a pleasant arbour, provided by the Lord of the hill for weary pilgrims. There he sat him down to rest, and to read in his roll, and examine the coat given him as he stood by the cross.

It is doubtful whether Bunyan had any particular means of grace in view in planting this arbour of rest half-way up the hill of Difficulty. He probably wished his readers to learn that the Lord never calls us to endure trials, without providing us with a spring of grace, in the strength of which to meet it, nor permits us to become weary, without furnishing us with an arbour in which to refresh ourselves. "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able: but will with the temptation also, make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." There is a spring at the foot of every hill, if we will but look for it, and an arbour in the steepest part of it, to which the Lord invites us for rest.

There is one arbour, however, continually within reach of the christian pilgrim, to which the allegory seems specially to apply, viz., *the Sabbath*,—every week returning to us with its freight of heavenly influences and emotions,—pearl of days,—heaven's antidote to the curse of labour,—memento of the risen Saviour, and of the completion of His redeeming work! What a dreary and endless round of toil were life without it! "The Sabbath was made for man,"—"a ward of grace,"—a refuge from the world,—a breakwater to earthly labours and cares, saying to them all, "thus far shalt thou come, and no farther!" The day of rest is the birth-right of every human being,—aye, and of every animal too,—and no man, nor company of men, can righteously require any employée to forego it. Nothing but the sternest necessity, or the purest beneficence, can justify a departure from the original command,—"in it thou shalt not do any manner of work." But physical rest was only *one* of the ends contemplated in the institution of the Sabbath; cultivation of the heart, by communion with God, and contact with spiritual truths, was another, and certainly not less important one. But alas! this arbour, so pleasant and refreshing when rightly employed, is often made use of as was Christian's arbour, as a place *for sleep*,—sleep of both body and spirit,—instead of making it an occasion for spiritual exercises. The Sabbath should be *the spirit's working day*,—the day upon which it should be most active, in laying up its stores of food for the week, for

"A Sabbath well spent,
Brings a week of content,
And strength for the toils of to-morrow."

All through the week the spirit is corroded with care, and exhausted with effort; it has but little time to renew its strength for the conflict with evil. If it maintain its ground against the encroachments of the foe, it is as much as in *most* cases, and more than in *many* cases, it accomplishes. Few of us, probably, are in as spiritual a state on Saturday night, after a week of worldly engagements, as we were on Monday morning. The tide of religious feeling generally *ebs* all the week; but what if the Sabbath have not power enough over us *to turn it!* And how can it, if its precious hours are wasted in sleep, or sinful indulgence, or vacancy? Sabbaths thus spent, will, I fear, become swift witnesses against many of us in the day of Christ!

Sleeping in this arbour, Christian lost his roll out of his hand: but it was not until he had reached the top of the hill that he missed it. There he met two men Timorous and Mistrust, who had seen two lions in the way, and were fleeing from these,—as Christian afterwards found them to be—imaginary dangers. The evil report which these men brought him, greatly distressed and perplexed him at first; but recollecting that the dangers before him, could not be greater than those from which he had fled, he resolved on pursuing his way. Bethinking him, however of his roll, which he now needed to comfort him, he was dismayed at discovering that he had lost it. His sinful indulgence had grieved the Holy Spirit of God, by whom we are sealed unto the day of redemption, and He no longer bore witness to his acceptance with God. What then was to be done? Many a professing christian has said in such circumstances, let it go!—content to know that he *once possessed it*, or *thought he did!* But these out-of-date experiences did not satisfy Christian. He had been charged to keep his roll, and look on it as he ran, and have it ready to present it at the celestial gate, and he could not rest until

he found it. And a long and painful search he had for it; and after he had recovered it, many sad but vain repentings, and self-accusations, did he suffer on account of his sin. Sooner or later, indeed, must all such self-indulgence be similarly atoned for, as far as remorse can do so. The blood of Jesus may cleanse the soul from its sins; but the remembrance of them may plant a thorn in the dying pillow, or weigh the soul down in the waters of the river of death, as Christian's sins did in his case, so that its faith shall well nigh fail. Beware then, *all*,—but beware especially *you*, whose hills of difficulty are so rugged and toilsome, lest you either turn aside to avoid them, or convert the arbour of rest into a bed of indolence and ease. The greater your difficulties the more grace you may have to meet them; for “they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength,” and in His strength you “shall mount up with wings as eagles: shall run and not be weary; and shall walk and not faint.”

Poetry.

SHORTSIGHTEDNESS OF MAN.

A dewdrop falling on the ocean wave,
 Exclaimed in fear—“I perish in this grave;”
 But, in a shell received, that drop of dew
 Unto a pearl of marvellous beauty grew;
 And, happy now, the grace did magnify
 Which thrust it forth—as it had feared—to die;
 Until again, “I perish quite,” it said,
 Torn by rude diver from its ocean bed.
 O unbelieving! So it came to gleam,
 Chief jewel, in a monarch's diadem.

TRENCH.

Family Reading.

PRISONERS OF HOPE.

J—S— was convicted of murder, and sentenced to death. The crime had been deliberately planned, the circumstances were aggravating, and the proof was clear. The jury returned their verdict unanimously, and the judge in pronouncing sentence warned the prisoner that he had no ground whatever for expecting mercy. The criminal was then led to a stone cell, and chained to an iron bar in the floor, there to drag out the numbered days between the sentence and the time appointed for its execution.

In spite of all that had passed, the infatuated man built himself up in the expectation of pardon. Sleeping and waking, he continued to occupy his time dreaming of the pity that his case would move in the heart of the Queen, and of the merciful message that she would send to him. From wishing it he slid into believing it like an article of faith. The truth is he could not endure to think that he was on the very brink of eternity, and therefore he hoped wildly against

reason and evidence, that he would escape. When a turnkey brought his food, he questioned him whether any letter from the government had reached the governor of the prison: when a missionary came to tell him of pardon through the blood of Christ, he interrupted the solemn lessons by requests to send a petition to the Queen. He became more eager as the time drew near. In the long dreary sleepless nights, if the wind rattled on the roof, or a watchman's footfall were heard ringing on the stone pavement along the corridor of the prison, he started with a beating heart—Is this the messenger bringing me a reprieve? When all was silent again, he listened at the key-hole of the iron door, until his ear seemed ready to crack with the straining. Oh, it was an eager, deep, long-sustained listening: but the pardon which the criminal so fondly expected never came, and the death which he refused to believe in, approached as steadily as the laws of nature, and overtook him at the appointed hour. If the sovereign does not grant a pardon, all the listening and expectation and hope of the prisoner will not bring a pardon.

Reader, in respect of your guilt and God's judgment-seat, you are not in the position of the wretched prisoner whom we have described. If you have already closed with the offer made in the gospel, you have gotten the pardon into your hand—into your heart. You taste the sweetness of the gift, and rejoice in the goodness of the Giver. "There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." "He that hath the Son hath life." Your sins are blotted out; and Christ's righteousness is yours; and you will stand in it accepted in the great day.

But if you have not closed with the offer made in the gospel—if you have been living without God and without Christ in the world, still you are not in the condition of the infatuated prisoner who desired and hoped and yet perished. You are in the same condition as to the sentence passed on you, and that a sentence of death eternal; but you are in a different condition in respect that a pardon is ready, is offered, is pressed upon you. You are in the state of one condemned already, but to whom a free pardon is offered from the King eternal. The Son of God has come to your prison with a pardon in His hand. He stands at the door and knocks: but up to this moment you have permitted Him to stand and knock in vain. His tender complaint stands recorded against you—"Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."

Look at the difference between yourself and that poor prisoner. He longed and listened with his whole soul for a pardon, but no offer of pardon ever reached him: to you the offer of pardon has come, but you have turned a deaf ear to the message, and allowed the divine compassionate Messenger to knock and plead in vain. Think of this, dear friend, and pray over it before the thought drop from your mind. Turn aside, and fall upon your knees, and confess your sin to that compassionate Saviour, and close with Him now. He is willing. He will receive you at once and forgive you all, although you have treated him so ill. Speak to Him, and pour out your heart to Him. Fall into His bosom as the prodigal did, and He will rejoice over you as a lost sheep found. He will take you now into His loving heart, and forever into His happy home.

But, reader, although you are not now like the prisoner of our story, there is one event in which your case may be fearfully like his, and like it forever: that is, if you remain careless and Christless till death overtake you, and carry you away to the judgment-seat in your sins. While you are here, God's terms are, "Seek and you shall find;" but when you have passed into eternity unforgiven, you will never hear those words again. Although the lost should listen for mercy with all the energy of their being, their listening will not bring mercy when the day of mercy is gone.

Oh! my brother, you have permitted the din of this world to drown God's still small voice in your heart; make silence now for Him. Fear not to listen fully, for the word is love: it brings a free pardon to you: "Hear, and your soul shall live."—*British Messenger*.