

those who say their consciences act thus or so in regard to worship, but in other matters display no conscience at all.

Can anything be imagined more injurious to the Church of Christ than a wrangle over the strength of the wine used in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper? Such a wrangle is absolutely revolting to every person of piety and good taste. At most it is a question of percentage of alcohol. And yet that question has done a considerable amount of injury to the Presbyterian Church in the States. There are not wanting signs that certain parties would like to introduce it here. Can any ungodly man of common sense and average taste be blamed for not connecting himself with a Church if he sees that the members and office-bearers can find no higher work in this world of sin and sinners than quarrelling about one of the symbols they use in celebrating their Master's death. Such conduct makes infidels and no wonder that it should.

Many other foes might be named. Meanness on the part of members is one of the worst. Reason about the matter as you may you cannot make a generous worldling believe that the Lord has opened the eyes of a man whose vision can be stopped with a ten cent piece. The lack of anything bordering on self-sacrifice and self-denial on the part of many professing Christians does the Church an infinite amount of harm. One man who denies himself for the cause of Christ has more influence in any community among worldly men than a hundred professing Christians who live selfish lives.

Nor are the foes confined to the ranks of the laity. One of the most dangerous may be found among the clergy. If ministers speak mainly about overtures, motions, amendments, cases, appeals, committees and other parts of the ecclesiastical machinery, there is too much evidence that the running of the machinery has come to be considered the main thing. A minister who finds more enjoyment in sitting on committees or attending Church courts than he finds in making and preaching sermons is in a bad way.

The worst foes the Church has to contend against are within her. If all were right within, the world could soon be conquered for Christ.

GOOD SOCIETY FOR MINISTERS WHO WORK IN THE COUNTRY.

The Rural Dean has just returned to his manse. Vacation is over and he must begin work again. The manse seems very quiet. He has just been on crowded trains and crowded steamboats, in crowded hotels and big cities, and now that the sound of the cars has died away and the motion of the steamer left his brain, he feels a little like the man who said: "Oh solitude, where are thy charms?" In fact, the rural manse seems a trifle lonesome. The evenings are becoming long and the Rural Dean longs for society. As he

sits in the twilight and toasts his pedal extremities (No. 12's perhaps) at a nice glowing fire he soliloquizes thus: "On the whole I am very comfortable in my present position. My people are very kind. They have provided me with a very comfortable home, and meet all their engagements with me promptly and cheerfully. I have nothing to complain of in that way. They are regular in their attendance at church, and I think honestly endeavour to profit by the services. They are good solid people. I have great reasons to be thankful when I think of the manner in which many ministers are kicked from pillar to post by callous, quarrelsome, fault-finding congregations. But I do feel just a little lonesome in this quiet corner. I would not go anywhere as a candidate; but if it should please the Head of the Church to offer me a congregation in a town or city, I think I would accept. I feel the need of society. I am almost certain to become rusty here. I need association with congenial spirits to keep up my intellectual tone."

Now, brother, let us join issue on this point and "have it out" if we should take all winter to settle it. The point is that you have no society of a professional type and for the want of such society you are lonely and in danger of becoming rusty. Did you ever hear what D'Arcy McGee said on that point. A prominent public man of this country, more given to sporting than reading, called him a book worm. The genial Irishman replied that he always did like the society of good books better than that of middling men. How would the maxim of the eloquent Irishmen meet your case, brother? You have a good library. Each book in that library, worth a place there, may be a very entertaining and profitable companion.

Supposing you lived, we shall say, in Toronto, for you know Toronto is the centre of everything good and great in Canada. The National University is there, and Osgoode Hall and the Art School and half-a-dozen colleges and the Parliament buildings (a perfect gem of architectural beauty) and many other institutions which have been established and are maintained by the people of the Province, but which the typical citizen of the Queen City always refers to as Toronto institutions. It is a way he has. The reason why his mind works in this way is probably because he believes there is nobody and nothing of much consequence in Ontario outside of Toronto. Now, brother, suppose you lived in this city which the *Globe* and *Mail* always refer to as a "great city"; suppose you lived there and enjoyed the society of all the distinguished people of this great city; suppose you were blessed with the companionship of the Chalmerses and Guthries and Spurgeons and Whitfields of the Toronto pulpit, it is very doubtful if even then you would gain anything in the matter of society.

You wish to converse with some great man on a point of Theology, do you, brother? Well, look at these