

## Pastor and People.

### PRAYER.

Lord, what a change within us one short hour  
Spent in Thy presence will prevail to make,  
What heavy burdens from our bosom take,  
What parched grounds refresh, as with a shower!  
We kneel, and all around us seems to lower;  
We rise, and all, the distant and the near,  
Stands forth in sunny outline brave and clear;  
We kneel, how weak, we rise how full of power.  
Why therefore should we do ourselves this wrong,  
Or others—that we are not always strong,  
That we are ever overborne with care,  
That we should ever weak or heartless be,  
Anxious or troubled, when with us is prayer,  
And joy and strength and courage are with Thee.  
—Richard Chenevix Trench.

Written for THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN  
**OUR PRIVILEGE.**

BY J. R.

In his thanksgiving prayer,—1 Chron. xxix. 13, 14,—David thus addresses God:

"Now therefore our God we thank Thee and praise Thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee."

The followers of Christ in this generation have much to fill their hearts with thankfulness and praise. Grand opportunities for service are granted them. Doors for long centuries locked against the entrance of the heralds of the cross, now stand wide open. Messengers carrying the glad tidings of the gospel are entering these open doors. The opposition shown to missionary endeavor a century ago no longer stands as a barrier to progress. Missions have earned their right to hold a foremost place among the great enterprises of this world, and have now many strong and able advocates.

Our hearts should surely go up in praise that we have been permitted to see the way opened up for missionary enterprise, and that we may share in the work. Is the Church awake to its privilege and duty in this matter? The interest in mission work is certainly increasing; missionary organizations are gaining in strength; a spirit of liberality is manifesting itself; much is being done, but still we cannot rest fully content.

We desire to see the missionary spirit permeating the whole life of the Church, until each individual member has been aroused to see his personal responsibility, and has become an earnest worker for the cause. There is a story told that in the war between the North and South in the United States, some of the Northern army were suspected of favoring the Southerners. Every man in the Northern army was compelled to take the oath of allegiance; any who refused were given so long to cross the border line to the South. It was necessary that every man should be known to be loyal to the flag he was fighting under, and ready always to render prompt obedience; one disaffected might work untold harm. In accomplishing this grand work which Christ has given his followers, He demands the undivided allegiance of every heart. Christians may differ on some points, but on this, the duty of proclaiming the gospel message the world over, they must be one. Rich and poor, old and young, should in this aim find a bond of sympathy drawing them nearer to each other and to their Master, and breaking down the bars of social caste and exclusiveness. All united in prayer, and united in work for this one great end of telling the world of Jesus.

"All the world for Jesus,  
Our prayer should be,  
And our watchword ever  
Christ for me.

All the world for Jesus  
Our work should be,  
Spreading Christ's salvation  
So full and free."

As a matter of fact there are many members in our churches who fail to realize their privilege and responsibility. Their inactivity and lack of interest acts as a drag on those trying to advance the cause; and keeps back the fulness of blessing which will

assuredly be poured out on the congregation or Church, that with consecrated purpose and whole-hearted endeavor strives to obey this command.

Dr. Gordon, of Boston, in his annual message to his congregation last New-Year's Day, spoke very earnestly on the duty of the Christian in regard to missions, and sounded a warning note to those neglecting this duty. I cannot do better than quote his appeal: "Forget not that your first and principal business as a disciple of Christ is to give the gospel to those who have it not. He who is not a missionary Christian will be a missing Christian when the great day comes for bestowing the rewards of service. Therefore ask yourselves daily what the Lord would have you do in connection with the work of carrying the news of salvation to the perishing millions. Search carefully whether he would have you go yourself to the heathen if you have the youth and fitness required for the work. Or, if you cannot go in person, enquire diligently what blood-mortgage there is upon your property in the interest of Foreign Missions; how much you owe to the heathen because of what you owe to Christ for redeeming you with His precious blood. I warn you that it will go hard with you when your Lord comes to reckon with you, if He finds your wealth boarded up in needless accumulations instead of being sacredly devoted to giving the gospel to the lost. But remember that consecrated giving will be impossible unless there be first a consecrated giver. Therefore I counsel you to seek the special grace and anointing of the Holy Spirit that He may work in you that consecration of heart and life on which so much depends."

Dr. Gordon was strongly imbued with the missionary spirit and he imparted it to His people. Clarendon St. Baptist Church, Boston, is an example of a missionary church. The membership is about 1,000. Last year they contributed \$12,000 to Foreign Missions. Home Missions are not forgotten. Almost every member is actively engaged in some philanthropic work.

Another example of a missionary church is the Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, England, over which Spurgeon presided so long. Dr. Pierson speaking of it says: "It is a radiating centre for all city evangelization, public philanthropy, and Home and Foreign Missions." The members of this Church are characterized by their prayerful spirit and willingness to work and to give for the Master. Why cannot all our churches be missionary churches? not perhaps on such a large scale as either of those mentioned; but following in the same line. The promises of God are not limited to any church or any person.

Are we ready to receive the blessing promised? Are we asking for it? Have we counted the cost? It means a complete surrender of our lives, of all that we possess or are to the service of Christ. He gave Himself for us. He has redeemed us. We must give ourselves unreservedly to Him to be used as He wills in saving others. We must no longer consider ourselves as free to follow our own pleasure. We belong to Christ and His will must be our law. In everything the test question of right or wrong must be: What would Jesus have us do? A missionary church must be a consecrated church. Its members must not forsake the prayer-meeting for the concert hall or pleasure party, or for the comfort of sitting at their own fireside with the daily paper or some interesting book. In all expenditure they must remember the responsibility to think first of the Master's cause. They must cultivate a missionary spirit by subscribing for missionary periodicals and keeping themselves well-informed on the needs of the world at home and abroad. Stirring missionary addresses must be given, not just once a year at an annual missionary meeting poorly attended; but frequently, at the week night service, and from the pulpit when the congregation is largely attended. Above all there must be earnest,

united prayer for the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, that each individual member may be made "a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work." "Prepared unto every good work" does not mean just ready and willing to help in good works. It means more. It means having the ability to perform good work. This is a right ambition for every Christian to aim after. We have the promise: "God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye always having all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work." To those who are indifferent, failing to realize their responsibility, we give this call:

"Rise for the day is passing  
And you lie dreaming on;  
The others have buckled their armour  
And forth to the fight have gone.  
A place in the ranks awaits you,  
Each man has some part to play,  
The past and the future are looking  
In the face of the stern to-day."

In the past the way has been prepared for the work; in the future we must render an account of our service; the present alone is given us for action. "Act, act, in the present."

Written for THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.  
**DEFICITS IN THE FUNDS: THE CURE.—III.**

BY R. A. DIX.

I do not think there should be such a thing as an Augmentation Fund. No; I am not contradicting myself. Since it exists, and in the present state of things must continue to exist, the Augmentation Fund deserves a far more hearty support than it receives. But is it not possible to imagine a state of things in which there would be no need for such a fund? I am thinking about that quotation from Dr. Robertson which I used in a former paper, "the Church is a unit—not a sand heap." When the rich man refuses to help the poor, we shall content ourselves with reproaches against his niggardliness; but when a man goes barefoot in order that he may afford to wear a silk hat, we shall take steps to have him shut up in a lunatic asylum. "But now are they many members, but one body."

That there is a strong drift in our Church to-day towards congregationalism, everyone who has made a study of the matter must know. I am not, of course, alluding to any supposed unsoundness about the Church government in Presbyteries or Synods, or to any conscious or acknowledged wish or feeling among the laity; but simply to the practical effect and logical outcome of the state of matters which we have. That drift increases the difficulty of making any arrangement which should look to the treatment of the financial and other affairs of the Church as the affairs of "a unit—not a sand heap." But I submit that the very existence of the drift emphasises the duty of trying to make such an arrangement. If, in spite of its vaunted "oneness," the Church be really little better than a fortuitous concourse of atoms, the sooner we know it the better. A sand heap is, of course, much more of a unit than a rubbish heap; but it is a sand heap notwithstanding. If you build your house upon it, you know what will happen to the house.

Giving to the treasury of the congregation and giving to the treasury of the Lord, are frequently different things in these days. Why should they be different? Not only the Lord's treasury, but the whole cause of religion, suffers when people come to draw the distinction I have just named. How much more do they suffer when people are oblivious to the distinction, although it exists? Why should a number of good Christians in the communion of a Church which is a "unit" be quite comfortable and at ease under the impression that they are doing their duty in expending some extra thousands in the adornment of their place of worship or in maintaining the musical part of its service at a high æsthetic standard, while other good Christians in the commun-

ion of the same Church are struggling along with occasional supply or no supply at all, because the few hundreds necessary to secure it are not to be had?

Why should we tolerate a system in the payment of ministers which gags them, at least in many cases, with the feeling that, when they urge the duty of liberal giving, they will be considered to be simply asking for a "raise"?

Why should we tolerate a system which segregates the congregations of our Church, creates rivalry and heart-burning, intensifies the evils of "candidating," lowers the ideal of Christian duty, and dries up the stream of Christian liberality?

That such results do flow from our present system of Church management, cannot be denied. The whole thing is loose and slipshod to a degree, and it requires no seer's vision to perceive that those departments of the work which make their appeal for support simply and only to Christian liberality, without any help from the stimulus of congregational interest or rivalry, are getting into a very bad way indeed.

The day of Christian socialism has passed around to the other side of the orbit and will not be back for some time. We cannot now have all things in common, as the first Church had. But the obligation to bear one another's burdens has not passed away, whether the desire to do so has or not. Let us by all means encourage and applaud proper manifestations of congregational spirit. We encourage and applaud the man who labors to see his family decently clothed and housed; but when he takes counsel of a foolish vanity and runs into debt for a residence and a style beyond his means, we pity or condemn him, as the case may be.

Is it impossible to attach a salary to every pulpit and pay that salary from a central fund which shall be kept up by an assessment upon every congregation? Governments do something of that sort, and also benevolent societies, as well as some societies which are not benevolent.

So long as the Church will beg, it must be a beggar. When it ceases to allow the conscience of the people to be debauched by beggars' tricks; and begins in earnest to cultivate that conscience by an earnest pressing of duty and privilege, it will find its reward.

Put aside certain of the schemes for support by "extra" contributions, if you will. It might be well, at all events for a time, to put the colleges upon that footing. But let the amount required to pay for "supply" at home and abroad, to support the necessary machinery of the Church, and to keep the A. & I. M. and the W. & O. Funds up to the mark, be calculated upon the basis of so much per member per Sabbath; and make it the duty of ministers to put this often before their people as a solemn obligation which they are expected to discharge, making the while such comments and explanations as the local conditions demand. Pay the ministers a fixed salary from the central fund, that their months may be opened to speak with boldness. In the cost of Church "machinery" include a small allowance for unemployed ministers in good standing—their number would never be excessive under such a system as is here sketched—and let a list be kept of them, each man's name going on when he becomes unemployed with the approval of the Church. When a congregation becomes vacant, give it three months to "call" as at present, and if it fails to do so, send it the first man on the list of unemployed, for one month, at the regular salary attached to the pulpit. Scratch that man's name off the top of the list and write it in at the bottom. Next month, send No. 2, and next, No. 3. When his month is out, let commissioners put into the hands of the members a ballot paper containing the three names, and if any one gets a clear majority of all votes cast, induct him. If not, take another course of three at two months each, and ballot again. If that fails, make the term three months; then six; then twelve.

This, of course, is a mere outline sketch with a broad pencil; but if we had some such system, and if it were worked as some men we wot of could work it, empty treasuries, vacant charges, and unemployed ministers would be much rarer than they are to-day.