

without and warm and close within, so that the number in attendance was not unusually large, and those present were not feeling especially bright. The meeting, partly owing to the dull address of the speaker, was not the most inspiring kind, yet there was some interest awakened, and a fair collection raised. The church here has been for some time past without a pastor. Last summer student Macallum had charge of the work. The essence of prudence and the elixir of true piety seem to have been so well mixed into that young brother's nature as to give flavor to all he says and does, and certainly the memory he leaves behind him is a very creditable one. At present the Rev. F. McLeod, a graduate of Andover seminary, is supplying the pulpit with a view to the pastorate of the church. He is said to be a fine preacher and appears to be in full sympathy with our F. M. work. Leaving Economy, I went to Londonderry, took the Intercolonial Railway train, and returned to Montreal.

Thus ends the first two months of my labor. During that time I have visited nearly all our churches in Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Delivered addresses at sixty-two meetings, visited a large number of persons sick and well. Travelled 3,760 miles, and my expenses including cab fare, pullman car when needed, and nearly two hundred and fifty miles of stage travel, were \$66.30. Had I visited the Lower Provinces at an earlier season they would have been less.

W. T. CURRIE.

THE FREEDOM OF THE PULPIT.

To the Editor:

The question raised by Mr. Beaton is one of those which are constantly cropping up in the churches and which demands constant wisdom, the wisdom which comes from above, to deal with it.

It is in no canting or goody-goody spirit that I say, let pastors and churches alike seek for Divine guidance with a due sense of responsibility, and it will not be withheld.

Mr. Beaton pleads strongly for the poet and the thinker. His meaning is not particularly clear, for the rhetoric of his letter is more prominent than its logic, but apparently it is a claim on behalf of certain persons who consider themselves poets, and certain others who call themselves thinkers, to a large license in their pulpit utterances because of these characteristics.

Now there are poets and poets. I never knew the churches object to the man of genius who clothed the truths of our common salvation in poetic imagery. Such are always welcome, and their songs speedily make their way round the world.

But the church is jealous, and with good reason, of men who claim that because they have (or think they have) the poetic faculty, it does not matter whether what they sing is true or false. Despite of some sneers at orthodoxy that meet us now and then, it is to be presumed that there are such things as truth and falsehood, and it is generally understood amongst us that religious truth is not a thing for men to begroping after in the dark now-a-days. We have found it, and an unspeakable prize it is. It is worthy of all the poetry that illustrates it, and if more poets try their hands at further illustration, the churches will bid them God-speed; but when the poet wanders off into bogs and darkness, brilliant as his genius may be he is

not wanted in the church. Byrons and Shelleys are out of place there.

With regard to thinkers, there are different sorts of these also. There are young thinkers and old thinkers. There are thinkers who know where truth respecting Divine things is to be found, and who are content to spend their intellectual strength in understanding, expounding, illustrating and enforcing the record. There are others who are ambitious to evolve theological truth out of their own consciousness, or who take their inspiration from men of this stamp. Such are ever learning, but never come to the knowledge of the truth.

The churches generally give a hearty welcome to the first. But if they are jealous of the second, can it be wondered at? Long experience has demonstrated that such thinkers, no matter how powerful their intellects, only evolve therefrom mere lies and phantasies, so they become mere blind leaders of the blind.

Your correspondent sneers at phrasemongers. I am not aware that dullness is glorified either in the Divine word or the experience of the church, but if the choice had to be made, I would rather listen to truth from a phrasemonger than to lies from a poet and thinker. Mr. Beaton casts a side-flip at orthodoxy. But what is orthodoxy? Right teaching, is it not? Teaching the truth! Does our friend wish to teach falsehood? A Congregational church is scarcely the place for that.

He refers more than once to dead creeds.

A minister who knows the Christian world as it is, should be aware that the great creeds of Christendom and the great confessions of the older churches are not dead, but living and powerful forces in the experience of millions of Christians of the present day.

A Christian church is not a free-thoughts club, and we that listen have some rights in this matter.

COMMON SENSE.

EXIT SALEM.

MR. EDITOR,—The following paragraph is clipped from the Halifax, N. S., *Chronicle* of 23rd Jan., and is significant as showing the departure of our denominational relic in the capital of N. S.:

"The salem church building, which was purchased by Mr. E. W. Crease, to be converted into mercantile premises, has commenced to undergo the necessary changes, carpenters being at work inside yesterday."

Salem church, which has practically, as a body, ceased to exist for some years, had for some time a struggling existence. It was supplied almost entirely by pastors from England, and was aided in their sustentation by the Colonial Missionary society. For several years the edifice has been either closed altogether, or temporarily occupied by other denominations for Sabbath school or mission work. The hope has been fostered by some of us that an effort would be made by our Congregational Missionary society to start the work there afresh as a city mission, the building being well located for such an enterprise. However, Halifax from some cause does not seem to nourish Congregationalism and years ago the old Mather church of that city, named after Cotton Mather, glided quietly from us into Presbyterianism; and then to hide any suspicion of its puritan ancestry received its present name of St. Mathew's, which would sound enough