

complete. In the meantime, as the topmost stone had been placed with rejoicing on every side of "Grace, grace unto it," the Session concluded it was time to make the necessary arrangements for opening services, and, as already noted, the time fixed was the first Sabbath of March (6th inst.). Then, amid the many principals, professors, doctors and ministers, a selection must be made for the opening services. This did not occupy much time, however. The first name suggested was the one chosen, and the choice proved equal to every anticipation. Rev. J. K. Smith, of Galt, Moderator of our General Assembly, one of the most successful and popular ministers of our Church, was chosen. On Saturday afternoon and evening it commenced to storm, and on Sabbath morning the roads and streets were filled with the beautiful snow. At an early hour, however, the people came tramping through the deep snow, and into the church, until additional seats and chairs were brought into requisition, to accommodate the vast audience. A very pleasing part of the opening service was the attendance of Rev. William Hall, M.A., minister of Grace Methodist Church, and almost the entire congregation, their service having been cancelled in the morning for this purpose. This speaks well for the harmony and good feeling existing for many long years between the two congregations, proving their Christianity to be not merely one in name, but a living reality. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Rev. J. K. Smith, after the singing of the grand old 100th Psalm, containing so much food for the soul, and used at the opening of thousands of churches in this and other lands, chose for his text in the morning, Luke xxii. 27, last clause: "But I am among you as he that serveth." In the evening his text was Romans x. 4: "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

We need hardly say to your readers who know our venerable Moderator, that both sermons were very impressive, full of the very marrow of the Gospel, earnestly listened to, and very highly appreciated. May their fruit be seen not many days hence. Next Sabbath being our communion season, in the afternoon, a mass meeting of the two Sabbath schools, Methodist and Presbyterian, was held, at which Mr. George Gillies, Session clerk, and superintendent of St. Andrew's Church Sabbath School, presided. Interesting addresses were given by Mr. Peter Reid, superintendent of Grace Methodist Sabbath School, Rev. William Hall, M.A., pastor of Grace Methodist Church, Rev. H. Gracey, our own beloved pastor, and Rev. J. K. Smith, Moderator, interspersed with admirably selected Gospel hymns, led by Mr. McNaughton, one of our elders, and Miss Mitchell, organist. The three services were eminently and highly successful in every sense of the word; and Sabbath, 6th of March, will long be remembered as a red-letter day in Gananoque, and particularly by those who took part in the services at the opening of St. Andrew's Church. The collections, morning and evening, amounted to \$215.06. On Monday evening one of the most successful tea meetings ever attended was held. Over 600 were waited upon, and served with refreshments in the lecture room, which would have been a credit to a first-class hotel or restaurant. As each table was served, its occupants filed into the church, where knowing glances were exchanged of undoubted satisfaction, pleasure and admiration, as they found themselves seated so comfortably in the beautifully enlarged church—in the appropriate words of the Moderator, Rev. J. K. Smith, "a gem of neatness and good taste, a credit to either of our large cities, Toronto or Montreal." Rev. H. Gracey, pastor of the church, called Mr. George Gillies to the chair, and a most interesting programme was presented, consisting of admirable addresses by Rev. Mr. Pyke, Rev. William Hall, his Honor Judge Macdonald, Rev. E. B. Millard, of Lansdowne, Rev. H. Gracey, pastor, and Rev. Dr. Grant, of Queen's College, Kingston. Judge Macdonald carried the audience back to the year 1855, and it was most amusing when he called upon those present who witnessed the first opening in 1855, to manifest the same by standing up. Of course the unmarried ladies and grave bachelors were not going to give themselves away by even the persuasive eloquence of the learned judge. About forty stood up, however, which is a goodly number, and speaks volumes for the healthy atmosphere of the place.

On Tuesday evening a grand social gathering of

the children was held, and over 400 were served with abundance of the very best of refreshments in the lecture room, and then all repaired to the church, where Mr. George Gillies, superintendent of the Sabbath schools, presided. A most interesting programme was presented, consisting of recitations, dialogues, duets, solos, Sabbath school hymns, by the entire gathering, etc., enjoyed alike by old and young.

It was announced on Sabbath that, on Thursday evening, a committee appointed by the Session to allocate seats would be glad to meet the applicants for sittings. A very large number were present, and the need for enlargement affording additional seating accommodation could not be more effectively evinced than it was in the eager anxiety and rush for seats on the part of those present. Almost every seat was allocated, and not a few of the prominent leading members of the Church, who generously and unselfishly allowed others to supplant them, will find it very difficult to secure accommodation equal to what they enjoyed before the enlargement.

Our position at present is about the same amount of floating debt uncovered that we had before these improvements were thought of or made. Thanks to the Giver of all good, who does for us exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think, we have our beautiful large commodious church upholstered throughout, frescoed walls and ceilings, its aisles laid with cocoa matting, and, thanks to one of our generous public-spirited members, Mr. Walton, of the Gananoque Carriage Company, lighted with electric light, and last though not least, we have an earnest, faithful pastor, greatly beloved by all the people, and admired for his amiable qualities of head and heart, outside as well as inside the congregation. May it be his privilege to say of his flock: "Happy, yea thrice happy, is that people whose God is the Lord;" and may the glory of the Lord fill this house as it did the temple of old, and the light of the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ shine into every heart assembled within its walls. May it be written of it in ages to come: "This one and that one was born in her;" and may the power of the Highest establish it. To every Church in our Dominion, struggling it may be under a small burden of debt, if your Church home is only upon the average three-fourths filled, we say heartily, "Go thou, and do likewise." Yours sincerely, ELDER.

Gananoque, March 11, 1887.

REPLY TO "PRESBYTER."

MR. EDITOR,—Will you kindly give me space for brief reply to certain strictures which "Presbyter" has recently made on my articles on the Polity of the Presbyterian Church; I could wish that "Presbyter" was more distinct in the objections which he makes, as well as more lucid in defining the opinion or theory which he himself holds regarding the eldership. He states "that the attempt to extract two classes of officers, so distinct from one another, out of the word *presbyter* has led only to confusion in other hands than his," i.e., mine. The *ugh* I have carefully examined the ingenious reasoning of Principal Campbell and others respecting the proper interpretation of the crucial passage, 1 Timothy v. 17, I am compelled to adhere to the view that under the common designation of *presbyter* there are here included elders or presbyters who ruled, and presbyters who laboured in "the Word and doctrine," or "in speaking and teaching." After a critical examination of the passage before us, Alford adds: "Therefore the preaching of the Word was not the office of all the *presbuteroi*." The remarks of Conybeare and Howson are these: "We find from this passage that there were still some *presbuteroi* who were not *didaskaloi*, i.e., who did not perform the office of public instruction in the congregation." Great value is to be attached to the opinions of those Anglican scholars, because they cannot be accused of having any undue affection for Presbyterianism. "Presbyter" is perhaps not aware that in the Second Book of Discipline which was agreed upon in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1578, the views which I have advanced received this corroboration (chapter vi.). "The word *eldar* in the Scripture sumetyme is the name of age, sumetyme of office. When it is the name of ane office, sumetyme it is taken largely, comprehending als weill the pastors and doctors, or them who are callit seniors or elders. . . . The eldership is a spirituall function, as is the ministrie. . . . It is not necessary that all elders be also teichars of the Word; albeit, the chief aucht to be

sic, and swa ar worthie of double honour." "Presbyter" makes a citation which I also made from the Form of Church Government that was adopted by the Westminster Assembly. One of the conclusions which he draws from that citation is to the effect "that the Westminster Assembly did not believe that *presbyter* is the title of an office distinct from that of the clergyman or pastor." Had "Presbyter" read the section in the Form of Church Government with the heading "Pastors," he would have found these words: "The office of the elder (that is, the pastor) is to pray for the sick," etc. "Presbyter" and I agree in believing that elders, in the common acceptance of the term in our Presbyterian Churches, are meant by the concluding words of the citation to which reference has been already made—"Which officers Reformed Churches commonly called elders." The words, "the office of the elder (that is, the pastor)," clearly refute the statement of "Presbyter," showing, as they do, that according to the Westminster Assembly the designation, elder or presbyter, is applicable to pastors as well as to elders.

"Presbyter" misrepresents me, unintentionally I suppose, when he states that I think "the elders have no right to the peculiar functions of the minister." I was merely dealing with the well-known practice of our Presbyterian Church, which, as every one is aware, is what I represented it to be. Holding the views which I do regarding the scriptural import of *elder*, I would naturally incline to an opinion entirely different from the one which "Presbyter" assigns to me.

My interpretation of 1 Timothy v. 17 is, according to "Presbyter," "obviously at variance with the principle and logical consistency of the extract from the 'Form of Government.'" It is clear, as I have shown above, that the case is entirely otherwise, for the interpretation for which I contend is involved in the fact that, according to the Westminster Assembly, the elder is the pastor, and the elder is the officer who is commonly known by that name in the Reformed Churches. And what is more, the Act of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1645, regarding the Form of Church Government, has a clause to the effect "that this act be no ways prejudicial to the further discussion and examination of that article which holds forth that the doctor or teacher hath power of the administration of the sacrament as well as the pastor . . . but that it shall be free to debate and discuss these points, as God shall be pleased to give further light."

I am at a loss to understand on what ground "Presbyter" has chosen to state that certain presbyters, as I suppose, "who were chosen for their ability to teach, were found on trial not to be possessed of the faculty of elocution." The elders who were ordained in the Churches which were founded by the apostles were on terms of exact equality. Is it not natural to conclude that, after congregations had been fairly organized, and after facilities which could not at first be obtained had become available in the way of gaining a larger and more accurate knowledge of the Word of God and particularly of the Gospel, the propriety would suggest itself of confining the work of instruction and preaching on a large measure to presbyters who, by their talents and education, were best fitted for that particular work?

In my reference to 1 Cor. xii. 28, and particularly to the terms helps, governments, I refrained on the ground that these terms are too vague and general, from seeking to extract from them any special argument in favour of the eldership. Alford indeed is of opinion that by government is meant "a higher department—that of the presbyters or bishops—the direction of the various Churches."

I am afraid that I have failed to understand the particular purpose which "Presbyter" meant to serve by his reference to the Evangelical Armenian Church. If he regards the words Church Session as identical with the Session in Presbyterian Churches, then it is surely a novel doctrine that pastors and deacons form a Church Session, particularly when it is borne in mind that the normal functions of elders are inseparably associated with the Session of which they are members.

"The Scripture doth hold out deacons as distinct officers in the Church, whose office is perpetual, to whose office belongs not to preach the Word or administer the sacrament, but to take special care in distributing to the necessities of the poor." This extract from the Form of Church Government, to which "Presbyter" attaches so much importance, does not bear out the inference which he draws from the laws or practice of the Evangelical Armenian Church. Cornwall, March 7, 1887. NEIL MACNISH.