

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CHURCH EXTENSION.

Among some of the lower types of animal life we find what are called *gemmiparous* and *fissiparous* re-production. *Gemmiparous* re-production is that which multiplies the animal by the development not of an egg or embryo, but of a bud upon the surface of the parent. The bud remains united by its base to the parent stem for a shorter or longer period, and gradually attains perfection. The re-production called *fissiparous*, takes place not by buds but by divisions. A well known naturalist thus briefly describes the process: "A cleft or fissure at some point of the body takes place, very slight at first, but constantly increasing in depth, so as to become a deep furrow, like that observed in the yolk, at the beginning of embryonic development; at the same time the contained organs are divided and become double, and thus two individuals are formed of one, so similar to each other that it is impossible to say which is the parent and which is the offspring." What is true of these lower forms of life is also true of the highest created form of spiritual life, the Church of God.

The same phenomena are observable in the plant world. A single vegetable cell floats in the water, or lies upon the surface of marshy ground. By subdivision it adds cell to cell until the single one is lost in the long line of its descendants. These again multiply in another direction, until the line itself is lost and a great expanse is covered with the product of the single cell. So the Churches of the world have grown from the little company that followed Jesus of Nazareth, the Church's King and Head. The little one has become a thousand, the small one a strong nation.

There was a time when progress was made principally by simple evangelization. The apostles went with the seed of the kingdom, which is the Word of God, and sowed it broadcast in the great centres of population, Antioch, Ephesus, Philippi, Corinth and Rome. This was the formation of the original cells. It was by division that the Churches were multiplied; centralization, so much to be desired, in some respects, at a time when mutual support and sympathy were most needed, would have been the death of the infant cause. A single persecution might have swept it away. The scattering, not only of teachers and officers, but of private members of the Church, was a division for the sake of multiplication. In many a house, far from the place where the Word by the apostle first brought quickening to the heathen city, in rural seclusions and neighboring towns and villages, twos and threes cut off from the central fold became large flocks, well worthy of a shepherd's care. In heathen lands we must still evangelize, or sow the Word in order to extend the bounds of the Redeemer's kingdom; and that same Word of which God's sons and daughters are begotten, must also be the means for up-building the Church wherever it is planted. But the Church itself which has received the engrafted Word that is able to save the soul, in which the Word lives and energizes, that Church by itself must carry on its own extension. There is life, if it be a true Church, not only in its head or Minister, in its arms or Elders and other office-bearers, but in every part. Take a fresh water polype and divide it into as many unmangled pieces as you may, each one of these will become a perfect animal. Such has been the experience of the Church in all ages of its history, and in every land. Especially is it true of a new country such as this in which our Church is placed.

Our Church members do not understand or appreciate this truth. A destitute region in a city forces itself upon the notice of a Christian congregation or community. It is decided that something should be done for the