

help us; come again, soon." Similar work is being carried on among a more recently established colony of Hungarians, near Yorkton, by the Rev. John Kovacs, and among a colony of Germans, west of Edmonton, by a German speaking student. These people are already Protestants, and welcome gladly such service as we are able to offer to them. They form a considerable element, and an increasing element, in our population, and, to say nothing of the blessing it will be to them, if we keep up and develop their religious life we must, in self-defence, seek to neutralize what otherwise is likely to become a menace to Sabbath-keeping, to morality and even to good government. An instance of the danger that lies in neglected duty is to be found in the character of much of the immigration which is now flowing into Northern Alberta from the Western States, especially from Nebraska and Washington. Church-going in some communities is almost unknown. The Sabbath is used for sport, or, in a busy season, for work, and there is an ignorance of Bible truth sadly out of keeping with the vaunted Western intelligence. The student, or other missionary, has up hill work indeed, if his lot is cast among such Westerners. Still more arduous is the work and still less cordial is the welcome of the ambassador who is sent to carry the glad tidings among the Mormons who have established themselves in Southern Alberta. This work was undertaken a year ago, and the benefits are enjoyed also by scattered settlers who are adjacent to the Mormon colony.

But our work consists not only in trying to overtake the needs of the heterogeneous elements which are now crowding in, and which, in the future, are to make up our Canadian nationality. We must do something for those of our own people who have been hitherto neglected. The most striking example of work of this class within recent months has been the visit of Mr. G. A. Wilson to the Cariboo country in Northern British Columbia. He found a widely scattered population of more than three thousand souls almost entirely destitute of religious ordinances. The main industry is mining, but there is, here and there, a little ranching. There have been a few people in the country for a long time, but the number increased slowly on account of the difficulty of reaching it. Recent developments in hydraulic mining, have given a new importance to the region; the population is now advancing rapidly, and the need of a missionary which was acutely enough felt before, is now much more clamant. Mr. Wilson travelled the main Cariboo highway for 200 miles without finding a resident missionary. The responsibility for such a state of things rests with our church, for the majority are Presbyterians, and practically all are willing to unite in support of a Presbyterian missionary. One veteran was met, who had been in the country for twenty-seven years, and now saw a missionary of his own church for the first time. Another, with whom Mr. Wilson spent a night, asked, as he was leaving in the morning, if he could change a ten dollar bill, giving in return a five, "for," said he, "it is worth five dollars to see a Presbyterian minister once more."

The most noticeable progress of the summer has followed the line of the largest immigration, from the Red Deer River northward to Edmonton, and eastward along the Saskatchewan. The difference between the present and the past is seen in the fact, that where, ten years ago, I carried on the church's work alone, there were, last summer, eight missionaries, and next year more will be needed.

Our church will not dare to neglect these calls, which come alike from scattered members of our own communion, and from other nationalities, spiritually destitute. Let those who are now fighting alone in the outposts be supported by our sympathy and our money, and let reinforcements be sent such as will adequately overtake a work for which the Presbyterian church, more than any other, is responsible.

Winnipeg.

The Governor of St. Petersburg is teaching temperance by a new method, which may properly be called Wahl's Object Lessons. Under a general order he issues a "peremptory notice" that any and all persons found upon the streets in a disorderly or intoxicated condition shall have their names and addresses printed on large posters and publicly displayed in the official journal. On one of these lists of 127 names all classes in society are found represented, nearly one-half of them being women. In executing this order General Wahl is inexorable. No privileged persons are exempted from this punishment.

The Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, of New York, of which the Rev. John Hall, D.D., is the pastor, supports three large missions in the city, with ministers who devote themselves to special work among the poor. In these missions they have Sunday Schools for the children, sewing classes for the girls, and training schools for the boys. This church is also erecting, at a cost of \$100,000, another mission building in a destitute part of the city.

Written for THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

## SHOULD LAYMEN ADMINISTER SACRAMENTS?

BY REV. JOHN BURTON, B.D.



ACCORDING to an article in the last issue of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN an interesting question of church order has been before the Presbytery of Montreal. So far as the thorough consideration of the matter is concerned, it could not be in abler hands; and the writer does not presume to indicate to the brethren of that Presbytery any line either of research or of action; only, as one among the many points on which his regard for the traditions of his fathers has been rather rudely shaken, he has an interest in the discussion, and some convictions therein have been reached, which, since the question has been raised, may have more than a personal interest and value. He therefore ventures upon this article.

For years the church has recognized and employed what may for brevity's sake be called "lay preaching," but has never recognized the right of the laity to administer the ordinances, either of Baptism or of the Lord's Supper. I am not convinced that the inconveniences of the restriction have been greater than the good which has been gained by the enforced visit of ministers to all parts of the mission field to dispense the communion and the rite of baptism. The personal contact of so many pastors appointed by Presbytery to dispense ordinances has done much towards keeping alive interest in the home mission work. Nor do I think that the prestige given to ministerial standing by the restriction is without its value. If the ministry is to be held as a divine institution there is need in this day of democratic individualism to emphasise its importance. On these lines the question has little interest for me. Its real importance lies in the deeper question whether we are not in this matter sacerdotalists regarding the ordinances in question, and neglectful in a great measure of the manifest requirements of preaching the Word as embodied, e.g., in such injunctions as we find in 1 Tim. iii. 6; v. 22; Tit. i. 9—in other words, whether we have not bound fast the sacraments, which at most are but signs and seals of covenant blessings, and played fast and loose with the rightly dividing of the Word of truth. The Christian church to day is suffering more from consecrated ignorance in presentation of divine truth than from any supposed irregularity in the dispensation of the sacraments. The crass pessimism, which is being put forth as gospel truth in many quarters, and the false sentiment that the Holy Spirit is more honored as it works through ignorance, than through scholarship, is doing more to foster agnosticism and intensely indifference than all of Col. Ingersoll's school or the extravagances of the critics.

I well remember dropping in suddenly upon a week night meeting in a church where a worthy elder was presiding. I declined the courteous invitation to take the lead, knowing the friend had come prepared, and contented myself with a few words after his excellent and devout exposition. The time came for closing, a brief prayer by my friend and the benediction. Why did he not ask me to pronounce the latter? Was it my sense of ministerial dignity that was hurt, or was there a wrong committed that made me shrink from the benediction pronounced by a lay man? I pondered—"The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture." The apostolic benediction was the "yours truly" of the apostle's letters. What is to prevent any honest soul from uttering the same? Church order is a good thing, and is not to be either lightly esteemed or needlessly broken; but it is not necessarily a matter of faith; nor must its traditional authority in any way be allowed to hinder the spread of the good tidings of great joy to all people. Similarly, in the dispensation of the sacraments, as the question has presented itself to me, very much can be said for our present church order, but it is church order and not New Testament precept; and we must not retain the sacerdotal sentiment that some invisible grace is given by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery whereby the sacraments are rendered more efficacious. We ought the rather to "go over our fundamentals" and thoroughly understand that New Testament church order demands, as ordination requisites, ability to teach, wisdom to rule, and power rightly to divide the Word of truth. We can, in my judgment, better allow a company of brethren to assemble and break bread together, passing round the sacramental cup, than to encourage immature dogmatism in the pulpit, or a crazed pietism which an old pastor once described as *evan-jelly-cal*. The pastoral epistles will still prove our surest guide in all questions concerning those functions which pertain especially to the official relations, and a determined return to them, let our traditions suffer as they may, will be the best adaptation of our church and work to the pressing needs of the times.

## Christian Endeavor.

### THANKSGIVING AND THANKSLIVING.

REV. W. S. M'TAVISH, B.D., ST. GEORGE.

Nov. 25—Eph. v. 15-20

Paul advised the Ephesians to give thanks to God always for all things. This advice came with good grace from him because he practised what he preached. His great heart was always grateful, and very often did he express his gratitude. When he was a prisoner on his way to Rome, some friends came to meet him at the Appii Forum, and when he saw them he thanked God (Acts xxviii. 15). When he was lying, a captive, in a foul, gloomy dungeon, at Philippi, he and his companion, Silas, made the walls of the old prison resound at the hour of midnight with the song of thanksgiving (Acts xvi. 25). Often in his private devotions he gave utterance to the thankful feelings in his heart (Rom. i. 8; 1 Cor. i. 4; Phil. i. 3; 1 Thess. ii. 13; 2 Thess. i. 3; Philem. 4).

Looking at the text, we see that he urges us to give thanks for all things. We should be grateful, and we should express our gratitude for health, for strength, for raiment, for food, for civil and religious liberty. We should bless God for His word, for the privilege of carrying everything to Him in prayer, for the gift of His Son, and for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Should we be thankful for afflictions, for reverses, for trials and troubles? Yes, for even though these things may wear a forbidding look, they are sent in love and are intended for our good. When they come we have reason to believe that God is dealing with us as with children. If we can look back and thank our parents for the discipline we received at home, we ought also to thank God for our chastisements for they are intended for our profit (Heb. xii. 10). We are to thank God for all things, and since we are assured that, notwithstanding appearances to the contrary, all things are working together for our good, we should not fail to express our gratitude for even those things which at first are somewhat distasteful. David said, "I will bless the Lord at all times," and yet there were certainly times in his life when almost everything seemed to be against him. Though the prospect before Daniel, at one period of his life in Babylon, was anything but inviting, yet he continued to pray and give thanks as he had always done (Dan. vi. 10). The true believer should be able to say:—

Glory to Thee for all the grace  
I have not tasted yet.  
Glory to Thee for strength withheld,  
For want and weakness known,  
And the fear that drives me to Thyself  
For what is most my own.

Observe also that we are to give thanks *always*. Dr. Hodge says, "This is not a duty to be preformed once for all, nor merely when new mercies are received; but always, because we are under obligations for temporal and spiritual good already received, which call for perpetual acknowledgement." We should give thanks always because not only is it seemly so to do, but it is also a condition of receiving greater and better blessings in the future. McCheyne, in his remarkable sermon on "Thanksgiving Obtains the spirit," made use of this very striking language: "My dear flock, I am deeply persuaded that there will be no full, soul-filling, heart-ravishing, heart-satisfying out-pouring of the spirit of God till there be more praise and thanking the Lord."

The topic very appropriately connects thanksgiving with thanksgiving. The two should always go hand in hand—indeed, it has been said that thanksgiving is the best thanksgiving. A man at family prayer may recount many of God's mercies and may appear to be truly grateful for them; he may attend church and join very heartily in singing songs of thanksgiving to God, but if he be often heard uttering complaints about hard times or about his troubles, and if he often finds fault with those around him, his professions of gratitude count for very little. Let us show our thankfulness by speaking sometimes of our blessings, by recounting the many kindnesses we have received along the journey of life, and by doing what we can to make the lives of others happy.

The *New York Evangelist* urges pastors to preach series of sermons on the Christian Endeavor pledge. Such a series of sermons, the editor thinks, would arouse the entire church, and would be especially effective if they came in response to a request from the Endeavorers themselves.

A Sunday-school superintendent of Birkenhead, England, testifies that he has never lacked a volunteer teacher for a class. He has only to appeal to the Christian Endeavor Society, and the need is supplied. Bravo!

Mr. Moody says that it is better for a man to get ten men to work than for that man to do the work of ten men.

The *Golden Rule* says: To think you are a genius and work, is better than to be a genius and not work.