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Contributors and Correspondents

For the Presbyterian.

OUR OWN CHURCH.

No. VII.

Having briefly referred in my last to the office of the eldership, I will now refer to the office of

DEACON,

which is also an apostolic institution, and which, (though it would seem, if not altogether ignored, to have fallen into abeyance), ought to have a place in every Presbyterian congregation. This order of office-bearers is clearly established in the first six verses of the sixth chapter of Acts; and their business was to look after the "poor" and "serve tables." It may be that some congregations have deacons, but I think they are few. It is true that there are in every congregation "managers" or "trustees" who look after the financial affairs of the congregation, but who have no ecclesiastical position or recognition, and who are chosen annually, but who are not required to possess the peculiar qualifications necessary for deacons. It is sometimes said that deacons are not required, but this is no reason why the order should be ignored generally. Our system should be as near perfection as possible, and if they were useful and necessary in the Apostolic Church, surely we need their services as much.

Our Episcopal friends would like to get poor here for their order of "deacons," which is, as they claim, an order of ministers who are invested with power to preach and baptize, and for proof of this the case of Philip the Evangelist is quoted. Philip did preach and baptize, but it was not as a deacon but as an Evangelist, as he is called in Acts xxi. 8—an order which would be of great importance in the Episcopal Church. It is not likely when Philip went to Samaria that he waited to don a surplice or repeat what is known as the "Apostles' Creed," and no one can question the result of his labours. In these days of advanced thought and ritualistic tendencies, the closer all churches adhere to apostolic pattern the better, and I believe the more successful in carrying out the commission of the Master.

CHURCH DEBT.

This is a subject of much importance at present, and is even more felt in the United States than here. Those congregations who in prosperous times incurred debt, now find it a heavy matter to carry. Many churches have difficulty in raising the necessary funds to "run the church," to say nothing of paying off debt. These difficulties are not confined to Presbyterian or Protestant Churches. I saw it stated some time ago that the Roman Catholic Cathedral which is being erected on Fifth Avenue, New York, is mortgaged to the extent of \$800,000. Only think of a congregation having to meet the interest on this sum and pay other expenses as well. The eagerness of some people to have handsome and costly edifices at any price is astonishing. These folks say they can borrow money at six or seven per cent., and surely they ought to build or repair simply because their neighbors are doing so. Well, the difficulty is not in borrowing the money and building, but the whole difficulty is in paying the money. The question should be first settled, How is the money to be paid? but this question is seldom faced until the congregation finds itself seriously cramped by a sinking debt, which has a most chilling effect on the congregation and which causes many to leave. Then complaints of the minister are sure to follow; either that he is not visiting or not preaching as well as he used to do, or some other trifling reason given, but the whole secret is that the everlasting debt is the true cause. But whilst I say these things to caution; I do not wish to discourage needed improvements; and as the life and progress of a denomination is judged by the appearance which it presents, I would like to see our church architects keep pace with the spirit and progress of the age; all of which is consistent with the principles which I have enunciated.

The spirit already exhibited by our Church is worthy of all praise, and our earnest wish is that that spirit will not be relaxed in the slightest degree, until every congregation will not only have a handsome church to worship in, free of debt, but that every minister will have a handsome manse to live in free of debt, and free of rent. Every reasonable addition to a minister's income will be a corresponding advantage to the congregation, and not in a money point of view certainly in an intellectual point of view. And now a word for the

ELDER,

who writes in your paper of 18th ult. As

our friend accepts the general tenor of the article referred to I will not go into a controversy with him on the construction of "sentences" and words which I am free to admit might be better put; and as to whether your paper is fit for Sabbath reading, I suppose he and I must leave this matter to the good taste and judgment of our Presbyterian people, many of whom, I am pleased to learn, are appreciating your efforts to supply a Church paper in some degree worthy of the denomination; and whilst it may not contain reading matter of such a type as was produced by such men as Bunyan, or Boston, Baxter, or M'Cheyne, still it can be introduced to Christian families not only with safety but with profit and advantage. PRESBYTERIAN.

Toronto, 4th Aug., 1877.

SUSTENTATION OR SUPPLEMENT.

No. II.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—Another argument in favour of a constitution as against a supplemental scheme is—that the Church, by the former, recognizes her ministers as on an equal footing. The parity of the ministry is one of the leading doctrines of the Presbyterian Church. The sustentation is based on the principle of equal dividend to all. For the supplement that may be given by congregations afterwards, by which distinction is made, the Church is not responsible. The supplemental plan does not recognize parity in reference to the whole—only in reference to some, and these the weaker brethren. By implication the doctrine is taught of an "inferior order of clergy."

The sustentation plan again exhibits congregational confederation, which is Presbyterianism—the supplemental, congregational independence which is Congregationalism. By the sustentation scheme we teach that congregations are bound up in each other and are to help one another. As congregations we stand in this relationship in other matters. In the departments of doctrine, discipline, government, we are linked together so that the teaching of one is that of all. The supplemental plan does not recognize this relationship. It says to congregations, "Your first and great duty is at home to your own pastor, then if you have anything to spare afterwards we will thank you for it to help others."

We know that this congregational independence in the matter of ministerial support is now claimed by congregations themselves. Apparently there is no obligation felt, in many instances, by one congregation to help another. If contributions are given to aid weak congregations it is not often as a matter of alms rather than as a matter of right? The principle of supplement does not correct but rather confirms the congregational independence. It confirms it both on the part of the contributor and on the part of the recipient from the fund. The one gives because it is able and independent as a congregation. The other receives because it is weak and helpless as a congregation. Now to adjust matters, to have no opportunity for self-laudation on the one side or self-humiliation on the other, every minister should be sustained, not because he is the minister of a strong or weak congregation, but because he is a minister of the Church.

What have we done as a Church to disabuse the minds of congregations on this subject? Should they be encouraged in the belief that they are doing all that is incumbent on them in reference to ministerial support when they contribute at a certain rate per member, while others in like circumstances are under the necessity of contributing twice as much to enjoy a preached Gospel at all. Large congregations can give even large salaries at a very small cost to themselves individually; but why should the mere accident of numerical strength, for it oftentimes is a mere accident, release from stipendiary obligation? Now a Sustentation scheme teaches the obligation of every member in a large congregation doing as much as the member of a weak congregation. A Supplemental scheme never has provided for this yet.

In my next letter I will try to show that congregations are likely to contribute more largely to a sustentation scheme than they now do for stipend and supplement combined. I am, etc., W. BENNETT.

Springville, Aug. 8th, 1877.

The Italian Cabinet has been summoned to Rome to consider the Eastern question.

Rev. W. McCONNELL of Innisfil has been unanimously and enthusiastically called to undertake the charge of the congregation at Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia.

MUSKOKA AND ITS CLAIMS.

Only a very short time ago, the District of Muskoka was considered almost inaccessible, and if reached at all, of very little value for any useful purpose. Many thought that its fairy lakes and rocky islets would be left in their solitude, and be known only to the Indian hunter, the muffled trapper, or the stalwart sportsman. Instead of this it has during the last few years become the home of hundreds of families. Little villages are springing up here and there, giving more or less promise of future importance. The openings in the forest are numerous, and although the region is somewhat rough and rocky, the perseverance of faithful toilers is often rewarded by very rich returns. And here where very lately the Indian only trod, and the marks of Christian civilization were unknown, churches are being planted everywhere and faithful missionaries are proclaiming the good news to their fellow-men. Impressed with the importance of this district as a field of Missionary labor, the Barrie Presbytery, held its last meeting in Bracebridge. The members were cordially received by our devoted Missionary Mr. Findlay, and the good people of this new town most fully obeyed the injunction: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." The Presbytery held four long seditants at which much important business was transacted which I will not detail in this paper. But we had a tea-meeting on Wednesday evening of the good old stamp. The ladies, young men and maidens, were in their glory on that occasion, and for the time, all the difficulties of Muskoka life were forgotten. On the platform was a choir of twenty singers who discoursed sweet music in excellent style, and speeches full of poetry, humor, and stirring earnest utterance were given by several members of Presbytery. Towards midnight the company, not a few of whom had come from a distance, turned homeward, highly pleased and we trust more earnest in carrying on the good work.

Looking at Muskoka as a field for mission labor there are two things which earnestly demand attention. The new stations and young congregations are the children of the Church, full of hope for the future. They need to be kindly cared for, watchfully tended, and suitably nourished. This is the work of the Church. And this work is best performed by cherishing a deep interest in our Home Mission scheme, and by liberal contributions keeping the Lord's treasury ever full, that Christian ordinances may be more fully enjoyed in these outlying districts.

But another thing important to the prosperity of the work is the erection of suitable Church edifices. We are glad to know that efforts are being made in several places in this direction. But however willing the people may be, they are not able to do what is really needed to be done. The new church at Bracebridge is occupied but not completed. At Allensville and Port Carling a beginning has been made, and at Gravenhurst the frame of what promises to be a very comfortable place of worship, is up and enclosed. But there is help needed. What has been done has been accomplished with great difficulty. And it is to be feared that unless substantial aid is rendered, it will prove a serious loss and hindrance to the work. Are we justified in looking quietly on while our brethren are thus encompassed with difficulties? Are there not men in our towns and cities who possess ample means, and who without inconvenience could fill the hearts of God's people with rejoicing by aiding them in their Church work? Are there not men in Toronto and other places who could send one or two or even four hundred dollars, to aid in the erection of churches? We do feel that from the thousands spent in our towns and from the thousands not spent there might be spared many a goodly sum, which would cause the wilderness and solitary place to be glad and the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose. Our missionary in Muskoka is doing a great work amid great difficulties, and on a salary which scarcely places him above respectable poverty. But if Christian men who are stewards of large means, would remember the people as they might and ought to do in their efforts to secure suitable places of worship, they would give to our missionaries fresh courage and greater strength, and they would secure a rich reward in their own hearts. May the spirit of Christian benevolence and large-hearted liberality be poured out abundantly on the people everywhere, that the message of Heaven's love may be heard in every corner of our land. R.

A COMPANY has been formed for the manufacture of paper from tulo grass.

LETTER FROM MR. CHINQUY.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

The events which took place at Belfast, Prince Edward Island, on the 1st of March, 1847, have such an analogy with those of the 12th of July last, in Montreal, that no doubt your readers will like to know them and draw their own conclusions. An election for members of Parliament being ordered, and a place very near where I write these lines, selected for the poll, the Irish Roman Catholics determined to elect their men with their ordinary arguments, "the stick and the stone;" and several loads of flint stones were secretly carried by them thirty miles. The Rev. Mr. McLennan, Presbyterian minister, of Belfast, had, a few days before the election, received a visit from the Roman Catholic Priest, Brady, who had told him, "I am sent by the whole Catholic people of Belfast to tell you that we want to have a peaceful election. Please, then, request your people to come to the poll without any weapons which might be a cause of provocation, and I pledge my honor that not a single Catholic will come with any weapon either." This message of peace, delivered to the Protestants by their pastor, had been received with the utmost satisfaction by them, and not a single one had had the least idea of arming themselves to come to the poll.

The first Protestant who voted was called Malcolm McCrae; but his name was not yet registered, when, at a signal given by an Irish Roman Catholic, a real hail of flint stones fell on the Protestants, and wounded many; and hundreds of shillelahs, till then concealed in the sleeves, were raised against poor McCrae, who fled for his life. But he had not run ten rods when he fell dead—his head broken, and his brains scattered on the snow, under the blows of a dozen sticks.

The Protestants, seeing that they had been cruelly entrapped by the Priest, and brought to a slaughter-field by their too confident pastor, having nothing to defend themselves, ran towards a grove of young maple trees, which, providentially, was not more than two or three hundred rods distant. The Irish Catholics followed them with their stones a few rods, and wounded several more, but they soon returned to the poll, filling the air with their cries of joy at so quick and complete a victory.

The Protestants, in running towards the forest, had only one mind—it was to cut a strong stick and come back with it to meet their perfidious foe—and in a few minutes each of them was grasping the formidable weapon in his hands.

Among the Protestants there was a brave old soldier, who, with powerful voice, rallied them, and said: "The Roman Catholics are six against one of us; if we want to gain the day we must present a united front to the cowards who have brought us, through their priest, into this trap. United, we stand; divided, we fall." A moment after, the little Protestant army was forming a kind of square battalion, presenting a front of eight tall and fearless sons of the old mountaineers of Scotland. In the middle of the front line, a real giant in body, strength, and heart took his place. The smallest of these eight men in front was not less than six feet in height. When once put in order of battle, that handful of heroes went out of the wood, with a firm and quick step towards the poll. But I must not forget to say that the Irish Catholics, in order to make their victory more easy and complete, had invited the male Catholic population of the other counties, thus bringing their number up to six hundred men, when the Protestants were hardly more than one hundred in all. When the Catholics saw the Protestants coming out from the wood in good order of battle, they quickly formed themselves in a battalion of fourteen men front by forty-five deep. The two little armies were soon near each other, when a man with a white flag left the ranks of the Protestants and went to the Catholics to say: "We do not want to fight; our only object is to enjoy our right of voting; do not deprive us of that right, and there will be no trouble between us." A blow from an Irishman's shillelah, which brought that messenger of peace down with a ghastly wound in the face, was the first answer. The second answer was the unanimous cry: "Not one of you shall vote here to-day!" Then the commanding soldier of the Protestants cried out: "Hold well your sticks in your two hands—keep near each other—strike at the heads of the Papists—march!" It seems incredible, but it is true; that terrible hand-to-hand battle of one against six lasted more than one hour, though it took only twenty minutes for the Protestants to pierce through and through the whole column of Roman Catholics, and scatter it. The victory of Belfast, like that on the banks of the Boyne, was gained by the soldiers of truth and liberty. A most respectable lady, who, from her windows,

was an eye-witness of that bloody encounter, said to me yesterday, "The Irish Roman Catholics were falling before the long and heavy sticks of the giant Scotchmen like sheaves before the mower." Not a single Protestant was killed, except McCrae, though almost every one of them was wounded, but thirty Irish Romanists fell dead, or died afterwards from their wounds. More than one hundred were put hors de combat, and there were very few who did not carry for life the marks of the terrible maple sticks of the Scotch Protestants. The battle raged till all the Roman Catholics, bleeding and wounded, had picked up their dead and dying into their sleighs, and disappeared at the full speed of their horses. From that day the Irish Catholics of Belfast have been quiet and gentle as lambs, and the Protestants bless God that they are prosperous, happy and free. Truly yours, C. CHINQUY.

Belfast, P. E. I., 28th July, 1877.

Presbytery of Barrie.

This Presbytery met at Bracebridge on the evening of Tuesday 7th inst. at 7 o'clock. The Moderator, Mr. J. Ferguson, preached from Matt. xviii. 18-20, to the members present and a considerable number of the public. It was desirable that, as special reasons had been urged for holding the meeting at Bracebridge, there should be a full attendance of members, and arrangements were made by Mr. Findlay, the missionary, for their accommodation, but there were present only nine out of twenty-one ministers and three elders. The absence of Messrs Gray and W. McConnell was accounted for by indisposition. After the court was constituted Mr. Ferguson resigned the chair, and Mr. Lister was elected Moderator for the next twelve months. A vote of thanks was tendered to Mr. Ferguson for his conduct in the chair and for presiding and preaching at the opening services. A standing committee on the state of religion was appointed consisting of Messrs Gray (Convener), D. McDonald and R. Rodgers. The following resolution, prepared by Mr. Fraser, thanking his honour Judge Gowan for a valuable gift already notified in the BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN was adopted. "The Presbytery being informed by Mr. Gray, Orillia, that his honour Judge Gowan had placed at the disposal of the Church in trust, as a Manse, for the residence of the minister for the time being in charge of Guthrie Church, Oro, the house at Shanty Bay, built and formerly occupied by the Rev. S. B. Ardagh, and the grounds and appurtenances belonging to the same, and that the deeds of trust securing the said property for the purpose named were now in Mr. Gray's hands—the Presbytery in view of the intrinsic value of the gift itself and the benefit accruing therefrom to one of the congregations of the Church, as well as in consideration of his honour the Judge being a member of another section of the Church, desire to place on record their high appreciation of the Christian generosity—overlooking denominational boundaries—which led to the devising of this very liberal disposal of a valuable property, and to tender to His Honour the Judge their best thanks, and the expression of their earnest wishes and prayers that he may long live in health and prosperity, to enjoy much of the comfort of our holy religion, and to bring the influence of his position and character to bear upon the interests of the Church of God at large." The Treasurer, Mr. D. McDonald, presented the annual report and resigned his office. The resignation was accepted with reluctance; thanks were tendered Mr. McDonald for diligence and efficiency, and Mr. Stuart Adhesion was appointed Treasurer in his stead. The Clerk was directed to correspond again with congregations in arrears to the Presbytery fund. A discussion arose on the inadequate collections made for the payment of expenses of Commissioners to the General Assembly, resulting in a motion to the following effect, being left till next general meeting for consideration, viz., That the Commissioners be refunded to the sum of \$— each, and that the amount necessary to make these payments be included in the estimates of the Presbytery's expenditure for the following year. A considerable portion of the third seditant was engaged in attention to the Home Mission work of the Presbytery. An application of Mr. Charles B. Hemmings of Stephenson, Muskoka, to be employed as Catechist, was cordially entertained. It was agreed to retain the services of Mr. J. P. Grant, as missionary in Port Carling etc. for the winter. The Presbytery resolved to recommend a special collection on Thanksgiving Day, or on any other day more suitable, by all the congregations of the bounds, in the interest of the mission at Huntsville, Muskoka. Arrangements were made to administer the Lord's Supper at certain places. At the fourth seditant on Thursday forenoon, Mr. Alexander Russel, after trials and examinations, was licensed to preach the gospel. Mr. Ferguson having resigned the charge of South Osprey and Honeywood, the resignation was laid over for consideration at a special meeting of Presbytery to be held at Slayner on Wednesday 29th Aug. at 2 p.m. and the Clerk was directed to notify the Session and Congregation to appear at said meeting in their interest.—ROBERT MOORE, Pres. Clerk.

The Emperor of Germany gave a beautiful, but deserved compliment to Von Moltke in a recent speech. Referring to the success of their arms, he turned to the Count and said, "We all only carried out what you, the thinker of the battle, chalked out for us."