

all the inconveniences of the itinerant system less the systematic advantages.

We have been frequently in the habit of paralleling the relation of pastor and church with that of marriage, the pastor being the husband. In view of the facts to be presented, we submit that if that figure of speech is at all appropriate, the system of divorce is assuming proportions rivalling the action of divorcing laws in some of the neighboring States where really one of the problems of social life is to discover whether one is married or not. We draw our information from the Year Books, and make our statement with some care, though from imperfect acquaintance with many of the fields we have come to the conclusion that in the present form of our tabulated statistics we can only approximate.

The first number of the *Year Book* bears date 1873. Of fifty-two names of ministers settled in Ontario and Quebec only seven appear as remaining in 1880 in their old charges. All the rest have either dropped out or changed their pastoral relation in the seven years. Of fifty-five names taken from the statistics of 1878 and 1880, twenty-seven remain in the last year as they were reported in 1878, twenty-eight have changed, of which twenty-eight have dropped out altogether, and from present appearances the ratio is not decreasing. Have these changes been for the most part beneficial? Let us see. Virtually, then, our pastoral relations completely change in every six years. Of the pastoral ties thus severed, it is safe to say that in every case one of the following contingencies prevailed on the part of the people: Either the separation was viewed as a happy release, or with indifference, or as a painful and involuntary severance. In the first two instances there was something wrong which told of weakness and decay; in the other case, unless the cause were strong, discouragement and even resentment would seriously interfere with the church's progress and stability. In comparatively few cases would the change be viewed on all sides as for the glory of God and the upbuilding of His cause.

That changes are called for and effected with benefit, both to a faithful pastor and a working people, we know; but we have not yet brought ourselves to believe that the frequency of our changes has been either beneficial to our work or inseparable from our polity. They are either an element of weakness among us, or the effect of a cause whose presence denotes a disintegrating power detrimental to our advancement as a part of Christ's Church militant. Can any one determine which? We are not pessimists, having faith in God; nor have we implicit faith in a sentiment sometimes given in our columns of correspondence that we need never expect to be a large denomination. We naturally ask, if we hold New Testament polity, why not? The real question is, have we the moral courage to face our weaknesses, confess and mend them? To understand our weak points is to be strong as we cover them. An apparently impregnable position at Spitzkop bravely won, was irre-

trievably lost by a confidence that kept not constant watch. Secure in our work as Churches of Christ we call attention to what is to us a manifestation of something wrong, before we return to it again we should be glad if some thoughtful friend, lay or clerical, would indicate in what direction the evil (for in its present proportions evil we deem it to be), which we have pointed out may be met and minimized. We have contented ourselves just now with noting the fact, will some give us the why and the wherefore? We pause for a reply.

THE WILKES JUBILEE TESTIMONIAL.

The subscribers were invited by special circular to meet in the Lecture-room of Emmanuel Church, on Tuesday, Feb. 15th, to receive the report of the Committee, and to decide on the form in which the Testimonial should be presented to Dr. Wilkes.

The meeting was duly held at the time and place appointed, with Mr. Henry Lyman in the chair.

1. The report of the General Committee was read by REV. DR. CORNISH, Hon. Secretary, and the audited statement of the Treasurer was presented by MR. GEORGE HAGUE, Hon. Treasurer, whereupon, it was:

2. Moved by REV. JAMES ROY, M. A., seconded by MR. N. B. CORSE, and resolved unanimously:

That the Report, which has now been read, be received and adopted; and that, together with the Treasurer's statement, and Subscription lists, be printed for the information of subscribers to the Fund.

3. It was moved by MR. JAMES BAYLISS, seconded by MR. GEORGE HAGUE, and resolved:

That this meeting, whilst expressing its gratification at so successful a termination of this undertaking, desires to tender its cordial thanks to those friends in the Mother Country, who have by their liberal gifts contributed so largely to this success; and at the same time to record its grateful appreciation of the essential services rendered to the Fund by James Spicer, Esq., and the Rev. W. S. H. Fielden, the Treasurer and Secretary of the Colonial Missionary Society, London.

4. It was moved by MR. C. R. BLACK, seconded by REV. DR. STEVENSON, and resolved:

That the best thanks of the subscribers are due, and are hereby tendered to the Rev. Dr. Cornish for his laborious services in connection with the Testimonial Fund, and through which, to a large extent, its success has been assured.

5. The Committee further reported that arrangements had been made for holding a public meeting of the subscribers, and all others interested in the matter, in Emmanuel Church, on the evening of Thursday, Feb. 24th, for the presentation of the Testimonial to Dr. Wilkes, and that they had requested Dr. Cornish to make the presentation, which action was sustained, whereupon the meeting adjourned.

There was a good attendance at Emmanuel Church the evening of the 24th, to witness the presentation of the Public Testimonial to the Rev. Dr. Wilkes. Mr. Henry Lyman occupied the chair, and on the platform were Revs. Dr. Wilkes, Dr. Stevenson, Dr. Cornish, J. S. Black, H. Wells, Theo. Lafleur, Robert Wilson, James Roy, Prof. Shaw, J. L. Forster.

The Rev. Dr. Stevenson opened the meeting with prayer, after which the Rev. Dr. Cornish said he had received letters of apology for inability to attend from the Lord Bishop of Montreal, Rev. Principal MacVicar, Dr. De Sola, Rev. A. B. Mackay and Rev. Dr. Usher, they being absent on special duty elsewhere; and from Rev. Dr. Jenkins, Rev. Principal Douglas, Prof. Fenwick, and

Mr. James Court, for being absent through illness.

The Treasurer of the fund, Mr. George Hague, reported that the amount received altogether on account of the Testimonial has been \$8,196 25, of which \$2,452 70 had been received from Great Britain; \$4,884 57 from Montreal; \$449 50 from Ontario; and \$419 55 from miscellaneous sources. The expenses of collecting, etc., has been \$111 53, leaving a balance of \$8,084 72, which was accordingly ready for presentation to the Rev. Dr. Wilkes.

The presentation was made by the Rev. Dr. Cornish, who spoke as follows:

"MY DEAR DR. WILKES. It affords me sincere satisfaction to be the medium, on so notable an occasion as this, of tendering to you, on the behalf of your friends and fellow citizens, their congratulations and tokens of respect and esteem. On many grounds is the occasion notable, but chiefly because it is the lot of but few public men, especially in a new country where chance and change are so frequent, to pursue their career for well nigh half a century in the same place, and ministering to the same people. To still fewer is the happiness granted of doing this with growing success and approbation as the years roll on. Such, however, has been your happy lot, as a public man and a minister of the Gospel in this community, a fact which the proceedings of this evening testify more clearly than any words of mine could do. To the loyal minister of the Gospel of Christ, the approval of the Master whom he serves is the highest meed of honor and reward that he looks forward to. Next to that, comes the approbation of his own conscience, springing from a well assured conviction that, however poor and imperfect may have been his service, his dominant motive has been to do it faithfully, and "by manifestation of the truth commending himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God." Yet, in ministers even there is much of human nature; and it is, therefore, no matter for wonder that they should, like other men, be sensitive to the opinions which others may form of their character and of their work. There is, moreover, in society a keen discernment of moral worth and of unselfish service, and oftentimes a readiness to appreciate and recognize these good qualities in a public man; and in your case, I am happy to think, has this found an exemplification. For nearly 50 years, your face has been among the most familiar and best known in this community, and you have been willing during all that time to give your ready service to your fellow-citizens, not in the pulpit only, but in all other public ways in which a minister of the Gospel can, compatibly with his high calling, promote the best interests of his country. Nor has this service, so cheerfully rendered on your part, been overlooked or unappreciated by those on whose behalf it has been done. And now in your declining years, and when your work is near its close, those who have long known your character and the value of that work have felt it to be their duty, as well as their privilege, to give public expression to the regard they have for you, and that too, in a way which, they trust, will do something to add to the brightness and comfort of your remaining days. It is, I am sure, the sincere desire of each and all that these days may yet be many, and that as the shadows of life's even-tide gather around you, they may be made bright by the felt presence of Him whom you have loved and served so long, and cheered by the growing respect and esteem of all among whom you live. As a token of the strength of this respect for you, in the past and to-day, I have the honor to request you to accept this Testimonial, which has been freely

given by your numerous friends in the Mother Country and in this city, and in divers parts of this Dominion and the United States; given, too, with oft-expressed wishes that all that is good and blessed may ever surround your path.

THE REPLY

In reply, the Rev. Dr. WILKES spoke as follows:

DR. CORNISH. I thank you, the Committee and the many friends you represent for this magnificent Testimonial. Before adverting to the matter generally, let me offer to you individually, to the Acting Treasurer and to some others, all of whom have expended an immense amount of labour in getting this Testimonial, the expression of my heartfelt gratitude for such generous service.

My first impression is the faithfulness and loving kindness of God. No one need be afraid of laying himself out in service rendered in His name, on behalf of fellowmen, without any reference to pecuniary reward. Let him trust in the Lord and do good, and verily he shall be fed. The money value of this gift is large, and by it means unacceptable to myself and family, especially at a time when circumstances, over which we have had no control, have caused considerable diminution of a moderate income, and when also the bread-winner has passed beyond the three-score years and ten; and, yet, let me say that the reports which have reached me of the readiness, the cheerfulness and the liberality of the response made to the application of the Committee and its officers, raise this gift far above any money value, and exhibit it as such a testimony of regard as constitutes it a precious reward for such services as I have been enabled to tender in the cause of truth and righteousness during 55 years.

This is a "Jubilee Testimonial." At the jubilee service in Zion Church in October, 1878, there were present a considerable number of old friends of various churches, who had been the companions in former days in such work as we were called to do together. I have not a list of the subscribers in my possession, and do not yet know most of the names that are on the list, but I happen to know that there are some among them some who were boys in my Sunday-school class in Montreal 55 years ago. At that early period of my manhood we had a Missionary Society, of which I was Secretary, composed of Presbyterian, Baptist and Congregational dwellers in the city, the design of which was to procure and then to aid in the support of well-qualified ministers of Christ in the destitute parts of Upper and Lower Canada. In the sermon delivered on the occasion of the jubilee service just alluded to, mention is made of my reasons for relinquishing commercial engagements here and proceeding to Glasgow, Scotland, for the purpose of being prepared in the University and Theological school there for the work of the Christian ministry. While thus engaged the interests of Canada were not forgotten; and ministers were sent out to labor here for their Master. The summer of 1832 was spent in Canada; the voyage out being on board the brig "Favourite," Captain James Allan, the work of the summer had reference to educational and missionary plans and movements. Nor were the interests of Canada lost sight of during the three following years of my ministry in Edinburgh, Scotland. But in the year 1836 I became one of the regular ministers of the city, having a small yet intelligent congregation in St. Maurice street. Without at this time alluding to the various forms of denominational action and work which fell into my hands, it is but natural and proper that I should speak of more general work done by my fellows and myself in the interests of the community. We were a small but united band of