

The attitude of the laboring classes towards the Church can be summed up in two words: comparison and indifference.

Many of them compare the Church members with outsiders, to the disadvantage of the first. They compare the various denominations, and what they say of each other, and decide to stay out until the Christians agree a little better among themselves.

But, after all, among the poorer classes the attitude of the many is dull indifference. The struggle for life is hard, and they have no eyes or ears for spiritual things.

Mr. Williamson said:

When the Church extends sympathy to the workman it must show some respect as well.

There is too much display and finery on the part of the more fortunate people, and too much coldness to strangers.

The distinctions between rich and poor are nowhere so marked as in the seating arrangements of most of the churches. Caste distinctions at public worship must be done away with, or the Gospel expurgated.

On the other hand, the workmen don't need to be patted on the back. "Soft sawder" is as bad as the other thing.

Let the pastor lead in a reform of these things. Let him move among the working people in their every-day life. Let him show them as much respect as he does the rich, whether he meet them at home, on the street, or at church. Let the more fortunate people do likewise.

The preaching should be plain and understandable. Much orthodox and intellectual oratory is of a character which may do no harm to the learned, but misses the workman altogether. The preacher might as well preach in an unknown tongue. The greatest preachers are generally the plainest.

Lack of unity among the churches is a great stumbling block. The working people look on at the strife and fail to see the consistency of preaching peace and practising strife.

Creeds need not be thrown away, nor boiled down into one, but the churches should keep their favorite peculiar doctrines for their own private use and comfort, and work together to push forward those which are essential and common to all, love to God and neighbor, and hands joined to rescue the perishing.

Why abuse the Salvation Army, when it does work which the churches don't do? Every church should do Salvation Army work.

The bad opinion raised by the fights among the churches is confirmed by those who read history, and see that it has always been so. The only remedy is to show that, though differing in opinion, the great power and motive is love.

Then the lives of professing Christians. Many business men, high in the Church, countenance tricks of trade. Many employers, high in Church, grind the faces of the poor, and the Church winks at these things. The Church people, priests and all, must have clean hands, and lives that will bear the light of day.

The Church has a way of touching such great moral questions as it touches at all, with kid gloves.

The great enemy and destroyer of the working people is the drink traffic. Now the Church may not tolerate the groggery keeper, but too often it has welcomed the rich brewer, distiller and wholesaler.

"A NON-PARTISAN VIEW"

was presented in a letter written by the superintendent of the Steelworks Club at Joliet, who described himself as neither a Church member nor a workman:

"Looking at the work being done in the name of charity and for the uplifting of the masses, you will find side by side the man of the Church and the man of no church. Why does the latter refrain from seeking society with which he has had apparent affiliations? I answer, and in doing so I believe that I voice the opinion of my fellows,—'Because the Church has ceased to be a leader in the upraising of mankind.' This is a very serious charge and it brings me directly to the subject of your discussion, viz.: the relations of the churches and the working classes. It is perhaps one of the most remarkable things in human history that a Church which owes its existence and general diffusion to workmen, should have so completely lost its hold on this very class. The fact argues a radical change either in the Church, or in the workmen, or in both. A Christian church of the past belonged to no rank or condition. It was in fact a body of ministers filled with fervent if sometimes mistaken zeal, and seeking through the agency of all its members to gain converts. A church of the present time is a body ministered to. The active vital principle is gone. The work has been specialized until we have reached the point where one man must give all the encouragement for faith; give it in a refined literary form; he must be with his flock at their births, marriages and deaths, and in the time that is left represents his church of some hundreds in the redemption of the rest of mankind. The Church expects of this

man that he shall be a scholar; that he shall spend many years in acquiring literary graces and social tact. It expects also that without any special education, association or training, he shall fully understand the ways and methods of thought of workmen.

"In England you will frequently hear such phrases as 'the vicar's poor,' 'the curate's poor' and so on. To us who are not of the Church this conveys the idea that the average congregation is disposed to live in snug sanctity, using their clergyman as a sort of staff with which to touch from afar such uncomfortable things as sin, sorrow and human suffering, and we reason that the Church does not attract the working people mainly because it is making no serious effort to do so.

"So much for the change in the Church. Among the working people we find that methods resembling those of the early Church are still successful, and we are therefore entitled to assume that there is no radical change in their attitude. The Salvation Army has been successful, not because of its peculiar features, but because all its members are active; because it seeks its converts in their own haunts; because it follows the apostolic example and sends a fisherman in search of fishermen and a carpenter after carpenters. Contrast this with the method of the churches. If a rolling mill operative is moved to join a church he carries with him the odium of all his ungodly brethren. He is considered to be on probation, the end being to make him as unlike every other rolling mill man as possible. Would it not be better to encourage this man to communicate even his first impulse to others, and let his religious growth be stimulated by his own work for religion?"

"In conclusion, if there is within the whole range of experience an axiom that has been perfectly demonstrated it is this, 'Every message to the poor must be vain if it does not come expressed in the lives of brother men.'"

THE RESULT.

The views expressed by these workmen undoubtedly represent a widespread feeling of estrangement from the Church of to-day, and state most of the reasons for it. Will it not be a good result of this meeting if we carefully examine ourselves in the light of such candid criticism, and reform ourselves wherever reform is needed?

Home & Foreign Church News

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS.

MONTREAL.

Church of the Redeemer, Cote St. Paul.—The Lord Bishop of the diocese made his visitation to this mission on the third Sunday after Easter, the 8th May, inst., and administered Confirmation to ten persons presented by Dr. Davidson, Q.C., Lay Reader, in charge. The service was beautiful and reverent, consisting of the Confirmation Service proper, with appropriate hymns approved by his Lordship; the candidates being formally presented to the Bishop and inquiry made by him as to their fitness. Each candidate was presented singly to his Lordship, sitting in his Episcopal Chair, for "the Laying on of Hands," the special invocation "Come, Holy Ghost," being sung, all kneeling, immediately before the presentation of the candidates. His Lordship delivered an earnest and loving address. Following immediately the Confirmation Service came the Communion Office, and the newly confirmed received their first communion at the hands of the Bishop himself, assisted by the Rev. E. A. Willoughby King, M.A., who has been doing the priestly work of the mission for some months past. The boys and men of the choir were in surplices, and the Altar vested in white, decorated with a beautiful floral cross and vases of cut flowers. The confirmed were the Misses Edith Silcock, M. Gilmore, S. Trotter, C. Miller, Emily Fraas, L. Murgatroyd, E. Gall, and Messrs. George Silcock, Norman Meyer and Alfred Russell.

SABREVOIS MISSION.—The Rev. Mr. Dixon preached in Cote St. Antoine Episcopal Church Sunday morning, in aid of the Sabrevois Mission. The church was well filled and the greatest attention was given to the discourse, which was a terse review of the present advanced condition of men in material wealth and the consequent increased demands upon them for purposes of bettering their kind. Prominent was the cause of religion and most prominent missions. He dwelt at length on the Sabrevois Mission, making an earnest appeal on its pecuniary behalf, which was responded to by a good collection.

Ninety-six persons were recently confirmed by Bishop Whitaker, of Pennsylvania, in the Church of the Covenant, Philadelphia, more than half of whom came from other religious bodies.

ONTARIO.

NAPANEE.—This part of central Ontario has long been the stronghold of Methodism. The Bay of Quinte conference can claim the prestige of embracing in its jurisdiction the "first Methodist Church" in Upper Canada. Here the first class meeting was held, and now some of the best prizes of the connectional pastorate are here located. As one of their own poets has said, "If you ain't a Methodist in these parts you ain't in it at all." Any Church extension therefore hereabouts is accomplished under great difficulties, and is matter for thankfulness, if not of congratulation. A humble effort in this direction is being made in the parish of St. Mary Magdalene, Napanee. On Thursday, May 19th, a mission hall and chapel was opened on Robin's Hill, in the east end of the town. It is about a mile from the parish church, and in the centre of a good field for mission work—a little hamlet away from all the churches, and where the dwellers had begun to think that no man cared for their souls. Here last winter the rector held cottage meetings, and these were so well attended that he was encouraged to set on foot a scheme, which seemed a little ambitious for a parish numerically and financially weak, and already carrying the burden of a large parochial debt. However, the people interested promised to give all they could offer, the work of willing hands, and with this subscription to go upon, the rector undertook to build a suitable house, and confine the expenditure to the modest sum of \$100, at which suggestion the knowing ones winked with their eyes and said nothing. The first to lend a hand was that much abused knight, Sir Richard Cartwright, who has great possessions in Napanee, and whose benefactions both to Church and State have not perhaps received the recognition they ought. To him we are indebted for the lot on which the mission house stands, leased to us for a term of nine hundred and ninety-nine years, at an annual rental of 25c. Next, Mr. E. W. Rathbun, well known to business men and promoters of charities far and near, placed \$25 to the credit of our account with his firm for building material. Not to mention other benefactors, a very substantial addition to our resources was the gift of Mr. H. B. Sherwood, superintendent of the K.N. and W.R.R. On his property stood an old dwelling, which he gave us on the sole condition that we should take it clean away. A "Bee" did it, and on Christmas day the last load of old frame timbers, such as our second growth forestry knows not, was safely deposited on the lot. And hereby hangs a tale—that old building was the first seat of learning in Napanee. Its ancient rafters echoed too with the words of the first sermon ever heard in our midst; long before the upstart Academy and the pretentious Collegiate Institute began to dazzle our eyes with their novel light of higher education, practical teaching was imparted in this common school. Preacher and pedagogue vied, one with the other, in fitting old and young for their place in this world and the next. At that time the missionary at the Mohawk Reserve, a few miles distant, was the Rev. Salter Givens, and the Indians, reversing the order of things, sometimes would send their missionary to those spiritually destitute white brethren who met together to pray in this school house. It is said that Mr. Givens' instruction included a course of lectures on Church psalmody. Perhaps in those days, when a spade was a spade, they called this early effort at university extension a singing school. Anyhow, Mr. Givens, relating his experience not many years ago, told how the young men and maidens used to meet here once a week, and under his guidance, drink in, or rather breathe forth the mysteries of *do, re, mi*. And most assiduous among these devotees of St. Cecilia, was a young man who, we are told, gave promise, even in these early days of his career, of turning out a much better statesman than vocalist, no less a personage than the late Premier, Sir John A. Macdonald. The writer, however, had the pleasure a few years ago of ministering to a little sea-side congregation which included Mr. Givens' quondam pupil, and he can testify to the fact that the grand old man had not forgotten how to sing at least with a reverent energy, when the service and praise was being offered. Sir John has laid claim to the honour of acting precentor and clerk for the first missionary of the church in these counties. Well, the old-time school house after serving so many years as a humble dwelling place, is again restored to public and sacred uses. In its old age it has renewed its youth, and rests now not far from its original site, where we hope it may last till our lease expires, 999 years hence, promoting the glory of God and the good of His Church. Despite its new dress, therefore, the old school house may be considered an historic building of no mean local interest. The historical associations might well be fixed in some tangible shape if funds were forthcoming. We scorn to beg, though we are not in the least ashamed to receive alms for such a purpose. The rector, in making his address at the opening service, was able to say that the expenditure in cash so far has been less than \$80. The balance of the hundred originally

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