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TORONTO, JANUARY 15TH, 1878.

We invite the earnest attention of our readers to a communication in this issue from Mr. Allen Pringle relative to this JOURNAL. We entirely agree with Mr. Pringle in thinking it advisable, at least for the present, to make the JOURNAL a monthly instead of a weekly paper. It will be more honorable to work upward from a small beginning than to endeavor to do too much and fail in the attempt. There are a large number of Freethinkers in the Dominion, but from want of organization it is with great difficulty that they can be reached. Christians, forgetting the example and advice of their "Master," taunt infidels with being poor, and they undoubtedly, as a rule, deem poverty a crime. It is unfortunately too true that a majority of us are poor, and to many even the small sum of two dollars is a serious consideration. By making the JOURNAL a monthly paper and reducing the price to one dollar we have no doubt large numbers would subscribe who at present feel unable to do so.

EXEMPTIONS.

The people of the Dominion are beginning to see the injustice of exempting church property and clergymen from bearing their share of the burdens of taxation in return for the privileges and protection accorded them, and petitions against all exemptions have been circulated and are being numerously signed by all classes of citizens. Liberals are especially interested in this question, and should do all in their power to forward the movement. We, who think Christianity is, and ever has been, a clog to the wheels of progress, are compelled to aid in its support by paying increased taxes that churches and ministers may be exempt, and the latter to that extent become paupers of the State. A great outcry is made in England against the injustice and tyranny of forcing men to support a State religion in which many of them do not believe, while they see no injustice in imposing on us taxes, that churches and ministers, which we believe detrimental to the welfare of the public, ought to pay. There is not a single reason

that can be urged against one, which may not, with equal justice and truth, be urged against the other.

In support of this iniquitous system of spoliation, Christians assert that churches repay the State by the "good moral influence" they exert on the community, whereby they lessen crime and the cost of administering justice; that they are necessary to the State, and therefore ought not to be taxed. We shall show further on that neither of these assertions have any foundation in fact; but suppose they are true. Christians might for the same reasons with as much justice ask the State to build and support churches for the public benefit. If by preventing crime they act as a police force, they should be under the same control as are other branches of the police force. If they are necessary to the State, the State should build and control them. There can, with justice, be no middle position. So long as they are controlled by private corporations they should be supported by the same means, but if necessary to the State should be wholly supported and controlled by the State. But we deny the assertion that they are necessary or even beneficial. In an able article on the subject in the *Boston Index* its editor says:

"Trinity Church, by the use it permits to be made of the land it rents to its tenants, is the greatest feeder of vice in the whole city! According to the official records in the offices of the Chief of Police and the Excise Commissioners, the real estate of Trinity Church supports seven hundred and sixty-four saloons, or 'gin mills,' and ninety-six known houses of prostitution (ninety-two white and four colored), with many others suspected to be such! Who can estimate the annual expense entailed on the city by all these haunts of vice in its lowest forms? Not we, assuredly; but it must be simply enormous. Yet Trinity Church is exempted from taxation, forsooth, because it is a 'bulwark of morality,' and officiates in this capacity by pandering to the most depraved appetites of the worst classes of the city!"

So much for the necessity of Christianity in New York, but we do not need to go beyond our own borders to show that churches have been the most expensive "police" a country was ever burdened with. More than one-fifth of all the freehold property in Montreal is held by churches and religious corporations—all, as well as the enormous income derived from it—exempt from taxation. Some of the worst dens of infamy and crime are to be found on their property. The same state of things, though perhaps not to the same extent, exists in every city of importance in the Dominion, and yet we are told that it would be wrong to tax "God's property." The trustees of that estate should heed and profit by the lessons of the past, or the time may come when, on this continent, it may be necessary for the benefit of the public to place it in other hands. Churches, too, by various means, some of them not very reputable, contrive to drain the country of large sums of money for the purpose of converting (1) the "heathen," while thousands at their own doors are lacking bread, are worse off both morally and in all other respects than those to whom the "gospel" and the money are sent. It may be said that it is no concern of ours, but so long as we are taxed for the benefit of churches it is our concern. If Christians paid taxes on the immense sums represented by church property, they might have less to spare to send away to pervert and demoralize the "heathen."

There is another aspect of the case which is seldom noticed. These self-appointed "guardians of the public peace," by their utterances in their pulpits and press, engender so much bitterness