

Our Contributor.

A LIVELY, TIMELY CONGREGATIONAL MEETING.

BY KNOXONIAN.

The congregational meeting of St. Andrew's church, Sandytown, was held the other evening—in our mind—and was noted for a timely though unsuccessful attempt to utilize current financial discussions for the benefit of the church. Mr. Calvin Commonsense and a few others had been reading recent speeches on the prosperity of the country, and they thought that, in view of the marked progress Canada is making in trade, manufactures and business of all kinds, the people should show their gratitude by increased contributions for missionary purposes. Mr. Commonsense embodied his views in a motion which we regret to say did not pass, some of those who contend most vigorously elsewhere that the country is highly prosperous and progressive voting against it. The ordinary business of the meeting being over Mr. Commonsense made the following motion:—"That this meeting, having been recently informed that Canada is in a highly prosperous condition, and the fact of our prosperity having been shown by statistics, be it resolved that we immediately raise one hundred dollars in addition to our usual contributions for each of the following schemes,—Home Missions, Foreign Missions and Augmentation."

Mr. Commonsense supported his motion with a strong, temperate and well delivered speech. He quoted largely from recent speeches by the Dominion Premier, the Finance Minister and other prominent men to show that the country is enjoying a high degree of prosperity. If prosperous, we should show our gratitude by giving liberally of our means to support every good cause. There was no cause better than Home and Foreign Missions and Augmentation. He had seen it repeatedly stated that this country is more prosperous than the neighboring Republic. He did not know how that was, but of one thing he was quite certain, the average man in Canada is as comfortable as the average man in the United States. The average contribution, however, of the American Presbyterian for all charitable and religious purposes was over eighteen dollars (\$18) per member in 1890—he had not later reports—while ours last year for all purposes was only twelve dollars and nineteen cents (\$12.19) per member. He hoped the resolution would pass.

Mr. Felix Skinfint opposed the motion. He said he was astonished at the innocence of his friend, Mr. Commonsense. He had not thought that there was so much innocence left in this wicked world. The figures his friend quoted from were intended for political and not for ecclesiastical purposes. The political arena was one thing and the ecclesiastical was another. Figures that it might be quite proper to use at a banquet, or a political meeting, or in a secular newspaper, or in parliament, might be quite out of place in a church meeting. He himself might have used similar arguments and statistics at the bye-elections, but would any one tell him that these arguments and statistics were to be brought into the church and urged as a reason why he should increase his contributions for missions? He now gave twenty-five cents a year for missions and he would not add one cent. He objected to any connection being made between public affairs and the church. A man should be allowed to say what he pleased on public questions, and no one had a right to quote public speeches at church meetings. This was a free country and a freeman should be allowed to adjust his speeches according to the kind of meeting he spoke at. He hoped the resolution would be voted down by a large majority.

Mr. Canting Sniveller opposed the motion because it was carnal. He feared Mr. Commonsense was not a spiritually minded man. Congregational meetings should not discuss carnal things. The prosperity

of the country was not a question that should be considered at meetings of this kind. He was grieved to hear quotations made from carnal speeches. What connection was there between prosperity and missions? A Christian should give just what he pleased apart altogether from the state of the country. His giving should depend on how he feels and not on how much he may have been prospered. (A voice—"How about Paul?")—He was not speaking about Paul. What he wanted to say was that the amount of a man's money had nothing to do with his giving. He gave when he felt like it, and at no other time. He did not feel like giving any more for missions, and as for Augmentation he never supported that. It was a carnal scheme.

The resolution was lost by a very large majority.

Mr. Commonsense then moved that in view of the increased and continued prosperity of the country \$50 each be given to Knox and Montreal colleges and \$100 to Queens University. He supported the resolution by an admirable speech in which he showed the excellent work that is being done by our Theological Seminaries and proved clearly that had it not been for its seminaries Presbyterianism would not be even a fourth rate ecclesiastical power in Canada to-day. He dilated on the splendid work done for Queens by Principal Grant. A few years ago many thought that the old University was about dead, but now mainly through the efforts of the Principal there was a fair endowment; good buildings and better than all, over five hundred students. And all this had been done alongside of a university called national, a university supported mainly by public funds and helped in many ways by the government of the province. The country being so prosperous he thought they should give the colleges some additional support and in this way show their gratitude.

Mr. Skinfint approved this motion also. He decidedly objected to any further references to the prosperity of the country. That had nothing whatever to do with the colleges.

Mr. Moneybag also objected. He wouldn't mind giving an additional fifty to Queen's, but he would not give another cent to the others.

A long discussion ensued, the trend of which was that national prosperity is mainly a political or business question that should not be brought into church meetings. The resolution was withdrawn and the meeting adjourned.

THE AMERICAN CHURCH IN BERLIN.

AN APPEAL.

About the year 1860, union religious services conducted in the English language were commenced in Berlin, Germany. The audiences that assembled, from the first composed of representatives of all the Christian communions, gradually increased in numbers: and before long the original single service held on the Sabbath, had to be supplemented by a regular week-day meeting. Later on, an attempt was made to secure the stated and systematic visitation of strangers and of the sick: and other kindred offices of oversight, pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the community, were cheerfully undertaken. Thus for more than a quarter of a century, under varying circumstances and supervised by successive annual "committees," these services have been unremittingly rendered to the transient English-speaking residents of the city.

But each year, as the movement gained headway, it became increasingly evident that something must be done to give unity to the work. Otherwise, very clearly, the efforts put forth would be handicapped and could not prove permanently effective. Hence in 1887 a Union Church was organized: and Rev. J. H. W. Stuckenberg, D. D., who since 1880 had been living in Berlin and had been practically the pastor of the flock, accepted the invitation to devote himself more exclusively to the duties of that office. The congregation continued to grow, but as yet it had no building of its

own. Arrangements already entered into, in accordance with which the use of a hall had been secured for a certain fixed hour on each Lord's Day, were continued for the time-being. Those arrangements have necessarily been continued ever since. For nearly six years the congregation has been meeting in a rented upper room—an apartment of inadequate size, inconvenient situation, and woefully lacking in equipment for its purpose. This hall moreover is available only on Sabbath mornings, so that the other meetings which have been more recently organized (several occurring each week) have unhappily to be held in as many different places.

But the pastor, and the committee who are loyally seconding his endeavors, have certainly not been idle. Having resolved to solicit help to erect a church, so that the large amount of work being done might be concentrated and consolidated, a vigorous canvass was commenced among the friends of the cause. The response which rewarded the diligent labors of the collectors was most praiseworthy. The future looked most hopeful. The ladies of the congregation, it need scarcely be said, proved most ingenious in devising and carrying out plans for adding to the slowly-accumulating funds. As the result of much effort and actual self-denial, the sum of \$40,000, i.e., an amount sufficient to build the church, has already been secured. If therefore the cost of a site was not so excessive, the long cherished project would now be near its accomplishment. City lots in Berlin command, however, extraordinarily high prices: fully \$60,000 must still be raised before the committee can feel justified in letting the contracts; and so, again and again disappointed in their hopes, some of the workers are at times sorely disheartened. It is hard that, when so much has been achieved, it seems so very difficult to get any further.

Those who have spent a year or two in Germany, and especially if they have spent that time in Berlin, will fully understand the importance of this commendable enterprise. Such will scarcely hesitate to admit that, in view of all the circumstances of the case, no worthier undertaking could win the support of a generous and sympathetic mind. Actual experience of the value—and even the imperative necessity—of this church, has converted many a visitor into a contributor: and certainly by Canadians who travel, it will not be allowed to make its present appeal in vain.

To others it need only be recalled that, for the hundreds who annually resort to Berlin for purposes of business or study,—coming from the Dominion, Great Britain, and the United States: for the thousands of tourists who each year visit that brilliant capital; and for the scores of English-speaking residents who have been constrained to make it their temporary home, it is in the highest degree desirable that the ordinances of grace should be regularly maintained. Unhappily the influences which prevail in most continental cities are not wholly uplifting. Temptations,—at once strong, unfamiliar, insidious, and most evil,—address themselves with special power to the young: and many are overborne before they have fully become aware of the risks that have surrounded them. It is of supreme moment therefore that, at one of the chief educational centres of the world, the most effective religious restraints should be provided and sustained.

Hence this plea. It is really an appeal to the strong to consider and help the weak. Those who go to Berlin as students, and who must always form the major part of the congregation, are generally quite unable to contribute anything save their slender weekly offering. The remaining weight of the burden must therefore be borne by the rich, and by those who (less favored by fickle wealth) will loyally combine together to share the responsibility amongst them.

It may be mentioned that, while all the seats in the new church are to be free to those who shall use them, it is proposed to aim at getting a number of pews and single sittings endowed in perpetuity. \$1,000, capable of yielding \$50 a year, will endow an ordinary pew. If desired, the name of the donor or donors, or some in

memorial name selected by the donor can be permanently associated with the gifts. Is there not here a suggestion for the man of abundant means? Is there not here an opportunity for the members of a congregation, or the students of a college, or the residents of a particular city or province, to found a benefaction that will yield a return of incalculable value? Is there not here a call that must appeal with peculiar force to those who would promote genuine and effective Christian unity: for surely, in the way just indicated, that unity can be demonstrated to exist both amongst those who give and those who receive?

Almost the whole of the amount thus far secured has been subscribed in the United States. But is now Canada's turn. It is fully time that British America had been heard from. The new church is intended to represent the Dominion as well as the Republic. Many Canadians owe much to Dr. Stuckenberg personally: they owe much to the church of which he is the pastor: a constantly increasing number of them will certainly derive benefit from the structure which is about to be erected. How much shall we give? Besides other contributions already obtained in Canada, one donation of \$1,000 has been promised: who will volunteer to furnish the second thousand? No doubt those who feel unable to remit larger sums will be willing to contribute \$500, \$100, \$50, \$10, or even \$5. All subscriptions and promises of future payment, should be mailed not later than the last day of February. Any donations for this purpose received by the undersigned, whatever their amounts, will be gratefully and promptly acknowledged.

LOUIS H. JORDAN.

(Formerly pastor of Erskine Presbyterian church, Montreal.

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INSULTS TO GOD'S WORD.

The Committee of the Quebec Auxiliary Bible Society has requested us, the undersigned ministers of the Gospel, to prepare the following statement of facts for the press, believing that the time has come when the public should know how the Roman Catholic priesthood encourage the reading of the Holy Scriptures, and how, in almost every instance where the New Testament is found in a Roman Catholic family, it is condemned to the flames as a book which endangers their salvation. The version of the Holy Scriptures sold or loaned by the Quebec Bible Society is that of De Sacy, first published in 1701 with the permission of His Eminence "Monseigneur Le Cardinal de Noailles. Archeveque de Paris." It has also sold the version made by the late Monseigneur Baillargeon, Archbishop of Quebec, but the edition is now exhausted and the book very rare. The following are instances of how the priesthood treat the De Sacy version of the Holy Scriptures:—

Four students attending college here obtained a copy of the New Testament and began to study it with great interest, but it soon became known and they were charged with reading a bad book. It was agreed that the book should be submitted to the judgment of one of the professors, who pronounced it good, but added that the Church had condemned it. He was then asked how it could be a good book in 1701 and a bad book later on. Shrugging his shoulders, he replied: "Ask me no more questions: the Church says it is bad, and that is enough."

In Daulac street, St. Roch's a De Sacy New Testament was sold to a family, the mother of which, according to instructions, took the book and showed it to the cure, who pronounced it a bad book, and condemned it to be burned, saying at the same time that he had heard of more than fifty other such books, of which he had burned many. The woman herself when seen acknowledged that she had found only what was good in the book, but the Church did not permit them to read it.

A New Testament was left on trial with a family on King street, St. Roch's. Some days after the book was returned, with the explanation that it was not a fit book