

Fortunately, one of these is a Hebrew dictionary, and since coming I have received by mail a Hebrew Bible, which had been left behind to be rebound with interleaving, so that there is more prospect than I could have foreseen that I shall have an opportunity to read through the Old Testament in the original during the long winter evenings, the length of which reminds me that I am some six hundred miles north of Toronto. I am not abandoned altogether, however, to the chill charity of vowel-points and parallelisms, for Mr. Hardisty has made me welcome to the very considerable collection of books which he possesses, among which I am happy to find a number of good old fashioned Theological works, left by Mrs. Hardisty's father, that devoted and simple-hearted missionary, the Rev. George McDougall. My gratification was complete when no longer ago than yesterday, in a neglected corner of the store, I found an armful of old German books, all dusty, and some evidently having passed through the hands of the Philistines. The clerk offered me the lot for a couple of dollars, and after securing them I set about a more detailed examination. They turned out to be the property of a young German Count, who, for some dark reason—probably political—had left his country and entered the ancient and honourable service of the Hudson Bay Company. After living here several years, he was, on the death of his father, summoned home hastily to take the title and to live a life which, I suppose, would make the years passed with clerks and *voyageurs* in the wild West seem like a dream. That he was a young man of educated literary taste, is shewn by the general character of the literature which he left behind him; that he was possessed of deep religious sympathies is shewn by a well-thumbed Bible, a beautifully bound Lutheran communion book, and—not the least affecting—a little old-fashioned Sabbath school hymn book, with both words and tunes, which has been worn almost to pieces by constant use.

I must postpone till some future letter my opinion as to the prospects and possibilities of union. I think that first impressions on these subjects are more likely to be mistaken than on most others. There is, however, but little difference of opinion to be noted between the new arrivals and the "old timers," as they are called; and even that is a difference not of kind, but of degree. Everybody is cheerful and hopeful. I have not met a croaker in the place—the road is too hard for them. They have all fallen out of line between Winnipeg and Prince Albert. The merchants are all enlarging their businesses. Many of those who came last summer are preparing for the reception next summer of their families or their friends, and although the winter is so far advanced, building operations are being vigorously prosecuted. The weather thus far has been delightful; there is about two inches of snow, and we have had some cold days, but even they have been bright and sunny.

ANDREW B. BAIRD.

Edmonton, N.-W.T., Dec. 14, 1881.

ROMISH ORDINATION.

MR. EDITOR,—In my last paper I shewed that if the Church of Rome is not to be regarded as a branch of the true Church of Christ, as very many hold, it follows that Romish ordination is not ordination by the Church of Christ, and cannot be acknowledged as ordination to the Gospel ministry. But even if it be admitted that the Church of Rome is in a certain sense a Church of Christ, it does not follow either that the priesthood is an office in the true Church, or that ordination thereto is ordination to the ministry. Nay, it can be shewn that the priesthood is a heathen corruption introduced into the Romish Church, and ordination to it an unscriptural ceremony. This being the case, neither a priest nor his ordination should be acknowledged by the true Reformed Church of Christ.

The American Church, in the deliverance of 1845, to which reference was formerly made, declares that "the so-called priests of the Romish communion are not ministers of Christ." I propose now to justify this position by consideration of the nature of ordination as required by the Scripture, and the entire dissimilarity between Scriptural and Romish ordination.

According to the Reformed Churches, ordination is "the solemn setting apart of a person to some public Church office" (Westminster Form of Church Government); so, to ordain a presbyter is to set a man apart

to the office of presbyter. This is ordinarily to be done "by imposition of hands and prayer, with fasting, by those presbyters to whom it doth belong" (Westminster Form of Church Government). Dr. Bannerman says that this act of the Church admits a man to the office of the ministry, and gives him a right and title to discharge its functions. "It does not confer the office; Christ confers the office by His own call, addressed to whom He will. But it invests with the office, or admits to it."

The Romish Church, on the other hand, holds that "ordination is a sacred Order and divinely appointed Sacrament, by which is given the power of consecrating the body and blood of Christ, and also of remitting and retaining sins." Further, it anathematizes any one who claims that "by this holy ordination the Holy Spirit is given, . . . or that by it character is impressed upon the soul—that is, a certain mark, spiritual and indelible, in consequence of which it cannot be repealed, nor can a man who has once been a priest again become a layman."

Every intelligent reader will at once see how irreconcilable is the difference between these two views. It is impossible to regard Romish ordination as identical with that of the Reformed Churches.

Again, we may enquire as to the office of priest and presbyter, and their functions respectively. The Reformed presbyter is commissioned to preach the Gospel, to baptise, to administer the Lord's Supper, to rule in the Church and to ordain others. In the Romish Church a man may be ordained to the office of deacon, when he is commissioned to preach and to baptise. These are two of the functions of the Reformed presbyter. The deacon is then ordained a priest, but he is not as priest commissioned to administer the Lord's Supper, nor to rule, nor to ordain others. The first of these functions is lost in the abomination of the Mass; the other two are conferred on a distinct class of officers, called prelates (*pontifices*), an order not found in Scripture. The functions of a presbyter, then, so far correspond with that of a deacon, but in so far as the priesthood is concerned there is no function in common.

Further, the priest (*sacerdos*) is an unscriptural office-bearer, not to be recognised by the true Church of Christ. Nay, the office is contrary to the whole spirit of the New Testament; derogatory to the alone priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ; blasphemous, as it pretends to give man power to forgive sins, which belongs to God alone. In a word, it is *anti-Christian*. Look at it for a moment. The pontifex gives commission to the priest in these words: "Receive power to offer sacrifice to God and to celebrate masses, both for the living and the dead, in the name of the Lord. Amen.—Receive the Holy Spirit; whose sins ye shall remit they are remitted to them, and whose sins ye retain they are retained." What Christian will hesitate when asked is the blasphemous sacrifice of the mass, the consecrated wafer administered without wine, the Lord's Supper? Can a man forgive sin? Is auricular confession a divine ordinance? If these questions are answered in the negative, as I believe every true Protestant will answer them, then it follows that the only functions proper to the priesthood are unscriptural and blasphemous, and it is impossible to acknowledge the commission to perform these pretended functions as equivalent to ordination to the Reformed ministry, and making re-ordination unnecessary.

A third point to be noticed is, that while the Reformed Churches, following Scripture, ordain by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, with solemn prayer, the priest is ordained by a man-devised rite. The prelate hands to the candidate the chalice with wine and water in it, and the paten with the host placed on it, which he receives between the fore and middle fingers, at the same time touching the chalice and paten. This is the consecrating or ordaining act. Can this rite be regarded as the equivalent of the Scripture rite observed in the Reformed Churches? To sum up then: It is surely evident that as the office is unscriptural, its functions anti-Christian, the act of consecration of mere human device: as it is pretended that the rite is a covenant which, *ex opere operato*, conveys the Holy Spirit and gives character, without regard to the moral character of the candidate or the call of God, Romish ordination cannot be acknowledged as an ordinance of the Church of Christ, or as equivalent to ordination to the ministry in a Reformed Church.

Another point is to be borne in mind. When a priest leaves the Church of Rome, he abjures the Church and all its errors. Now, if the priesthood is an error—worse than an error—the ex-priest abjures, and having abjured it, as Bzer asks, how can he claim as his authority for acting as *presbyter* or *pastor* an authorization for acting as a priest, which he received from an authority he now abjures? The following extract from a letter addressed by an ex-priest, Olivier Contois, to Rev. M. Heiss, D.D., coadjutor of Milwaukee, Ill., dated September 13th, 1881, will shew how he regarded the matter of abjuration. "It was from that time evident that the Church of Rome could not be the true Church of Christ. In order to follow Christ, I give up my friends and everything else that is dear to me. I give up the *privilege of Rome*—of that Church so great, so rich, so high in the eyes of the world—to take the cross and follow the Lamb whose blood made me pure, whose word made me free." Thus, for the most part, converts feel, and, as Mr. Casey well put it last July when properly instructed they will ask for re-ordination. Some regard it as a humiliation for a convert to be told that he has not a status of a Protestant minister, and must receive ordination as such. Now if a man, rejoicing to be free from Rome's tyranny and anxious to serve Christ in the Gospel of His Son, applies for ordination and is told that in order to there must be evidence of his Christian character and of his call to the work, he will at once seek to furnish that evidence. Then he will naturally say, "Now confer on me in a scriptural manner this office set me apart by the authority of the Church of Christ in such way as may put beyond doubt that the Church approves me as a minister of Christ Jesus." To such a convert ordination is the seal of a privilege. It is no humiliation—it is making him what the Church of Rome never intends to make any man. To be minister is a privilege which ordained men among ourselves, such as elders and deacons, covet, and can be no degradation to tell an ex-priest that the Church is prepared to confer on him its highest office in the way which Scripture points out, and in which our own ordained elders and deacons are appointed, viz., by laying on of hands of the Presbytery.

In next paper I propose considering whether the usage of the Reformed Churches warrants the cautious fear of the learned Principal of Knox College, that insisting on re-ordination the Church may be setting itself in opposition to other churches. I am glad to know that the subject is at long last receiving serious attention, and I trust that if the Principal, or any other eminent and trusted pillar, can give us light on the other side we shall have it. I am glad to see the clear writing of "Nova Scotia" on the subject, and hope for more from his point of view. A good discussion will prepare the Church for deciding the question in June.

JOHN LAING.

Dundas, Ont., Jan. 11, 1882.

PRINCE LEOPOLD is Vice-President of the Church of England Temperance Society, and takes a deep interest in the progress of the movement.

A DELEGATION from the Women's Christian Temperance Union waited on Mayor Low, of New York on the 13th inst., and asked for the appointment of women to look after prisoners in the Police station and at Justices' courts. Police Commissioner Jourdan was called into consultation about the matter by the Mayor, and he approved of the scheme. The Mayor promised to consult with the Police Justices, and to consider the matter of an appropriation. It is proposed to call the women employed for the purpose named "Police Matrons."

PRESIDENT ARTHUR has announced that the question of polygamy shall be effectually settled during his term of office. As a step in that direction Senator Edmunds has introduced the Bill, to punish polygamy in Utah, which Mr. Christianity introduced in the Forty-third Congress. It provides, that every person who has a husband or wife living, who, in a Territory or State over which the United States has exclusive jurisdiction, hereafter marries another whether married or single, and any man who hereafter simultaneously, or on the same day, marries more than one woman in a Territory or other place over which the United States has exclusive jurisdiction, is guilty of bigamy, and shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$500, and by imprisonment for a term of not more than five years.