

WANTED—A ROYAL COMMISSION

By Knoxian.

Two members of the Royal Commission at present probing Life Insurance and other companies are stalwart shorter catechism men. For anything we know to the contrary the third member may have learned the catechism, too, but his name does not suggest attainments in that direction. How would it do to appoint Judge MacTavish, Mr. Langmuir and Mr. John Charlton a royal commission to enquire into and if possible solve some Presbyterian questions. The judge and Mr. Langmuir are getting a good deal of experience in their present enquiry, and John Charlton has enough of experience already to fit him for any kind of investigation.

Our commissioners might usefully enquire about the genesis of the Union Question. Some people say it originated solely with the Higher Powers, who moved certain men to give the question a start. Others hold that it is of earthly origin and is part of the modern universal trend in favor of uniting almost everything. Consolidation into huge trusts, combines and monopolies of one kind and another is the order of the day and the churches have fallen in with public opinion.

We know a few people who say the movement is part of the worship of the Big, which prevails everywhere on this continent. Bigness being the main thing, why not have the Biggest Church we can get. The commission might do some useful work on this question.

There is room also for enquiry as to whether the General Assembly is a deliberative body or a public meeting held annually to listen to speeches from ten or a dozen men who speak most of the time.

Enquiry might be made as to whether "this great church" is growing in the grace of liberality. The total amount given is larger than it ever was, but that proves nothing. The real test of liberality is the proportion the gift bears to the pile from which it is taken.

Our Royal Commission might also try and find out if there is any Presbyterianism in Canada east of Winnipeg. If they find any they might enquire whether a small eastern rural congregation, depleted by emigration to the Northwest, is not deserving of as much consideration as a growing western congregation. They might also enquire whether people who raise about one hundred million bushels of wheat annually, with other grains in proportion, can be truthfully described as "struggling pioneers," etc.

A wrestle with this question would not do the commissioners or the church any harm: Why is overlapping a sin in New Ontario and praiseworthy church extension in Toronto.

Concerning the clergy there are a few questions which the commissioners might very profitably investigate. "Does clerical puffing pay?" is a live practical question. That a considerable and ever increasing number of

ministers do habitually advertise and puff themselves directly or indirectly, is an undoubted fact. The only question is, does the puffing help the puffer. Perhaps the commissioners would find that in some communities puffing pays, and in others it does not.

The commissioners might very rigidly enquire why it is that the standard of professional honor is lower in the ministerial profession than in any other.

Here is an interesting problem that loomed up at the last meeting of the General Assembly. Why do some of the principals and professors of our colleges, sitting up stairs in the committee on students, insist on successful examinations in every subject of the theological course and then go down stairs and advocate a union that would bring in perhaps two or three hundred ministers who have received no academic training at all?

O, yes, we need a commission badly enough to probe a lot of questions, but we doubt very much if one can be had. Church courts do no probing on difficult questions. They have not the right kind of machinery to probe with and they do not like the probing business.

The Presbytery of Guelph has arranged for a useful course of lectures on Presbyterianism, to be given at various places throughout the bounds of the Presbytery, during the coming winter. The subjects to be dealt with are as follows: The Presbyterian church in Ireland, by Rev. R. E. Knowles; the Presbyterian church in the U. S. A., by Rev. J. C. Wilson; the Presbyterian church in Canada, by Rev. R. J. M. Glassford; Revivals in the Presbyterian church, by Rev. J. M. Mullan; Great Missionaries of the Presbyterian Church, by Rev. A. M. Hamilton; What is Presbyterianism? by Rev. J. R. Johnston. We miss from the list Presbyterianism in Scotland, a theme that Rev. Dr. Dickson could have handled in a masterly manner. And, then, the Music of the Presbyterian Church might have been entrusted to Rev. John Thomson, of Ayr, who could have said something worth listening to on this important subject. Perhaps it is not too late for the Presbytery to add to the published list the topics and lecturers suggested above.

The Central Presbyterian, published in Richmond, Va., reaches us greatly enlarged and improved in appearance. Although in its forty-first year our contemporary displays all the enterprise and vigor we usually associate with early manhood. The Central Presbyterian is ably conducted, and is always welcome to our table.

Dr. E. F. Torrance, pastor of St. Paul's Church, Peterboro, says: "There is in my opinion, no class more severely criticized than the ministers. Some of us would be delighted if those laymen who have been telling us how to preach would take the pulpit."

TORONTO.

The "thirtieth anniversary" of the pastorate of the Rev. G. M. Milligan, D.D., L.L.D., will be held in Old St. Andrew's church on Monday, October 18, at 6.30 p.m.

In his sermon last Sunday morning, Rev. W. G. Wallace, D.D., at Bloor street church, attributed much of the dishonesty in business and corruption in public affairs to a decadence in the sense of a personal God, who requires truth at all times from all men.

In a cold drizzling rain His Honor Lieut.-Governor Clark, on the 6th inst., laid the corner stone of the Avenue road Presbyterian church, Rev. J. W. Steven pastor. The ceremonies were brief owing to the inclement weather. The new edifice will be of Gothic style in white stone, and will cost \$50,000.

Rev. Dr. James Carmichael, one of the grand old men of the Presbyterian church in Canada, celebrated the 46th anniversary of his induction as minister of St. Andrew's church, King, Ont., last Sunday. The services in that church were conducted morning and evening by Rev. Dr. Alex. Gilray, of this city, whose pulpit in College street church was supplied by Dr. Carmichael.

The young people of St. Paul's church are to have a literary feast the coming winter. Mr. Wm. Houston, M.A., has arranged an inviting programme. Twelve meetings are to be devoted to a systematic study of Tennyson's lyric poems, and a thirteenth to an evening of Tennysonian songs and readings. Six are to be given up to a series of discussions of the oral use of the English language, covering the whole ground from simple vocalization to the delivery of a prepared speech. Five are set apart for lectures by eminent speakers, and several for debates and symposiums in which the participants will be the members of the society.

BOTH GOOD.

By H. Isabel Graham.

Men talk of joy, appraise its worth.
The gods best benison to earth.
But those amid the furnace heat
Who taste the bitter with the sweet
And prove both good
Have greatest cause for thanksgiving.

HAMILTON.

Once again it is the season for communion services, and substantial increases are being reported.

Mr. J. W. Gordon, of Knox College, Toronto, preached in Knox church on Sabbath last, the 14th inst.

Rev. Dr. Milligan's lecture on "Sermons in Sunbeams," given in connection with the anniversary of Chalmers' church was much enjoyed.

Rev. J. E. Duclos, of Valleyfield, Que., is visiting this Presbytery in the interests of the French Evangelization Building Fund.

Arrangements have been made for the ordination and induction of Mr. S. H. Sarkissian into the pastoral charge of Binbrook and Saltfleet early in November. Mr. Sarkissian is at present assistant to Rev. Dr. Neil, of Westminster church, Toronto.

The chief events of last week were the induction of Rev. W. H. Sedgwick as colleague and successor to Rev. Dr. Lyle, of Central church, and the sustaining by Presbytery of the call from Knox church to Rev. Dr. Nelson, of St. Peter's church, Rochester, N.Y.

"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." That is why God has given man two eyes instead of one, a discerning mind, a sympathetic heart and a helping hand. That is why he made us men and women and not cuttlefish.