

103, and many others? Or take the common paraphrases and hymns, those beginning with the following lines, for example:

- (1). "Spirit Divine attend our prayers,  
And make this house Thy home."
- (2). "O God of Bethel by whose hand  
Thy people still are fed."
- (3). "Safely through another week,  
God has brought us on our way."
- (4). "O Lord of heaven and earth and sea,  
To Thee all praise and glory be."
- (5). "Lord of the Sabbath hear us pray  
In this Thy house, on this Thy Day."
- (6). "Great King of nations hear our prayers,  
While at Thy feet we fall."

All will acknowledge that such verses are forms of congregational prayer, that they have a perennial freshness, and that most of the finest hymns in common use in our Church are of the same character. Who among our people would discard from public worship the psalms, paraphrases and hymns on the ground that they are forms of devotion familiar to every individual and not extemporaneous utterances from the pulpit? Who among our most learned and gifted ministers would furnish extemporaneous substitutes for these forms of devotion, not on occasion merely, but at every diet of worship throughout the year?

In an ordinary diet of worship the minister offers two, three, or more extemporaneous prayers. Those prayers although framed on behalf of, and for the benefit of the congregation, express only the minister's thoughts and feelings. They are his prayers, and from being extempore differ continually in their context so that no person present can be familiar with them. Although some few may be able to follow the varying utterances of the minister or considerable portions of his prayer, others frequently have difficulty in so doing, and thus it is not always possible for the latter to join in the devotions in a proper spirit.

If the prayers were written out and printed and placed in the hands of each worshipper, the cause of any such difficulty would be removed and every member of the congregation would be aided in his devotions by ear, eye, and memory, and thus enabled to follow the voice of the minister with an assenting mind. In every congregation there are men and women whose hearing through advancing years or other causes is defective; such persons could with the printed prayers before them, attentively take part with their fellow members of the congregation in the common devotions.

The discussion has confirmed me in the opinion that the church ought seriously to consider whether the opportunity of joining in public prayer should not be extended to the people. If half the prayers at each diet were read it would be a boon to many present in the congregation. Even if for one of the extempore prayers a congregational prayer, from a prescribed collection, were substituted it would be an improvement on the present system. Those laymen who think as I do, are satisfied that it is in the interests of the Church that a concession should be made to congregations in the direction indicated and we are decidedly of the opinion that its effect would be to make public worship more real, more reverent and more edifying without lessening its simplicity. We retain full sympathy with the wish to maintain primitive Presbyterian simplicity. We desire neither elaborate ceremonial nor prescribed chant; no inflexible service, no rigid liturgy.

We desire, it is true, uniformity but it is a voluntary uniformity, in general order, a uniformity in excellence, in reverence, in purity, as well as in simplicity. To these we aspire, and while we earnestly aim at some modification in our mode of worship, in order better to attain these ends, we deem it in expedient to introduce any change which would not commend itself to the Church as a whole.

In response to an overture from the Synod of Hamilton and London the General Assembly has appointed a Committee to consider how best to afford direction to the Church, to secure the reverent and edifying

observance of public worship, with due regard to Christian liberty and general uniformity. Such being the case it seems desirable that ministers and elders should take steps to ascertain the mind of the Church on points which may thus be formulated:

1. Is the present mode of observance of Public Worship in our congregations entirely satisfactory?
2. Have the people a sufficient opportunity to participate in Public Worship under our present system?
3. What means can be best taken to give the congregations a fuller share in the service of Public Worship?
4. Would it be desirable to substitute printed congregational prayers, for extemporaneous prayers, during some portion of the service?
5. What proportion of congregational prayer would it be advisable to introduce in any one diet of worship?
6. Should forms of services be prepared for administering the sacraments, solemnizing marriage, and the burial of the dead?
7. Should a manual of suitable services be provided which may be used as aids to devotion in new settlements and in localities where there is no settled minister or missionary.

Respectfully submitting these suggestions for wise consideration, I leave the matter with confidence in the hands of our Christian people, and the church courts. In concluding I may just add that the subject of congregational prayer is considered at some length in an article in *Queen's Quarterly* for July 1894, to which I beg leave again to refer.

SANDFORD FLEMING.

Ottawa, March, 28th 1896.

#### AN OPEN LETTER FROM THE W.C.T.U. TO THE CHRISTIAN MINISTERS OF ONTARIO.

REVEREND SIR,—We are desirous of securing from all who are interested in the progress of temperance reform, a more united and aggressive effort to secure the careful, thorough teaching of scientific temperance to every pupil in all the schools in Ontario. In our Sabbath Schools and Bands of Hope, young people are taught temperance from a moral and religious standpoint, but to make instruction complete another aspect of the matter must be considered—namely, the scientific. We ask therefore that this be made a part of common secular education; that some knowledge of the deleterious effects of alcohol and narcotics upon the physical organization of man be imparted in the schoolroom. The regulations of the Education Department, while they provide that scientific temperance be taught to the whole school by means of familiar conversations and to pupils preparing for High School entrance from the authorized text book, are defective in the matter of graded lessons and regular examinations. In some places, the people, not being alive to the importance of this teaching, consider it a useless innovation; and as there is nothing to lose at examinations if it be omitted the teacher finds it difficult to do even what the regulations enjoin. Sometimes School Boards are indifferent, not to say opposed, and in such cases the conscientious teacher is placed in very trying circumstances. In some instances, possibly the teacher is careless and does not realize that the education that fortifies against temptation and saves the future citizen, is just as necessary as that which ensures successful examinations.

Knowing the influence wielded and the position occupied by the minister of the Gospel in every community, we know something of the power he possesses to remove prejudice against reforms and to enlighten public opinion relating thereto. Accordingly we come to you with the request that, in the pulpit and out of it, as you have opportunity and as seems best to you, you would help us to achieve the success we are

work. We hope with your assistance to seeking in this department of Christian speedily secure the needed amendments in the regulations of the Education Department; that the people everywhere may come not only to approve, but to expect and demand, that their children shall receive the specified instruction; that School Boards may not only sanction but provide for the most efficient methods of teaching scientific temperance; and that teachers be as fully equipped for, and as faithful in dealing with this as with any other subject on the list of studies. We are assured of your interest in and knowledge of the importance of this phase of the "Do-Everything-Policy" of the W.C.T.U. So we appeal to you the more confidently for co-operation in our effort to save the "coming man" from the fate that has befallen so many of his predecessors. Yours faithfully

C. B. BIGELOW.

Provincial Supt. S. T. Dept. W.C.T.U.

#### THE REV. FRANCIS R. BEATTIE, D.D., AND KNOX COLLEGE PROFESSORSHIPS.

[At the request of the Rev. Dr. Beattie, Professor of Systematic Theology and Apologetics in the Theological Seminary of Louisville, Kentucky, we publish the following letter which has been addressed by him to the Board of Management of Knox College and which speaks for itself.—EDITOR.]

To the Board of Management,  
Knox College, Toronto.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have learned from various sources that my name has been proposed to your Board by several Presbyteries for the vacant chairs in Knox College. This fact is my apology for addressing you this letter, and making the request which it contains.

First of all, I beg to thank most sincerely those Presbyteries that have honored me with their nomination, entirely without any candidature on my part. It is some gratification to me to know that I am not entirely forgotten, although I have been absent from the Canadian Church for nearly eight years.

I desire also to state that I would not be true to my own feelings if I did not say to you that I would appreciate very highly any favor with which the Board might be disposed to regard these nominations of the Presbyteries on my behalf.

But what I wish chiefly to say is that, after careful reflection, I have decided to make respectful request that my name be not considered by the Board. For five years I taught Apologetics in Columbia Seminary; and for three Sessions I have been seeking to teach Apologetics and Systematic Theology, giving my strength chiefly to the latter, in Louisville Seminary. I am persuaded that I can best serve the Master by continuing in the lines of work in which I am now so comfortably engaged. I have the feeling, therefore, that my life work should mainly lie in teaching Systematic Theology, either in this Seminary, or elsewhere, as duty may be made plain to me. This being the case, I do not wish even to appear as a candidate for other positions. I respectfully ask, therefore, that the Board will not at all consider my name in making its nominations to the General Assembly.

Let me conclude by saying that my interest in my *Alma Mater* continues unabated, and that my earnest prayer is that the Head of the Church may rightly guide the Board in making its nominations to the Assembly.

With much respect,

I remain, yours sincerely,  
FRANCIS R. BEATTIE.

Louisville, Ky., March 21st, 1896.

To all of us the expressly appointed schoolmasters and schoolings we get are as nothing compared with the unappointed, incidental, continual ones, whose school hours are all the days and nights of our existence, and whose lessons noticed or unnoticed stream in upon us with every breath we draw.—*Carlyle*.

## Teacher and Scholar.

BY REV. A. J. MARTIN, TORONTO.

April 12th 1896. } PARABLE OF THE GREAT SUPPER. { Lu. xiv 15-24

GOLDEN TEXT.—Luke xiv. 17.

MEMORY VERSES.—11-12.

CATECHISM.—Q. 54.

HOME READINGS.—Mt. Luke xiv. 1-14. 7. Luke xiv. 15-24. 1P. Luke xiv. 25-35. 7H. Mat. xxii. 1-14. P. Ps. li. 1-12. S. Is. xlii. 1-16. Sm. Rom ix. 1-33.

Jesus is now about to make to the Jewish rulers the last offer of himself as Messiah. How anxious He seems to be to arouse these men to thought, to a realization of their danger, just that they may accept Him and thus save themselves and their nation. Our lesson for this week is the record of one of these attempts. Let us study it however, as illustrating a danger of this present day, rather than a danger of nineteen hundred years ago. For this let us consider "The Guests Invited" and "The Guests Present" at the feast.

I. The Guests Invited.—There can be no doubt that by those to whom the invitation came first, our Lord meant the Jewish people. The custom of those Eastern lands in the matter of bidding to their feasts very aptly illustrates the dealings of God with His chosen people. First of all there was intimation given to the expected guests some time before the day of the feast, so that they might be ready against that day. Then when the feast was prepared servants were sent out to announce that fact to the bidder guests: "Come for all things are now ready." To decline this second invitation is regarded even today as equivalent to a declaration of enmity. No one who knows the Old Testament scriptures can fail to see the aptness of the illustration. At the gate of Eden God gave notice of His intended feast; to Noah, to Abraham, to Moses, to David through the prophets, did God renew His promise and seek to prepare the Jewish people for the coming of Messiah. At length "the fulness of time" has come and God has sent His Son into the world for its redemption. First came John Baptist, then Jesus Himself and His apostles with the declaration that God's time had come: "the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." The parallel is very close indeed. And though we Gentiles are of the "tramps" who are gathered in from the highways and hedges, we must not overlook the fact that we have far less excuse for our indifference to Christ than had the Jewish rulers. All our lives we have had the assurance that God's "feast of fat things is ready," and we have been repeatedly urged to come. If we have not come, we should take heed lest the Master of the feast in "wrath" should withdraw that invitation and cease to plead with us, leaving us to perish miserably because we will not come unto Him. Though the rulers of the Jews were rejected, there were gathered in "from the streets and lanes of the city" many to the feast: the poor, the halt, the lame, the blind,—all who recognized their hopelessness, and accepted Jesus as the Messiah. Many of the common people heard Him gladly and believed on His name. Into the highways and hedges, after the "tramps" of the world, the servants have gone and are now busy "compelling them to come in" that the feast may be furnished with guests.

II. The Guests Present.—Those invited divide into two classes—those who refused the invitation, and thus declared their enmity to the Master of the feast, and those who accepted and came. The broad general distinction between the two classes is, that the former were satisfied with themselves and their possessions; the latter, having nothing, came gladly that they might be filled. Look at the excuses which were given; there is nothing sinful in them, but they manifest sinful hearts—that is hearts turned away from God. They have all that they want, and therefore will not come for the satisfying of their needs. But the poor in the city slums, the outcasts and sinners knew their helplessness in themselves and therefore came. What a solemn lesson. Provision is made for all, but there are many who will not come that they might have life; and their lack of willingness is all that hinders them, and is all that must necessitate their eternal exclusion from the good things of God. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" Let us then heed the voice which bids us "come"; and let us come that we may find in Jesus Christ all the things that are "now ready." Let us learn to rightly estimate the worth and the worthlessness of earthly good that it may not blind our eyes to the value of eternal things.