

founded in 1871, but it is only three years since the theological faculty was established. There are three regular professors and a considerable number of students. The college has good new buildings, and the financial position has greatly improved during the past year or two. The number of students in the theological classes is increasing, and the college promises to be of vast service to the Church in the North-West.

#### II. Is consolidation practicable?

The answer generally given to this question is, No, not at present. This was the consensus of opinion expressed at the last Assembly. Even those who are most anxious for consolidation freely acknowledge the grave difficulties in the way, and confess that they cannot yet suggest a definite scheme in regard to it. The question asked at the Assembly, and often repeated by others, if consolidation is not practicable, why not? is a very proper one. We will now seek to enquire whether the negative answer generally given rests on good grounds. Several distinct facts have here to be noticed, which taken together go to show that however desirable consolidation may be, it is, at least in the meantime, quite impracticable.

(1) The *historic origin and growth* of the several colleges must be considered. Each had its connection, previous to the Union of 1875, with some branch of the Church. Halifax was the college of the Maritime Provinces, Queen's was identified with the Church of Scotland, and Knox and Montreal were connected with the Canada Presbyterian Church. These ecclesiastical and historical moorings cannot be ignored or rudely torn asunder without doing injury. It may be said that all these things should be buried now that the Church is one, but the fact remains all the same, that each college has its history, which requires more than logic or eloquence to overcome. Any one who knows how hard it is to unite sister congregations in any district of the country, will understand the force of this point.

(2) Then the present position and location of each college is another fact of importance. Each college is rooted in its own constituency, and it may be regarded as a tree growing in its particular soil. Consider the position of any of the colleges, from Halifax to Winnipeg, and the force of this point will be apparent. When a tree is well grown and deeply rooted, transplanting often kills it; and so in the removal of any of our colleges there might be loss of power in one direction, if there was gain in another.

(3) Each college has had, and still has, its benefactors. This is a fact which it is not fair to ignore. When we know what liberal men in Halifax, Quebec, Montreal, Kingston, Toronto, and Winnipeg have done, and may still be prepared to do, it is not easy to see how any of the colleges could be removed from its present location without doing injustice to the benefactors in these various places. Ask the friends of any one of these colleges: Are you in favour of consolidation? and the answer will generally be: Yes, but you must not touch our college. Thus being the feeling of the various benefactors, it is evident that a strong barrier is at once raised to consolidation.

(4) The graduates of each college have strong attachments to their own *Alma Mater*. This feeling is a perfectly proper one, and it is not desirable to kill it out. It cannot be ignored in this discussion, and it is doubtful whether more would not be lost than gained by any forcible unification, which would in a measure break the sympathy of any number of our ministers and people with the interests of theological education. Take Halifax College out of the Maritime Provinces, or Knox away from Toronto, and grave injury, I am sure, will be done to the whole educational interests of the Church in the Dominion; and the same may be said for the other colleges.

(5) The *property* of each college gives it a permanency which cannot be overlooked. The charters, in some cases, are definite in regard to location, and private bequests in other cases are likewise local in their provisions. Expensive buildings, which could not be sold without serious loss, have been built, and most of the colleges have, or will very soon have, endowments ranging from \$50,000 to \$200,000. Such facts as these have to be considered in connection with consolidation. And as the endowments are completed each college will soon be in a position where it will not need to make constant appeals for large sums annually to its support.

These five points embrace some of the chief things which stand in the way of consolidation, and those

who think it is practicable must show how these difficulties are to be overcome. The Assembly, mighty as it is, cannot pick up its colleges, plant them here or there, or combine them, without fully considering the whole question in all its bearings.

#### III. Even if practicable, is consolidation desirable?

In some respects this is a still more important question. A very general consensus of opinion was expressed at the Assembly in favour of the desirability of consolidation. It is necessary before giving a hasty answer, or deciding a concrete question in the abstract, to look very carefully at the grounds upon which this opinion is based. Mr. Charlton and others have put the case very strongly, and on the whole, reasonably, yet on almost every such question there is much to be said on both sides. Let me, without attempting to argue on either side, endeavour to present the main things which may be said for and against consolidation.

(1) In favour of it we may note the following:

(a) It would lessen the expense. It is said, and with good reason, that if we had, say three colleges, we could educate the thirty or forty students that graduate each year at much less cost than we can with six.

(b) We could have a larger staff of instructors and better library and equipment if we had fewer colleges. A professor could as well have charge of a class of forty as of ten, and the enthusiasm would be greater.

(c) More money would be given. So many are not satisfied, it is said, with the present position of the colleges that they are withholding their contributions. If there were consolidation it is said that we would get more endowment and more liberal support to our colleges.

(d) We could get abler professors. As we are now situated we cannot pay such salaries as to command the best talent. With Union and Princeton paying from \$3,000 to \$5,000 to their professors, we cannot compete, but consolidation would enable us to secure the ablest professors.

(2) Against consolidation we have the following points:

(a) A greater number of our people would be directly interested in the college work of the Church under our present policy. People naturally feel a greater interest in that which lies near to them, and so when we have colleges in Halifax, Montreal, Kingston, or Toronto, the interest of the people in any of these places is greater than it would be if the college was not in their midst, but in another city.

(b) A strong centre of Presbyterian influence would be established in a greater number of places. Wherever there is a college there is a number of professors and students, and their presence, as well as the whole work of the college, is a rallying-point for the Presbyterianism of the locality. This, it is held, is a strong point in favour of our present policy.

(c) A greater number of men will be secured as candidates for the ministry. It is said that when a college is near at hand, it is likely that the claims of the Church in regard to young men entering the ministry will come before their minds, and that they will be more likely to give themselves to the work of the ministry when the college is not a thousand miles away.

(d) It makes it possible to give better supply to the mission fields, especially during the winter months, when they are often so destitute. This is held to be a strong point. Supposing there was no college east of Montreal or west of Kingston, it is easy to see that it would be impossible to give even the supply now given by our students during the winter months in the mission field. The distances would be too great. As it now is, with centres at Halifax, Quebec, Montreal, Kingston, Toronto and Winnipeg, almost the entire country is accessible from these centres. Consolidation, it is held, would greatly aggravate the evils under which our mission fields now suffer during the winter months.

These, it seems to me, are the main points to be considered for and against consolidation, and I must confess that the points of an adverse nature are so strong to my mind that I would be inclined to hesitate before I could rest in the opinion without reserve that consolidation is even desirable for us as a Church when all interests are fully weighed.

In conclusion, it seems to me the clear duty of ministers and people is to carefully consider the question in all its bearings, and if these remarks are at all helpful to that consideration I shall be more than rewarded for the trouble of penning them. I have the clear conviction that the best policy for the Church in

Canada touching the College Question is not to agitate an admittedly impracticable and, it may be added, a doubtfully desirable movement, but rather to do all we can to place our existing institutions on strong financial foundations, and then the question is settled for all time. The success of building and endowment schemes since the Union gives promise that, following the present policy, the whole College Question will be completely solved during the next decade. Let ministers and people heartily unite, and with God's blessing it is done.

F. R. BEATTIE.

Brantford, July 30, 1885.

#### CHURCH AND STATE.

(Continued.)

MR. EDITOR,—"The question—what is true faith? the Church held to be one which she is bound to determine for herself. But, while thus considering herself as not only competent, but under the most solemn obligation, to frame with God's Word in her hand, and under her responsibility to Christ her Head alone, her articles of faith, she claimed no authority to force her conclusions upon the State, and to require the civil authorities to sanction and support them, at her instance and at her authority. The State is subject to Christ as well as the Church; and that not indirectly through the Church, but immediately as a primary ordinance of God. Such being its position it is as much bound as the Church to judge for itself. It has, indeed, no more right to force its creed upon the Church, than has the Church to dictate a creed to the State." It was for these principles that thousands of Scottish people suffered persecution. And whenever the Church departed from this ground, she became paralyzed by corrupting State influence, and distinguished by defection from Evangelical truth. Nor can the Church adopt a new dogma without releasing its members from upholding it. In the present discussion we know that there is no law from the beginning to the end of the Bible prohibiting, restricting or limiting the use of liquor beyond moderation, but it stands on the same basis as honey and other things that the Creator has given us. No man or body of men, therefore, are justified in prohibiting its use or in using influence in making it difficult to obtain. It is the gift of God and not man's. And yet we behold, in our midst a puritanical set who wish to impose upon us a yoke for which they have no authority in Scripture and to create a new dogma for the Church on the blasphemous assertion that the Giver of all good has created something evil. This is contrary to the grand principles on which Presbyterianism rests. And it is also an attempt to enslave us by putting a yoke upon us that we are not able to bear. Let each man "stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Wine was sold in the public inn in Christ's days on earth. And, indeed, our Saviour would likely have been born at an inn had circumstances permitted. He was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger, "because there was no room in the inn." Yet Christ never forbade the purchase or sale of wine, but by implication recognized it as proper when He said: "Come unto Me, all ye that buy wine and milk." If there had been anything wrong in the sale of it He would have forbidden it emphatically as He did all sins. If there is no wrong in drinking there can be none in selling that which is drunk, and those who place obstacles in the way of sale encroach upon the natural right and liberty of man to use in the fullest sense that which the Creator has given him. The General Assembly wish to set up a doctrine of men which is opposed to the doctrine and example of Christ and His apostles, and to exact a blind obedience to this doctrine notwithstanding that thousands not only do not believe in it, but believe it to be blasphemous. By doing so, they try to destroy the liberty of conscience and reason also, and declare themselves not only judges of the consciences of those who differ with them, but declare themselves wiser than the Great Exemplar whose precepts they pretend to teach. They are also teaching a doctrine that was not taught by the fathers of the Presbyterian Church, who held that God alone is Lord over the conscience. Dr. MacVicar's assertion that if the Church refused to condemn the Senate of Canada for its action in amending the Scott Act she would be false to her ecclesiastical ancestry, can only be regarded as a pitiable exhibition of ignorance or