

were it right to do so. I feel, as keenly as any man, the force of what I heard a clergyman say, "that it was too painful a subject to dwell upon." But sometimes painful subjects *must* be spoken of, in the hope that an alteration for the better may take place.

You say, and with truth, that this serious omission "ought not to have occurred in a city where there are so many resident clergymen." You are not alone in that opinion. It was a shame and a disgrace to the Church generally; and especially to those clergymen who serve the parishes in which such large and important meetings took place. It looked as if we did not really believe in what we profess. We were met together from all parts of the country, some of us at considerable expense and inconvenience, and there was no opportunity given for meeting for worship: there was no "breaking of bread" whereby we might be knit together in the bands of love and fellowship. Men came and met, and spoke, and decided, and went, as men of business might do. All was cold and dead!

I would ask what are the clergy in St. John about? There are in St. John, Portland, and Carleton, seven parish churches and a chapel of ease; and to serve these there are at least nine clergymen. And has not every one of these men promised, at the most solemn period of his life, that he will be diligent in prayers, and in reading of the holy Scriptures? And does not the Church of England lay it down as a rule that Morning and Evening Prayer shall be *daily* said and used throughout the year? And is not every Priest and Deacon to say daily this Morning and Evening Prayer in the church where he ministers, that the people may come to hear God's Word, and to pray to Him. What were we country people to think of these town clergy, when we asked, (as I know several did ask), where we could go to church, and were informed that among all these nine clergymen there was *not one* who thought it his duty to keep his solemn promise to God; and that the only service was one at eleven o'clock on Wednesday, when the greater part of us could not attend.

Now, Mr. Editor, I am a plain country man, but I must take the liberty of saying that I don't understand on what grounds this great neglect can be excused. If I were a minister, I think I should feel it my duty at least to do what I had promised; and what the prayer-book told me to do. And it seems to me that it is a minister's duty to open his parish church twice every day and read prayers; if people come to pray with him, well and good: if not, still *he* is to pray, there and then. I once asked our clergyman about this, and he seemed to admit that he *ought* to do this much, but excused himself on the ground of having great distances to other churches. There might be a reason in this case for neglecting his duty: but surely there is none in the case of town clergymen, who have but one church and parish to serve. I should fancy that when clergymen are engaged in the active duties of their calling, it would be a help and comfort for them to have the stated hour of public prayer day by day: and surely there are in every populous parish some old and infirm people, to whom it would be a great privilege and blessing to have the chance of joining in the service of the Church more frequently than on the Lord's day. At any rate, if the rules of the Church were observed, it would not be possible for nearly all the clergy of the diocese, with lay delegates from a majority of the missions, to come together on the business of the Church, and have no opportunity of common worship. I question if such a miserable accident *could* happen in any other city except St. John.

It has sometimes occurred to me, as a layman, that the *clerical* mind must be peculiarly formed. Would the clergy be satisfied if lay people undertook the most solemn engagements and never *tried* to fulfil them? And do they fancy that *we* do not observe *their* shortcomings? I can assure the reverend clergy that this is not the age when duty can be ignored and neglected without observation. Particularly would I suggest to those reverend editors who for a number of years past have been engaged in sowing dissension and distrust in the diocese, and have set themselves against all authority to which they were bound to submit, that they would be much better occupied if they would serve these churches more frequently, and try to wipe away the reproach which attaches to the city of St. John, of being probably the only place of its size in her Majesty's dominions in which there cannot be found *one* clergyman sufficiently pious and