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TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1884.

THERE was grim humour in an incident that occurred in New York the other day. Billy McGlory was the keeper of one of the lowest "dives" in that city. It was an infamous den and had been frequented by the dissolute of both sexes. Billy was convicted for selling liquor without a license and sentenced to six months imprisonment in the penitentiary. Before his removal, McGlory was visited by a Mr. Gibbs, a local temperance reformer, and professed to be penitent. His penitence was coupled with an offer to lecture on temperance instead of going to the penitentiary. Gibbs tried hard to have Billy's sentence changed so that he might go into the lecturing business, but the courts would not consent. A New York judge can usually do some queer things but keeping the proprietor of a "hell" out of penitentiary so that he might engage in lecturing on temperance seemed too much—the line must be drawn somewhere. And this is the right place to remark that when all the Billy McGlorys are kept off the temperance platform the temperance cause will make much more rapid progress. There is a marked improvement in this regard of late in Canada. Had it not been for the Billy McGlorys of by-gone days prohibition would not be far off. Men of character and influence are taking the work in hand.

MR. KING DODD, the well-known advocate of the Licensed Victuallers, was fined by the Police Magistrate sometime ago for carrying on a kind of business which Mr. Fenton, the indefatigable County Attorney could not distinguish from gambling. An appeal was taken and the conviction quashed on the ground that the result of the game depended on skill rather than chance. Part of the defence was that Mr. Dodd learned the game at some church entertainment and one of the judges alluded to this alleged fact in his decision. Have not church entertainments touched bottom at last? After the Kingston bazaar and this "Bean" case, what respectable congregation has so little self-respect and so little regard for religion as to engage in these doubtful methods of raising money? It may be urged that some churches must do such things or die. By all means let them die. Their first duty is to die. A church that cannot live without making money by practices that an astute lawyer like Mr. Fenton cannot distinguish from gambling has no right to live. We have no idea where the church is, or what denomination it belongs to. Probably it existed nowhere but on the record, but the bare fact that such a plea could be set up speaks volumes of itself. If any congregation is so poor, or so small, or so mean, that it cannot exist without practices that bring religion into utter contempt, the sooner those connected with it worship somewhere else the better.

WE have heard of complaints because one of the regulations of the Augmentation Scheme provides that congregations receiving aid should contribute at the rate of \$4.50 per member. It is asked: "Should the Church refuse the Gospel to people who are not able to pay this amount?" The Church does not propose to do anything of the kind. Congregations not able to meet the conditions of aid shall be treated as ex-

ceptional cases. But how many congregations are unable to pay at the rate of \$4.50 per member? How much does this amount to per Sabbath? Not nine cents! Supposing the "member" goes to church twice a day, each service costs him about four and a-half cents. And supposing four of the family attend each service costs about a cent apiece. And then all the week-day services and prayer-meeting services are thrown in! Surely a religious service is worth a cent if worth anything at all. It must be remembered too that there are many adherents in all congregations, some of whom pay quite as liberally as many of the members. Taking all these facts into consideration, there is certainly nothing to complain about. The plain truth of the matter is, that a man who does not think a religious service worth four and a-half cents, does not think it worth anything. If those who complain, in any case, would just divide their contributions by fifty-two, the little quotient would settle the matter. Before you say anything, divide your yearly subscriptions by fifty-two. That little quotient is an eloquent little fellow.

THE N. Y. *Independent* has been taking an Episcopal clergyman of Jersey City somewhat severely to task for going to the theatre to see Irving in one of his noted characters. Posing as a Puritan the *Independent* is quite as much out of its natural element as the best minister in New York could be at a theatre. The garb of Puritan does not sit kindly on so "broad" a journal as our contemporary. In fact the *Independent* has been guilty of an ill-natured impertinence. If it is wrong for a clergyman to go to the theatre it is equally wrong for any Christian so to do. There is not one code of morals for ministers and another for other Christians. That which is lawful for any Christian to do a minister may do if he chooses. This theory of laying down one code of morals for ministers and another for Christian laymen is one of the remnants of Popery that lingers in our Protestantism. It is part of the theory which says a minister should not be married nor be in many other respects like his fellow Christians. It is Popery—rank Popery. It may be urged that a minister should be careful about his example. So should every Christian. Going to the theatre may hurt his influence, says some one. Yes, and going to the theatre, or doubtful places of any kind may and does hurt the influence of others as well as ministers. For this reason they should not go either. In our opinion it is very unwise for a minister to frequent the theatre, not because he is a minister, but because it is unwise and injurious for any Christian to do so.

REPRESENTATIVE CHARACTER OF
CHURCH COURTS.

IN commenting the other week on "Equity's" letter on the payment of expenses incurred by attendance on Church Courts, there was not the slightest intention of belittling the importance of these stated assemblies; nor was there any desire or design to impair the proper conception of the spirituality of the Church as a divine institution. Neither of these points was called in question, nor are they in these columns likely to be. The object was simply to call attention to the hardship imposed on many worthy ministers and elders who live at a distance from the centres where Church courts are held whose incomes are so limited that even the moderate outlay such duties require is really felt. Our respected correspondent "D. D. M.," whose letter appears in another column, says: "When the people know that owing to the smallness of the stipend, and the exceptional expense of travelling to these courts, we cannot well meet it, they will as a rule make it up." This is exactly what we believe and it was simply to press this matter on the attention of the people that the article referred to was written.

It is, however, surprising that "D. D. M." should have come to the conclusion that because reference was made to the payment of municipal and other representative's expenses, the Church was placed on the same level as these purely mundane institutions. Such was neither stated nor implied. The argument was plain: That if in all these instances the cost of attendance was defrayed, why not the expenses of representatives in Church courts. It was the payment of expenses and that only that was referred to.

It may also be stated that the idea of representation contained in our previous remarks was a little more comprehensive than "D. D. M." seems disposed to

recognize. Popular representation at all events in Church courts is not necessarily the echo of popular prejudices or local views. The members of Church courts are members in virtue of the spiritual offices they fill. They are ordained men. Their allegiance is to Christ and His truth. In all cases they are bound to act conscientiously. They are not there to interpret any temporary caprice. Granting all that "D. D. M.'s" argument demands he yet concedes that members of our Church courts are representatives. In Presbytery the respective congregations are represented. Only ministers and elders in office elected for that purpose are entitled to membership in our Presbyteries. According to the immemorial practice of Presbyterianism these can only in their representative capacity have the right to take part in presbyterial or synodical deliberations. The same holds true of the General Assembly. The delegates are chosen by rotation and by ballot. They represent their respective Presbyteries. In recognition of their representative capacity, in some Presbyteries at least, it is the custom of these delegates to report their diligence after their return.

The method by which their expenses in the service of the Church are to be met may be safely left to the circumstances of the respective congregations. Perhaps the better way would be the payment of an adequate stipend so that the minister may be in a position to pay ungrudgingly his travelling expenses, or failing that to provide a fund so that they can be met without entailing inconvenience on any one.

"PEACE BE WITHIN THY WALLS."

WHEN a Christian congregation is enjoying a season of steady prosperity, very little is known about it beyond its members and their friends. It is the unusual that attracts attention. Let misfortune befall or disturbance arise in a congregation, then its affairs become a matter of general notoriety. In these days of shadeless publicity the daily press, Argus-eyed, waiting and watching for sensation, seizes with avidity on a church quarrel and spreads it with all possible and sometimes impossible detail before its readers.

A painful disagreement in a New York Congregational church recently attracted considerable attention. A minister belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church had engaged to supply its pulpit. After a time it was considered that he should become connected with the Congregational body and be installed as a regular pastor of the congregation to which he ministered. An elderly deacon who had been long connected with the congregation seemed very desirous that the proposed change be made. Misunderstandings arose, and strong party feelings spread among the members of the church, part holding with the deacon and part with the minister. Stormy meetings were held, motions and amendments were submitted and wrangled over, until the direct proposal for the minister's dismissal was reached. If the descriptions of the scenes that appeared in the daily journals were in any measure reliable, they can only be characterized as disgraceful in the extreme. The wildest excitement prevailed. Several of the speakers seemed to forget that they bore the Christian name; some of them forgot even more than this, and many of the interested spectators indulged in conduct witnessed only when partizan political feeling is at white heat in the midst of an election campaign.

In religious affairs as in other spheres there have been and there will continue to be differences of opinion. Seeing eye to eye is apparently yet a long way off. But what is the use of falling out by the way? Members of churches have their rights. They are bound to exercise their judgment in matters pertaining to the welfare and prosperity of a congregation. There will be diversities of view as to the best method of promoting Christian work. In all cases, however, the fullest and frankest statement of opinion is the best. Let the statement be given with candour, and let it be listened to with respect. A no less candid and firm rejoinder may be made. The points of difference may be thoroughly discussed and a satisfactory understanding reached. This can never be, however, if there is forgetfulness of the spirit of Christ and the feeling of mutual respect for the Christian brotherhood. If personal antagonisms are permitted to appear confusion and evil work follow.

Congregational strife is evil and only evil. Good may and often is evolved from it, but in its very nature it is essentially bad. It has an unfortunate influence