

THE EVIL OF BEING TOO LONG-SIGHTED.

WE are all familiar with the peculiar vagaries of the human eye. One person sees things within reach perfectly, but more distant ones are wrapt in mist. Another has eagle like vision for remote objects, but sees darkly those close at hand. Science has in a very blessed manner enabled us to overcome these defects. It seems to us that the Church in Canada is too long-sighted. The needs of the foreign, distant mission field are discerned with clearness, but the equally crying needs of our home mission field seem to be only dimly discerned. How else can we explain the collections for, and distribution of large funds on Hindoos, while there are thousands of our own countrymen without pastoral care? How justify the despatch of funds to build Churches in heathen lands when in our very midst there are Churches closed up for lack of funds? Does it not look as though we were justly under the condemnation passed on those who care not for their own, especially those of their own household.

We fear the ambition of Canadian churchmen to shine on the subscription lists of the great home societies is leading to a most unjust curtailment of our domestic resources for home missions. When the matter is looked at calmly it must be evident that the funds dispatched to England do not come so much out of the pockets of the laity as from the ill-paid, in hundreds of cases only half-paid clergy. In such affairs a home illustration is most effective. Take the case of a small town or village where the Rector is paid from \$500 per year up to \$700. In his Church a collection is taken up for Foreign missions. Surely that money is so much deducted from his stipend, for if the people can afford to give to foreign missions they could afford to pay the amount to increase their clergyman's income! How can such a pastor ask money for India or China when he is in the depth of poverty, and the next station has been abandoned? It is not commonly honest of churchmen where the clergyman's stipend is down to starvation point, to be sending their money to remote lands. That a large number of our clergy are in grievous poverty is notorious, why then should they be asked to move their people to give liberally towards the funds of an English society? This country is just as much in need of outside help from such an enormously rich nation as England, as any foreign mission field. The care for the East falls properly on the old land, because every year it reaps a prodigiously large income from India, China, Japan, and Africa. But our contention is that *while Canada utterly fails to meet the requirements of Canadians it has no right, it is a breach of trust, to send out of this country funds to help the work of English societies.* When we have done our duty at home, provided for this Canadian household of ours, then our liberality may properly flow over to outside fields of work. But while some of our Churches are closed up for the lack of funds, numerous stations to-

tally neglected, the clergy paid disgraceful stipends, and the energies of the Church paralysed for lack of money needful for the exigencies of a fast developing land like Canada, we should try to concentrate our attention upon the home field, do our duty in that sphere wherein God has called us, which we are now grossly neglecting, then having paid all our honest home debts, we could gratify our sympathies by sending money abroad.

The mixing up of the funds of the Domestic and Foreign Mission Society is objectionable. Our people do not know to what cause they are giving, and uncertainty is always a hindrance to liberality. The Board does what, according to its judgment, is best in apportioning its income to different home societies, but in this distribution of their own money the laity have no voice. Why should we hand over funds to be spent by distant committees whom we do not appoint, cannot in any way control, who are indeed personally utterly unknown to Canadians? What machinery is there for bringing the Board of Domestic and Foreign Missions under the control of the Diocesan Synods, or by some arrangement making them answerable for their policy? That Board as now constituted is an "imperium in imperio," it is not in touch with the people, and we believe if the laity and the majority of the clergy were consulted, the sending of money abroad would be postponed until we could honestly afford such a luxury.

THE AGITATION AGAINST SACRAMENTAL WINE.

WE stand face to face with an active propaganda to banish wine, as commonly used, from the Lord's Table. The W.C.T.U. avows this as one of the main objects of its existence. It duly chronicles the number of congregations that have been won over to the use of "unfermented wine." In the ninth annual report of the Ontario W.C.T.U., it is stated that upwards of 300 congregations in this Province have abandoned their former usage and adopted this reform. The agitation has already disturbed the harmony of a considerable number of congregations and bids fair to break the peace of many more. This Society is spreading itself over the land. Through the circulation of tracts and the publication of articles denouncing the prevailing usage of the Church, the minds of many are being unsettled or prejudiced against the wine commonly employed.

The first objection, then, is based on the alleged danger of the use of wine to those who participate in the sacred memorial, especially to those who are reformed drunkards. The many excellent people who are embarked in this movement do not seem to be aware of the very dangerous ground that they occupy, or that the mode of their advocacy is calculated to undermine the faith of those who are carried away with it, in the authority of Scripture and the divinity of our Lord—that at bottom it is thoroughly rationalistic.

But to address ourselves to the objection, It proceeds on a grossly exaggerated estimate of the danger involved. The writer has admitted a considerable number of reclaimed inebriates to the Lord's Table, and has statedly administered the Supper to more. He has known such fall under the power of the old appetite again. But in no case have those with whom he has had to deal found difficulty or danger in the wine of the Lord's Table. Nor yet has he come into personal contact with any brother in the ministry whose experience is different in this respect from his own. Numbers, with whom he has spoken, of advanced years and large opportunities, who have admitted many hundreds to the Lord's Supper, and administered it to many thousands bear the same testimony. He does not deny that cases of the kind referred to can be adduced and substantiated. But he does venture the assertion that they are so few in number and so exceptional in character as to cut the ground from beneath the humanitarian plea on which this agitation so largely proceeds.

Granting, for the time, however, that danger does lurk in the communion wine cup, is it greater—is it even so great as that to which the reformed man is daily exposed, in the solicitation of old companions, in passing his old haunts and in the smell of liquor which assaults his nostrils on the street? Is it proposed to protect him from these temptations? *Is that reformatory work carried on on the right lines which only produces weaklings who must be guarded at every turn?* Tests and trials of the reality of their reformation and of the strength by which they are upheld are inevitable. They are strewn along the path of daily life and cannot be escaped. To those who partake of the Lord's Supper in faith and as an act of obedience to Christ it presents, to say the least, no peculiar temptation.

But beyond this the proposed remedy is futile. If the danger involved be such as represented, and if the practice of the Church is to be modified in obedience to such considerations as they adduce, the remedy must be found in some measure much more radical and effective than any which they have yet ventured to propose. The agitation proceeds upon the theory that the only source of danger lies in the alcohol of the wine employed, and that when it is removed the danger has vanished. Is it so? So far as there is danger the larger part of it still remains. Have the advocates of "unfermented wine" forgotten that their wine as well as that of commerce appeals to the eye, that its aroma appeals to the nostrils and that its taste appeals to the palate? All these are associated with former indulgence and are calculated, whether alcohol is present or not, to reawaken the old appetite. The elimination of one element from the wine does not obviate the danger. They who imagine that they have found an effective remedy for this evil in "unfermented wine" simply allow their abhorrence of alcohol to blind them. That the use of "unfermented wine" does not reach the root of the matter in the few and very exceptional cases in which this element

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