

monish the erring and wayward on the other, to deal earnestly and faithfully with immortal souls so that he may rule us in the fear of God.

(c) Another qualification which should characterize the elder is that he be "sound in the faith," not carried about by every wind of doctrine.

This is not a matter of business where crude opinions may be uttered and false motives expressed without injurious results following. One false opinion expressed may imperil a soul, and as the duties of the elder lie along the line of teaching, this qualification should not be overlooked; but as Paul in his Epistle to Titus puts it: "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and convince the gainsayers."

Submitting these as qualifications for the work I purpose referring now to some considerations whereby the elder may be more efficient in his work.

1. In the first place there should be perfect harmony between him and his pastor. Want of unanimity in a session will render the best laid measures for Church work ineffectual, and it is essential that on all the prominent moral questions there should be perfect harmony. Unless this be the case the pastor's hands are virtually tied. Take for example the question of "Intemperance." The pastor observes the evil spreading in his congregation, he preaches against it and prays that deliverance may be sent to those who are bowing the knee to Bacchus, and instead of succeeding in purging the congregation of the evil he finds some members of his session instrumental in paralyzing every effort in that direction. Such men surely have forgotten the scene described in the seventeenth chapter of Exodus where Aaron and Hur held up the hands of Moses until Joshua discomfited Amalek.

To be successful in arresting sin the elder must be prepared to give his heartiest support in the behalf of all moral movements—bold in defence of the right—in example and precept affording encouragement and imparting influences which are helpful.

2. Again he should be thoroughly loyal to his pastor and should regard his obligations to him as of the most sacred character.

In the momentous and solemn duties of the pastor's work with his heart yearning for sympathy, who should be the first to bring the "alabaster box" of ointment and with a whole-hearted devotion do what they can to assist him, but the elder? Who should defend his reputation, silence evil speakers, assist him in waging war against sin, be regular in attendance on ordinances, active in the Sabbath school, assisting in the prayer-meeting, zealous in the missionary operations of the Church, visiting the sick, pleading with the wayward and pointing them to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world—who, I would ask, but the elder?

There is not a cause for either joy or sorrow in the congregation but should touch a cord in the elder's heart, and there is not a line of duty indicated but belongs to him as much as to his pastor. Our elders are slow to learn that they are not mere figure-heads. Their vows imply sacrifice; their profession suggests work, and what a grand influence could be exercised were they alive to their privileges. Many of them adorn the social circles in which they move, and were they to enter in the proper spirit upon their official duties, they would shed a holy lustre upon their position, and prove, in God's hands, a blessing. How it thrills a pastor's heart to have such men as his counsellors, who, on all occasions, are ready to hold up his hands, to come with affectionate respect and advise with him—to assist him in enforcing just admonition; in maintaining discipline, and, in a word, by using every means in their power to promote the comfort and extend the usefulness of his labours.

In many of our country congregations (and not a few of our towns might be included) the pastor receives no moral support from his session, not from lack of ability on their part, for some of the most pious as well as the most intelligent are found in our rural districts; yet many a pastor knows to his sorrow the truth whereof I affirm. In some cases it may be that the session are mostly aged men and are satisfied with being in the position of the Church of Laodicea: "Neither cold nor hot." In such circumstances it might be well to pause and ask, has sufficient care always been exercised in enlisting the younger men with their business power and sanctified life into the eldership? All reverence and respect those who enter the Church's service in their youth and

who have grown gray in that service; but they are passing from among us, and if our young men, their hearts glowing with enthusiasm and zeal for the glory of God, could be enlisted in her service, a new impetus would be imparted.

3. Again, every elder should have his district, and a strict supervision should be maintained as to dereliction of duty. But all the qualifications necessary, and the considerations submitted will prove futile unless we plead earnestly with God for His blessing. Here again the elder should remember his pastor. In the onerous duties belonging to his office how comforting the thought to know that faithful ones are supplicating God on his behalf. The elder, like the pastor, should live in the very atmosphere of prayer. In the chamber of the sick and dying, in conversing with the young and pointing them to the Saviour; in guiding the anxious soul to the "Bleeding Lamb;" in imparting hope to the desponding; in pointing the aged saint to Pisgah's heights to view their promised land; prayer—importunate prayer—should be the alpha and omega of all. Will we not then, as a Church, plead earnestly that our eldership be baptized afresh by a holy baptism, and that they be esteemed very highly in love for their work's sake.

Brewmanville, April, 1884. THOMAS YELLOWLEES.

EASTERN ONARIO.

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.

Our friends down by the sea have their own way of looking at things, and so of interpreting the rules and regulations of the Assembly. Let me give an example of their way of doing things, for they are profound church lawyers down in that region. A minister was for quite a number of years settled in the eastern section, but in the summer of 1882 was called to a charge in the western section and accepted the call. In the simplicity of his heart he imagined that when he moved into the bounds of the western section, the proper thing for him to do with respect to the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund was to forward his dues to Toronto as he had before forwarded them to Halifax. He got undeceived a few days ago. Evidently the wise men in the east are of a different opinion. They interpret the law differently. They sent by post an urgent dun for two years' dues, requiring, of course in a mild and respectful way, that the arrears be paid up before the 1st of May. Happily there is nothing said so far about costs or interest. Your correspondent supposes that the cautious course for the brother in question to pursue would be to pay no more until it be made clear what the correct interpretation of the law is. He has not much doubt in his own mind, but such action on the part of the sages from the orient is enough to cause doubt.

Next week will bring the closing exercises in Queen's College, and at the same time the commencement exercises, as our cousins across the line put it, of the University. A large programme is made out; the proceedings will take up two days if not more. The Alma Mater Society is to hold a conversation on Tuesday evening. A large number of invitations have been issued. An unusual interest will enliven the proceedings inasmuch as several young ladies are to take their degrees, some M.D., and some B.A. By the way, can young ladies be dubbed bachelors? There will no doubt be a gathering of the clans as regards the old graduates of the university. Advantage is taken of their presence in such large numbers to hold meetings of trustees and of other officials. Kingston will put on its gala dress; the people of the Limestone City will no doubt be on the alert, not only to show at their best, but also to extend their wonted hospitality to the guests that are to assemble. The sub-committee on Augmentation is to meet the same week to complete the arrangements as to the grants to ministers of weak congregations for the year. It is said that the degree of D.D. is to be conferred this year.

An amusing incident, in connection with the report of a rather famous sermon which was preached not long ago, came under the notice of your correspondent lately. The sermon in question was over an hour in delivery, and in a day or two a very brief synopsis appeared in the local papers, but not only so, the synopsis was telegraphed to the great metropolitan thunderers and was commented on in editorials and extracts given in inverted commas. When investigation was made it was found that one of the local papers on the Monday got its account of the sermon from a

hearer who spoke from memory, and that the other local papers took its report from the first and chagned it so as to make it look like an original report. How far or near a report at third or fourth hand represents what was said by the preacher is a problem which it would take a clever man to solve. The whole story is not only amusing; it is instructive, it shows that newspaper accounts, of some things at least, need to be taken *cum salis grano*.

ELDERSHIP TERM SERVICE.

MR. EDITOR.—The subject of Term Service of the Eldership in the Presbyterian Church has been discussed fully in the United States, and in 1872 the General Assembly passed resolutions by which congregations are at liberty to elect elders either for life or for a term of years. The Reformed Church; lately called the Dutch Reformed, brought over from Holland the same practice, the elders in the consistory or session being chosen for limited terms. It is rather startling to be informed that all the Reformed churches of the European Continent, those of France, Italy, Switzerland and Holland, have always elected elders for limited terms to their consistories. Still more remarkable for us is the fact that the practice of the Scottish Church was, at first, precisely the same. In Wodrow's edition of Knox's Works, vol. 2, page 234, we have the following extract from the "First Book of Discipline":

"The election of elders and deacons ought to be used everie yeare, least that, by long continuance of such officials, men presume upon the libertie of the Church. It hurtis not that one man be retained in office mo years than one, so that he be appointed yearly by common and free election."

How then did the present practice of election for life originate? It arose from the fact that the Scotch Church became an endowed Church, and under the control of the State, while the churches on the continent of Europe escaped that corrupting influence. The aristocracy of Scotland introduced permanency in the eldership with patronage or the right of appointing pastors. The Free Church broke loose from aristocratic control; but the eldership question, which is also of great importance, has scarcely been at all discussed, though the evils of life-eldership have often been severely felt.

It seems preposterous that ordained ministers can be removed, sometimes, indeed, too easily, from their charge; but the elder, once ordained in a congregation, can never be displaced, except by the action of Presbytery on a distinct matter of accusation. It is quite possible for an unprogressive eldership to trammel the action of a whole congregation and lock its wheels.

Shall this state of affairs never be reformed?

Toronto, April, 1884

QUERY.

"THE UNMUZZLED OX."

MR. EDITOR.—You give me more credit than I deserve in connection with the Augmentation Scheme.

Though I did assume the entire responsibility of circulating the sermon referred to, yet, through the kindness of a few friends in all parts of Canada, notably the printers, who charged the least possible figure for their work, and Mr. James Croil, of the *Record*, through whose kind services the paper was got at cost price, the whole expense of its circulation, with the exception of about \$40, has been met. Therefore, in addition to any good that may be done by its distribution, if your recommendation is only generally acted on, substantial help may be given to this most important effort.

My experience in this little side-issue is new proof of what I have repeatedly stated and firmly believe, viz., that the Presbyterians of Canada, as a whole, only require to have this matter of ministerial support placed fairly before them to elicit a hearty response.

Perhaps you will allow me also to state that an edition of the sermon in pamphlet form is for sale at 10 cents, and that every copy sold as well as every contribution sent to Mr. Warden, will help the work.

A. B. MACKAY.

1133 Dorchester St., Montreal, April 25th, 1884.

Copies of "The Unmuzzled Ox" may be had at the establishments of Messrs. James Bain & Son, The Upper Canada Bible and Tract Depository; Williamson & Co.; Hart & Co.; Sutherland, 286 and 288 Yonge street, Toronto.