

Our Contributors.

MEN WHO HAVE NO JUDICIAL FACULTY.

BY KNOXIAN.

First on the list of men who have no judicial faculty is the credulous mortal who BELIEVES ALL HE HEARS

and believes it as soon as he hears it. Tell him anything about anybody and he swallows it by the first intention, as the surgeons say. It never occurs to him that there are two sides to every story. It never dawned on his soft mind that any kind of case looks different when you know all the facts, and the probable motives and the surrounding circumstances and look at it from all points of view. No, Mr. Softy, never thought of that. He always gulps down the first story and his judgment is not worth a brass farthing.

IMPULSIVE MEN

rarely have the judicial faculty in a high degree. Of course, if an intelligent, conscientious man *knows* that he is likely to be hasty in his judgments, he is careful and may judge very fairly, but if he does not know his weakness he is always in more or less danger of jumping to a conclusion. Impulsiveness and the judicial faculty are not usually found together. Nature has not joined them. If they are found in the same man the man has brought them into a working partnership himself and should get credit for so doing.

The job may not have been an easy one.

A VERY SMALL MIND

never has the judicial quality. It cannot have, because to compare things and come to a conclusion about them you must have a mind large enough to contain them. A mind so small that it can scarcely take in one small idea at a time ought never to be asked to decide anything. Some men are too small to serve as jurors. They ought to be excused on the ground that their mental apparatus is too small to grasp a case. If voting implied any exercise of mind we should say some men are too small to vote. In this happy country, however, a man can vote without any more mind than is needed to mark his ballot. In fact, he is sometimes not able to do even that.

Some minds are so warped and twisted by

PREJUDICE

that they have lost all power to decide anything fairly. The prejudice may have grown and strengthened on only two or three questions, perhaps on only one, but it ruined the mind for all questions. Cranks are generally made in this way. They often begin by being cranks or extremists on one question and end by becoming unable to deal fairly with any other question. A man brimful of prejudice on almost anything soon makes himself unfit to deal judicially with anything. Explain the matter as you may, that is the fact. We doubt very much if a very

BAD MAN

ever has a well developed judicial faculty. It may be urged that some immoral men have been good judges, and any one familiar with the history of jurisprudence in England or America can easily think of some names not any too savoury. A man may, of course, go through the routine work of a judge creditably enough without being any too clean, but the highest judicial faculties have never been associated with doubtful morals. Vice darkens the mind and makes it incapable of the highest judicial functions even where the intention may be good enough.

In a country like Canada, in which there is government of the people by the people, it is of the highest importance that the people should cultivate their judicial faculties. In fact they must think or sink. We often read in articles and speeches that the people are doing a great deal of thinking. We don't believe they think half as much for themselves as they did thirty years ago.

The proof of increased thoughtfulness is that many are breaking away from their political parties. And what do most of them break away for? To join other parties with cast iron rules more rigidly enforced than either of the old parties would dare to enforce party discipline. That certainly is peculiar evidence

of growing thoughtfulness. People follow demagogues now that the old settlers would have kicked out of their shanties.

In a self-governed church like the Presbyterian, the judicial quality is absolutely indispensable. No small part of our trouble comes from thrusting full congregational machinery upon little congregations that are too small to work it. Their whole strength is exhausted by running the machine. A successful Presbyterian congregation cannot be made up of any kind of men. It must be made of men capable of self-government; an entirely different matter. All men are not capable of self-government, therefore men are not capable of being worked into a Presbyterian congregation.

We intended venturing upon a few hints on the best methods of cultivating the judicial faculty, but time is up. One good way is to assume that all questions have two sides and examine both sides or neither. Never gulp down one side of anything. Reading up on both sides of a question and balancing the arguments is one of the best possible kinds of exercise.

Associate with people who have the judicial faculty and keep away from crack-brained people, shouters, cranks, demagogues, hobby-horse men and above all from—fools.

Read the decisions and addresses of judges when they are not too technical. We know nothing better for training the judicial faculty than study of a judgment given by Chancellor Boyd.

The annual addresses of bank presidents are good. Just watch how one of these men can balance the probabilities for and against commercial prosperity.

The charge of an able judge to a jury in an important case is a good thing to study by any one who wishes to cultivate his judicial qualities.

Shun as you would shun smallpox inflated demagogues who want to get popularity, or votes, or business, by rousing the passions of the people. They are the enemies of society and they are successful in their nefarious business in proportion as men cease to reason.

"MAKE ME A LITTLE CAKE FIRST."

BY H. J. G.

At this period of financial depression, when the balance seems strangely inclined to gravitate to the wrong side in the accounts of both church and state, it may not be unprofitable to consider a similar but much more distressing time in the history of the church.

Outside the gate of the city of Zarephath a destitute and desolate widow wandered in search of fuel. The sad story of deprivation and suffering was depicted in her hopeless face, for "the famine was sore in the land." And she was gathering two sticks to bake a cake for herself and her son that they might "eat it and die." A very unlikely missionary in an unlikely place, yet here she was confronted by the prophet's singular request, "Make me thereof a little cake first and bring it unto me."

Had this woman lived in the present day she would probably have exclaimed in astonishment, "Surely you must be a stranger here and haven't heard of the hard times in this part of the country." We can imagine Elijah replying, "Oh yes, have experienced them myself, but I know something too of God's care over His people, for the ravens have been feeding me with the 'riches of His liberality.' 'Fear not,' for thus saith the Lord God of Israel, the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth."

"I feel very sorry for you, Elijah; I always like to help a good cause along, but really things have come to such a pass, that it is all we can do to keep body and soul together. The season has been so dry and the crops so poor that we have only a handful of meal in the bottom of the barrel and a little oil in a cruse and it would be flying in the face of Providence to give away the scanty provision we have. I am sure the Lord does not require so much of us. I think He must have made a mistake when He sent you to me. He pro-

bably intended you to go to Mr. Dives across the road. It is rich men like him that you should ask for a donation." If the widow of Zarephath had acted upon these modern principles, humanly speaking, that meal would have been their last on earth. But heathen though she was, belonging to the despised Gentile race, she believed the word that God had spoken to her "by the mouth of His prophet," and "went and did according to the saying of Elijah," receiving for the recompense of her faith and generosity an ample supply for many days. "Never did corn or olive so increase in the growing," says Bishop Hall, "as hers did in the using."

This incident contains a lesson for the poorest as well as the richest Christian. If God did not consider reduced circumstances a sufficient reason for exempting her from doing her part, what excuse will we offer Him when He asks us to share our comparative plenty with His servants who are laboring in distant lands?

What is needed at the present day is not so much means as consecrated money. If our church had more Jacobs among its members taking for their rule of life his vow, "Of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee," there would not be so much spasmodic giving and less fear of missionary societies and benevolent institutions becoming bankrupt.

We have money for business, money for pleasure, but sometimes hardly one dollar in a hundred for Him, who counted not even His life dear for us. If, as someone says, our benevolence is measured not by what we give, but by what we have left, what sums of money which we have wasted on trifles will go before us to judgment. We are so apt to take more notice of what we give than of what we spend on ourselves. The twenty-five cents that we give to God's cause on Sunday is an ever-present subject for self-congratulation, and often calls forth the prayer of the Pharisee, "Lord, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are," while at the same time we are utterly oblivious to the fact that during the week we have spent fifty times that amount on superfluities that neither make us richer or happier.

If Irving or Patti leaves our cities with thousands of dollars of Canadian money nothing is said or thought about it, but if Dr. Pierson or Gordon collects one or two hundred dollars and immediately transfers it to the missionary societies to aid in Christianizing and civilizing the world, instantly a great hue and cry is raised against so much money being taken out of the country when business is so dull.

This ought not to be. Instead of making the present stringency a plea for inactivity on our part, let each one of us faithfully perform his or her duty, knowing that God will assuredly supply our temporal as well as our spiritual needs out of His infinite fulness and give us grace for grace.

It may be that the Lord has a controversy with us for having robbed Him in tithes and offerings. It therefore becomes us to "endeavor after new obedience" and bring our tithes which have been so long withheld into God's store-house that there may be meat in His house. The promised blessing will then be poured upon us as a church and individually till there will not be room enough to receive it.

We have too many professing Christians who stand with one hand raised in prayer that the spirit of liberality may descend in mighty power and awaken the people to a sense of their responsibility while the other hand pulls their purse-strings a little tighter and passes the application on to their next neighbor.

Prayer is the motive power of all true action, but it is well for us to be sure that our giving is in proportion to our means and to our prayers, lest "the Great Searcher of hearts" sees the money for which we are so earnestly praying, slumbering peacefully in the depths of our own pockets. Our duty is to serve God first and self last.

If every Christian in the Presbyterian Church in Canada had only denied themselves one luxury in the past weeks and forwarded the price of it to Dr. Reid, the whole deficit would have been made up.

Is there no one who for Christ's sake will

sacrifice some delicacy from their already well-filled table, that some soul may partake with them of the "bread of life" at "the marriage supper of the Lamb?" or do without some article of dress, that our dusky brothers and sisters may be clad in "the garment of Christ's righteousness?" God is asking us today to "make Him the little cake first." If we refuse to obey His command, have we not reason to fear that the widow of Zarephath, who gave so cheerfully of her penury, will rise up in judgment to condemn those of us who, although living in the glorious gospel light of the nineteenth century, are not worthy to touch even "the hem of her garment." The words of our risen and adorable Redeemer are as full of meaning to-day as before He ascended up on high, and He is still saying, "all power is given unto Me, go ye therefore and preach the gospel to every creature." The need is as great as ever before, and the piteous wail, "Come over and help us," which rises from one thousand million perishing souls, bears witness in heaven to our sinful neglect and indifference. God's call to the church to-day is, "Awake, awake, put on thy beautiful garments, oh, Jerusalem, the holy city." May we respond by shaking ourselves from the dust of indolence and selfish indulgence, praying God to forgive the Christlessness in our own unworthy hearts and lives, beseeching the Holy Spirit to enlighten our understandings that we may know more and increasingly more of "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich." Then, and then only, will the consecrated prayer rise to our lips and find expression in our lives.

"Take my silver and my gold,
Not a mite would I withhold
Take myself and I will be,
Ever, only, all for Thee."

EFFICIENCY OF THE ELDERSHIP.

The minutes of the General Assembly for 1893 state the number of elders of our church to be 25,399. This is a large number of men. There are nearly five times as many elders as there are ministers in our church. In every community where our churches are found, the elders are men of influence and worth. 25,399 men of earnest piety and continuous effort in every good work would influence multitudes to seek and follow their Saviour. Of course there is a difference in the gifts and graces of such a number of men. But without any disparagement to them, may it not be a proper matter of consideration whether they might not greatly increase their efficiency and usefulness in the important and responsible office which they hold in the church? Our ministers have clubs and associations and conferences, the object of which is to increase their efficiency and usefulness as ministers. Our Sabbath school teachers and officers hold institutes at which they have lectures, model teaching and object lessons, with the purpose of increasing their efficiency and usefulness as teachers in Sabbath schools. I am aware of the fact, and I rejoice to refer to it, that in recent years the elders, sometimes of one or more Presbyteries, meet in conference to seek by prayer and mutual exhortation to increase and enlarge their gifts for the benefit of the church and the edification of the saints. I have no doubt they have found these conferences very profitable to themselves. But I still repeat the inquiry, when so much is done by other classes of Christian workers, cannot more yet be done in some way to increase the usefulness of our large and influential body of elders?

In order to accomplish this purpose, there needs to be a clearer and more enlarged conception by the members of the church, of what are the duties of the elders in order to assist them in a wise selection of persons to fill this important office. This enlarged and proper conception of the duties of elders in the church is needed also by the elders themselves, in order that they may more diligently and earnestly seek by prayer and study the grace and wisdom which they need for the right discharge of the solemn and important duties of the office. There is one very marked and special difference in the matter of entering upon the duties of the ministry and of the eldership in our church. The candid-