

Our Contributors.

SOMETHING MORE ABOUT AUGMENTATION.

BY KNOXIAN.

"Lord, keep him humble and we will keep him poor." This petition is said to have been offered by an elder on behalf of his newly-inducted minister. Uncharitable people might think that the elder offered this petition because he did not wish to pay much toward the stipend. Perhaps that was not the reason. Possibly this elder thought that his minister could do ministerial work very much better if kept poor. That was his theory. The same theory is held by some people who are opposed to Augmentation. They think a minister can write better sermons, and visit his people more efficiently and do up his pastoral work with more heart, if his family are ragged and his coat glazy and his stomach filled with gruel instead of beefsteak. They are afraid that when the minister goes into his study to write sermons the afflatus might not come on if the good man were comfortable. There is nothing like poverty for bringing on the afflatus. The conditions on which a first-class sermon can be produced are these: Your coat must be threadbare, glazy and generally shabby; your home must be ill-furnished and comfortless; your library must not have a book in it that was published within the last fifty years; your wife must look careworn and weak; your children must be ragged and wear clothes that have been made over at least three times; you must be a little in debt without any reasonable prospect of being able to pay it; you must begin each sermon with a load of care and anxiety, heavy enough to crush any ordinary man. As you write, be sure that the unpaid bills are on your desk so that you can draw inspiration from them; that your ragged children are within sight, and that you can hear your wife scrape the bottom of a flour barrel in the next room. Any man who cannot write a first-class sermon under these favourable conditions is unfit for the Presbyterian ministry. It was for these conditions that the elder prayed when he said: "Lord, keep him humble and we will keep him poor." It is for these conditions in the Canadian ministry that those people work who won't do anything for Augmentation. Dr. Guthrie did not think that these conditions were favourable to the production of good sermons, and Dr. Guthrie knew something about preaching. Here are the Doctor's views on the point:

Genteel poverty, to which some ministers are doomed, is one of the evils under the sun. To place a man in circumstances where he is expected to be generous and hospitable, to open his hand as wide as his heart to the poor, to give his family a good education, to bring them up in what is called genteel life, and to deny him the means of doing so; enough, but for the hope of heaven, to embitter existence. In dread of debt, in many daily mortifications, in harassing fears what will become of his wife and children when his head lies in the grave, a man of cultivated mind and delicate sensibilities has trials to bear more painful than the privations of the poor. It is a bitter cup, and my heart bleeds for brethren who have never told their sorrows, concealing under their cloak the fox that gnaws at their vitals.

It may be urged that some ministers are not worth \$750 a year and a manse. We go farther than that, and assert that some ministers, like some doctors and some lawyers and some of every class, are *worth nothing at all*. But why punish the worthy for the sake of the unworthy? The best way to weed out the unworthy is for the Church to make reasonable provision for the worthy. How can any Presbytery have the heart to attack a useless or inefficient minister if they know the man has never had a reasonable chance to do anything? How can they know that he would not have done good work if he had had a reasonable chance? We are no defenders of lazy, incompetent, inefficient ministers. If there is one man on this footstool that ought to be despised it is a selfish, lazy minister who is trying to slip along by doing just as little as he possibly can. There are not many such in the Presbyterian ministry, and the right way to get rid of the few is to put the pastorate on such a basis that a Presbytery can force these few to work or push them out. How different it would be could a Presbytery say to any incompetent: "Brother, the Church placed you over that congregation; the Church saw that you had a reasonably comfortable home and a fair salary; your salary has been regularly paid, and the Church has kept its contract with you; you have not done the work required, now do better at once or step out." But the Church can never say that to a

man and starve him at the same time. The best way, in fact the only way, to get rid of incompetents is to give every man a fair chance to work and then crowd out every man who is useless or worse.

There is just one more objection to Augmentation that we care to notice. Some people, who profess to have intensely spiritual minds, are afraid that the spiritual life of the ministry may be lowered by the payment of fair salaries. These excellent people are very anxious that the spiritual tone of the pulpit should be kept *high*, and they think that the way to do it is to keep the salaries *low*. This is rather hard on the men who have from four to seven thousand a year, but let that pass. The excellent people referred to think there is some necessary connection between grace and gruel, between righteousness and rags, between faith and feeble health, between genteel poverty and spiritual power. The peculiar thing about this theory is that those who hold it are never afraid that the piety of any man other than the minister may suffer from a reasonable degree of prosperity. The minister is the only man in danger. It is for him that they worry and lie awake at night. A merchant may grow rich, build new stores, extend his business, push his trade and become a millionaire in a small way, but there is no danger of him. His piety is proof against worldliness. A farmer may build new barns, buy more farms, improve his stock, purchase new implements and grow rich, as thousands of them have done in this country, but those good people are not the least afraid that his spirituality of mind may be injured. He can resist temptation. But the minister, poor man, is in danger if he gets an extra hundred put to his little salary. Every man can resist the dangers of prosperity better than a minister. It is not a little strange that people who sell goods, or prescribe pills, or address courts, or raise grain and stock, or invest money, should all be bomb-proof against the temptations of prosperity, and that a minister is almost certain to fall before the luxuries of seven hundred dollars a year. A lawyer can grow in grace with a hundred dollar fee in his pocket. A doctor can prepare for the kingdom on a practice of four or five thousand a year. A merchant, or other business man, can be a good Christian with a good balance at the bank and his safe full of mortgages. A farmer finds no difficulty in keeping up his spiritual tone while he takes a hundred dollars for a thoroughbred calf. But a minister would most likely fall from grace if he found himself with a spare dollar in his pocket. What weak men these ministers are!

This is the ground taken by those spiritually-muddled people who say that it would lower the spiritual tone of the ministry to give them a decent living. One almost feels guilty for having used so much good ink in exposing such rubbish.

MR. TASSIE'S REPLY.

MR. EDITOR,—I am glad my critics cannot complain of unfair treatment, as they have been permitted to exhaust themselves, and have written nine letters to eight on my part. Want of space will not permit me to reply to them as fully as I should wish. The first three have assumed, without offering proof, that license law fosters drunkenness, which I deny, while I assert we are a very sober, law-abiding people, and are growing more so every day under license law. The amount of liquor consumed by the habitually intemperate has no appreciable effect on the total consumption. Good and bad times alone affect it. I may also state that the two sons of Aaron were not killed for being drunk, but for offering strange fire; that the priests were not forbidden to drink wine except in the tabernacle; that the Nazarites and Rechabites voluntarily imposed abstinence on themselves, and, therefore, offer no precedent for State Prohibition. Mr. Wright, Convener of the General Assembly's Committee on Temperance, deserves and shall receive a more lengthy notice than the others.

I take exception to his statement: "There can be no doubt his (my) utterances on 'Church and State' virtually demand that Civil Government be forever emancipated from religious influences." I stated that "Christ is the head of the State, for the kingdom is the Lord's, and He is the Governor among the nations. But a separate and independent jurisdiction belongs to both Church and State." Nor did I deny the right of a Church Court to register its disapproval of legislation. I questioned the wisdom of such a course, believing that the Senate of Canada under-

stands, and is able to perform, its duty without the censure and advice of the General Assembly. I do not, the right of a Church which has the Westminster Confession as a Standard to discuss politics. As long as it is written in the Standards of the Church, "Synods and Councils are to handle or conclude nothing but that which is ecclesiastical; and not to intermeddle in civil affairs, which concern the commonwealth, unless by way of humble petition in cases extraordinary; or, by way of advice for satisfaction of conscience, if they be thereunto required by the civil magistrate," the Church is bound to adhere to it. They have no more right to claim latitude on this question than on any other; and if the Church has ignored its Standards in the past, that is no reason for doing so to-day. The decree of the last Temperance Convention in Toronto made this a political question. It is now to enter into every political contest, although only a few months ago we were told it was a purely moral question. I also deny the right of men who are exempt from taxation to demand the destruction of a large amount of property which would necessitate great fiscal changes, while they are themselves unwilling to suffer pecuniary loss should the adoption of their views result in greater evils than we have under license law.

Mr. Wright and his confederates have, without offering any proof, made a great effort to create the impression that license law produces drunkenness and the evils commonly ascribed to liquor. A law which admits a false principle creates contempt for all laws; a law which shuts out harmless pleasures encourages vice; a law which declares the use of liquor in moderation to be sinful is founded on falsehood; a law which makes the sale of a glass of liquor a crime, while it does not make the drinking of a glass of liquor a crime, or a law which punishes more severely the sale of a glass of liquor than the theft of a glass of liquor concedes false principles and must fail. The authors of the Scott Act confute themselves. They declare Christ used unfermented wine at the sacrament, while they make special provision in the Scott Act for the use of fermented wine at the sacrament. To show them the practical effect of Prohibition, I present the following evidence from the report of the Special Committee of the Legislature of Massachusetts in 1867 on the working of the prohibitory law which had been in force since 1855: "The evidence before the Committee, though, of course, to some extent conflicting, tended to show that in all those cities or towns where the prosecutions against open places had been the most active, an extraordinary number of secret places had been started, and that more liquor and worse liquor was drunk, and that more intoxication ensued."

According to the report of Deputy-Chief of Police Savage (a), the whole number of places in Boston in which liquor was known to be sold was 1,500 in 1834 and 1,515 in 1866. The number of drunken persons taken up by the police in 1854 was 6,983, while in 1866 it was 15,542, the largest number taken up during any year in the history of the city, except 1861 and 1863, two of the years of the war, when the numbers were 17,324 and 7,967 respectively. The number of drunkards in 1866 exceeds that of 1865 by 1,657. Again, the State constabulary during the months of January and February, 1867, made more efficient prosecutions for the violation of the law than had ever been made in the city, yet the number of drunken persons taken up in January was 1,462, and in February, 1,570, against 1,118 in January, 1853, and 1,039 in February, 1863, the war year referred to, when the largest number of drunken persons was taken up. If the number of cases for 1867 is calculated upon the basis of the returns for January and February, it will amount to 18,192. Rev. James A. Healey (b), pastor of a very large Catholic church, and visiting extensively among the poorer classes, says that "in almost every house they have liquor and they sell to those in the house." Ex-Mayor Lincoln (c) says that "the sale of ardent spirits and the number of drunkards have increased faster than our population has increased." "And, without attempting to give the names even of the numerous witnesses who testified in regard to the present condition of things in Boston, it can be safely asserted that while the number of open places has undoubtedly somewhat diminished, all of the principal hotels, grocers, restaurants, apothecaries and wholesale liquor-dealers sell openly; an immense and constantly-increasing number of secret places and 'clubs' has been established. Drun-