

spheres of ministerial work. Seven of them have been preaching in vacancies—presumably with a view to a call. Others of them I know to be somewhat restless, or restive. From the year 1866 till now twelve have left this Presbytery and sought work in the Church elsewhere; all but one of these, I have good reason to believe, through "restlessness." I know there is similar "restlessness" in other Presbyteries, but cannot say whether in greater or less measure. In my view it is very sad. The pastoral relation should be very sacred and tender and honourable. In proportion as it is otherwise, the saving and elevating power of the Church is marred. Is it treating the relation as sacred, tender, and honourable, for ministers to go a fishing in other churches, meanwhile holding on to their present sphere? Are people to be blamed for indifference or displeasure at their minister in such a case? And is it possible for them to honour him with their confidence and affection? On the other side, is it treating the relation with anything like consideration for people to fall to criticizing, fault-finding, and opposing in private and secret those ministers whom, of their own choice, they have called, and against whom they dare not bring any charge in a constitutional manner? And what are we to say of ministers who tolerate and encourage such courses toward their brethren? It seems to me that this whole matter calls for serious consideration with a view to future remedy and prevention. B.

PRIEST AND PRESBYTERY.

The only question in dispute among us at present in reference to reformed priests coming out of the Roman Church is on a point of formality: Should they, when duly tried and approved, be admitted fully to the status of ordained Presbyters with or without the laying on of hands? All are agreed that they should be thoroughly examined and, if need be, carefully trained, before admission to the active work of the holy ministry. Should no account whatever be made of their ordination as presbyters in the Church of Rome?

The Church of Rome is so grievously corrupted and misgoverned that her priests do well to separate themselves from her communion; yet only in so far as she departs from Christ who is the Lord of all. This right of separation they derive from Christ himself, in whose name they have been baptized and ordained; and they are subject to Him in all things. Consequently they are bound, both as members and as ministers, to prosecute the work of reformation; in concurrence with Protestant Churches. They are not to renounce anything in their membership, or in their ministry, that is Christian, but carrying it with them, they are to associate themselves most closely with those who are nearest to Christ, enjoy most of His spirit, and obey best His Word.

This view accords with the origin of our Presbyterian Churches. They have been reformed from Popery by Presbyters. Yes, by Roman Catholic Presbyters. John Rough and John Knox needed no re-ordination by imposition of hands to authorize their following the Word of the Lord in the Castle of St. Andrew's, or erecting the Church of Scotland on the ruins of Popish superstition. They felt that as members and ministers of the Catholic Church of Christ they had the right, and it was their duty to reform both themselves and others, the Lord helping them.

The controversy about re-ordination is not so novel as some people seem to think. It was passionately agitated in Scotland by the Presbyterian nonconformists during the twenty-eight years' establishment of Prelacy, and at the Revolution period when Presbytery re-gained the ascendancy. The General Assembly was disposed to discipline the curates, who were priests by Episcopal ordination. But the Civil Government passed an Act declaring that such of the curates as offered to subscribe the Confession of Faith, to submit to the Presbyterian government, and against whom no scandal could be proved for thirty days, should be maintained in the possession of their stipends as parochial ministers. The General Assembly at length gave in to the expedient, and boasted to Queen Anne of "this pregnant existence of their moderation." The Church of the Revolution may, in several respects, have been too facile; but at any rate she adhered to the old principle, that Episcopal ordination of Presbyters is for substance valid, and set an example which we do well to imitate when we are tempted to humiliate erring brethren more than is necessary. J. W.

THE DROPPED LINKS OF THE INTERNATIONAL S. S. LESSON SYSTEM.

MR. EDITOR,—It was a common complaint with a class of careless Bible students that the seven years' course of lessons, known as the International, had no unity, that it was a hop, step, and jump through the Bible. The statement may be safely made that the representative men united in this important work can give a good account of the principles and aims they had before them, and that they were not guided by caprice.

The selection made did present in outline the great leading and controlling facts and principles of the entire Word of God. In the course we have taken up, like the one just completed, there will of necessity be links in the vitally organized chain of truth that will hang out of sight to the less careful student. It would be an important work for the pastor, or teacher of teachers and senior classes, to pick up these links and exhibit the organic structure and life presented in the Word of God. This want of unity was felt in the Old Testament more than in the New, partly from want of interest, and partly from the wider range of historical subjects embraced in the Old Testament. The latter half of this year in the new course will be occupied with the book of Genesis. And, being interested in the better equipment of our eight or ten thousand Sabbath school teachers and senior scholars, could nothing be done to pick up these dropped links, bringing them historically into sight and uniting them with the prescribed course of lessons. It would be a good service; enabling the workers to master the entire outline of Bible truth in a seven years' course. This work, with the Normal Class Outlines you have so neatly set before us, would leave the teacher and senior scholars without excuse as to Canadian helps. If this can be done now is the time to commence it. Who will rise and lead us in this help. DIDASKALOS.

TAX EXEMPTIONS AND "R. J. L."

MR. EDITOR,—I have read with interest a letter that appeared last week on the exemption question, and which was signed "R. J. L." The writer displays considerable ingenuity, an ingenuity shall I say just a little bewildering, in seeking to sustain his own position, and to prove you wrong. As far as I can judge, however, his attack and defence are not so strong as at first sight perhaps they may appear. His arguments, if they prove anything, prove too much. "The answer of many will be," he says, and he himself is evidently included in the "many," "that churches and theological halls have pre-eminently a dual relation—a relation that is special, and a relation that is general—a relation to the well-being of ecclesiastical bodies to which they belong, and a relation to the well-being of the community or country in which they are found." Now, Mr. Editor, if this duality of relation—a relation to the well-being of a more private circle on the one hand, and to a well-being of a more public kind on the other—if such duality of relation can be held to constitute a valid claim to exemption, where, I should like to know, is taxation to begin? Why, every man that helps to build the church has just such a two-fold relation, and why should he not be exempt? I know of no manufacturing concern whatever, there is no corporate body of any kind, that cannot very fairly claim to bear this two-fold relation which your correspondent thinks such an indisputable ground for exemption. A case, perhaps, more nearly parallel is that of schools, not the public schools—I am sorry to say I don't know whether these pay local taxes or not, though I can see no reason why they should not—but private schools which most certainly pay their fair share of all necessary expenses, and surely have a right to claim the protection of this wonderful shield against the ubiquitous tax-gatherer. I grant "R. J. L." that he says the Church has the dual relation "pre-eminently" but, Mr. Editor, did you ever hear or read of any privileged order that did not consider itself "pre-eminently" fitted for its privileges? Who is to determine this "pre-eminency" of the dual relation, will anyone kindly tell us? Does "R. J. L." think that the "dual relation" which the Roman Church, for instance, bears to those within its own pale, and to the world at large, "pre-eminently" advantageous either for one or other? Before the breaking out of the French Revolution, what with clergymen, and noblemen, and princes of the blood, and other hangers on to royalty, there were so many who

appeared to satisfy the claims of this "dual relation" in a manner that was wonderfully "pre-eminently," that the unfortunate plebeians were soon left to pay all the taxes together, we know with what result.

And now for the argument from the case of a March fence. This, Mr. Editor, is an argument that works both ways. If honest B, out of neighbourliness, due sense of responsibility, and with an eye to self-interest as well, perhaps, will cheerfully help A to build a fence between A's wheat-field and his own pasture-ground, then by parity of reasoning on the very same grounds is honest A bound to help B to build a fence between B's field of oats and his own woods. If the State does something for the Church, and it does a great deal in allowing perfect freedom of opinion, then the Church should do something for the State in the way of helping to bear the State's burdens. Christ prayed to His Father not that the Church should be taken out of the world, but that while in the world it might be kept from evil. I don't think Christ meant that His Church should form a privileged order in the State, but that while bearing all the responsibilities and reaping the advantages of State life, it should do so not in a different manner but with a different spirit from men who look to the affairs of this world but to naught else. C.

MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

NYASSA MISSION.

It was at sunrise on the morning of the 12th of October, 1875, singing the One Hundredth Psalm, that the first missionary expedition of the Free Church of Scotland steamed out of the Shire upon the blue waters of Lake Nyassa, in Southern Africa. In the few years which have passed away since that memorable morning, the Central Africa Company, consisting of the chairman of the Nyassa sub-committee of the Free Church, Mr. James Stevenson, and other large-minded elders of the Free Church in Glasgow and Edinburgh, has placed the "Lady Nyassa" steamer on the lower Zambesi and its Shire feeder from the lake, while the Mission has floated the "Ilaia" on the Upper Shire above the cataracts and on the lake itself, and Mr. Stewart, of the Mission, has made a good road sixty miles long around the Shire cataracts. By these achievements, accomplished by the power of a Christian impulse, the head of Lake Nyassa, by the Suez Canal route, is brought within sixty days of Great Britain. Besides this, Mr. James Stewart, of the Mission, has explored the country between Nyassa and Tanganika, the next great lake to the north, and made the first survey for an easy waggon road of about two hundred and ten miles between the two great inland seas. The London Missionary Society has formed stations within a few years on Lake Tanganika, and this road when completed will give its representatives a comfortable route to the coast. Soon the traveller will be able to go with ease from Great Britain into the very heart of Africa in a little more than two months. A vast region is brought into contact with Christian civilization. The "Academy" says: "This route is destined to become a great highway. It is notable how admirably the missionaries have managed the once dreaded Mazitu, the outlying tribes of the Zulu race, who were reputed so warlike and so savage."

THE GOSPEL IN MACEDONIA.

In October last, says the "U. P. Missionary Record" for April, we gave, under this title, some account of the work which Dr. Maroulis, a layman of the Greek Church, who holds the rank of "public reader," is carrying on at Serrès, a town near the ruins of Philippi. He has instituted training seminaries both for male and female teachers, whom he prepares during a curriculum of three years for their work in the schools of their native country. His object is not only to equip them thoroughly by a liberal education in the different branches of secular knowledge, but to send them forth imbued with Christian principle and evangelistic zeal, to become centres of light and spiritual life in the districts where they may be called to labour. He has also instituted an elementary school, which serves the double purpose of preparing boys and girls to enter in due time the more advanced seminary, and of giving to the students attending that seminary the opportunity of practising the art of teaching. From intelligence received from Professor Godet's Committee, we learn that Dr. Maroulis, who attended the recent meeting of the Evangelical Alliance at Basle, is prospering in his work, and that his