

a pity that the practice of making a difference between the two sacraments, or of giving baptism to non-communicants, should ever have crept into our Church. This custom took its rise from two opposite extremes, namely, *extreme partitionism*, and *extreme laziness*. But, however difficult, it must be discontinued, and every other custom for which there is not the shadow of authority in the Word of God. The Minute of our Synod of 1850, upon this subject, is admirable, and should be in the hands of every one. If, as we have indicated, those only who are "in full communion" with the Church, should receive baptism for their children, then it follows that these, in the judgment of charity, should be believers or visible saints; and however difficult it may be to act conscientiously up to this, we fear it is cruelty to the parties themselves to do otherwise. The writer, while endeavoring accordingly to carry out this rule, has already delayed giving ordinances to many applicants, fondly hoping that by such delay he and his elders might have many opportunities of instructing them; but, to their utter grief, the greater part have found a city of refuge in the bosom of the "Kirk." These parties incur a fearful responsibility by thus virtually doing all they can to defeat a godly discipline. There is already too much of the spirit of insubordination in this country, without being still more encouraged by a professedly Christian Church. Referring again to the evidences of credible Christianity, family worship should be made a *sine qua non*. The writer acts upon this rule, and the consequence is, that probably about sixty families of his charge have set up family worship within the last two years. It may be said down as a general axiom, that family worship is a uniform accompaniment of vital religion; it was so in the best days of Israel, in apostolic times, in the times of the Reformation, and of genuine Revivals; and if our Church is ever to be spiritually baptized, the same result will appear.

There are many collateral and interesting questions which might advantageously be discussed; but these, however, must be reserved for a future occasion. In the meantime we may state that, it is not meant by the foregoing remarks, that our Church, as a body, is behind any Church in Canada, in purity of communion—far from it. Yet we have nothing to boast of, and there is much room for improvement, and scarings of heart.

GLENHARRY, Dec. 1851.

PRESBYTERIAL VISITATION OF CONGREGATIONS.

The best effects have resulted from this practice, wherever it has been vigorously prosecuted. The results, in the small extent to which has been attempted in our own Church, are all in favor of the practice. We hope to be able in our next issue to give a pretty full report of the doings and success of the visiting deputations, which have been, and will still be, at work in the different presbyteries.

The Presbyterian Church in England, at the last meeting of their Synod, appointed deputations to go forth to all their presbyteries, with the view of informing the people respecting the position and prospects of the Church, and to plead in behalf of the schemes. From a very full and interesting report drawn up by Dr. Lorimer, the Convener of the Deputation Committee, we cut the following extracts, referring only to two congregations, viz., Dudley and Birmingham. At the former there was an excellent meeting:—

"The spacious apartment was crowded in every corner. The walls were tastefully decorated with flowers, and tables were arranged and plentifully provided to give tea to a company of

not less than 300 persons. Rich and poor, young and old, Presbyterian and Independent, Baptist and Methodist, were here all met together in happy harmony.

"We are gratified to find, from Mr. Lewis's speech on this occasion, that our friends at Dudley have recently taken steps towards the reduction of the heavy debt still pressing upon their new church; and we did not omit to encourage them to go on with this local effort, at the same time that we expressed our hope that they would work their Association for the more general objects of the Church, as well as for their own congregational objects. They have an admirable example set before them of this wise and liberal combination of local with general objects by their near neighbors at Birmingham; and this example I have no doubt they will follow—for though they may not be able to do so much as has been done at Birmingham, there is nothing to hinder them from doing something proportionate to their means, with equal heart and alacrity. The meeting, I need hardly add, went off very successfully. It was no difficult matter to please an assembly in which every one was so willing to be pleased. The speeches were agreeably and profitably diversified by pieces of sacred music, executed by a band of congregational amateurs; and altogether we received the impression that the whole art and mystery of getting up a successful *soiree*, is thoroughly understood at Dudley—as thoroughly as the art of making nails or smelting iron. They gave the deputation an excellent start, and sent us away in the best spirits to go on with the work which we had so pleasantly begun. Our meeting on Tuesday evening was at Birmingham. It was a great drawback and disappointment to us, that we had not the advantage of the presence and assistance of our brother, Mr. McKenzie, on the occasion. He was absent in Scotland; and it was no doubt owing to this cause that we had not so large an attendance as could have been wished. Still we were favored with the presence of a very considerable number of the members of the congregation, and among these were many, if not all, of the congregational workers—those, I mean, who do the work of the Association, as collectors, secretaries, treasurers, &c. We had long been aware of the efficiency of the Association in collecting both for local and general objects, and it being an important part of our mission to recommend the formation of such associations in all our congregations, we were particularly anxious to inform ourselves thoroughly on the methods pursued, and the successes obtained by our Birmingham friends. Mr. Henderson took a very kind and judicious way of meeting our wishes in this respect. He invited the office-bearers and collectors of the Association to meet us in the school-room at tea, an hour or two before the meeting took place in the church; and here we had the pleasure and advantage of meeting a goodly number of them, and of hearing from Mr. H. himself, a minute exposition of their plans and arrangements. These we found to be organized in the most business-like way, so as to ensure thorough accuracy and punctuality, and to be conceived and carried out in the most enlarged and liberal spirit, embracing not only all the congregational objects in which the people are locally interested, but all the schemes and institutions of the Church without any exception. The congregation is divided into districts, for the purposes of the Association, these districts being small and manageable. A collector is appointed for each, with instructions to make his rounds punctually, and without urging any one to contribute, to give to all an opportunity of contributing. The collectors—most of whom, if not all, are ladies—make their returns to the Treasurer of the Association regularly every month, at a meeting of the Associational Committee held for the purpose of receiving them; and once a month, or quarterly, the Treasurer transmits to each of the Treasurers of the Synod's schemes the proceeds which have been received. It is really very gratifying to

record what has been achieved by the working of this goodly mechanism during these last two years. Be it remembered that the congregation, though now greatly enlarged beyond what it once was, is neither very numerous nor very wealthy. Be it remembered, too, that they have a very heavy building debt resting upon them, the interest of which along with some other floating debts, is no less than £67 10s. per annum. Let it also be taken into account that they have twelve public congregational collections in the year—one, that is to say, every month, including the five Synod collections. Well, what in these circumstances have been the yearly proceeds of the Association?—proceeds, I mean, additional to all that has been obtained from the collections. In 1849, they were £163 4s. 10d.; and in 1850 they were £175 3s. 4d.—goodly sums it will be allowed, and an admirable proof of the efficiency of such congregational machinery when thoroughly worked. Of the last mentioned sum the proportion that accrued to the Synod's Schemes was no less than £69 1s. 9d. The public collections for the schemes the same year amounted to £71 6s. 10d., making the very handsome total of £140 8s. 7d. contributed in one year to our General Funds. It cannot be doubted that nearly the one half of this sum would never have been realized but for the working of the Association. Perhaps the £71 of the collections might have been got, but the £60 of the Association would not have been forthcoming and yet how often are we told that public collections under Associations, and that Associations undermine public collections. It is clear from this decisive example, as well as from others, furnished by our Church, that it is perfectly possible, and exceedingly advantageous, to work both these methods of calling forth the liberality of our people simultaneously.

"It is only necessary to add, in order to complete the impression which such an example is fitted to make in favour of Associations—that the results which have been hitherto obtained are the fruits of only a few years' persevering exertion, and that the congregation themselves would be the first to repudiate the idea that they have already done every thing which it is possible to be done among them in this way. Mr. Henderson repeatedly assured us that the case was otherwise—that there was still much ground to be overtaken by the Association, and still much room remaining for enlarged liberality among the people. Still, both Mr. McKenzie and he must allow me to say, that the deputation felt thankful that they had had such an example of congregational organization and effort brought under their notice, and that they often afterwards experienced the importance and value of having such a case to refer to when engaged in prosecuting their work in other localities.

"Before leaving Birmingham we were presented with copies of the 'collector's book,' and the 'subscription note,' which subscribers to the Association are requested to fill up annually with the sums which they undertake to contribute during the year. These documents are model ones, and I would advise those brethren who desire to see how such an Association is worked, to apply to Mr. Henderson for copies, which he will be very ready, I am sure, to forward to them.—The figures and facts we had seen and heard at Birmingham, stood us in excellent stead ever afterwards. My fellow deputy, Mr. McClintch, had particular reason to be thankful for them, the reason being that the estimate formed by our Birmingham friends of the relative values of our different Synod schemes was peculiarly favourable to the claims of the Home Mission."—*Eng. Pres. Mes.*

[The same system of congregational associations, which has wrought so well in Scotland, and is now adopted among the English Presbyterians, is peculiarly adapted to our circumstances, and will, we trust, ere long, be introduced and effectively carried out in all our congregations.]