

The Wesleyan

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Curate Keating has at length received attention in the "Church Chronicle." It does not defend his letter—that would incur the indignation of a large number of churchmen; it does not rebuke the Curate—that would be too great a concession to non-conformists. It merely opens its columns for a second letter, if possible more slanderous than the Curate's, which asserts that disgraceful stories have long been circulated, "that the Reverend gentleman had merely done his duty," that scandals are floating about respecting Berwick," meaning we suppose, as regards its camp-meeting; though other things may be implied; that Mr. Keating made an effort in the right direction, and "that there are too many of us"—churchmen—"frightened of giving offence." The editors, in a note at the head of correspondence, states that "they are willing to publish letters on any subject connected with the Church, but they are not responsible for the sentiments expressed in such communications." The "C. Chronicle" imagines by this quibble it is legally free from the odium of publishing such slanderous utterances. It is cowardly, that is all. It dare not rebuke, it will not rebuke. We see no alternative, therefore, but for the slandered Berwick Christians to proceed against Curate Keating, demand from the "C. Chronicle" the name of the second libeller and have a jury of disinterested men to give judgment. All ways provided the Berwick people are really innocent of the sins and crimes of licentiousness and Sabbath breaking with which they are charged. For our part we believe they are innocent; but the "C. Chronicle" repeatedly asserts they are guilty. The author of this second epistle in the "C. Chronicle" maintains that the action of Curate Keating was "neither mean nor sneaking," inasmuch as he came out under his own signature; but the second letter, more defamatory than the Curate's, has an assumed signature. By his own judgment the latter has no single element of manliness; his method is "mean and sneaking." This is his own finding. We would not have written this judgment.

The "Christian Intelligencer" and "Visitor" of St. John are discussing the question of close communion as related to baptism. The latter is the Free Baptist paper of New Brunswick; the former the organ of the Calvinist Baptists. The "Intelligencer" seems to us to have the tremendous advantage of consistency and common sense; but, then, we ourselves are outside of the true Christian pale, and therefore not competent to give an opinion. This we can see, however; that close communion brings in its train a vast amount of bickering and is a most potent instrument in splitting asunder Christian bodies. On several occasions when we have longed to honor Christ by observing his commands as regards the sacrament of bread and wine, among brethren brought from different countries and churches to signify their union in the common bonds of one blessed Lord, we have been met by the response that it could not be done for fear of offending the Baptists. It is high time such an obstruction were altogether removed from the Christian brotherhood.

The Greek Church, the Roman Catholic, the Episcopal, stand aloof and refuse to recognize other Churches in fellowship because really they are not Christian. The Baptists alone continue to acknowledge other Churches—after a sort; they will pray with them, work with them, exchange pulpits with them—anything but eat and drink with them. In the temple they call us brethren; but when they enter the sanctuary we must stay out. No wonder that Robert Hall, Spurgeon and other great men denounce the system.

Since our last issue a counter explanation has been sent out by the Committee of Moncton Baptist Church refuting and most strongly denouncing the review made by Lawyer Milner of Sackville on the Toad-Sears difficulty. Mr. Milner has met it by an intimation which may or may not mean that he will reply in due time. Till Mr. Milner's next expression shall appear, it is impossible to say whether peace is to ensue. There can be no doubt that Mr. Todd's officials believe in his innocence with a faith unquenchable; and this properly have its weight with every unprejudiced mind. Should, however, the war be renewed, friend Todd should not content himself with a newspaper discussion. Every honorable man will sustain him in an appeal direct to a tribunal which must command public respect—a council of his peers, and sufficiently disinterested to silence all gainsaying.

OUR EDUCATIONAL WORK.

BY REV. C. STEWART, D.D.
The Report of the Educational Society for the Methodist Church of Canada for the past year, has just been published, and is a document well worthy of a careful perusal. It contains facts and suggests inferences which if now unheeded, may, at no remote period, force themselves upon our attention, in a way neither flattering to our intelligence, nor honorable to our position as an important section of the Church of Christ. "The objects of this society," to quote from the Discipline, "shall be to assist in maintaining our Universities, Theological schools, and Higher Mission schools; to defray the expenses of the Examination of candidates for the ministry in our Church; and to aid such candidates in obtaining an education." To further these objects, the net income of the society for the last year was \$7,083. "The first and largest" outlay was to aid candidates for the ministry, who are in training at our various Theological schools. Of these fifty-eight were appointed by the Conferences of 1875 to attend College, of whom forty-four received assistance to the amount of \$5,260, or more than two-thirds of the net income of the society for the year. The expenses of examination cost \$510 more; so that the Board found a balance of \$1,266 in their hands, to meet "all the claims of the institutions to which the Church has entrusted her work of education."

Never was that work of so much importance as it is to-day. Never were those institutions needed so much as now. On them depends very largely, the formation of right public opinion for this young but rapidly growing nationality. To them must we look not only for our trained missionaries for the foreign work, but also for the supply of our pulpits at home, from Newfoundland in the east to the shores of the Pacific in the west. Yet to accomplish all this vast and varied work our Connexion last year provided a sum less than thirteen hundred dollars! This fact, one might suppose, is sufficiently startling and humiliating. It could scarcely be brought forth in proof that we are "a man that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do." But in turning to the records of the Maritime Conferences, we find that a special share of the humiliation falls to our own lot. To aid the work in the east, we ascertain that the Central Board contributed

the sum of \$2,520. On the other hand the total amount raised in the three Eastern Conferences—according to their own Minutes—was but \$1263.69; or, after deducting District expenses, \$1195.05, being considerably less than one-half the amount which we received. Now if the treasury were overflowing, or if even we could do no better, we might without compunction consent to receive so large a subsidy. The Connexional principle is, that the strong should help the weak; but the Central Board is not strong, and we are not so weak as the above fact implies. We certainly can do a great deal better than this, and shall but suffer if we do not. Let us briefly examine the details of last year's contributions. Nova Scotia is the "banner" Conference, for it raised 67 cents per member on an average, whereas the N. B. and P. E. I. Conference raised only 6, and the Newfoundland Conference 5. A still greater inequality presents itself however when we look into the District returns. For N. S. they stand in the following order, Halifax 104, Liverpool 6, Truro 5, Cumberland 4, Guysboro' 4, and Annapolis 2. In no District save that of Halifax is the Conference average reached; And how is this sliding scale to be explained? A plea might perhaps be found for the shore circuits of Guysboro' and Cape Breton—thinly-peopled, of wide extent, suffering from failures in the fishery, suffering still more from the continued depression of the coal trade; but how comes it that the thriving District of Cumberland should be no better, and that the fertile, compact, prosperous circuits of the renowned Annapolis valley—a Methodist field which the Lord hath so greatly blessed—should be so much worse; the very lowest in the Province?

But our anomalies are only commencing. Let us look at the Circuits in the most advanced District. The metropolis always does well. But taking out Grafton Street with its 30 cents per member, Brunswick St. with its 26, and adding Windsor with its 9, and there is not another Circuit in the whole District which raises the Conference average! Dartmouth is next with 6, and Newport and Hamilton, Bermuda with 5. Horton and St. George's, (Bermuda), are bracketed at 4, but Sambro leads them at 4; then comes Avondale at 3, Kentville at 2, Hantsport and Margaret's Bay at 1, and, finally, Burlington with half the last sum, three-fourths of a cent per member.

In the next highest District, Liverpool, there are inequalities too. Here the whole average is 6; but Lunenburg yields 6, Liverpool 8, Yarmouth 8, Yarmouth N. 10, Caledonia 11, and N. E. Harbor 22! Last, however, the returns from the last named circuit should lead to "great searching of hearts," not only in country parts but even in rich and generous circuits not distant from itself, it is sandwiched in between Port la Tour 13, and Shelburne at 8.

If we turn to the sister Conference, it will only be to obtain facts more humiliating still. The Conference average is 6 cents per member. By taking out the receipts of one circuit—and not a city one—that average for the remainder is 31-6. The order in which the Districts stand is, Sackville 11, St. John 9, St. Stephen 4, P. E. Island 3, and last of all Fredericton 3. Comparatively the St. John circuit do well, but they do not approach the Halifax circuits, nor are they first in their own Province. The Centenary yields 17, but Woodstock 22 cents per member, and Sackville 67. Charlottetown raised 42, but Fredericton took rank with Fairville, Elgin, Gibson and Pownal, at one cent and a half per member. Florenceville, Apohaqui and Kingston sink to the level of that one circuit in N. S., at 1 cent, and worse still, Carmarthen St. St. John, and Souris, Egmont and Alberton, in P. E. I., with an aggregate of 308 members, make no returns at all!

An analysis of the returns from the Newfoundland Conference would doubtless show how much has to be done there also, in bringing up this fund to a proper relation to our other Connexional interests. Yet considering the missionary character of our work there, and its recent rapid extension, and the poverty of many parts of the Island, it is creditable that the average should not have sunk lower than 51 per member. We observe too that St. John's, with its wonted liberality has a subscription list—which many other places more highly favored have not—and that its income from all sources made its average 31 cents per member, the second highest amount in the Maritime Provinces.

But the great question for us all is in reference to the future. The very lowest amount which, in order to meet its claims the Central Board requires for the present year is \$16,000. Of that amount our fair share would be at least one-sixth, or \$2,700. Can that be done? We think

so certainly, and without serious difficulty. We would suggest—

1st. That the importance of the work and the reasonableness of the claim be the subject of conversation in each Quarterly Meeting, at its next session. The youngest, weakest Circuit is interested in it. An able, and therefore a trained ministry is one of the constant and pressing wants of our time. All are anxious to secure such a ministry—some circuits demand it as a right which must be conceded to them, whatever may become of others. Let none expect to reap without sowing. Let each circuit endeavor to understand its own responsibility. Our own experience has been, that, if the cause be put fairly before our people, they will nobly sustain it. The Methodists are a common-sense people, and liberal withal. They believe in our institutions and modes of working. If this matter is not made unpopular, it will never be unpopular.

2nd. Let the arrangements of the General Conference—the embodiment of the wisdom of our laymen, as well as of our own ministers—be fully carried out. How desirable that once a year the subject of Christian education should be plainly set forth from the pulpit, and the collection made, in order to give the members of our congregations an opportunity to contribute. Then, as sermons are required "to be preached, and collections taken up in all our churches and preaching places, at some time in February or April in each year," so it is ordered that "meetings shall be held on each circuit or station, at which the claims of our educational work shall be placed before our people, and contributions taken for the funds of the society." (Discipline p. 93. Art. vi.) We observe that the cases are very rare in which subscriptions have been obtained. And yet it cannot be doubted that they might be obtained for larger or smaller amounts on every circuit in our work. If but one subscriber of five dollars, or five of one dollar were found in all our circuits it would almost at once double our income—and very much more than this can easily be done.

3rd. It may perhaps be urged that as times are dull, and as the circuits respectively have to bring up the ordinary receipts and the missionary lists as they have not been accustomed to do, that any further responsibility of this kind is impracticable. Yet this is no real hardship to our people. Many are the circuits which ought long ago to have been lifted above external aid, and who are now "putting on strength," because they have been thrown more fully on their own resources. And this Connexional interest, the benefits of which all come back to themselves, will still more develop their moral manhood. Nor can it be doubted that for each dollar contributed to the Missionary Society, our people will if they are asked contribute twelve cents for our educational work.

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

FIFTH YEAR, 1877. FEBRUARY.
FIRST QUARTER: STUDIES ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.

B. C. 906. LESSON VII. ELIJAH AND HIS SACRIFICE; OR, THE LORD'S TRIUMPH.
1 Kings 18, 36-46. Feb'y 18.

EXPLANATION.
THE TIME. Probably about three p. m. There might thus remain about five hours of light for the following events. Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, (Jacob, v. 31.) Unmistakable reference to Exod. 3, 15. It reminded them that the God of their fathers was a God that could answer by fire. Let it be known. By the descent of fire. Ver. 24. That thou art God. This was Elijah's foremost desire—the glory of God. Is it ours? I, thy servant. Not working for myself, nor by my own power, but in thy cause and in thy name. These things. Heretofore and that which is to come. At thy word. By thy power and might, and under thy direction. Happy the man who is consciously doing all things according to God's word.

TURNED THEIR HEART BACK. Elijah's desire, next to God's glory, was that Israel might return to God's service, and his prayer is not only that they may be converted, but that they may recognize God's gracious design in thus bringing it about.

FIRE OF THE LORD. Not a stroke of lightning. The sky was clear. An electrical discharge could not produce the effect. How it was done we need not know. It was as if one intensely brilliant flame came from the sky, consuming every thing, the sacrifice, the altar, both its stone frame and its earth center, and also the water that filled the trench. It was a great miracle, but what was it compared with the miracle of the incarnation of the

Son of God, and his suffering death and resurrection, that our hearts might be turned unto him?

FELL ON THEIR FACES. Unable to endure the brilliancy of the divine light. The demonstration was convincing, and they, perhaps involuntarily, prostrated themselves before the wonder-working God. The Lord, he is the God. See "Golden Text." Jehovah had proved his title. Baal is proved to be an impostor, and no God at all. All Israel pronounce the verdict, and in so doing profess allegiance to the God of their fathers.

TAKE THE PROPHECY OF BAAI. A severe test of their sincerity. Their profession was to be followed by acts. The command was in the Mosaic Law; (See Deut. 13, 9.) it might expose them to the anger of the king and queen, but as felt that it would help them throw off the bondage of Baal. Brook Kishon. Rising at the foot of Mount Tabor, skirting Carmel on its north-eastern side, it empties into the Mediterranean at Ptolemais. It is perennial only in its lower portion, but as it drains a large surface, it becomes a torrent after heavy rains. It may have been chosen that the coming rain might sweep the slain and their blood into the sea. The present name is *Nahr-el-Mulatta*—"the river of slaughter." Slow them. Not by stoning according to the command, (Deut. 17, 5.) but with the sword, (Chap. 19, 1.) Not by his own hand, but by his orders. The act is not to be judged by New Testament standards, nor to be imitated under the Gospel dispensation.

GET THREE UP. From the brook, where he had witnessed the slaughter. Eat and drink. The prophets' faith sees the end at hand—forces the coming rain, and would have the king rejoice rather than mourn over the fall of the false prophets. Sound of abundance of rain. Possibly the wind rising, possibly a mysterious intimation to the ears of his prophet only. The time was come when the drought was to end.

WENT UP. Ahab and Elijah both went up, but to different parts of the mountain. Top of Carmel. Not the highest point (ver. 43, 44). Probably the brow of the mountain overlooking the sea. Carmel is a long ridge with various peaks, growing gradually higher inland. Ahab could feast—Elijah preferred to commune with God. (See John 4, 34.) Upon the earth face between his knees. The extraordinary attitude indicates extraordinary earnestness. Comp. Mat. 26, 39. Mark 14, 35; Luke 22, 44.

SERVANT. This and chap. 19, 3, are the only references to this servant. Tradition says he was the son of the widow of Sarepta. Go up. Elijah was withdrawn from a view of the sea, probably just back of the brow of the hill. Toward the sea. To the west. Seven times. A full number. Don't get weary, the storm will come. Elijah's faith is sure; no delay can shake it.

AT THE SEVENTH TIME. God sometimes tries our faith to the last, but "he is faithful that promised." A little cloud. Sailors say that a small cloud on the horizon is the sign of a coming storm. We should not overlook the first intimations that God is about to shower down his mercy. Go up, say unto Ahab. Ahab was farther inland, on higher ground. Get thee down. Jezreel is in the valley. Rain stop thee not. He must cross the Kishon, which would be swollen by the coming rain as to be impassable. Elijah was confident that the rain would come and that abundantly.

MEANWHILE, or straightway. Heb "till here and till there." Jezreel. The place of Ahab's palace, (chap. 21, 1,) or one of them, as the metropolis of the nation was Samaria. It was situated on a hill at the foot of Mount Gilboa, at the head of the plain of Esdraelon, and between it and the valley of Jezreel. Its modern name is *Zerin*.

HAND OF THE LORD. Hand frequently denotes strength in Hebrew. He had eaten nothing for many hours. It may mean a strong inward impulse, or in Exek. 1, 3; 3, 14, 22, etc. Under divine direction, probably with divine help, he ran before Ahab the sixteen miles to Jezreel. Probably to keep him in mind of the recent events, and support the irresolute monarch in carrying out the reformation thus inaugurated.