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TORONTO, FEBRUARY 25th, 1891.

The Demand for Preachers.

During the last few weeks we have heard of a number of churches which are anxious to employ preachers to labor with them all the time, but find it difficult to secure suitable men. It appears that among the Disciples in Ontario the supply of preachers is not at present equal to the demand. We find that the churches desire good men, of good ability, and of good education; they feel the need of able ministers of the New Testament. The churches too are willing to contribute to the support of such men, though few of them are able to pay large salaries. And the problem before them would seem to be how to get first class preachers for moderate salaries. Does any one think it impossible to solve such a problem? We think it is not. It should not be so. Why should it be thought a thing incredible that earnest and able men who know the truth and love the truth should devote themselves to its propagation even though they should have to live on meagre salaries? Let us have faith in the men of our own generation and believe that in our day as in former days there are those who are willing to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Why should we hesitate to appeal to the most talented young men among us and urge them to give their lives to the preaching of the Gospel? We do not hesitate to do so. We ask young men whose aptitude for business might make them millionaires, and those whose abilities might carry them to the highest places in the professions to renounce the hope of being rich, or of professional eminence, and engage in the work of proclaiming the Gospel pure and simple as was done by the Apostles.

In the matter of compensation we believe the churches are disposed to deal fairly and as generously as possible with the preachers, and we think the attitude of the preacher should be not to get all he can, but to do with as little as possible. In the present emergency when preachers are in such great demand, and so many of the churches that need and want preachers are not strong financially, the preachers should do all in their power to adapt themselves to the circumstances and meet the churches half way or more than half way if necessary. No good cause was ever built up without self-sacrifice; no religious movement ever became victorious without self-denial on the part of its preachers. Our fathers in their day endured much for the cause, why should we not imitate their faith and emulate their labors? That the Lord hath need of us in this country we heartily believe; that He will use us if we are willing to work we do not doubt. But He can do without us and can raise up others to do His work if we refuse to labor in His vineyard. Let us work while it is called to-day.

Strong Talk.

Rev. T. De Witt Talmage, in an address to saloon-keepers, closes with this strong paragraph: "I tell you plainly that you will meet your customers one day when there will be no counter between you. When your work is done on earth, and you enter the reward of your business, all the souls of the men whom you have destroyed will crowd around you, and pour their bitterness in your cup. They will show you their wounds, and say, 'You made them'; and point to their unquenchable thirst, and say, 'You kindled it'; and rattle their chain, and say, 'You forged it.' Then their united groans will amaze your ear; and with the hands out of which you once picked the sixpences and the dimes, they will push you off the verge of great precipices; while rolling up from beneath, and breaking among the crags of death, will thunder, 'Woe to him that giveth his neighbor drink!'"—*Canadian Nation*.

The *Canadian Nation* very properly styles those words of Dr. Talmage strong talk. It is strong, no doubt of that, but is it wise? It is not wise, and the sooner advocates of prohibition cease uttering or commanding such talk, the better it will be for the cause. One would think that a man of Dr. Talmage's position would have found out before this that the saloon-keepers are not the only parties responsible for the evils of the liquor traffic. Are they more responsible than the Government that grants them license to sell their neighbor drink? Is their responsibility as great as that of the Government? Are they more responsible than the people who elect and support the Government that grants them license? Are they as responsible? Is it not plain that the chief responsibility rests upon the people, a less responsibility upon the Government, and a still less upon the saloon-keepers? Most assuredly it is. Let all friends of prohibition turn their guns upon the people who license men to make and to sell that which is so destructive to the bodies and souls of a vast multitude of our fellow creatures.

Petitions for Prohibition.

We presume the congregations of Disciples throughout the country have received circulars requesting them to have circulated among their members petitions to the Parliament of Canada asking for the enactment of a Prohibitory law. We are uncompromising prohibitionists, and we believe in seeking to further every movement that may hasten the day when the Dominion will no longer be cursed by the liquor traffic, but we do not think that the present effort will amount to much. One thing that will be an objection to it is that it is under the auspices of two of the religious denominations of the country—the Presbyterian and the Methodist. By what authority, it may be asked, do they take it upon themselves to inaugurate such a movement? If they desire the co-operation of other religious bodies, why did they not consult them before the scheme was launched? Moreover such petitions, if they are presented at all, should come from the people of Canada as such, and not from the members of the different denominations as such. We do not vote for members of Parliament in our capacity as members of religious bodies, but in our capacity as citizens, and so if we approach our servants, the Parliament, by petition, we should do so as citizens. This tugging in of religion where it does not belong is not much use and is sometimes odious. The Parliament of Canada has no right to act upon the petition of church members, but upon the petition of electors. The right time to petition Parliament is when a general election is being held.

And the right way to petition Parliament is to do our utmost to elect men who will enact such laws as we believe to be for the general good.

Another thing that will operate against the present effort is the fact that even good church members who are at the same time good prohibitionists are slow to give countenance to a project which may injure the political party to which they belong, and may not help much, if at all, the cause of prohibition. We have heard that some Conservative prohibitionists are declining to sign the petitions on the ground that if they are largely signed they may embarrass Sir John Macdonald.

A third consideration that we think will affect the number of signatures to the petitions is that many staunch prohibitionists honestly question whether the country is ready for prohibition. The treatment received by the Scott Act shook the faith of many earnest friends of the cause. Why was the Scott Act repealed so generally where it had been carried by large majorities? Because so many of its professed friends had not moral courage enough to aid in its enforcement. Temperance people must recognize sooner or later that it is not sufficient that a majority of the electors should be persuaded to vote for prohibition; they must learn that a majority of the people must be ready to assist in enforcing the law when enacted. For our own part we do not know that the country is prepared to enforce a prohibitory law. We rather doubt it. We are inclined to think that the moral fibre of the community requires to be strengthened considerably before such a law could be effective. And we would recommend all preachers who favor prohibition to devote themselves to that work; it will be beneficial on general principles, as well as helpful to the temperance cause.

There has been much experimenting and so much failure and disappointment in connection with temperance work in this country, that many, we believe, are losing confidence in the wisdom and political sagacity of temperance leaders, and are becoming cautious in the matter of committing themselves to new projects proposed by them. There is great need of politicians, in the good sense, in the councils of prohibitionists; practical men who know the country and know the times, who will not recommend such schemes, as, being visionary and impracticable, will serve rather to waste the energies and the means of the friends of the cause than to further the end in view. It must be confessed that some, at least, of those who have hitherto posed as leaders have had barely ability enough to manage a temperance lodge, and have been conspicuously out of their spheres in the chief places in the temperance army.

What we think the churches as such should do is, in the first place, frequently, faithfully, earnestly, yes, tenderly, to press upon the attention of the people the scriptural teaching in regard to the great evil of drunkenness and the dreadful doom of the drunkard, and, in the second place, to be very assiduous in keeping before Christians in particular, and all men in general, the high and noble quality of moral courage, so that when we secure a prohibitory law, we shall not again be put to shame, as we have been by the Scott Act, and be compelled to confess that though a majority of the electors voted for prohibition, there is not enough of loyalty to conviction and manly courage to enforce the law, albeit ever since the country was settled by the whites the voice of the preacher has been heard in the land, and the Bible has been opened and expounded before the people, and they urged to make it the practical, every day guide of their lives.

What we think the electors as such should do—those who favor prohibition, of course, we mean—is to use their influence energetically in the caucuses and conventions of their respective parties and do everything in their power to secure the nomination of prohibitionists. Then if the country be ripe for prohibition, the great majority of the candidates of both parties will be prohibitionists, and as a consequence the majority of elected members will be prohibitionists, and no difficulty will be experienced in passing a prohibitory law. We think if such a course would not succeed it would be good evidence that the country is not ripe for prohibition, and that its friends should for another period devote themselves to educating the people.

Discordant Voices.

Our readers will have learned from the secular press that on Christmas Day, in Old St. Paul's Church, Woodstock, Rural Dean Wade, of the Church of England, invited Dr. McMullen, ex-Moderator of the Presbyterian church, to preach, and to commune. The incident gave rise to a vast amount of gratulation and congratulation on the part of many secular and religious papers. The *Canadian Churchman* (High church), however, in no uncertain tones, squarely took issue with those who applauded the course of Mr. Wade, and sharply criticized him, pointing out that he had deliberately violated one of the laws of the church, and broken his ordination vow, and even went so far as to intimate that it would be better for those ministers who do not see fit to observe the regulations of the church to cease to exercise the functions of ministers. Thereupon a chorus of religious papers, aided by secular journals, raised the cry of bigotry, narrowness, etc., against the *Churchman*. An instructive sight it is, too. Mr. Wade solemnly pledged himself, at his ordination, to observe the laws of the Church of England; on Christmas Day he unquestionably violated his obligation; the *Churchman* points out the fact and rebukes the offender, while religious papers pat him on the back, and tell him what a noble Christian he is. Surely we have fallen upon curious times. It is a time to quote the words of the prophet: "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil."

We are not discussing the question whether it is right, or Christian, or charitable, or wrong, or bigoted, or narrow, for the Church of England to have such a rule as that violated by Mr. Wade. We simply point out what is the fact, that there is such a rule, that Mr. Wade deliberately and flagrant broke it, and that professed Christians call that evil, good. Why should they not apply to themselves the words of the prophet quoted above? What but harm can come from such disregard of common moral principles? What can be expected of the rank and file when the leaders unite in glorifying a man who lightly tramples under foot that which he solemnly swore to uphold? There is abundant need for a thorough ventilation of the corrupting effects of what there is reason to fear is a common in Church and State, viz., the thoughtless making and the thoughtless breaking of vows.

We have been intending to remind our readers to exercise their privilege in regard to the "Critic's Corner." Bro. Sheppard will be happy to receive and to answer hard questions pertaining to Bible matters. None need hesitate to apply to him. What is a difficulty to one may be a difficulty to many.

Bro. Joseph Franklin began a series of special services in Hamilton, Jan. 11th. The writer had the pleasure of meeting him and his wife, and of listening to him preach on the evening of the 16th.

The annual meeting of the Canadian Press Association will be held in Toronto on Friday and Saturday, February 13, 14, next. The circular announcing the meeting says it is likely to be the most interesting gathering of newspaper men ever held in Toronto. A reception at Government House and a banquet are among the attractions of the occasion.

We call attention to the statement of Bro. McLean, in regard to the March collection for Foreign Missions which appears on page seven. As we are now only asked to take up one collection in the year for this purpose, that one should be liberal. What is required is the general participation in the collection by all the brethren. A good rousing sermon on Foreign Missions, frequent announcement beforehand and an opportunity to all, repeated, if necessary, will accomplish much.

Vick's Floral Guide for 1891. No lover of a fine plant or garden can afford to be without a copy. It is an elegant book over 100 pages 8 1/2 x 10 1/2 inches, beautiful colored illustrations of Sunriso Amaranthus, Hydrangea and Potatoes. Instructions for planting, cultivating, etc. Full list of everything that can be desired in the way of Vegetable and Flower Seeds, Plants, Bulbs, etc. Also full particulars regarding the cash prizes of \$1,000 and \$200. The novelties have been tested and found worthy of cultivation. We hope it will be our good luck to see the Nellie Lewis Carnation and taste the Grand Rapids Lettuce. It costs nothing because the 10 cents you send for it can be deducted from the first order forwarded. We advise our friends to secure a copy of James Vick, Seedsman, Rochester, N. Y.

Church News.

MARSHVILLE.—Bro. Bronnstuhl was with us on Lord's day, 4th inst. Spoke for us twice very acceptably. One young lady made the good confession and was baptized the following Wednesday. S. WOOLNER.

ERIN VILLAGE.—Bro. E. Sheppard began special services at this place January 10. At this writing the meetings are growing well in interest and attendance.

GRAND VALLEY AND MARSHVILLE.—We are informed that Bro. Samuel Woolner has been engaged to preach for these two churches during 1891. Bro. Woolner, like some other easy-going preachers we know, is only to preach three times each Lord's day, and drive some 15 or 20 miles. We trust that Bro. W. and the churches will have a happy and successful year of work together.

EVERTON.—Upon invitation, I visited the churches at Grand Valley and Marshville last Lord's day; I spoke in morning at Grand Valley, and in the afternoon and evening at Marshville. At the latter place, at the afternoon meeting, there was one confession. Also, since last report, there has been one confession and baptism at Everton, the man coming all the way from Elora to obey his Master.

J. A. BRENNENSTUN.
January 6, 1891