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I am, Sir, yours, etc.,

T. BEDFORD JONES,
Archdeacon.

Napanee,
July 2, 1886.

CHURCH SYNOD GREETINGS.

SIR.—If you will give me space I wish to ask for information on this subject. At the last meeting of the Toronto Synod, when conveying their "fraternal" greeting to the Methodist Conference, the Synod by the reverend gentleman, on whom the pleasing duty devolved, said that in doing this they wished to emphasize the word "fraternal." Will any of your many learned readers kindly inform me as to how the "fraternal" with or without emphasis, can be reconciled with the ordination vows of a clergyman of the Church of England? In the solemn service of his ordination to the office of the priest, the candidate is asked this question by the Bishop, "Will you be ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's word?" to which he answers, "I will the Lord being my helper." And afterwards he subscribes to this declaration in the 86th Canon, "I—do solemnly make the following declaration:—I assent to the thirty-nine Articles of Religion and to the Book of Common Prayer, and of Ordering of Bishops, Priests and Deacons; I believe the doctrine of the Church of England as therein in set forth to be agreeable to the Word of God."

What am I to understand by the expressions, *erroneous and strange doctrines*? I always have understood them to mean such doctrines as are contrary to or not consistent with those taught in our Book of Common Prayer. And with my own hand I have subscribed to the above declaration, that I believe doctrine contained in the Book of Common Prayer to be agreeable to the Word of God. Now I understand that Methodists deny many of the doctrines in this book; unless I am wrongly informed they deny the doctrine of absolution at the very beginning of our liturgy. They do not hold the *descent into hell* in the Apostle's Creed in the sense in which it is taught in the scriptures. They deny the *one baptism for the remission of sins* of the Nicene Creed. They repudiate even in strong terms the teaching of the rubric to the ordinal. And also some of the thirty-nine Articles are rejected by them. My impression has always been that if I am to act honestly I am bound to endeavour to banish and drive away these doctrines that are contrary to the doctrines of our Prayer Book. Have I ever since my ordination been labouring under a wrong impression on this matter or not? I desire very much to know how English clergymen learned and honest can consistently offer a Methodist Conference a "fraternal" greeting? I ask sincerely and earnestly for a light on this subject which perhaps I do not yet possess.

I feel sure my request cannot be thought to be impertinent.

INQUIRER.

Diocese of Niagara.

THE COMMUTATION FUND.

No. 2.

SIR.—As regards the condition of the By-law under which I and others were placed as beneficiaries on the fund, there was no dispute but that they had been complied with; the Synod contends that it is not legally bound by the conditions it set forth in the By-law for any longer period than it thinks well, although it did not limit any time for the benefit. Respecting the legislation the following is required by the Constitution:—"Every proposition for an alteration in the Constitution or Canons of the Synod must be sent to the Standing Committee to be forwarded to the members of the Synod." (See Canons, etc., page 11, clause 24.) At the Synod of 1875, a committee brought in a report offering some amendments to a prior Canon increasing the benefit to all beneficiaries under the Trust, but it was not received or considered in any. Bishop Hellmuth signed the report as Chairman of the Committee, and the following note in italics was appended:—"This is presented as the report of the majority, the Chairman dissenting therefrom on certain points." The Synod Journal then states:—"The Bishop addressed the Synod at length on this subject and stated that dissenting from several important provisions of the proposed Canon, he had determined upon preparing a Canon himself for submission to the Synod. Desiring to save the time of the members by avoiding needless discussion,

he had sought the sense of the Standing Committee as to the most appropriate time for him to introduce his Canon, and their unanimous counsel was that it should be brought forward at the opening of the question rather than after discussion had taken place. He concluded by presenting the following Canon, printed copies of which were circulated among the members," (Synod Journal, 1875, pages 31, 32.) This was the first time, the Synod had heard anything about it, although clause 16 of the Constitution required, and still requires, that "a circular containing a statement of such business is to be submitted to the Synod shall be forwarded to each clergyman and representative two weeks before the meeting of the Synod." The following resolution then appears:—"That the Canon prepared by the Bishop on 'appropriation of accrued interest of the Commutation Fund,' and now read, be adopted in the place of the present By-law, and the same to take effect from the 1st April next." After some amendments it was declared carried. Unless the Constitution is binding upon the Synod it becomes farcical, and assumes the grab of mockery. The notice required by the Constitution had not been given.

At the Synod of 1876, I brought forward a motion to regulate the future application of the surplus of the Commutation Fund, and which proposed an increased benefit to the beneficiaries, but clearly set forth that those already on the fund should have their claims fully recognised, and according to the requirements of the Constitution, notice of this appeared in the Circular convening the Synod. An amendment was afterwards moved, not to my motion, but to a prior Canon, which completely took away the annuities of those who had been recipients. Of this amendment no notice had been previously given. Even if it had been moved as an amendment to my motion, which it was not, it could not have been valid, because it destroyed the principle which mine involved. This must appear evident, because an amendment to a motion is not to destroy it, but to amend it in its details, without voiding the principle involved. The confusion at this Synod was very great, so much so, that the negative vote was not taken, but the Doxology was sung. The minutes declare that the said amendment was carried unanimously, but how could that be without the negative vote having been taken? (Synod Journal, 1876, pages 41, 42, 43, 44.) In this case also the notice required by the Constitution, I contend had not been given. Regarding the last point, the legislation did not take place until June 22nd, but the said Canon was dated to come into operation on April 1st, preceding its pretended passage. This I contend was illegal, the Synod having no power to pass *ex post facto* enactments which deprive the beneficiary of any already accrued benefit. To add to, or increase a benefit is allowably justifiable. (See Synod Journal last quoted.)

(To be continued.)

J. T. WRIGHT.

The Parsonage, St. Mary's,
July 21st, 1885.

Notes on the Bible Lessons FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS, ON THE INSTITUTE LEAFLETS.

Published under authority of the Sunday School Committee of the Toronto Diocese.

Compiled from W. S. Smith's work on Genesis and other writers.

AUGUST 9th, 1885.

VOL. IV. 10th Sunday after Trinity. No. 87

BIBLE LESSON.

"The Vision in the Wilderness."
Genesis xxviii. 10, 22.

We have seen how Jacob, encouraged and helped by his mother, by deceit obtained the blessing from his father. Wrong doing, however, always brings sorrow, and Jacob was no exception to this rule. Esau was very angry when he discovered the trick played on him and determines to revenge himself by slaying his brother Jacob, as soon as his father Isaac should die. Jacob must flee for life; Isaac concurs with Rebekah in her wish to send him away, so he calls him and confirms the blessing already given, telling him at the same time to go to Padan-aram, and marry one of his uncle Laban's daughters. He had evidently kept up his intercourse with his kindred and wishes to prevent Jacob marrying anyone but a worshipper of the true God.

(1). *The Weary Wanderer.* Jacob now begins to realize the bitter fruits of his conduct. He goes

forth from his father's house alone, with no splendid retinue of servants, probably full of sad thoughts, he "wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way." Psalm cvii. 4, with nothing but a staff in his hand, Gen. xxxii. 10. We can easily imagine how lonely he felt when night came on, with no where to lay his head; but this poverty and privation brings him nearer to God. He lies down to sleep in the open air, with a stone for a pillow.

(2). *The Wondrous Vision.* The weary traveller sleeps, and as he sleeps on his hard couch he dreams. God sends him a beautiful vision of hope and comfort. He sees, as it were, a luminous pathway or stairway in the midnight sky, up and down which shining angels were ascending and descending, the messengers of God, whence He gives charge concerning us, who by their ministry defend us from "the terror by night and the arrow that flieth by day," Psalm xci. 5, 11; Psalm xxxiv. 7. The office of the angels is one ministry, Heb. i. 14, whence they ascend they bring up the prayers of the faithful before God and when they descend, they being a favourable answer to the prayers which God has heard, compare Acts x. 4. Our Lord, in St. John i. 51, makes an application of this vision to Himself. The ladder was a type of our Lord Himself, because He is the very way to the father, St. John xiv. 6, and the door to eternal life. "The Lord stood above it," verse 13. He whom Jacob saw may be believed to be God the Word, or the Son by whom the Father reveals Himself to man. In Him we see heaven open. What was the divine message? It contained a renewal of the promise made to Abraham, chap. xii. 8, and God further assures him of the Divine Presence, "I am with thee," of the Divine Protection, "I will keep thee" and of the Divine Preservation "I will bring again." So God promised Abraham, chapter xv. 1, and Isaac chapter xxvi. 24. When Jacob awoke he was full of joy and reverence. He had forgotten as we too often do, that God was close to him, wherever he went, verse 16. Now it seems as though he could never forget it again, that lonely wilderness seemed to him the gate of heaven, verse 17. He sets up the stone that had made his pillow, as a memorial, and pours out upon it to show that it was to be holy, compare Leviticus viii. 10. Isaiah xix. 19. And he calls the name of the place Bethel, i.e., House of God.

(3). *The Willing Vow,* verses 20, 22. This is both a vow and a prayer, "I pray that God may watch over me, and protect me, and supply my wants, and if He shall hear my prayer, and restore me in peace to my father's house, then I vow to Him, the tenth of all that He shall give me." Here we see how Jacob's repentance and faith were called out by the vision, he now takes an independent step and resolves to take God to be indeed his God. Let us observe the order of what he desired. It corresponds with our Saviour's rule to seek things of the greatest importance first, see St. Matt. vi. 33. His desires are moderate also, compare 1 Tim. vi. 8, 9. Such was the prayer of Agnes in Prov. xxx. 7, 9, and thus Christ Himself teaches us to pray "Give us this day our daily bread."

Many young people on leaving home feel sad and lonely as they go among strangers. Let them remember that the God of Jacob is near them. May they be led, like Jacob, learning their own usefulness and helplessness, to give themselves to God, then will they be safe and happy wherever they go. Observe how our Church in the solemn rite of confirmation, invites each one to consecrate himself to God.

O Jesus I have promised
To serve Thee to the end,
Be Thou forever near me,
My Master and my Friend.

—Science, in her own province, is a glorious and welcome revealer of God's truth. Let her only be rightly, cautiously, and reverently interpreted.—*Roden Noel.*

Speak gently! 'tis a little thing,
Dropped in the heart's deep well;
The good, the joy that it may bring
Eternity shall tell.—*Longfort.*