

EXCESSIVE CHURCH ACCOMMODATION.

THE *Mail* gives us the following figures: "It is clear, judging by the membership, that there are too many church buildings. In Ontario there is one church for every 274 Baptists, one for every 230 Congregationalists, one for every 539 Episcopalians, one for every 249 Methodists, and one for every 490 Presbyterians. These figures include children, and persons who do not attend church, but describe themselves as belonging to the denominations to which their parents adhered. Supposing there are five persons to a family, the figures would indicate that there is in Ontario a Protestant church to every seventy-one Protestant families, including non-church-goers. The Roman Catholics, on the other hand, have a church to every 1,207 members or 241 families, and nearly all Catholics are church-goers or contributors."

From these facts the *Mail* concludes that "it is apparent therefore that the divisions amongst Protestants are sources of waste and weakness."

It appears that Principal Grant proposes or supposes that the evil results of these divisions may be overcome by treaty. A Mr. Doudiet proposes that "each Church should keep out of the territory of the other Churches." Suppose Dr. Grant and Mr. Doudiet set us an example to illustrate their meaning? The Catholic Church was in Quebec province long before Presbyterianism. Will Dr. Grant and Mr. D. advocate the withdrawal of the Presbyterians from, say Montreal, as a start? These theories are all wildly impracticable. There is only one way to stop the scandalous, the suicidal policy of providing edifices for the worship of God by His children in excess of their numbers and needs. That evil can only be cured by the abandonment of sectarian, fancy forms of the One Faith and the recognition of the central fact of Christianity—the foundation by Jesus Christ of One Church, the visible unity of which He intended to be His witness to the world. To build a Church, so called, which militates against that visible unity is an act of sin. As to making treaties, based on the recognition of schism, as a perpetual and un sinful factor in Church life, and as to dividing the churches by territorial divisions, it is the mere gaseous froth of sentimentalism. "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." Spiritually, the whole earth is the parish of the Catholic Church. That position has a divine warrant. As Trustee for God, the Church must guard her sacred trust. However men may sneer or mock, she must refuse all overtures to divide or share in any degree, or on any terms, with those private churches who have no title or claim, or call, or responsibility as organizations, in respect to God's vineyard and the work of its tillage.

The notion that the church of Jesus Christ is made up of congeries of sects invented and founded by men is mere "midsummer madness," the Church cannot give any sanction to such folly without treason.

There is another very grave aspect of this subject. There is a determined attack made upon the Church by her enemies on the absurd plea that by her ministry and Sacraments, she interposes between souls and God. The charge is never made except in general terms, and all efforts to obtain a specific explanation of the particular way in which this obstruction is made has hitherto failed. It is as though a person were arraigned before a Judge on the charge of being "an offender against the law," without any special provable offence being alleged. That those who bring this charge refuse to be specific is a demonstration of the charge being fanciful. But we distinctly charge those who build sectarian Churches with doing the very thing they charge but never prove against sacerdotalists, that is against the sacramental teaching and offices of the Church.

The multiplication of church edifices has driven tens of thousands into total neglect of divine worship. The enormous costs of such waste has been a burden too great for many to bear. The scandal for so much division in Christ's family has turned myriads away from His assemblies. The fact of wholesale alienation of classes is beyond dispute. It is admitted on all hands that Christian energies, and money have been devoted to excess in providing needless edifices for worship, instead of in real mission work in the gathering of outcasts. Thus beyond controversy or cavil the sects by their competition with each other, and their efforts to damage the church have indeed placed barriers between the souls of tens of thousands and God. That charge rests upon no mere fancy woven metaphysical theory like the cry against sacerdotalism, but upon facts which are freely admitted. The excessive multiplication of places of worship is nothing more or less than an outcome of the shopkeeping spirit of jealousy and competition. Whether such a spirit is in accordance with the mind of Christ we need not say.

The *Mail* voices the universal conviction in saying. "The divisions amongst Protestants are sources of waste and weakness."

THE LATE F. W. ROWSELL.

WE deeply regret to find the death of Mr. F. W. Rowsell, C.B. and C.M.G., in the prime of life, being only 46 years of age, announced in late London papers. Mr. Rowsell, from an early period of his official life, took a very high stand in the civil service of England. For several years he held the position of "Director of Contracts" in the Admiralty. The great ability he displayed, led to his appointment as British Commissioner to regulate the system of taxation in the island of Malta. For his services in this important position, he was highly complimented in Parliament, and received the C.B. distinction. After the death of his brother-in-law, Mr. William Dixon, chief Agent of Emigration for the Dominion, Mr. Rowsell, by request of the Canadian Government, took the duties of the office until Mr. Jenkins was appointed. For the past five years he has resided at Cairo, as

English Commissioner for the Egyptian domains. For his services in this capacity, he was appointed C.M.G., and had his life been spared, a still higher distinction was to have been conferred upon him. Of late, however, the effects of the climate and the strain upon all his faculties, undermined his health, and he returned on leave of absence to England, where he died a few days after his arrival. He was well known in the literary world as a contributor to the leading periodicals. An article of his on the land system of tenancy in Egypt, lately published, attracted much attention. Mr. Rowsell was a nephew of our esteemed townsman, Henry Rowsell, and also of Bishop Barry, Metropolitan of Australia.

WHY SOME CLERGYMEN FAIL.

BY RICHARD FERGUSON.

AS already shown, the grand mistake that many clergymen make is not in having hobbies, but in trying to thrust them upon their congregations before they have gained their confidence and good will, an operation which, with our people above all others, be it noted, takes time and patience. No where in the world can there be found a more intensely instinctively, and often unreasoningly, conservative class of people than in the Church of England, and this, of all facts, should be kept before the mind's eye of the newly appointed priest who aspires to make changes and reforms in the manner of doing things. With many churchmen, the very fact of a desire on the part of the clergyman for change of any kind, is, *per se*, a cause of the gravest suspicion and distrust, and in no case can a man announce his intention of making any changes, radical or superficial, upon his predecessor's way of doing things, without arousing among a certain class of people, and they by no means the worst, a certain degree of misgiving, which makes them morbidly critical, and produces a state of affairs most uncomfortable for all parties. First impressions are the strongest after all, and a congregation is very apt to form its opinion—good, bad or indifferent—of a clergyman during the first few months of his pastorate, and to cling with unreasoning, persistent tenacity to that opinion in the teeth of overwhelming evidence to the contrary. We all know what a dreary, heart-sickening task it is to "live down" the evil effects of some imprudent course of action. How many men, I wonder, out of the seven or eight hundred priests of the Canadian Church possess the requisite grace and tact and backbone to do so. A marvellously low percentage, as our ceaseless ministerial changes most amply testify.

Humanly speaking, in at least nine cases out of ten, a clergyman's success or failure is irrevocably decided within, say, the first six months of his pastorate. If within that period he arouses the suspicion or distrust of his people, or fails to gain their confidence and esteem, ten to one that he will ever be anything more than a mere stop gap, holding his