

## Our Contributors.

### HOLIDAYS FOR MINISTERS.

BY KNOXONIAN.

"Why should ministers have holidays? Other men work all the year round. Why should not ministers do so?"

Why are you not correct in your facts? Other men *don't* work all the year round. The other men rest fifty-two days in the year if they are not Sabbath-breakers. How many ministers in the Presbyterian Church of Canada have a vacation of over seven weeks or fifty-two days? Every good citizen rests one-seventh part of the time. To be even with the other men in the matter of rest a minister should have as long a vacation as all the Sabbaths of the year put together. The day on which the other men have their needed rest is the day on which the preacher has to do his hardest work.

Why not rest on Monday? says some one. Because he can't. In a congregation of any size each day brings its own share of work and you must do it or fail. Monday brings Monday's work and the work of Monday must be done as well as the work of any other day or the whole week is spoiled. Every city and town preacher knows that Monday is often his busiest day. A great many things that require attending to at the close of the week are put off until after the Sabbath. They accumulate on Monday and make Monday a busy day. Besides, many of the duties that devolve upon a pastor cannot be postponed. How could you say to a family: "Better put off your funeral until Tuesday, Monday is my resting day!" The theory of resting on Monday is fine; in practice it is a dead failure.

There are a few benighted people in the church who think that a minister works on Sabbath only and rests the other six days. We have no controversy with them. This contributor does not write for idiots. Here, then, is one good, solid, all-sufficient reason why a minister should have holidays: He works seven days in the week while most other men work but six.

But is it a fact that the other men who rest every seventh day take no rest except on Sabbath? Everybody knows that a large portion of the community take an annual holiday over and above the rest of the Sabbath. The teachers of this Province have a holiday of about two months every summer and well they deserve it. Lawyers have their long vacation. All mercantile houses give their employees a holiday. In fact all brain workers in this country have a vacation. A half holiday on Saturday is becoming the rule in many manufacturing establishments on this and the other side of the lines, and those who ought to know predict that the day is not far distant when the whole of Saturday will be given by many large employers of labour in the States. Let any man visit the places of summer resort all over this country next month and see whether ministers are the only men who take holidays. A very short inspection will convince him that a large proportion of every class of people in the community take a vacation of greater or less length. About the only men in Canada now who don't get a holiday at some time or other are country ministers. Certainly, they are the only brain workers who never get a vacation.

There are some special reasons why a minister should have a vacation. As a rule his health is his only capital. If that fails, all fails. He has no property or business to fall back upon. There is nothing between his family and semi starvation but his working power. When he becomes unable to work the little income stops. When he can no longer occupy his pulpit, his family can no longer occupy the manse. Health for him means bread and a home for his wife and children. Most other men have something to fall back upon when ill health comes. Ministers as a rule have nothing. This alone will be considered a sufficient reason for giving ministers a vacation by all men who have generosity in their hearts and grace in their souls. The man who asks why should the minister have a holiday would probably be the first to turn the children out of manse if their father's health broke down.

But the reasons are not all of a personal kind. It pays to give the minister a holiday. It pays the congregation of which he is pastor and pays the Church as a whole. Many congregations in towns and cities know this and govern themselves accordingly. They

know that any brain worker can do more work and better work in eleven months of the year than in twelve, and they ask him to work only eleven months and expect him to rest on the twelfth. Most intelligent people are waking up to the idea that a good physique and an abundance of nerve power are indispensable to the highest success in the ministerial profession as in any other. Intelligent people no longer see any necessary connection between preaching and chronic sore throat, between dyspepsia and sanctification. They know that a good mind is usually found in a sound body, and a good voice comes only from a man who knows the value of exercise and plenty of fresh air. Beyond all doubt the thing most needed now by many of our younger ministers is *force*. They are devoted, earnest, cultured, polished, scholarly; but too often intelligent hearers, not at all unfriendly, go away from church, saying: "Excellent young man that, well arranged discourse, well composed, good scholar, no doubt, but he lacks force." So he often does, and the force he lacks is often nerve force. He has been worked at college, in the mission field and in his first pastorate, until there is not enough of him left to move a mass of men. He works on for ten or fifteen years without one decent rest—without one month's holiday, and then he is so weak, spiritless and despondent that first-class work with him is an impossibility. The snap, the ambition, the "ginger" as the doctors say, has gone out of him. Does it pay the Church to support six colleges for the education of young ministers and then use many of the ministers in such a manner that good work from them is an impossibility? Does it pay individual congregations to keep their minister hammering away year after year without a rest until he becomes physically and mentally incapable of a good effort.

At a recent Synodical Conference Principal Grant dealt some very hard but on the whole just blows at ministerial dulness—want of freshness in their pulpit efforts, he termed it—if we rightly remember. The learned Principal gave Sir John Macdonald and Mr. Gladstone as illustrations of how minds may be kept fresh at seventy and eighty. The comparison of a hard-worked country minister, who supports his family on \$400 a year, with the Premier of Canada and the Prime Minister of England scarcely goes on all fours. Had these statesmen been compelled to do the work of many a Canadian minister and support a family on five or six hundred dollars a year, they might have been just as lacking in freshness as any member of the Kingston Presbytery. Sir John has crossed the Atlantic ten or twelve times, has travelled all over America and a little in Europe, has had for forty years all the advantages that money and high position could give him. He spends two or three months every summer that he does not travel in a beautiful summer residence at Riviere Du Loup, breathing the stimulating air of the Lower St. Lawrence. Gladstone has had all his life everything that the world can give to keep a mind fresh. A parson that could not keep his mind fresh under these conditions for a hundred years should be expelled from the pulpit.

There are but two ways of keeping one's mind fresh—by reading and travel. How can a man read new books if he has no money to buy them? How can he travel if he has no money to pay his expenses? A very considerable part of the dulness in the pulpit complained of would be removed if the salaries of poorly-paid ministers were doubled. Not all, by any means. Some men would be dull no matter how well you treated them. Some who have big salaries *are* dull. There is no reasonable probability that Mr. Macdonnell will be able to double the stipends for a year or two yet. The next best thing then is to give the minister a good holiday each year, and see if he does not do better when he returns.

A good many mean things have been done in the Presbyterian Church. Perhaps the meanest was the act of a very strict man who gave his minister a present of a few bushels of potatoes so small that they were unsaleable, and then made the present pay his pew rent. Next to this perhaps the meanest act is that of a parishioner whose minister had not had a rest for twenty years. He hears a well-paid, well-kept, well rested, well helped preacher and exclaims in open mouthed wonder: "Oh, if we had a man like that!" If you had he would soon be as spiritless and weak, and generally pumped out as your own! Give your own minister half the chance that man has had his whole life time, and your minister might be a bet-

ter man. If the parishioners of this man you admire had been *men like you*, your hero would likely have been starved to death or have been sent to a lunatic asylum ten years ago.

This contributor has nothing to complain of personally. He has always had all the holidays he needed or wanted, and kind, generous friends have many a time given him the wherewithal to enjoy them. But he sees men toiling on year after year amidst many discouragements who never have the luxury of a real rest. He has seen more than once worthy brethren pinching themselves when taking a little trip because they well knew that the loved ones at home could ill bear the expense. He knew well that many of the parishioners of these brethren were rolling in wealth and that many of them spend hundreds on their holidays every year. He hears men preach occasionally and he knows well that if they had more recreation, more nerve power, more of that life and "go" that health and prosperity usually give, they could serve their Master and their Church much more efficiently. If this paper is the means of giving one such man a holiday, "Knoxonian" has his reward.

### THE OLD TESTAMENT REVISION.

BY REV. JAMES LITTLE, M.A.

In offering a few remarks in reference to the changes made by the Revisers, we must remember that we have a *revision* and not a *translation* of the Old Testament before us. The Revisers were not authorized to make a new translation; but were required to adhere as closely as possible to the authorized version, only departing from it "when in the judgment the most competent scholars change was necessary." They did not therefore make every change or every improvement which occurred to them or seemed good; but only such as fidelity required. The first principle laid down to them "was to introduce as few alterations as possible into the text of the authorized version consistently with faithfulness." Under these restrictions the changes are fewer than was commonly expected. We notice only a few of these changes. There is first the obvious one made on the form of the text by following the rational method of dividing it into paragraphs according to the sense, rather than the arbitrary one of dividing it into chapter and verse as in the version in use. Any confusion which might arise from this change is obviated by placing, as is done, the numbers of the chapter and verse on the margin; thus, also, convenience of reference and ease of comparison is secured. Every thoughtful reader has felt at times the arbitrariness of breaking, as is sometimes done in the common version, the continuity of a passage or paragraph by the closing of one and the beginning of another chapter in the midst of it. We also frequently find quotations, pieces of poetry or psalms, so incorporated into a writer's own words as not to be easily distinguished from them. In the new version all quotations, all peculiarities of construction in the poetic books, the different speakers in dramatic parts of these books, all Hebrew parallelisms, etc., are brought out before the eye, which greatly promotes a ready apprehending of the drift and meaning of the record.

Then we find many changes of phrases and forms of expression with which we are familiar for others which will be found more intelligible and correct. Thus in the first chapter of Genesis the expression "the evening and the morning were the first day," "the evening and the morning were the second day," is changed to the more intelligible one: "then was evening and then was morning one day," or "the evening and then was morning a second day," etc. The phrase often occurring in the historical books of the Old Testament: "the tabernacle of the congregation," is everywhere changed to the more correct and proper one, "tent of meeting." The designation "meat offering," so often spoken of in connection with the service of God, describes an offering in the making of which no flesh was used. Hence the Revisers have given us in its stead the somewhat novel but more correct term: "meal-offering."

Then we have words changed on account of their archaic character, or of their obscurity, or to correspond with the progress of physical and philological science. Thus we exchange the term "unicorn" for "wild ox"; that of "screech-owl" for "night mowster"; that of "behemoth" for "hippopotamus" (in margin), that of "leviathan" for "crocodile" (in margin).