

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

\$2.00 PER ANNUM IN ADVANCE.

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, Editor and Proprietor.

OFFICE—NO. 6 JORDAN ST., TORONTO.



TORONTO, FRIDAY, APRIL 12, 1878.

THE SPIRITUAL NATURE OF THE CHURCH.

IN another column our readers will find a letter which deserves a kindly answer. In giving this we cannot enter upon all the points raised by our correspondent, but we hope to make clear the principle involved, which is in reality the chief difference between the Reformed and the Romish Churches. Our correspondent in the most courteous terms objects to our statement that the Church as defined by Mr. Porter is an "unspiritual affair." He does this because (1) Mr. P. claims for it divine institution; (2) he holds that through the sacraments, etc., as *media*, grace is communicated; (3) he holds that the Holy Spirit is communicated to and by the priesthood. He further thinks that Prelacy *may* be essential to the church organization, if this is taught in Scripture. Our remarks will not be extended, but are a bare statement of the salient points of difference.

1. Our controversy is not with the Church of England, as such, but with the Sacramentarian or Ritualistic party in that Church, which is avowedly not Protestant, and in principle and practice, as far as may be, is Romish. 2. The fact that a thing is of divine institution does not make it spiritual. For example, the civil magistracy and marriage are of divine institution, but they are not spiritual. 3. Sacraments are means of grace not in themselves, but only where they are received by faith accompanied by the working of the Spirit. Our Sacramentarian opponents hold that always, necessarily, and *ex opere operato*, they convey grace. 4. The Scripture teaches (John i. 12, 13, Acts ii. 4, x. 44) that the Spirit is bestowed on believers independently of and antecedently to the reception of the sacraments or laying on of hands. 5. That every believer having the Spirit of God is a member of the Church of God, whether he has received the sacraments or not. 6. We hold that the Church *invisible*, consisting of all true Christians, is to be distinguished from the Church *visible*, which consists of those in all the world who profess the true religion, with their children. 7. That the Church visible and invisible are not co-extensive; many being members of the one who are not members of the other. 8. We reject the doctrine that "external actions are the means or instruments for conveying heavenly gifts to the soul." These are bestowed according to His sovereign will and *directly by God*, sometimes apart from external actions, although also at other times in connection with them. 9. We reject a PRIESTHOOD, *i.e.*, human mediators. All men have *direct* access to God in Jesus Christ, without a *go-between*, whether man or rite. 10. We deny that the validity of ordination or the efficacy of the sacraments depends, in any sense, on the character or condition of the administrator, or on "manual

contact." 11. While Scripture [gives some directions as to the outward form of the visible Church, we deny that *any* particular organization is essential; and also that prelacy is not found in Scripture, far less can it be the only form under which God's Church exists. We shall go no further. Our correspondent must make his choice between Protestantism and Popery, between Scripture and the Fathers; between worship in spirit and reality, and worship which consists in the performance of outward actions and symbolism. The real question is one of "Spirituality"—Is the Church formed directly by God's Spirit, or by man's acts conferring as *he* wills the grace of God upon the soul?"

PROPOSED TEMPERANCE LEGISLATION.

AT last it has been settled in whom, or what particular branch of our federal government, the power rests to legislate on this vexed question, and the ministry, by promptly taking up the subject, have refuted a charge which many were too ready to bring against them, of insincerity in their assertions of professed interest, and of a desire to stave off dealing with it as long as possible. But in truth, so thoroughly has public sentiment on this vital subject been aroused, that the question being once settled where the power to legislate upon it lies, no minister or government could well afford to trifle with it. Apart from this, however, the measure which has been introduced by the government bears every mark of a sincere desire to deal earnestly and with a vigorous hand with this great social grievance, the traffic in intoxicating liquors.

In the first part of the proposed measure, the first thing which we notice as being an improvement upon former acts, is removing the question of the submission of the Act to the vote of the people beyond local influences, intrigues and evasions. This is now lodged in the Governor-General in Council upon the presentation of a petition with the certified signatures of one-fourth of all the electors in the county or city petitioning who are entitled to vote for a member of the House of Commons. With respect to the places and mode of voting, many of the provisions applicable in voting for members of parliament are embodied in this bill. Thus, the polling is to be done in one day, and a sufficient number of polling places are to be opened to make polling in every locality convenient. Lists of voters in each such polling district are to be furnished to every returning officer, and every precaution that could be thought of has been taken to make voting safe, and secure a fair chance of testing the strength of parties for and against. Every voter shall vote in only one place, may be sworn or called upon to make affirmation, and should he refuse to do so he cannot receive a ballot paper, and so cannot vote. The destruction, loss, or non-appearance for other reasons of the ballot-boxes on the day and at the place of making up the poll will not necessarily void the petition. If one-half or more of all the votes polled are against the petition, it shall be held to be not adopted; and in case more than half of all the votes polled are for the petition, it shall be held to have been adopted. We would have wished to see these clauses just

reversed; but, perhaps, the measure is more likely to be successfully carried out as they stand, and one more than the half is strictly all that is needed for the adoption of the petition.

The penalties for infringement of the provisions of the Act are sufficiently severe to deter offenders, and yet not so severe as to cause a desire on the part of administrators of the law to evade their infliction wherever possible. The dangerous nature of the liquor traffic and of the effects of drink are indirectly shown by the enactment that "no intoxicating, spirituous or fermented liquors or strong drinks shall be sold or given at any hotel, tavern or shop or other place within the limits of any polling district, during the whole of any day on which any polling is begun, holden or proceeded with, under a penalty of one hundred dollars for every offence, with the power of imprisonment for not more than six months at the discretion of the judge.

The interests of dealers in liquors are treated with fairness. In addition to their knowing beforehand that at any time this Act may pass in their respective localities, it is provided that it cannot come into operation until the expiration of sixty days from the date of the publication of the order in Council giving it effect, and then only if this sixty days allow thirty more to have elapsed from the day on which the annual license shall expire, granting the dealers in liquors from two to three months for the disposal of stock on hand. The petition having once been passed, it is provided that it shall remain in effect for three years, unless revoked by means not very likely to be tried where the law has once been carried by a good majority. This gives an opportunity to give the law a fair trial in any locality where it has been put in force.

The regulations for the sale of liquors for sacramental, medicinal and mechanical purposes are so strict as not likely to be often violated. The first case requires the certificate of a clergyman, the second that of a doctor, the third that of two justices of the peace, stating that the liquor is for the purpose set forth by the applicant.

Perhaps the most objectionable part of this Act is that which allows the sale of quantities of ten gallons by any licensed distiller, brewer, merchant or trader, on the condition merely that he has *good reason to believe* that the liquor will forthwith be carried beyond the limits of the county or city in which the sale is made. In the first place dealers in liquor will in the majority of cases be very easily satisfied with reasons given for believing that the liquor is to be carried beyond the city or county; in the next place, it will be very liable to abuse at points where counties are contiguous to each other; and lastly, it will afford, though not to the same extent, the pretext which the anti-Dunkinites made of the five-gallon clause, that it pressed hard upon the poor man. How considerate they are, because it prevented him from going and getting his glass at a tavern, and also was worse for his family, as it would cause poor men to club together, purchase their liquor, and then take it to their homes and so endanger their families. It appears to be not quite consistent that the buyer for sacramental, medicinal or mechanical purposes must show