

effect were given by, at least, one leading member of the Government.

It was also thought that, by means of this arrangement, ministers of the two largest Protestant Churches would be able to visit the institution, clothed with official authority, and able to give religious teaching without being exposed to insult, as happened on more than one occasion to a respected Presbyterian minister.

It was also believed that, by this plan, the teaching would be of a more varied and of a purer evangelical tone than under the former arrangement, and that all the leading Protestant Churches of the Province would be led to take a deeper interest in the moral and religious welfare of the erring and unfortunate inmates of the Reformatory.

The resident Methodist and Presbyterian ministers were willing to undertake their share of the work, and it was supposed that at last the religious element would be developed in the training of the misguided lads who professed to be Protestants as had never been the case before. And it was a happy preparation for this desirable change, that the attempt made during the past to impart religious truth to these unfortunate youths on sectarian and church establishment lines had proved a comparative failure.

But, to the surprise and indignation of many of their friends, the Government have dared to ignore the request of the two leading Protestant denominations, representing a population of upward of a million in Ontario, and have reverted to their former objectionable practice. And, as if they wished to treat the representations of these Churches with contempt, they actually, when there was no resident minister of the Anglican Church in Penetanguishene, imported one from abroad and increased his salary.

They must surely show very cogent reasons for this strange course. Through their official channel, the Hon. A. S. Hardy, they usually set forth the following: The Church of England has more lads in the institution than all the other Protestant churches. This is scarcely correct, as the numbers are: Church of England, seventy; other Churches, eighty-two. Besides, the way in which the list of the Anglican Church is made up will scarcely bear close investigation. Moreover, this reason has two sides—a Church that with one-fourth of the Protestant population supplies nearly one-half of the inmates of the Institution is not, on that very ground, the best fitted to have the sole religious charge of them.

The second reason is that it would give great offence to the Church of England if a privilege granted to them for so many years were now withdrawn. The answer to this reason is that there is no withdrawal of a privilege, but simply the sharing of that privilege with others who are justly entitled to it. A dog-in-the-manger policy is not the spirit of Christianity, but the spirit of the devil. Again the question may be put—Is it wiser to offend Churches representing more than a million of people, for well-grounded causes, than to offend a Church representing a little over a third of that number for reasons that have no foundation.

A third argument is that these three chaplains, having so much to do in connection with their respective congregations, could not give that attention to the Reformatory which is necessary. No chaplain has been able in the past to give his whole time to the work on account of the meagre salary, but has always had charge of an adjoining congregation. And surely three thus situated could do the work more efficiently than one. Besides, this arrangement would raise the question of supply above all sectarian and party feelings, as well as afford a healthy stimulus in carrying on the difficult work of leading these erring lads to the Lord Jesus.

PRESBYTER.

CONGREGATIONALISM AT WOODSTOCK.

MR. EDITOR.—I am not so fortunate as to be a regular reader of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN; but one who is, a friend in another city, has sent me a clipping from a recent issue, containing an article headed "Congregationalism in Woodstock." On that article I crave your permission to make a few remarks.

It is stated to be by "An Outsider." Who it is that has written under that cognomen it is not difficult to say. I know as well as if his name in full had accompanied the article; for he truly describes himself, more truly than he intended, outside Presbyterianism, outside (practically) Congregationalism, and outside the Woodstock Church (he will know what I

mean by that). Let not your readers think of him as a Presbyterian and a champion of their cause; by no means. If there is one thing he hates worse than Congregationalism it is Presbyterianism; but the opportunity was too good to be let slip to have a slap at men who cannot swear by his shibboleth of l-i-c-e-n-s-e, or acknowledge him as their ecclesiastical leader. So much for "Outsider." As to the subject-matter of his communication, let me say.

With regard to the formation of the Congregational Church at Woodstock, the writer admits that there had been "strong feeling," "much personal antagonism," and so on. I would lift the question above the plane of personal or denominational feeling, and say most unhesitatingly that there are states of mind in members of the same church, at times unhappily so, when the best, most Christian, course is severance of communion. Whenever I find in any church member a sense of wrong received, with no attempt to undo it by the offenders, and feelings rankling that must destroy all co-operation and make fellowship a sham, then I would say, in the name of all that is true and right, sever the connection. I have advised this course in the past, even where my own church suffered by it, and I would advise it again. Such appears to have been the case at Woodstock, and the decision to separate was, in my judgment, proper and wise. It strikes me that the time will come when Chalmers Church will be of that opinion. The "shake hands with one another; be friends again"—"kiss and be good children" policy is not always practicable; and when practicable, not always wise.

But the seceders have formed themselves into a Congregational Church, and, according to "Outsider," they have no "conscientious preference for its principles." It is "a thing of convenience," and so we have that dreadful thing that has done scarecrow service so long, a "Cave of Adullam." My experience with the friends there is this, that, rightly or wrongly (I cannot expect you to admit rightly), they have chosen the Congregational polity as that which suits their views. From the Missionary Superintendent they heard its principles, and they agreed with them. They were relieved from outside authority, and were supreme in their own affairs. They approved of our motto, "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." As to "doctrines," which "Outsider" would say had to be changed, he knows, well enough, that in all the grand essential doctrines of our faith we are one. We have a common heritage in the "Confession of Faith." Independent divines assisted at its drawing-up, and certainly to-day, of the two bodies it is not the Independents that have swerved the farthest from it. Let not your readers be misled. Congregationalist and Presbyterian may exchange pulpits, and from their "doctrine" no one would know the difference. I speak of the bodies; there are, of course, individual exceptions on both sides.

"Outsider" would have us believe that he was specially in Mr. Cuthbertson's confidence, and undertakes to tell your readers, with characteristic impertinence, what that gentleman knew and did not know and what he felt during the services. It is all pure bosh. Mr. Cuthbertson is not a man to jump into a quickset hedge with his eyes closed. He knew all about the circumstances and thoroughly appreciated them, and as to the "rude awakening" that Mr. Cuthbertson had, I can assure "Outsider" that he did not scare a bit. I had some conversation with him when in Toronto a week ago, and the "glare" has not—really it has not, "Mr. Outsider,"—hurt him in the least.

Had the writer of that article been a Presbyterian, I would have said a few words on the denominational aspect of the question. As it is, I forbear, simply asking that your readers who are not acquainted with the facts of this Woodstock matter withhold their judgment, and not be led away by the utterances of a man disappointed, soured, erratic; a man of marked ability, who might have been a power for good in the Congregational body to which he belonged, but whose quarrelsomeness and overweening vanity have destroyed all chance of usefulness. Presbyterians and Congregationalists are not one polity, but they are one in what is far higher, the work of the Master. Mutual jealousies will, I suppose, arise, for even Christian men have their infirmities; but mutual confidence, which I rejoice to think is increasing, will overcome these, and it will, I trust, be soon impossible for misrepresentations to provoke anger or coolness of affection.

A CONGREGATIONALIST WHO WAS AT WOODSTOCK.

THAT JOINT COMMITTEE.

MR. EDITOR.—A Joint Committee of Methodists and Presbyterians has been sitting lately in Ottawa for the purpose of "swapping" Methodists for Presbyterians, and *vice versa*, in places where each can only have a weak congregation, so that instead of there being a Methodist and a Presbyterian congregation in each place, both weak, one would have a strong congregation in one place and the other a strong one in the other. The secular papers, of course, approve this latitudinarian movement, so characteristic of the Romeward trend of the age. If consciences and religious convictions were, like houses and farms, exchangeable this would doubtless be a wise policy. As it is, it is simple cruelty to hand over so many Presbyterians, who never can accept the absurdities of Arminianism, to either attend the Methodist Church or ecclesiastically die. This is a most remarkable way of carrying out the command, "Feed the flock of God," and the ordination vow regarding the Confession of Faith, "In your teaching will you faithfully adhere thereto?" If the Presbyterian Church takes the position that it will hand over the stragglers of the flock, who need more instead of less care than the others, to the teaching of Arminianism, then the next consistent move will be to have this ordination vow struck off the list; for the Church itself will then be ignoring it on a large scale. And, of course, when it goes the Confession of Faith, of which it is the key, must necessarily follow.

With all due honour to the Methodist Church for its friendliness to, and co-operation with, the Presbyterian Church in many a noble work, we must not lose sight of the fact that as regards doctrine and teaching we have less in common with it than with any other evangelical body. Ministers of other bodies may be Calvinistic or Presbyterian in teaching, Methodists cannot be. For that reason a true Presbyterian cannot feel at home under their teaching. This is not at all ignoring the fact that the Methodist Church, apart from its Arminianism, is one of the noblest branches of the great Christian tree.

Further, the golden rule, "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise," would teach us that we should make no such exchange as is contemplated; but rather make a greater effort to supply all these weak and outlying places with the truth. England spent nearly \$50,000,000 to save a few British subjects from imprisonment in Abyssinia. Apparently she might have spent that money to better advantage at home and let these prisoners die in Abyssinia, if she had acted on the utilitarian methods that characterize this new ecclesiastical movement. She might say, for instance, to France, a sister power, "Do as you like with all British subjects who go to France, and I will do the same with all French subjects who come here. Let us exchange and save trouble. What is the use in spending millions upon the stragglers when it could be applied more economically in other respects? It is a mere waste of money." Not so. She takes a higher and nobler view of her duty in the matter. It is a question of honour and principle with her to defend every right of every subject in every part of the earth. If the Presbyterian Church took such a view with regard to her subjects, the stragglers would have the best, not the least care.

As to the practical value to us as a Church of this change of policy, the advantage, as usual, will be on the Methodist side, because they themselves admit that Presbyterians make the best Methodists; but, while there are some noble exceptions, Methodists of the third or fourth generation under Methodist teaching make very poor Presbyterians indeed. We have already lost more by Methodist zeal in proselytism during the present century than from all other denominations combined. We are now preparing to make further sacrifices of the children of the Church to the great Moloch of Arminianism—that gigantic system of error, which not only includes the Church of Rome, but is more and more every year casting its grim shadow over the wide domain of Protestantism!

I trust that the General Assembly will decide, in accordance with its past history, to stand by the rights of conscience and not do to any of our people, however little influence they may have, what we would not like to have done to ourselves, and that at least before any decided step is taken the Presbyteries, as well as the parties more immediately concerned, will be consulted.

February 9, 1886.

VERITAS.