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THE CLAIMS OF OUR NORTH-WEST ON BRITISH PRESBYTERIANS.

AS far as the older Provinces of Canada are concerned the Presbyterian Church of the Dominion neither asks nor can reasonably expect to receive much more assistance from the mother Churches in Britain. These have done their work in this country very liberally and very lovingly. They have supplied both money and men in no stinted measure, and they have given with these what have been of more value still, their cordial sympathy and their most earnest prayers. The Church they have thus planted and watered so assiduously has made so much progress and gathered so much strength that it can now be left to its own resources. It can hold fast the sacred trust it has received and it can also hold it forth so far to the regions and peoples beyond. It recognizes this as the very condition on which it received such fostering help in the days of its weakness. But while so far the Presbyterian Church in Canada may very properly be left to deal with Home Mission work within its own borders even though this implies the supply of ordinances to many who are continually coming from the churches in the old country, it does not follow that it would be either fair or reasonable to leave it unaided to struggle with all the growing necessities of the great North-West which is, and will be, quite as much filled up by people directly from Britain as from the older Provinces of the Dominion. These settlers are and will continue to be very largely Presbyterian and in all likelihood will come in increasing numbers from the other side of the sea. Fully to meet the strain thus put upon the resources of the Canadian Church will in all likelihood be found more than can be accomplished without outside assistance. Nor, we repeat, can any one think Canadian Presbyterians unreasonable if they ask their friends in Britain to assist them in this great work of supplying the ordinances of religion to their own expatriated members. The work is great, and will in all likelihood become every year more extensive and exacting. The encouragement is in correspondence. The danger of not a few of the settlers relapsing into barbarism and religious indifference, if their wishes are unmet and their wants unsupplied, is anything but small. In these circumstances, with an ever widening Home Mission field in the older provinces to be attended to, is it anything but reasonable to ask the Presbyterians in Britain to lend their hearty and timely assistance in the extensive work now in progress in the great prairie land of North-Western Canada? If the present opportunity is fully taken advantage of, the whole of that wide fair land may have a permanently predominating leaven of Presbyterians and Presbyterian doctrine and practice. No one who adequately estimates what is involved in this will undervalue the importance of the present crisis, and no Presbyterian in Britain, we venture to add, who is competently acquainted with the facts will for a moment deny the reasonableness of the claim for co-operation, and the worthy character of the field thus marked out for united effort. The Canadian Church does not ask

that any should be burdened in order that it may be relieved. It will do its utmost, as it has hitherto been trying to do. But the danger is that if left to its own unaided efforts a good part of the work will be left undone and many of the late members of all the different Presbyterian Churches in Britain be spiritually uncared for in their new homes. Would this be right? Would it be prudent? Could it be done without spiritual injury being inflicted on those who left these sheep in the wilderness to perish? We think not, and, besides, we are persuaded that there is too much missionary zeal, too much sympathy with their emigrating people and too strong a desire to follow up the great success already achieved in this Dominion, to allow the Presbyterians of the United Kingdom to hold their hand when the claims are so urgent and the encouragement so evident and so great. We shall not believe till we can do nothing else, that the Presbyterians of Canada and Britain will ever acquiesce in the idea that they have far more pressing demands from their own brethren in the newer parts of the Dominion than they can meet and that they can say nothing to many who ask them for a supply of Gospel ordinances but that they must apply to others who seem to have more zeal and more means to meet such claims and to alleviate, if they cannot altogether remove, such spiritual destitution.

PROPORTIONATE AND SYSTEMATIC GIVING.

BY a strange and scarcely explicable mistake we last week called attention to a communication which we said was signed "L." As most of our readers would at once perceive we ought to have written "Mentor." We can scarcely regret the mistake when it enables us again to refer to the subject, and to again ask our readers prayerfully and carefully to consider the whole matter. We have been long convinced that where God opens the heart there will be comparatively little difficulty about the hand and that where the former is still closed it is but thankless work to try to force open here a finger and there a thumb and perhaps have only a copper, if even that, as the reward of all the trouble and toil. At the same time, however, the comparative non-liberality of even some of God's own dear people may be the result more of ignorance and want of thought than of absolute churlishness, or indifference to the good cause. Such discussions as those of "Mentor" may very materially help such by leading them to view matters in a different light and to judge of them by a different standard. We are never to forget that Voluntaryism and Optionalism, far from being, as some seem to imagine, convertible terms, have really no necessary connection with each other. No one is forced to become a Christian or to join a church. He does that of his own free will under the sweet constraint of the Spirit of all grace. But when he has taken this step and assumed this position he has deliberately pledged himself, not by constraint but willingly, to follow a certain course, to live by a certain standard and to struggle toward a certain result. None but Christians can be expected either to support or to extend Christianity, but the obligation lying upon all such to do both is as urgent as it is evident. "I am a 'voluntary' Christian and therefore I may give much or little or nothing for the cause of Christ as I please!" Why, good friend, you might as rationally and as logically say that you are a "voluntary Christian," and therefore that you may, if so disposed, curse and swear, steal and lie, worship idols, and murder your infants! That would be Optionalism with a vengeance, but not more so than what some practise under the poor pretence that they are "voluntaries," and therefore are free to do as they please with their money and their movements. They are free as far as the constraining power of earthly law is concerned, but they are under law to Christ. They have deliberately said that they are, and if they know what language in its natural acceptance means, and if there were any honesty in their professions when they laid themselves as living sacrifices on Christ's altar they must know that the constraining power of that love, which they said they cherished and which they say they cherish still, gives a might and a willingness to all efforts for Christ compared with which the power of all civil or even church regulations must be feeble as the order of a peasant and ineffective as the threatenings of a child. No one is forced to be a Christian, but let him once become such and the same law of love makes him live and act and give accordingly.

SEDUCTION.

THERE are some questions from the discussion of which one instinctively shrinks at the very time there is the conviction that many and important purposes would be served and not a little good effected if they could be touched upon with becoming delicacy and at the same time with that unmistakable plainness which is indispensable if they are to be effectually meddled with at all. We need scarcely add that this is peculiarly the case with that subject which we have put at the head of this article. The feeling with many has been, and is, that this requires much more attention and much more discussion than it has hitherto received, but the fear of not saying the right thing in the right way has generally acted as a deterrent against saying anything whatever. One could wish to be possessed of that faculty for which a rather prominent writer of the present day says he was distinguished at college, viz.: that of touching very delicate matters without giving offence, and without in any measure overstepping the limits of propriety. We can lay claim to no such *curiosa felicitas*, and yet we cannot help turning once more to that the discussion of which needs this delicacy as much as anything else which could be mentioned, if not a great deal more.

We have already expressed our strong conviction that seduction ought to be removed from the category of civil offences, and be treated not only as a crime but as a very grave one. It may be quite true that very many and very formidable difficulties surround this view of the matter; but such difficulties are not avoided by any other possible treatment, and least of all by that which at present has the sanction of law. As things stand at present there is literally worse than no law on the subject. To tell an outraged and dishonoured father that he can sue for damages in name of loss of service is to add insult to injury, to make the whole thing the grimmest and most offensive of mockeries, to provoke beyond all reasonable endurance those who have still some sensitiveness of feeling in reference to family honour, and at the same time to encourage and connive at the tactics of those who make seduction a trade or regard it, at worst, as a natural and innocent amusement. All our most thoughtful and intelligent judges are agreed in the opinion that the present mode of dealing with the admitted evil is about the worst that could be thought of—certainly a great deal worse than none. The question then seems narrowed down to this simple alternative—Shall this wrong, acknowledgedly a most grievous one, be made a criminal offence? Or shall it be declared to be in the eye of law and reason not an offence at all, of which any human judicature could with propriety take cognizance? That some change of the law is inevitable at no distant day is beyond all reasonable question. In what direction then is that change to be made? This is the point to be settled, and we feel certain that better arguments in favour of ridding the statute book of all laws on the subject than have as yet been mentioned will have to be brought forward before the people of Canada will sanction the principle that seduction is not an offence which the law can either recognize or punish.

But while we hold very strongly by the opinion we have stated both now and formerly, we are no less fully convinced that the great remedy for the evil referred to lies in the general elevation of the moral sentiments of the community, and particularly in the more widely diffused and sensitive recoil of feeling on the part of all, both old and young, from anything in social intercourse which could be construed into indelicacy or even undue familiarity. We know we tread upon delicate and difficult ground when we say that *no man ever seduced the woman he really loved*, but we cannot help making the assertion which will be endorsed by every man who reads these lines and ought to be believed by every one of the other sex. Love implies in a certain sense an infinite respect for its object. It so far turns that object into an idol, and such a feeling must be, and is, absolutely incompatible with anything which would degrade, dishonour or destroy the person idolized. If women in general, and poor foolish inexperienced girls in particular, could only be brought to believe this, and as a consequence to resent as the very deadliest insult which could possibly be offered to them, the faintest approach to indelicacy either in word or action, a very material advance would have been made towards seduction being rendered impossible. We at once acknowledge that there must be something so far unwomanly and indelicate in anyone