

dominant idea of the college authorities (and very naturally) seems to have been to impart so much of culture as would fit men for the rough-and-ready life of backwoods settlements. This idea regulated the style of men who were received, the preparatory training required of them, and the method and scope of the culture itself. I speak, of course, in general terms. There were exceptions, doubtless.

This policy had, however, the radical defect that it was suited to a temporary state of things, which by-and-by would entirely pass away.

The founders of our great educational system proceeded on an entirely opposite theory. Rough and barbarous as the country was at that time, they looked forward to the day when an advanced civilization would cover the land. They prepared for it schemes of education, suited rather to the future than to the imperfect present. Certainly they have had their reward. We have now, perhaps, the finest system of education on the face of the earth. Our common schools, high schools, and universities, cover the land; and our people, educated under such a system, taken broadly and generally, are among the most intelligent of populations.

Let us consider, then, the effect of the working of these two opposite systems—An ecclesiastical education, suited for the imperfect development of the early stage of our existence; and a secular education, suitable to the most advanced state. Is it not evident, that while those who are trained under the former can maintain their influence in the days of early development, they will lose their hold, and have a less and lesser degree of influence, as the people rise into higher stages of intelligence?

It may be objected that if our ministry for the last quarter of a century has not been abreast of the times, it has been abreast of its neighbors, and that these neighbors have made wonderful progress none can deny. I do not care at present to discuss the question whether our ministry is abreast of its neighbors, but I deliberately say that unless it is in advance of them we can never make progress, unless other conditions are altered. For let us consider the position. We have adopted a church system which strips us of all adventitious aids. The power of such aids in other church organizations none can deny who are familiar with their working. Even the other branch of the Congregational order has a powerful adjunct in a striking ordinance, of which the very most is made in the working of the church. In our system, however, everything depends, and must depend, upon the minister himself. It is idle to talk of its depending upon minister and people. It is the minister who is the formative power in the church. The people take their tone from him, and must do so in the very nature of things. The very working of our system, as it exists amongst us, necessitates it. It may not be so in other churches. But it is eminently in a Congregational Church, as such churches are known in Canada. Having then adopted such a system, we are bound by every consideration to see that the men upon whom we place the responsibility of its working shall be equal to the charge laid upon them, by careful selection in the first place, making sure of their having faculties which would fit them for the work, and then by thorough training—severe training, let me say in mental and moral culture—we may educate a race of men who will be able to command attention anywhere.

In giving utterance to the foregoing reasons it will be observed that nothing has been said as to certain other reasons (lack of the right kind of emigration, and so forth), which have sometimes been made prominent when discussing this question. I have said nothing of

these, because I do not believe in them. The Baptist churches, certainly, are subject to the same influences; yet while we have been stagnant, they have been making striking advances.

To conclude the whole matter, let me give expression to a few suggestions with regard to the future:

1st. Let us rid ourselves of narrowness and littleness. Being filled with the idea that we have that in our possession which is good for the whole people of Canada, let us feel the pressure of responsibility to extend our system over every part of it.

2nd. Let us endeavor to break up this spirit of rampant independency under which every church does what is right in its own eyes. Independency is often a mere synonym for self-will. Independency is a powerful shield against ecclesiastical tyranny. But when tyranny is overthrown, and freedom established, other forces need to be introduced into play, if we would consolidate, advance, and assume an aggressive attitude. In order to win victories, we must adopt for our watchwords—ORGANIZATION, ORDER, CO-OPERATION. We must sacrifice self-will for Christ's Kingdom. Self-will and selfishness have ruined churches, destroyed usefulness, and retarded progress in innumerable instances.

There is one kind of Independency which would indeed be desirable in many cases, viz., independence of help from outside sources. Perpetual pauperism and independence are certainly not compatible.

So far my suggestions may be merely the utterance of ideas. A practical man—it may be said—should say something practical. But let us bear in mind that the world and the Church are ruled by ideas. When ideas are dominant in the mind, they must force themselves into utterance in the shape of policies, arrangements, and lines of action.

3rd. But, proceeding to practical suggestions, I would say, in the first place, we must increasingly aim after a higher standard of college education. Knox College has recently adopted the rule that none but graduates in Universities can be admitted within its walls. Our admission standard should be raised to something like this. And afterwards such a rigid system of mental and spiritual discipline should be enforced that both unspiritual men and dunces should be plucked without mercy.

4th. We must make far more of our church organization and life. There is a tendency amongst us to relapse into the condition of mere auditors in a lecture room. Our ordinances and membership require far more attention than they receive. Purity of communion should be strenuously maintained. Our worship, or what we are pleased to call the "preliminary service," ought to be advanced to the front place. There can be no comparison between the unimpressive baldness of many Congregational churches, and the edifying fullness, scripturalness, and power of some other sections of the Body of Christ.

It would be well, too, if there was a general adhesion to the solid biblical truth of old times, and an avoidance of shallow, unphilosophical rationalism.

We must, too, make more of our church order. Prominent men, both ministers and laymen, have sometimes boasted that they were not denominationalists. Now, while bigotry is abominable, there is a spurious liberalism which is mischievous. To say "I am not a denominationalist" sometimes means "I do not care whether I am a Congregationalist, a Methodist, or a Presbyterian." Churches wholly of such material would soon become extinct as such. We have no right to remain separate unless we can give a reason for our existence.

5th. We must simplify our machinery. Our Home Missionary Society, Indian

Missionary Society, Labrador Mission, Manitoba Mission, and Congregational College, might all be managed by Committees of the Union.

6th. The Union itself ought to be strengthened. Connection with it should be the ground of recognition, both for Congregational churches and pastors. Separation from it should be equivalent to withdrawal from the body.

I put the last two suggestions I have to make in the shape of queries:

1. Would it not be desirable to cultivate a closer connection with the thousands of American brethren on our border?

2. Ought we not to do something for

3. Could we not make some systematic effort for Foreign Missions?

Soliciting the earnest and prayerful attention of the brethren to these letters, and thanking you for the courtesy shown in their insertion,

I am, &c.,

A PRACTICAL MAN.

Montreal, April 7, 1881.

### THE NEW TESTAMENT HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH.

#### VIII.

A church founded on lineage had been tried and had failed. That founded on nationality combined with lineage had also failed. The descendants of Abraham, the best of earthly fathers, and the monarchy of David, the great model king, had alike and combinedly failed as means of establishing the kingdom of God among men. With some natural and powerful elements for good in each, which should hereafter be found to have served great educational ends, they were nevertheless totally insufficient as groundworks on which to build the church of God. A deeper and a firmer basis in human nature had to be sought. No system of religion claiming to be from God could afford to overlook the moral and spiritual elements of man's nature. Hence, from far back in the Jewish economy, recognized along with the great national and family sign, was "a circumcision which was not outward in the flesh, but which was of the heart in the spirit," (Rom. ii. 28, 29; Deut. x. 16);—a genuine love of God and man. (Deut. xxx. 6).

And now for the first time in the history of the world there is to be a Kingdom, a Church, a Society, whose bond of union shall be individual or personal, moral and spiritual, in opposition to being national and lineal.

The first Adam was at the head of a race after the flesh. The last Adam shall henceforth be at the head of His people a quickening Spirit. Hence, Jesus Christ has no descendants after the flesh. He stands opposed to Abraham and his posterity, as He does to Adam and his posterity. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. (John iii. 6, 7). "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and brother." (Matt. xii. 50.)

Now, the more intensely spiritual men are, the more truly personal and individual they become in character. If you would deny to men individuality, you must deny to them also spirituality. The disciples under Christ were permitted the full play of their individuality; but "filled with the Holy Ghost," that individuality was

greatly intensified. At Pentecost, and subsequently, Peter's weakness had well-nigh vanished, but the prevailing characteristic of his temperament was maintained at its highest point. He is the spokesman whenever a mouthpiece is needed. John, who before "leaned on his master's breast at supper," clings now more intensely than ever to the divine love that throbbed within it. And in every believer the Holy Spirit acts on every faculty of the soul in its right relationship to the rest, guiding all to the great end of Christ's life and death. As if

"The Saviour's Spirit enfranchised on the Cross

"From the rent tabernacle of His flesh"

filled and directed all for Him. 2 Cor. iv. 17.

But the working out of such a manhood, or individuality, means freedom for the man—personal liberty in thought, action, life. Not to be used as a cloak of maliciousness (1 Peter ii. 16), neither as the servant of men (1 Cor. vii. 22, 23), but as the servant of God or of Christ. It is freedom from the dominion of sin—the world, the flesh, and the devil—that by God's Spirit and truth men may be moulded into the divine image. Thus stood this first and infant Church of Christ—no one attempting to restrain another; not anyone asking the question even, Which of us is greatest? But each one so filled with "peace and joy in the Holy Ghost," and the spirit of service to his Master as to be wholly absorbed in the work divine providence had, for the time being, committed to their hands. The life within corresponds to the law without. There is no disposition on the part of any to "exercise lordship" as the Gentiles, or eldership as the Jews, or governorship as at feasts. Each one loves the other, as he loves himself—as Christ loved them.

"One family, they dwell in Him,  
One Church above, beneath,  
Though now divided by the stream,  
The narrow stream of death."

COUNTRY PARSON.

(To be continued.)

### Correspondence.

#### THREE IMPORTANT ITEMS.

To the Editor of the Canadian Independent:

SIR,—Three things I wish to say which you may place under different heads, or put altogether as a short letter from me, as it may please you.

1. The Church at Ottawa did on the 27th April by unanimous vote, heartily thank the Colonial Congregational Missionary Society and the Colonial Missionary Society "for their long continued assistance in maintaining and carrying forward its work," and resolve, though not out of debt on their property, to struggle on without asking for a further grant. Here are at once faith and pluck to be greatly commended. I rejoice to add that while their finances are "more encouraging than ever before, the spiritual condition of the Church and congregation is as hopeful as are its temporal affairs."

2. Rev. J. Burton's communication in your last issue on "Church Extension" should have immediate attention. He must not be discouraged because no one has written in your pages on the subject since his first announcement. When nothing can be said but "yes, it is important" one does not care to trouble you. I am