

FUEL SUPPLY OF MANITOBA.

BY REV. JOHN SCOTT, WEST LYNN, MAN.

One thing that often comes to mind in Canada with those looking westwards is, "How can settlers in Manitoba and the North-West be kept warm in a climate where the winter begins in November, and keeps on with greater or less severity until the end of March; where there are plains like the ocean, without tree or shrub; where grass grows in summer, to be burned or buried under the snow in winter? To this question it is answered that timber, more or less, is commonly found along the course of the rivers and streams, and that settlements follow the timber. At first, Canadians avoided the treeless prairies, and left them for the Mennonites and others, until they found out that it was easier to bring into cultivation five acres of prairie than one acre of timber or scrub. Having gained experience, they now launch out boldly and take up homesteads—timber or no timber. Woods miles away, but still in sight, are deemed sufficient to warrant a parent in building his house on the open prairie.

Wood is found along the Red River, the Pembina, Assiniboine, Riviere de Salle, the Boyne, the Badger, the Cypress and the Saskatchewan. It exists also along the range of Pembina Mountains, about Rock and Pelican Lakes, and for fifty miles from the point where it begins in Dakota to where it ends in Manitoba, at Turtle Mountain—depth of woods about nine miles—these in our territory. North of Winnipeg is an abundance of poplar. East of it are forests of pine and swamps of cedar, spruce and tamarack. In southern Manitoba the wood is chiefly oak, elm, ash, poplar, maple (*Negundo Acervides*)—not the hard maple of Canada—and in some places birch, spruce and basswood, with willows and cottonwoods. In one place I saw a juniper (*Juniperus prostrata*), indicating cordwood are imported largely from Minnesota and Dakota, U.S. In carrying out the National Policy a tax was put upon firewood, and it was increased upon lumber, so that settlers pay heavy duties; while under the same "Rule" Syndicate lumber and supplies come into Manitoba free of duty. Of 11,360,000 feet of lumber that passed the United States Customs at Pembina in May, June and July, 1881—going into Manitoba—two-thirds, the officer assured me, was Syndicate lumber passing into our Province free of duty. The whole thing seemed to be on the principle of "tax the poor, and let the rich go free." The tax on lumber is oppressive. The tax on firewood brings little into the Government, but it irritates and annoys our loyal and industrious settlers. For fifty miles along the line there is trouble every winter on the firewood question. Mennonites and Canadians suffer alike. Custom-house officers are watching that not a stick of cordwood comes into our Province without paying duty. So much for the tender nursing and parental care of those that live a thousand miles away from the wants and sympathies of the people that they govern. To say the least of it, their tax on lumber and firewood in Manitoba looks like oppression.

For our future supply of fuel we are looking to our lignite and coal beds. With the wood imported from the United States, and what we have of our own scattered over the country, we can rub along for a year or two, even if Emerson or Winnipeg pay \$6 or \$8 a cord for the comforting article. In our own territory there are, it is said, 80,000 square miles of lignite and coal beds, yet we do not reach the border of this vast carboniferous field until we travel 175 miles west of Emerson. There, near the Turtle Mountain land office, a farmer digging a well struck a lignite bed at a depth of about twenty-six feet. He penetrated three feet into it; night came on, and in the morning further progress was stopped by an abundance of water. From Turtle Mountain the beds are known to extend over the vast area already indicated. Further west some of these lignite beds are in a state of combustion. Across the line imagine a burnt bed 200 miles long and thirty broad. These burnings have been noticed on the Souris, Red Deer, and McKenzie Rivers, and as far north as Cape Bathurst on the Arctic Sea. The burnings have been noticed by explorers from 1792 up to our own day. Our western Indians have, it is said, a dread of the "Burning Country"—"the Land of Bad Spirits." Much as they love the smoke of tobacco and kinnikinnick (the bark of the *Cornus sericea*, or silky cornal),

they do not like the smell of the smoke that comes out of the ground. If lignite burns, and has burned for ages below the ground, the inference is that it will burn better above it when exposed to the air. If surveyors use it for their camp fires, settlers can use it in their houses at all seasons of the year.

Our railroads are pushing westwards, and very soon they will tap the coal fields. 80,000 square miles of coal will, I presume, supply all the future wants of our people for the ages that are yet to come. On the Northern Pacific Railroad, the coal of Missouri is laid down at Bismarck for \$4 per ton, and before long it may be just as cheap and abundant in Winnipeg, Portage la Prairie and Emerson.

CHURCH SOIREES.

MR. EDITOR,—I am sorry to see you encouraging "Church soirees," etc., in your issue of February 3rd. I think you cannot be blamed for reporting them, so long as some congregations have them. But, dear sir, do cut the reports as short as you can. We can all imagine the "appreciative audiences," and the "tables groaning with viands," and the charming musical "renderings," etc. Allow me to say, that your apology for them is a very lame one. I think if you would just substitute the words "theatre" or "wine-drinking" for the word "soirees" in the article referred to, you could make out quite as strong a defence of them. The question is, what is the tendency of the whole thing? All earnest Christian denominations, through their organs, have of late years agreed in saying that the tendency has been decidedly injurious. I conclude by very specially requesting you to copy from page 40 of the "Year Book," 1881, published at your own office, what Dr. Patterson said on the subject at the last Pan-Presbyterian Council:

"One particularly disgraceful phase of that general inconsistency of the Christian life which is so harmful to the progress of Christ's cause may be noted: The growing disposition to administer churches as if it was a part of their mission to provide entertainment for the people. Fairs, concerts, comical lectures, oyster suppers, turning the dedicated house of worship into a place of hilarious amusement, are fearfully demoralizing to the religious life. They de-spiritualize the people; merge the high sense of obligation in pleasure seeking; blot out that line of demarcation between the world and Church, which cannot be destroyed without debasing the one and affording rare comfort to the other in its sins. The piety of congregations which tolerates such things has lost the high old Puritan type. They are full of weaklings, with itching ears and sensual stomachs, who measure a Church by its amusement-producing capacity. In the end, no congregation gains by having them. It is not wise to introduce the world, the flesh and the devil into the Church as allies of its King. *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.*"

I COR. XVI. 2.

ROMISH ORDINATION.

MR. EDITOR,—Although I write you on this subject just when Mr. Laing lays down the pen, waiting for more light on the subject, yet I do not flatter myself as having the ability to throw more light on it. One thing is evident to us as Presbyterians, however: it is, that the Reformers of the first Reformation in Scotland did not attach the same importance to ordination itself as some of their successors do now. The most appropriate time for discussing and settling this question was at that Reformation; yet, neither in the life of John Knox, nor in his history, or any other history of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland as far as I have read, was it at any time discussed. For what reason? Either because no occasion arose which called for the discussion, or because it was not considered worthy of discussion. Does history during that period furnish an instance of the re-ordination of an ex-priest? When is the first recorded case of such re-ordination? If this re-ordination is only of recent times, what circumstances, either in the Romish or Presbyterian Church, have arisen to call for it? When Knox was called to minister to the Protestants in St. Andrews, we have no account of his re-ordination. It may be replied there were none to re-ordain him. True, but this objection does not hold good when he was a minister in charge at Geneva, or Frankfort, or Dieppe, in connection with other Reformed Churches. Gordon, bishop of Galloway, became a Protestant minister, and we have no account of his re-ordination.

Yet Knox attached little importance to his Popish ordination. A friend said to him: "Ye renounce and esteem that ordination null or error wicked by which

ye were called Schir John." Does not Popish ordination include the placing of the Scriptures in the hands of the candidate whilst he is told to "preach the Gospel to every creature?" What is the *sine qua non* of ordination? Is it "the laying on of hands?" The early Reformers did not think so. In the First Book of Discipline, iv. 10, they say: "Other ceremony than the public approbation of the people, and declaration of the chief [presiding] minister that the person there presented is appointed to serve the Church, we cannot approve: for albeit the apostles used imposition of hands, yet, seeing the miracle is ceased, the using of the ceremony we judge not necessary." The Second Book of Discipline, iii. 6, defines "ordination" to be "the separation and sanctifying of the person appointed to God and His Church." And the ceremonies connected therewith are "fasting, earnest prayer, and imposition of hands of the eldership." (Does this include the lay as well as clerical elder?) Were an ex-priest to be put in charge of any of our congregations, would it be by induction or ordination? The only difference between them is that "the laying on of hands by the Presbytery" is not required in induction. But it will be a difficult task to prove that all the ministers referred to in the New Testament were ordained "by the laying on of hands."

JOHN BAIN SCOTT.

Leamington, Ont., Feb. 18th, 1882.

"RULES AND FORMS OF PROCEDURE."

MR. EDITOR,—Permit me to call attention to the important little book entitled as above, which should be in the hands of every minister, elder, deacon, and many a member of our Church.

Although the title-page reads thus, "The Constitution and Procedure of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, agreed upon by the General Assembly in 1878," it does not appear to be known as an authority in our Church but by a very few; a fact to be regretted, as a general acquaintance with its provisions would be helpful in guiding all concerned in Church business and Presbyterian organization.

An important omission in this excellent little book is at once observed, and that is—"the Basis of Union." This basis is referred to on the occasion of all ordinations. If the Committee cannot have this corrected in another edition, it would be well to have the matter brought up at next meeting of Assembly.

Another point worthy of attention is the sections relating to Managers and Deacons. As now written, *Managers* will be preferred to the exclusion of *Deacons*, if for no other reason than that the one is annual and the other for life. The term "Managers" is purely secular, and, as far as our Church nomenclature is concerned, a misnomer; while that of "Deacons" is ecclesiastical and scriptural, and should be preferred. I object to the term "Managers" as more fittingly belonging to secular industries, railways and theatres.

Deacons being ecclesiastical and scriptural, and their duties well understood, by all means let our Church retain the Deacon in preference to Manager, and give the latter to secular concerns. There is nothing secular about the Church of God; there are things *spiritual* and things *temporal*.

By way of making Deacons more popular, I see no reason why they should not be a separate body, to be chosen for a term of three years, one-third to retire annually.

The practice in the States is, not to elect these officers for life; and our experience here has been that the temporal affairs of a congregation may be improved by a change in the administration—in fact, the principle of shorter terms might be applied with advantage to the Eldership too.

Respectfully submitted for consideration.

March 14th, 1882.

W. N. H.

THE London "Free Press" of the 2nd inst. says: "The progress made by the King street Presbyterian congregation is very gratifying. Two years ago the debt on the building amounted to \$4,200. This morning a payment of \$1,000 was made, and this, with other amounts paid, reduces the mortgage debt to \$2,400. This pleasing state of affairs has been attained by the united and untiring efforts of the pastor, Rev. J. K. Wright, and the Board of Managers, together with the handsome donations received from Scotland through Rev. Mr. Wright's father. All other branches of church work are alike satisfactory, and good feeling prevails on all sides."