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Modern Religion.

These are wonderful days, we are living in now,
It's an age of progression, they say,
But we'd better look out, lest we find in the end
The progression has been the wrong way.

Religion must move say these radical men,
And keep up to the times of the day;
Old Rome must go to the wall, it is said,
And when there, pretty quietly lay.

We are wearied of hearing the Bible is true,
And that sinners must go down to hell,
For we don't believe that there is such a
place,
And the name has a sulphurous smell.

We won't be disturbed in our boisterous mirth
By thoughts that our souls may be lost,
Nor read in the Bible enough to find out
How much our salvation has cost.

For our preachers shall be fast and brilliant
Young men,
And their names blushed off with D. D.,
They will preach "in the end we will all come
out right,
God loves us so much," don't you see.

For the Bible is human, and full of mistakes,
Which ignorant prophets did pen;
Creation's a fable, and Job is a myth,
Yet we think "apes evolved into men."

In our youth we were taught that our churches
were built
For preaching, and singing, and prayer,
A home of God's people, the House of the Lord,
And solemn our feelings when there.

What old-fashioned notions. It now is the place
Where gather the sprightly and gay,
No end to the laughter, the fun, and the songs,
Fine speeches and worldly display.

The preachers so spry, with each other do vie
Whose speeches shall be the most funny;
There's an end to be gained, folks must be en-
tertained.

For the Lord (sic), to get hold of their money,
O isn't it grand, the old rules are crossed out,
Or at least have become a dead letter;
We can dance and play cards, and to theatres go,
And no one our freedom can fetter.

Conventions are held, and swell speeches are
made,
And delegates feast on swell dinners;
They talk, and they spout, but we cannot find
out
That any one cares for poor sinners.

These things are all fine, if they only would last,
Our pleasures, our pomp, and our pride,
But I often have fear, when we come to heaven's
gate,
We will find that our place is outside.

If such be the risk, speaking just for myself,
Why, the old Bible way is the best,
I'll follow the Master and walk in His steps,
I shall land in the home of the blest.

RUSTICUS CANADENSIS.

Richmond Hill, April 9th, 1896.

Presbyterian Church Re-

Opening.

The Presbyterian church, after being
thoroughly renovated, was re-opened on
Sabbath. The Rev. Dr. McTavish, of
the Central church, Toronto, preached at
both services to large congregations.

At the morning service he preached
from Acts xii and 31: "Then had the
churches rest throughout all Judea
and Galilee and Samaria and were edified;
and working in the fear of the Lord and
in the comfort of the Holy Ghost were
multiplied." After showing in the in-
troduction to his sermon that the
churches throughout Palestine enjoyed
outward and inward prosperity after the
early persecution had ceased, he went on
to show that the church ought to be in
order to carry on efficiently the work of
God.

1st. The church is not an aggregation
but an organization. A heap of stones,
or a flock of birds is an aggregation; they
have come together and exist without
any moral force arranging or keeping
them in order. In an organization there
must be life in order to develop, and a
power to guide and control. A plant is
an organization. It has life and develops
into a thing of beauty. The family is an
organization. It has parents to regulate
and guide, children to obey, and all work
for the common good. You may have
an aggregation by gathering together a
number of people. You cannot call that
a family. No. A family must be born.
So the Church of Christ is a living or-
ganism begotten of Him, born from
above, having His life and endowed with
His power, and is set apart for His work.
Each member is a branch abiding in Him
who is the true vine and bearing fruit to
the glory of God.

2nd. The Church is not a field but a
force. The field is the world, the Church
is the body of trained christian soldiers
who march out to do battle against the
enemies of the Lord. Too often profess-
ing christians look upon the Church
merely as existing for their own mutual
benefit and for their sole existence.
They speak not of the work they do in
the Church, in that they have little in-
terest. They have a sitting in the church;
for this they pay, but the work! oh no!
the minister and the elders attend to
that. What would you think of a gen-
eral and his officers going out to battle and
the soldiers saying, "let them do the
fighting, we will look on." Alas, too
many in all our churches do nothing but
look on. Yes they sometimes criticize
harshly the faithful few who are doing
the work. The world is the field of op-
eration, the church must not only sing
"Onward Christian Soldiers," but must
advance, led on by the Captain of their
salvation, a mighty force conquering and
to conquer.

3rd. The church is not a counter, but
an altar. In modern times, as in the
days of Christ, the house of God is being
changed into a house of merchandise.
Too many people connect themselves
with the church, not for spiritual benefit,
but for temporal gain. Men coming into
a community to commence business look
around to see what church will be most
likely to advance their worldly interests,
and with it they connect themselves.
This, in the Apostolic times, was called
Simony, from Simon the sorcerer, who
wanted to pay money to the Apostles in
order that he might receive the power of
the Holy Ghost to enable him to make
gain. This is the most sordid of all sins.
Again, the church in modern times has
been resorting to very questionable means
to raise money; grab bags, concerts, tea-
meetings and many other things have
been adopted, all of which are dishonor-
ing to God's cause. One minister had
made the doleful complaint that two-
thirds of his salary came through the tea-
pot. "Social meetings in the church,"
said the preacher, "I am in sympathy
with, there is nothing I enjoy more than
meeting my people in a social way, but I
consider that much of what is resorted to
in our churches for the purpose of filling
the Lord's treasury, should be given up.
The shop exists for buying and selling
earthly merchandise; the church is the
place of sacrifice, on its altar lay all you
have, on it consecrate your gifts to God."
The speaker here feelingly referred to
James and George Gordon, brothers from
Nova Scotia, who went out as mission-
aries to the South Sea Islands, and after
a few years of noble self-sacrificing work
were murdered by the natives. In con-
clusion the speaker counselled his hearers
to be faithful in the work of the church,
ever remembering that their labor was
not in vain in the Lord.

In the evening the text was from Hosea
ii, 14 15: "Therefore, behold, I will
allure her, and bring her into the wilder-
ness, and speak comfortably unto her,
And I will give her her revenge from
them, and the valley of Achor for a door
of hope; and she shall sing there as in
the days of her youth and as in the day
when she came up out of the land of
Egypt." The preacher said that in this
chapter the picture drawn by the prophet
of an unfaithful wife, illustrated the awful
condition into which the Kingdoms of
Israel and Judah had fallen. The people
had forsaken Jehovah and had gone after
other Gods, lavishing upon them the
gifts so kindly given by Jehovah. Un-
faithfulness began in the heart, and was
carried out into the life, and as is seen in
the picture of the unfaithful spouse her
love was transferred from her husband to
other lovers, after whom she went spend-
ing what was her husband's on them, un-
til she was left helpless and degraded.
This, said the preacher, is picture of
too many in our time whose affections
are alienated from God and are attracted
by the fascinating and deadly pleasures
of the world. Many, like this unfaithful
woman, leave behind them all the good
influences with which they have been sur-
rounded, and entering into sinful in-
dulgence go on from bad to worse pur-
suing their evil inclinations until even
the pleasures of the world have no allure-
ment for them. They become miserable
wrecks, and forsaken by those who were
their companions in sin, are left to per-
ish. But God, who is rich in mercy, will
not forsake the vilest wretch. He per-
mits the unfaithful to go so far, and then
he helps them around, brings them into
the wilderness and there in loneliness He
speaks words of love to the fainting heart.
And not only does He speak kindly, but
He administers to their wants, brings
them back again to the right path and
sets them on their way rejoicing. In
concluding, God's love as shown in the
parable of the prodigal son was
beautifully depicted and all were exhorted
to accept of the love of God as offered
in Christ Jesus.

Contributions from the
Schools.

THE MISTAKES OF SPRING.

With the advent of Spring the whole
face of nature is changed. She shakes off
her winter's lethargy and assumes a dress
of lively activity. She is awake to the
fact that when summer comes, a harvest
will be looked for. She, therefore, so
arranges her forces that no duty is ne-
glected, no mistakes are made, and there-
fore no disappointments are the result.
It would seem that in this respect,
Spring is trying to teach us a lesson.
For we commonly welcome Spring as the
season of pleasure and enjoyment. We
organize our foot-ball and lacrosse clubs,
and prepare our pleasure grounds for a
season of sport. We take long walks in
the evening and seem to loathe the house
because it is so pleasant outside. We
beat our streams for snickers or trout, or
wait for warmer weather when the boat-
ing and bathing comes. In short,
we order our lives for pleasure in
order that we may forget the confinement

which winter's cold and snow had forced
upon us, and what does all this mean?
In many cases it means that work is al-
most abandoned for a time. It means
that sport is carried to excess; and, like
many other things which are good in
themselves, it becomes an evil when it
exists in excess.

Now, we would not leave the impres-
sion that men and women, boys and girls,
should refrain from all outdoor exercises
when the sun has filled the air with balm
and health. But rather let us impress
the opposite idea. Take healthful exer-
cise. Take a lot of it. But when we
do that, let us not become intoxicated
with pleasure and so forget that we have
something else to live for. In other
words take a lesson from nature. Do as
the greatest of modern French education-
alists, Rousseau, tells us, "Learn what
nature has to teach."

And what is that? In the first place
it teaches us activity. For in what sea-
son of the year does nature show greater
activity than this? Everything in it is
busy. Trees and grasses, flowers and
herby, birds and insects, are all bursting
forth to efforts of a renewed activity.
Everything animate, whether inspired
with plant or animal life, is trying to tell
us that now is the time to be zealous in
our respective spheres, and yet on all
hands we are making mistakes. We who
are men and women think the warm
weather suggests that we need rest. We
think it is beckoning us to shady groves
and cooling streams. We think it is
telling us to flee from the heat and tur-
moil of business life, and await a colder
day. We who are boys and girls (and
this includes school boys and school girls)
think that surely more favorable oppor-
tunities for study and work will come.
We think that unless we enjoy the fine
weather while it is here we will never be
able to eke out our existence, or will live
to have regrets that we did not lounge
away the shining hours of Spring.

But what does this fine and hot
weather tell us? Just this. That this
is a fine time for work and that we are in
the heat of life's battle. That unless we
improve our resources now, there will be
very little fruit when the harvest time
of life comes. For suppose that a tree
should refuse to develop its trunk and
branches during the fine days of Spring,
what would it have to yield when reaping
time came? Nothing but dry leaves and
withered branches. And so with us.
Unless we take advantage of all these op-
portunities of ours, we too shall, when
summer comes, find ourselves sadly de-
ficient. It will be ours to mourn that
when the days were warm and fine we
did not increase our store of knowledge
as we should. Yes, if we think that be-
cause this is fine weather it is not fine for
working, let nature correct our mistake.

Then we sometimes think that because
winter is just past, we are a long way
from the coming autumn, and thus the
results of our work will not be expected
for a long time. But here, too, we make
a mistake. Look to Nature and she will
correct it. For Nature is always active,
and certainly loses no time in bringing
its fruits to maturity. But no matter
how active Nature is, she never is ready
for harvest in the Spring, nor yet in the
summer. Autumn is always fully here
before Nature can fully yield her fruits.
And here's the application of this.
Though we are as active as Nature, we
will not be ready for the harvest a day
too soon, and though we are maturing
our knowledge with all possible speed,
that knowledge will not be too ripe when
examination day comes.

Wallace Accepts

THE CHALLENGE OF CITIZEN JOHN BROWN
TO A DISCUSSION.

Ottawa, April 13.—Hon. N. Clarke
Wallace has sent the following letter to
John Brown, Patron candidate in West
York:

Ottawa, April 11, 1896.

Dear Sir,—I am in receipt of your
favor of the 3rd inst., which I notice was
posted at Parkdale four days after it was
written, and did not reach me at Ottawa
until the 8th inst. In reply I beg to say
that at the present time, as you are
aware, I am very much engaged here at-
tending to my parliamentary duties, and
that, as the House will probably sit until
the 24th inst., I shall not be able to ac-
cept your invitation for the 18th inst.
However, after the session closes, I shall
visit my constituency and shall be pleas-
ed, indeed, to meet you and discuss fully
the questions to which you refer in your
letter, and, of course, afford the fullest
opportunity for that discussion to your
friends as well as to yourself. In the
meantime, I judge it is unnecessary for
me to reply to your opinion of my course
with regard to the remedial bill. I am,
yours truly,

(Sgd.) CLARKE WALLACE.

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