

Our Churches.

ST. LUKE'S.

DEAR SIR,—After considerable delay I again take up the tale of the churches, and trust you will not find me too long-winded in my very discursive account of St. Luke's.

Failing a better one, this edifice has been dubbed our cathedral. We have a bishop, and without irreverence may I say, a jolly good bishop too; then why not have a cathedral worthy of the name? When is one more move going to be made to this end? Does it not strike you, Mr. Editor, that in the eyes of those friends our Bishop has left in the States, we, who belong to the Church of England, must appear pretty small potatoes? We rob them of a man, very difficult for them to replace, and what do we give him? A fairly empty title! I can remember when, at the death of the late bishop, a certain section of the community thought it was only a question of asking to have any man they chose in his place. This same section soon found that accepting the position of Bishop of Nova Scotia was not considered quite the same thing as annexing the whole earth, and the diocese ought indeed to be highly congratulated at having been able to fill the post with such an able man. This much for our very substantial and capable bishop, and his pseudo-cathedral.

Now for the church, and those who worship therein. I presume it has been a moot point whether or no seats in a church, fashionable or otherwise, should be declared open and free? In the case of St. Luke's the ayes as regards freedom have carried it. Why is this so? As a matter of fact, is it not the case that some ultra conservative holders of seats do not care to give way to the radical position of to-day? To give an example, I myself saw a stranger go into St. Luke's church; he did not hurry into a seat—no gentleman would—he looked around for a cicerone, as one should do in a respectable church. No such forthcoming, it dawned upon him he must find a seat for himself. He tried No.—No use, family coming in with most aggressive expressions. The belated stranger turned tail and departed for a more congenial atmosphere, unconverted to the "new system." This is one of the exceptions I take to the free system; another is, I, as a stranger, came in with my respectable 25c. piece—solid! no envelope, and then I see the next man hustling into the plate a 5c. piece in an envelope! Where can I buy the envelopes?

As regards the clergyman in charge, Rev. W. B. King, I feel sure that though he may have been criticized many times, it may have been harshly too, there are very few more popular men in Halifax. As a preacher, he is thoroughly in earnest, and conveys the idea that he is not only telling a truth, but that he thoroughly believes it himself. Even with a congregation, such as the one he preaches to, some members of which strike me as likely to be rather fastidious as regards the spiritual meat given, he is not afraid to tell the unvarnished truth anent their little back-slidings. Among the poor, who after all are the best judges of charity, and the way that charity is distributed, he is much liked, because they find he acts towards them not only as a clergyman, but as a man and a brother, understanding, as he does, that it is ill listening, even to the Bible, on an empty stomach.

And now before closing I have to give vent to one more growl, but yet everyone, except those implicated, will bear me out that the complaint is a fair one; I refer to the custom of a certain number of boys, whose parents' position should have given them a better idea of what is considered gentlemanly behaviour, decorating the side-walk in front of St. Luke's on the exit of the congregation. Why, after having enjoyed a good service and feeling perhaps better men and women for it, why should we receive such a sudden shock in meeting at the door way, the idiotic grin, and the insane expressions of some 20 or more of these youngsters?

Why should this place of all others be made a rendezvous for any so-called dude, leaving his own church or chapel (if he attends one at all) just in time to make himself a perfect nuisance here? No lady can come out of church without some remark, without risking some audible comment as regards her personal appearance, or if not audible she can easily judge that she has been the butt for some wittily-pointed shaft.

All this is only what goes on every night the Academy is open, the same faces appear, and remain till the late arrivals have taken their seats, and then they disappear, not—unfortunately for the management—into the house,—no, it won't run to that! I appeal to Mr. King if it is not high time this was remedied? The names of the offenders shall be at his service after next Sunday morning's service.

Yours,

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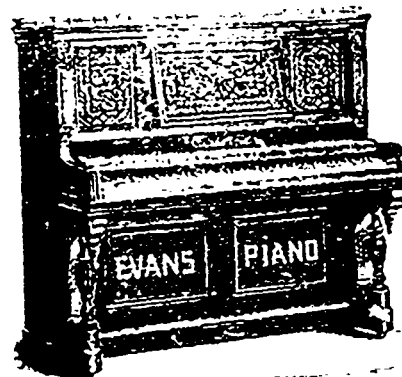
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