

Church News.

We are thankful for items of Church News...

Pastors and Readers.

Pastors are respectfully requested to announce to their congregations...

We will promptly send specimen copies of the paper to all persons whose addresses may be furnished us.

PRESBYTERIAN NEWS CO.

WORD has been received that the "Abyssinia" with the party of our missionaries on board en route for Honan, reached Yokohama in safety.

REV. J. L. MURRAY, M.A., pastor of Knox Church, Kincardine, recently favoured the N. P. Association with an address on the topic, "A Visit to Europe."

THE Rev. D. MacRae has returned to V. C. O., after an absence of six months spent in the East, and resumed his work there Mr. Knowler, who supplied his place during his absence, returning to Winnipeg to continue his studies in Manitoba College.

REV. PRINCIPAL MACVICAR, Presbyterian College, Montreal, is delivering on Sabbath afternoons, in the Crescent-street church, a course of lectures on "The Structure of the Bible." The lectures are designed for young men and women and are well attended.

THE News-Advertiser of Vancouver, B.C., in its issue of Oct. 15, gives a verbatim report of a sermon preached on Sabbath Observance the previous Sabbath by Rev. E. D. MacLaren, pastor of S. Andrew's. The preacher points out various modes of Sabbath desecration in vogue in that Province, and enters a solemn protest against their continuance.

THE Presbyterians of Alexander, a village to the west of Brandon, have long felt the want of a place of worship. A very neat and well-finished frame church, on a good solid stone foundation, has been built this summer, at a cost of \$1,600, and capable of accommodating 200 people. It was opened on Oct. 27th by appropriate services, conducted in the morning and afternoon by the Rev. Dr. King, and in the evening by the Rev. Mr. Ross, of the Methodist church. The attendance, especially in the afternoon, was very large, and embraced persons of all denominations. The collection was nearly \$100, a liberal one in the circumstances.

ON Friday evening, Nov. 1st, there was a large gathering of relatives at the house of the Rev. W. G. Wallace, 11 Madison avenue, Toronto, met to celebrate the golden wedding of his father and mother. The evening brought to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Wallace many assurances of the affectionate regard of their loved ones. Incidents of the gathering were presentations of a gold-headed cane and gold brooch from the grand-children, and of purses of gold from the nephews and nieces. Nearly fifty guests were at the wedding supper, and all joined in hearty congratulations to the bride and groom, and in hoping for them many choice blessings in the future.

QUEBEC NOTES.

HALLOWEEN was celebrated at Levis by a concert in connection with St. Andrew's church, of that place. The Rev. Prof. Tanner occupied the chair, and a pleasant and profitable evening was spent. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was dispensed in Chalmers' church on Sunday, the 29th October, when the Rev. D. Tait, B.A., the pastor, preached an able and practical sermon. The evening service was conducted by the venerable Dr. Clarke, pastor emeritus of Chalmers' church. The same ordinance was observed on the same day in St. Andrew's church, the morning service being conducted by the pastor, the Rev. A. T. Love, B.A., and the evening by the Rev. Prof. Macadam, who preached an eloquent and learned sermon to a large congregation. The evening of Friday, 1st inst., saw the formal opening of the twenty-ninth session of the Divinity Faculty of Morrin College. The Convocation Hall was well filled with an audience comprising the culture and intelligence of Canada's ancient capital. On the platform, among others, were the Revs. Principal Cooke, W. B. Clarke, D.D., Prof. Weir, M.A., LL.D., A. T. Love, B.A., and Prof. Macadam. The opening address was delivered by the venerable Principal who had taken for his subject, "The Difficulties of Natural and Revealed Religion." I was an able and vigorous paper, and was listened to throughout with marked attention. This session opens with the most pleasing prospects in the history of the College. For the last few years the attendance has been steadily increasing, and during the past year a large amount of money had been added to the endowment fund, and more is expected shortly. The Governors are determined to spare no pains to make this one of the foremost institutions of its kind in the Dominion. The Rev. Thomas Macadam, of Strathroy, Ontario, who has recently been appointed to the chair of Mental and Moral Philosophy in Morrin College, assumed his duties on the first of November. We take the following from the Quebec Morning Chronicle of October 23rd: "At the last meeting of the Presbytery of Sarles, a minute of the Governors of Morrin College, Quebec City, appointing the Rev. Thomas Macadam to the chair

of Logic, Mental and Moral Philosophy, and Systematic Theology, was laid on the table. The Rev. Dr. Thompson stated that he had been requested by the Governors to represent the claims of the College. He explained that Morrin College had an Arts Faculty which carried on exactly the same work as McGill University, and prepared students for the B.A. examination, thereby doing very important work in furnishing a complete university education. It also prepared young men for the ministry of the Church in its Theological department. The duties of the chair to which Mr. Macadam had been appointed embraced the very important work of carrying on the metaphysical studies of students up to their B.A.; and the responsible task of conducting part of their theological studies beyond this up to a license as ministers of the Presbyterian Church, in a further three years' course. He said it was difficult to find a man of such natural gifts, varied acquirements and scholarship, as could satisfactorily discharge the various duties of such a chair. It was easy to find a man suitable for a minister, but not easy to find one suitable for a professor's chair, dealing with such important departments as those referred to. Such a man the Governors of Morrin College had been seeking, and they had selected Mr. Macadam, whom he believed and his brethren generally believed to be eminently fitted for the work. Their choice had done honour not only to Mr. Macadam, but to the Presbytery, and to the congregation who had discerned his gifts, and to whom he had proved such an efficient minister. Mr. Macadam had done very important work in the Province of Quebec in the past, and the large endowment recently received, as the appointment of such a man as Mr. Macadam, gave promise of still greater success. It was not a sectarian institution so far as well as its University department was concerned. He himself had taught in it, and mentioned, among others, two distinguished Roman Catholics as old students with whom he was on very friendly terms—one of them a priest. He thought the Presbytery should agree to his translation, though his removal would be a great loss to them; and assured Mr. Macadam that he would find the social atmosphere of a large city like Quebec freer and healthier than in country towns, or in any congregation, and that consequently he would find a larger and more congenial scope for the exercise of the ability God had given him.

THE MINISTRY OF THE DEACONESSES.

BY REV. L. H. JORDAN, B.D., MONTREAL.

A GREAT and bitter cry is incessantly going up from suffering humanity—from the poor, from the sick, from the friendless, from the needy! And whence so naturally as from the living Church of Christ should the longed-for response be given? That Church is called by the name of One who, going about doing good, was emphatically "The healer of the helpless, the stay of all the weak;" and in the spirit of her divine King and Head, and in conformity with the example of her primitive Apostolic model, the Church of to-day must ever be conspicuous for her deeds of loving sympathy and of warm Christian charity. Nor will it suffice if only a few of her representatives, or even the great bulk of her membership, acting individually, should assume to discharge this function; rightly to undertake such a work as has been committed to her care, it must be carried on perseveringly and systematically, under prompt and intelligent control, and with adaptation for reaching quickly and effectively the end toward which it is directed. It must be confessed that among Protestants, hitherto, there has been very serious oversight in this particular; and, as a consequence, all the Churches of the Reformed faith have suffered grievous loss. Take, for example, the indifference with which so many regard the office of the deaconess. Roman Catholicism, through our lukewarmness in this matter, has gained an unquestionable advantage over its "separated brethren." It is true that, in certain respects, the Roman Catholic Church has most unwarrantably modified the character of that primitive female order which Protestantism, on the other hand, has as unwarrantably ignored; nevertheless, it was through the instrumentality of the nuns that Romanism first reached and won the hearts of scores who are to-day defenders of that system. The destitute and the sick, the young and the ignorant, the neglected and the criminal—are not these the classes among whom the nuns have long been accustomed so effectively to labour? And while a closer observance of the precept and practice of the New Testament would necessitate important changes in the methods and characteristic features of that order, a similar study of the Word, on the part of unbiased Protestants, would demonstrate the legitimacy and value of an office which dates from the very earliest Christian ages. It is a significant and very gratifying sign of the times that among Protestants a desire to see the office of the deaconess revived is becoming steadily more manifest. And this sentiment is not confined to any particular denomination, or to any particular quarter of Protestant Christendom. Among Anglicans, Congregationalists, Methodists and Presbyterians, there is the same deepening conviction. In truth, it is beginning to be generally recognized that the deaconess is not only a divinely sanctioned helper in the Church, but that her help is inseparable from the highest ecclesiastical efficiency. It is now realized as never before that woman possesses qualifications so manifest and pre-eminent for performing certain of the functions pertaining to the Scriptural diaconate, that only a distinct Scriptural prohibition should debar her from discharging its delicate and difficult duties. Accordingly, under the influence of a steadily strengthening impulse, women are now quite frequently being set apart to this office and ministry. Moreover, in order that those who undertake this service may fulfil its requirements with the largest possible measure of success, "homes" for their careful instruction and training are rapidly being multiplied. A few of these institutions exist already in the United States, the Drexel Home in Philadelphia being noticeably complete as regards both equipment and endowment.

Similar establishments, equally adapted to the end they are to serve, are at once to be erected in Chicago and New York. In these houses women of devoted Christian spirit are patiently prepared for their chosen life-work. Received at first as probationers, they are taught more perfectly in the Scriptures and in the art of imparting Bible knowledge; while at some adjoining hospital they are made acquainted with those multifarious details which make them invaluable as attendants upon the sick. When the period of probation has been deemed satisfactory, these carefully trained women are promoted to the status of deaconesses. They are now admirably qualified either to teach or to nurse; and while they are all fitted to give help in relieving the necessities of the body, they are ever especially solicitous to enlighten and nourish the soul. If they adopt the calling of teachers, they proceed to open and conduct day schools for the children of the very poor, night schools for those who can give no other time to study, sewing classes, singing classes, etc. Above all else, they make a point of instructing in God's Word those who are ignorant of its contents: they go from house to house, carrying with them everywhere the message of glad tidings; they arrange for Gospel meetings, mothers' meetings, young converts' meetings, etc. If, on the other hand, they adopt the calling of nurses—and by far the larger proportion of them do so decide—they hold themselves ready to go at the shortest notice to the bedside of the sick, whether these be found in private houses or in public hospitals. It is thus that, in the discharge of the varied duties of this office, the searching and seasonable word can so often be effectively spoken. It is not difficult, when the wants of a sufferer's body have been relieved by strange but gentle hands, to turn his grateful thoughts towards his rejected Lord and Master. And so, under the ministrations of this order, many a stranger to the knowledge and love of God has been brought back to the Father's house; many a wounded spirit has experienced the healing virtue of Gilead's balm; many a lonely soul has become joined forever unto Him who verily "sticketh closer than a brother."

OBJECTIONS TO REVIVING THE OFFICE OF THE DEACONESSES.

Notwithstanding, however, the benefits which even already have been the fruit of restoring in some quarters this ancient ministry of women, and notwithstanding the ardour with which, by its friends, the new departure has been steadfastly defended, there are still many who in every community are ready to withstand this movement with more or less vigorous opposition. It would be to them a supreme satisfaction if they could crush it at once out of existence, or (failing in that attempt) if they could hamper it to such an extent as to render it manifestly incomplete and ineffective. In this way they hope ultimately to disengage from this cause the warm sympathies of those to whose loyal advocacy it is so deeply indebted.

It is not to be denied that any revival of this sort, especially in its initial stages, is surrounded by peculiar difficulties and dangers; and of this deaconess movement in particular it has wisely been said: "It is to be hoped that there will be careful consideration of all the implications (and, we may add, complications) of the proposed action before the Churches commit themselves irrevocably." It can be shown, however, that the dreaded difficulties and dangers have been very unduly magnified. Moreover, the knowledge that they are likely to be confronted is, perhaps, the very best guarantee that they will be successfully surmounted.

The following objections are selected from among many by which this return to primitive Apostolic practice has most frequently been greeted. Yet, if those who discountenance this endeavour to restore the female diaconate are able to fortify their position with no more substantial defences, their citadel must be pronounced an exceedingly insecure one.

1. A response to mere craving for novelty.—It is urged in certain quarters that the revival of the office of the deaconess means simply a yielding at another point to a spirit of restless innovation—a spirit which is far too prevalent already, and which catches with avidity at every new thing.

But the order of the deaconess, far from being an innovation, is an exceedingly ancient institution. On the authority of exegetes of the very first rank, the female diaconate dates from the days of the Apostles. If, then, the diaconate of women appears to be an innovation today, it is simply because the Church of the last fifteen centuries has most strangely undervalued it. This short-sighted surrender on the part of our predecessors is proposed now to rectify. Not innovation, but reverent restoration rather, is the animating principle of this modern reformatory movement.

2. An unwholesome imitation of Romanism.—Many would lay an embargo upon the proposed revival of this office because it savours too strongly of Rome. It would amount, they contend, to the deliberate establishment of a Protestant sisterhood of charity.

But the female diaconate savours of Romanism only in so far as Romanism savours of the New Testament, and the New Testament is admitted to be a very safe guide for all who would serve God acceptably. It is important, however, to emphasize this very radical distinction. No slightest desire exists in the breasts of any Protestant to substitute a nun for a deaconess. This dutiful servant of the Roman Catholic Church, although she is the historical successor of the New Testament deaconess, is not her legitimate successor; she is rather the unauthorized supplanter of the New Testament deaconess. This form of the female diaconate we neither covet nor commend. And Rome, on the other hand, has very scant sympathy with the female diaconate which we do covet and commend. The sisterhood for which we plead, far from being a mere imitation of the Roman Catholic sisterhoods, has been tacitly disclaimed by that Church. Gladly has she seen it disappear; and she will never willingly revive it. This second objection, therefore, like the first, appeals to the ignorance of the hearer. It makes appeal also to the unholy passion of prejudice.

3. A compromise with Romanism.—It is often affirmed: If the female diaconate be revived, and especially if Protestant deaconesses are to be gathered together in special establishments erected for this

purpose, these female workers will differ so slightly from nuns that they might as well be bluntly designated by that name. This impression is clearly the result of a misunderstanding. There is nothing monastic about the teaching of the New Testament. In the case of a nun it is known to be otherwise; but the deaconess is bound by no life vow, neither is she enveloped in the mystery of a dubious seclusion. She lives, indeed, in a home specially set apart for her protection and training; but she remains within it only so long as she is preparing herself for her work, or while she is waiting for some fresh call upon her sympathies, or until God gives her release from the infirmities of sickness or old age. In reality she is no more "separated from the world" than a Presbyterian elder is so separated; and possibly some of our ruling elders even would be immeasurably the better of a corresponding period of special training for service!

4. A procedure thoroughly un- Presbyterian.—It is still further objected: Admitting that the female diaconate is not an innovation, and that the order is distinctively Protestant instead of being Romish, it is nevertheless something which runs counter alike to the traditions and genius of the Presbyterian system. It may not unfrequently be recognized in the great prelatical Churches; but a Presbyterian deaconess—why, the very thought of it is preposterous!

It is to be desired that every such super-sensitive critic could have been present at the Council of the Reformed Churches which assembled in London in July, 1888, for his narrow conceptions of Presbyterianism would have been very hopefully broadened. That august Congress, as is very well known, was made up of the representative laymen and divines of the whole Presbyterian world. Many valuable reports were submitted and considered; but few among them all were accorded a more willing attention or evoked a more hearty enthusiasm than the report of the Committee of Women's Work in the Church. And what did that report—a report prepared by eminently judicious men, who, moreover, had given the whole subject careful and impartial study during a period of some four years—deliberately recommend? It declared it to be the judgment of the committee that, inasmuch as "the time has fully come for the organization of woman's work by the Churches on some definite principle," the Council should proceed to sanction that principle which is laid down in the New Testament—that is to say, some of the foremost scholars of our communion recommended, and the most representative gathering of our Church which has yet been convened cordially endorsed the recommendation, that steps be taken to revive the Scriptural ministry of the deaconess. Surely none shall venture to say again, a deaconess is something distasteful, because it is utterly un- Presbyterian!

5. A large and embarrassing expense.—Some men appear to be ready to sacrifice almost anything if its introduction or existence is inseparable from the item of cost. On the other hand they can be counted upon to offer no serious opposition to anything, even to something which tampers with the fundamental verities of our faith, provided the proposed procedure does not involve them in expense. It is an utterly false way of determining the value of anything to be forever asking one's self the question, What does it cost? What is it worth? is the really crucial question; for there are ever to be discovered in earth's vineyard some pearl of inestimable price—a pearl which is cheap to the man who acquires it, though it costs him all that he possesses. And the order of the female diaconate, as long as it is confined within strictly Scriptural limitations, is cheap at any price.

As a matter of fact, however, the practical operation of training houses for deaconesses has never involved any insuperable financial difficulty. The public are almost invariably generous in contributing towards the support of every deserving charity, but charities such as those which have become associated with Kaiserswerth or Midway—where orphans are housed, and the naked are clothed, and the sick are healed or relieved—never appeal for succor in vain. Besides, no small part of the expense connected with these institutions is cheerfully borne by the patients for whom they provide. Those who suffer extreme poverty are not expected to tender any payment in return, but many of the deaconesses themselves, and (where their circumstances will permit) scores of those who have been cared for by them, present willing thank-offerings to the home that has afforded them help.

6. An undue elevation of woman.—It is maintained by some that to create an order of deaconesses would be to give to woman in the Church a position of unwarranted importance. Whereupon certain (irrelevant) citations are made from the New Testament!

It may be sufficient to reply that woman has ever occupied in the Christian family a position of the very first importance—a position which, of late, she is likewise claiming and securing in every Christian State; and there seems to be no warrant for excluding her from a similar honourable standing in the modern Christian Church. It is, of course, admitted that Paul instructed Timothy that women were to "learn in silence with all subjection," adding, "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." Preaching by women, therefore, and the placing of a woman over the regularly appointed rulers of a congregation appear to be distinctly prohibited; but it is to be remarked that, in the tenth verse of this very same chapter, the Apostle as distinctly declares: "I will that... women adore themselves... with good works." And if service of this character entitles a man to honour and position in any Christian congregation, on what grounds of equity can a woman be excluded from obtaining upon the same conditions the bestowment of like reward? (To be continued)

THIS present is an excellent time for the friends of THE REVIEW to assist the publishers in introducing it into families as yet without a Presbyterian journal. A perusal of the Premium list given elsewhere will show our readers that we are willing to pay liberally those who may devote their time and energies to building up our circulation. Read the whole column, carefully and then send for sample copies of THE REVIEW for distribution.

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