

News of the Churches.

RUGBY.—The Church, under the pastoral care of Rev. J. I. Hindley, received seven new members last Sabbath, all on profession of faith, all heads of families but one. This makes some 20 additions this summer.

The members of the Church at Edgar surprised Mr. Hindley on Tuesday evening last at the parsonage. They crowded the place, bringing baskets of good things, and Deacon McLeod read the following address:—

BETHESDA CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH,
Nov. 16th, 1880

To Rev. J. I. HINDLEY, M.A.

Dear Sir,—

The members of the Congregational Church and Congregation, knowing the inclement weather to which you are exposed in performing your arduous labour in your extended parish, beg your acceptance of the accompanying purse, that you may purchase there with a suitable overcoat to repel the attacks of Jack Frost, which we anticipate will be frequent and severe during the coming winter. We know that our present is small, but would ask your acceptance of it in order that you may be assured of the continuance of that love and esteem on our part which has always existed since you became our Pastor, and will receive it as a token of the high appreciation of your ministrations among us.

We trust that the Almighty Father of all good will continue to bless your work as we believe He has hitherto done, and that your stay among us may be long, rightly dividing the word of truth.

On behalf of Bethesda Congregational Church,

THOS. S. McLEOD,
C. CAVANAGH,
D. JAMIESON,
R. A. THOMAS,
Deacons.

The Pastor was too much taken aback to give a very logical reply, but made known his gratitude in a few words.

A number of improvements have been made around the Church and Parsonage, tending to render the property more valuable, and the Pastor and people more comfortable.
Nov. 19th, 1880.

LANARK.—INSTALLATION SERVICE.—On Thursday evening the 11th of Nov. the Rev. B. W. Day, was installed as pastor of the Congregational Church in Lanark village.

A council was held in the parsonage previous to the public meeting. Rev. John Wood, of Ottawa presiding, Rev. S. N. Jackson, M.J. of Kingston led in prayer, and Rev. R. Mackay acted as scribe. After a brief statement from Mr. Day, the following resolution was adopted: "that from our previous knowledge of Mr. Day, and from his present statements to us, we express our entire confidence in him as a good minister of Jesus Christ."

At 7.30 the service commenced in the church, there was a good attendance. The Rev. R. Brown of Middleville in the chair. Rev. S. N. Jackson gave an able address on the principles of the church, which was listened to with marked attention. The Rev. John Wood, gave the charge to the pastor, and Rev. R. Mackay gave the address to the people. Mr. Day commences his work under favourable auspices, the church and congregation are hearty in their desires to further the interests of the cause. We have no reason to fear that the cause of Christ will suffer in their hands. A very considerable amount has been spent on improvements on the church property, and the church promises to be self-supporting in another year. The previous pastor, Rev. John Brown, with his family, has settled in Manitoba.

EVANGELISTIC.—The Rev. R. Mackay of Kingston, is labouring in Cornwall, under the auspices of the Y. M. C. A. in united evangelistic services. He commenced on Saturday the 20th by addressing a meeting in the Y. M. C. A. Hall. Next day at 4 p.m. he addressed a large meeting in the Town Hall about 500 people were present a number being young men. At 7 o'clock he preached in the Methodist Church, and at 8.30 in

the Y. M. C. A. Hall. On Monday he visited twelve hotels and drinking saloons, and preached in the evening. At the close of the evening meeting there were several anxious enquirers. A number of the young men are earnest and active in their efforts for the good of their fellow young men, and are much encouraged by the ministers.

Several Roman Catholics are among the anxious.

WINNIPEG.—This city is being blessed with a deep religious awakening. Christians of all denominations are earnestly engaged in the work. Services are held each morning and evening. The Holy Spirit's power is felt. Many especially from the various Bible Classes and Sunday Schools have been brought to Christ, while several scoffers and infidels who had not attended the house of God for years have yielded to the Saviour. About three hundred profess to have been converted.

BOWMANVILLE.—Last Friday evening, an interesting and profitable social, largely attended by persons from all the churches in the town, the proceeds of which amounted to \$71, was held in the new Congregational Church building, which has been erected and enclosed under the superintendence of the esteemed and energetic pastor of the church. This is a sufficient guarantee of the beauty of its design. This church was weak and almost ready to die, having been closed for months. At the request of the Secretary of the Congregational Union, about three years ago, the Rev. W. H. Hen Do Bourek preached, received and accepted a call from the church to become their pastor. The congregation did not then number two score of persons, and none of them possessed a super-abundance of this world's goods, yet in three years—this handful of people—now considerably increased, have gathered more than \$3,000. The interior of the new church building is unfinished. We understand that members of the Congregational Churches of Toronto and others are contributing to help the indefatigable pastor and plucky little band. They deserve encouragement, and any funds sent to their pastor will be thankfully received.

Literary Notes.

"The Christian Commonwealth a Theocracy" is the title of the published inaugural address to the Congregational Union of Ireland, A.D. 1879. The Rev. R. Sewell is the author, and it is issued in a neat form by Dickinson, Farrington St., London. As a thoughtful address to sister churches, we may be pardoned in giving it more than a mere literary notice.

As indicative of the position of our brethren in Ireland, we call the following: "In the year 1829 the Congregational Union of Ireland was formed: so that this is our jubilee. In some respects we doubtless have made a little progress. We have a few good churches, perhaps larger than any that existed then. I think our church buildings are more commodious, and our machinery somewhat improved: but our preachers are not quite so numerous, and our spirit of enterprise, I fancy, is somewhat behind, so that whilst our fathers were thinking of how they might extend the area of their operations, we are at our wit's end to see how we may contract our bounds, and this, after closing, entirely or partially, several chapels, abandoning numerous preaching places, and withdrawing from counties where once we had a respectable standing, through the toil, and prayers, and pecuniary expenditure of our predecessors." This sounds in many respects like our Canadian experience, though we have been smitten from within in our centres in a manner happily rare in the churches of our mother lands. Nevertheless, we too have had to withdraw—and, from all appearances, may still have to repeat the process—from places where once our cause was denominationally strong, and the policy will be—if indeed it is not already being—forced upon us of strengthening the things that remain ere we seek for further territorial extension.

This at once raises the question, "Is, then our denominational work done?" This may be in some measure answered by the sentence in the address immediately following the above quotation—"I hold, however, that Independency has made progress—slow, it may be, indirect and silent, but none the less real. Any one writing the ecclesiastical history of this land (Ireland) for the last half century would have to set forth the contrast between then and now, in the larger bodies. Surrounding churches have come to admire, to imitate, and to appropriate our modes of activity, our church franchise, our hymns, our general congregational liberty." Much more may this be said to be true of Canada, unless indeed we qualify the statement that other churches have come to admire that which they have learned and adopted from us; in many

cases the advance has been steadily made by the power of the truth against the constant protest of the more conservative ones. Many a true step in advance has been at least hindered by the warning cry, "That is Congregationalism." Yet the work has gone on, and we may, if we set our houses in order, find ample and continual work to be done in the Master's name. Thus much concern for the more outward aspects of denominational life.

Very decided views are presented as to the N. T. light of our polity. "Each community is left to develop its organization from within itself" is a principle strenuously denied by Mr. Sewell. He writes: "I maintain that the Christian revelation is—a complete rule of life for the individual and the church. Leave every community to develop its own organization, and what a *mare magnum* would ensue. Take the developments of the past and what monstrosities have been foisted on the Christian system—bearing the impress of the lusts, fancies, prejudices, cupidities, and blindness of Christian professors." The Christian Church is a theocracy, which has these three essential elements, I. A Divine call, II. Divine legislature, III. Individual responsibility direct to the great King; and upon these three principles our author claims our denominational strength must rest. Free from ecclesiastical bonds, whether of state, convocation or synod, but under law to Christ, from whom all our independent rights are derived. The want of stereotype unity, which to some seems our weakness will, under these guiding principles be our strength, for star differeth from star in glory. Man stamps sameness upon his work "A piece of sculpture, a painting, a house, a wax figure, may be the exact counterpart or likeness of something else, because the work is human; but where the author is divine the variety is as extensive as the objects made." We commend the book, small though it be, for prayerful perusal.

THE CHARACTER OF JESUS CHRIST.

The character of Jesus Christ is, itself, enough to claim the Bible for God. It bears his sign-manual in every detail. As it stands in the Gospels and in the Epistles, it is unique and incomparable, and much more easily to be conceived as a transcript from a living reality than as a mere fiction; as that, especially, of so many independent writers, of so many temperaments, such various gifts, and often, defective training. There is a perfect naturalness and freedom in the various documents, which shows no trace of exaggeration or art; they are simple and unstrained, even when most above the plane of mere human life. Innocent as a child, and moved by the loftiest thoughts, He is painted with the same spotlessness to the last, and yet in no negative sense, like the mortifications of an ascetic, but in the midst of an active life, in which each day culled out every varied emotion and impulse. He never hints at the need of repentance for Himself, though He makes it essential for all besides; but, in its place, He again and again claims a perfect faultlessness that sets Him above such a requirement. The best of men are deepest in their humility at the thought of their shortcomings; but Christ, though unequalled for patient lowliness and sustained religiousness, claims that His life so far from showing imperfections or sins, is a mirror reflecting the stainless image of God, as the unbroken pool gives back the shining round of the sun. His claims and pretensions are greater. In every direction, then could for a moment be urged by a mere man without raising a horror at the blasphemous folly. He proclaims that he who has seen Him has seen the Father as well, and requires that all men should render equal honour to both. He gives Himself forth as greater than Solomon: as the way, the truth, and the Life; as the life of the world; the gate of Heaven; the centre to which all men would one day be drawn. He claims power even beyond this present life, over the dead, who are to hear His voice and come forth to be judged at His throne. And yet we never feel the incongruity of such unparalleled claims; they never strike us as anything unbecoming, but harmonize with the whole of His being, as fitting and natural. He has a divine patience, that bears every form of trouble—hunger and thirst, a homeless life, the taunts of enemies and betrayals of friends, craft and violence, meanness and pride;—He moves amidst all, as the sun amidst the clouds, emerging the same, as they pass, far below. He sets up a religion which rests on self-sacrifice.

whose most vivid illustration is found in the grain that dies to bear; while promising rest to the soul even here, He demands that it be found bearing a daily cross, as He bore, and fainted beneath, His own. Such a principle was opposed to all that ever had, or has, obtained among men; it offered the highest joy, apparently by the surrender of all. In an age of local religions, and of unmatched exclusiveness and natural hatreds, He announces a Faith for the whole race, which shall unite them in a common and equal brotherhood before their common Maker and Father. Himself the poorest of men, He bears Himself with a noble dignity that awes rulers; and makes us forget the fact that He had grown up in the household of a Nazarene carpenter, by His kingly self-composure and perfect manhood. His teachings are as original as they are authoritative, embracing all that is excellent grandest and most mysterious in time and eternity; in the nature and wants of man; and in the secrets of God, so far as they touch them. He draws aside the veil, with no faltering hand, from the future, and lights with a brightness all His own the darkness stretching over it, as no teacher has ever presumed to do in any country or age. And with all His loftiness there is no touch of the pride or arrogance of the Stoic, but a lowliness which attracts the humblest, as to their special friend. In a superstitious age, He has no superstition, but instinctively casts aside all human distortions and weak credulities. He is as broad in His charity as He is unbending in His spiritual demands, for He welcomes those whom His nation rejects; puts aside narrowness, however enforced by custom; and in an age of universal ceremonialism, lays stress only on spiritual life. Unlike other teachers, the humblest understand Him, even when He speaks on matters the most sublime and mysterious, for He has none of the subtleties of the Rabbins; no tricks and perplexities of thought and manner; no abstractions or refinements; but, like the light, reveals by beams themselves invisible. As to morality, set Him along side even the noblest of common men, and the difference grows as we study it. Take Socrates, perhaps the flower of the ancient world, and he becomes a foil to the surpassing merits of Christ. He speaks uncertainty always; confesses that, at the best, he only guesses and gropes in the dark, and dies discoursing in part on indifferent things, and ordering a cock to be offered to Esculapius. He was, indeed, a wonder in such an age, and had glimpses of a better than earthly wisdom, sent, I daresay, into his heart, as into the hearts of many illustrious heathens besides, from the throne of God; but, compared with Jesus Christ, he is a moon compared to the sun. All the light of ancient philosophy, to use the figure of Coleridge, was little better in the darkness of superstition and ignorance resting on all things, than that of the lantern-fly of the tropics, moving in luminous specks, on the face of the night—mere gleams and points, of no avail in the gloom around; but Christ shines with a steady and universal brightness. Human philosophy, like a stream through yielding banks, flows stained and coloured by the times in which it rises. But the teachings of Christ, like the river of God, clear as crystal, are unscathed by any polluting contact with His age or country. School after school has attempted to revive neglected systems of human masters, but all have failed: Christianity beckons us forward to-day as at first. In all other teachers men have recognized only instructors; but Jesus Christ has been worshipped from the first as a God. The instinct of men has seen in Him no mere Jewish Rabbi, but the Son of the Highest. The heathenism of Greece and Rome, and their philosophies, have faded away like the parhelia-mock suns—of northern skies; Judaism, in spite of the good scattered here and there through the rubbish beds of the Talmud, has died out for eighteen centuries as a living power, except in its own nationality; but Jesus Christ is extending His invisible kingdom in the hearts of all races, with each generation; winning millions of subjects from every speech and country, and colour; and indirectly affecting even communities most opposed to a rule so pure and lofty.