

The Envelope System.

In further reference to living interest in the church, though we have had some experience of and connection with the Established Church of Scotland, we think that, in a voluntary church, membership should carry with it, as inevitably as the certificate of membership itself, a box of envelopes by the use of which each member should be trained to contribute with regularity, something, even if it be only five cents per week;—each member, that is, who has any income or settled position at all, no matter how humble. If a person hesitates to commit himself even to a small sum, the question may fairly arise—What is his religion worth practically? and for a man to say “I shall wait and see what balance I have, or what I have to spare,” is like saying, “I shall wait and see what the Giver of All will give me and then I shall consider what pittance I can give back to the carrying on of His work!”

The Publicity of Names.

At one annual meeting in mid-January an interesting discussion took place as to the question of publishing a list quarterly with the names of contributors and amounts given noted. Objection was taken to the publishing of the names, some holding that it should be sufficient to give the envelope numbers. Finally a compromise arrangement was proposed and approved, whereby it was agreed that the envelope numbers and amounts should be printed but not names.

Of course contributions to church support, like some other things, should be entirely a matter between the individual soul and the “Giver of All,” and if contributors put any conscience into the matter at all, it may be questioned as to why anyone need be concerned about Who Knows.

On the other hand a very good reason was given against publishing the names and amounts, though it is one which reflects somewhat deplorably on the human comparisons which are apt to influence detrimentally other interests in life, and which will even “creep and intrude and climb into the fold!” It seems that some poor souls, rich in gold, are in danger of reckoning their giving, not by asking themselves: “What have I received; what do I deserve; and How much can I spare?” But rather—“What does Mr. and Mrs. So-and-so give?”

The more fully men and women come to realize that religion is primarily a personal thing between “God and Thyself,” the less likely are they to have any difficulty or hesitation in contributing regularly by envelope system, for they will remember that they are concerned, not merely with a quarterly record-sheet, however arranged or printed, but with Him “from Whom we all derive—our life, our gifts, the power to give.”

Appointment.

As we go to press, we learn that Rev. J. A. Dow, late of Powell River, has been appointed to take charge of Dundas Street Congregation, Vancouver, for one year. This congregation has now the status of an ordained field.