

## OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

## HOSPITALITY AT CHURCH

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The Bible abounds with commands and examples of Hospitality. How Lot acted in this matter will occur to all—and Laban, and Joseph, and Boaz, and Rebekah, and Rahab, and the Widow of Zarephath, and the Shunamite, and memorably Abraham, Gen. xv. 4, etc. Then in the New Testament there are Simon the tanner, and Cornelius, and Lydia, and Phœbe, and Philemon, and Gaius. Nor was their hospitality all outlay and no income. Every one of them realized the truth of the Scripture promise, "that even a cup of cold water given to a disciple shall not lose its reward." Rebekah was rewarded with a good husband and many precious gifts, Gen. xxiv.; Laban, with a good servant for himself and a husband for both his daughters, Gen. xxix. and xxx.; Rahab, with the preservation of herself and kindred from destruction, Josh. vi.; David, with the discovery of his enemies, 1 Sam. xxx.; the widow of Zarephath, with the miraculous increase of her meal and oil, and the restoration to life of her son, 1 Kings xvii.; the jailor, and also Lydia, with salvation for themselves and their households, the Barbarians of Melita, with cure of both body and soul.

In Abraham's case as well as in Lot's, angels were entertained unawares, and verily they had their reward. Lot was preserved from the flames. To Abraham the glad message was brought of the promise of a son by Sarah, in whom all the families of the earth should be blessed.

And surely it is worthy of note the high place given by the ancient heathen to hospitality, as seen in the title they gave to their supreme divinity, Jupiter, when they called him as they did, Jupiter *Hospes*—Jupiter "The Hospitable."

And in the interior of Russia to-day where hotels and other houses of entertainment are very scarce, the kindness of the peasants to strangers is most delightful. The humblest hut offers its bed and its table to the traveller. No compensation will be taken. Indeed, a byword is current there which has almost the binding force of a law, "that to take pay for the bread and salt which a passing stranger eats is a great sin."

But, this question has a bearing on church life which should not be overlooked. Young men and young women come into town and city the year round to work or study, who belong to the Presbyterian Church. Whether they continue to attend that church or no will depend largely on the welcome they receive or the reverse on their arrival. Lonely and alone they long for sympathy and recognition. For a few weeks they do give attendance at the denomination of their fathers, and if the hand of fellowship be promptly given, and a seat be provided, they will abide, otherwise they will not.

Occasional visits are made of an evening to other churches, and not unfrequently they have but to make one visit when they are taken by the hand, and kindly spoken to, and invited to return.

Next Sabbath some genial visitor calls at their lodgings and takes them again to the same church, and so friendship goes on for weeks till at length the youth turns away altogether from the church of his fathers to some other from no other cause than want of hospitality and affability on the part of the people.

Now, who should take the initiative in speaking to this new-comer? Should any one person, should any one order of officials have a monopoly of this luxury? An atmosphere of sociability is only possible in a congregation when *everyone* is mindful to entertain strangers. Let no one wait for another to move. Let every man and woman make it a matter of personal obligation.

The minister cannot for the most part leave the pulpit to speak to the new-comer before he gets away. But somebody is sitting immediately in front, or behind, or by his side. Some one showed him to a seat, and let that same person play the "Achates" to him at the close of the service. Some one must touch elbows with him as he passes out. Let every one who has opportunity show affability, and should a dozen do so the same day all the better.

It is not the Confession of Faith and Catechism which drive many a youth from our communion, nor the absence of instrumental music or its presence, nor the

defective architecture of the meeting-house, nor the quality of the preaching so much; in a legion of cases rather it is the want of that which Abraham so abundantly possessed and used so generously—CHRISTIAN AFFABILITY

## DEGREES IN DIVINITY—No II

In the preceding paper attention was called to the great scheme of a Presbyterian University as banteringly submitted by the "Halifax Witness," and to the utter groundlessness of the first of two objections to the scheme urged by the editor of that paper, viz. that it lacked precedent. A second objection, however, is brought against the scheme, and it is thus expressed by the "Witness": "After all we might not be able to make much of our degrees," because "a D.D. of the University of Texas would have quite as sonorous and euphonious a sound as the D.D. of our proposed University." Now if the value of a D.D. lie in its sound rather than in its soundness, the cheaper we can purchase the sound the better, but the general impression is that the harder it is to obtain a degree the more valuable that distinction becomes. The higher the standard of scholarship required, and the more discriminating the exercise of University powers by a degree-conferring body, the more eagerly coveted and the more respectfully recognized is the honour it bestows. The General Assembly contains within itself all the learning and piety and wisdom of the Church. A degree therefore which it sanctions is preferable to one bestowed by one or two professors of theology, even though they be the best men in the Church, and very much to be preferred to a theological degree granted by professors of classics and mathematics and natural science, lawyers, doctors, engineers, and merchants who are less qualified to judge of the theological fitness than a minister is to pass an opinion upon their studies and pursuits.

Again such a University, as that proposed would by its very dimensions, responsibility to the Church, and absence of local character, be guarded against the danger to which the governing bodies of dependent institutions would be exposed of pressure from patrons or personal friends desiring distinction for themselves or others. It would also tend to raise the standard of theological education in its affiliated colleges, and instead of unwholesome bickerings among these institutions, would lead to a laudable and beneficial rivalry. The conferring of the degrees in full Assembly by the Chancellor, himself a distinguished Doctor of Divinity, would be a recognition of theological excellence combined with sound doctrine that any man might worthily covet.

Would there not be difficulty in obtaining University powers, especially seeing that the Dominion Parliament has relegated all matters of education to the Provincial Legislatures? To this it may be answered, the Dominion Parliament at its last Session incorporated ecclesiastical and educating bodies, thus establishing a precedent which could not be better followed than in the case of a Church whose colleges are scattered over the Dominion. But even should the Dominion Parliament refuse, a charter can be obtained from one of the Local Legislatures, and, just as affiliated schools outside of the Province in which a University is situated now partake of its benefits, so although local in name, the Charter of the Church University may be extended to the whole Dominion.

It may be said, why not affiliate all the Colleges of the Church with Queen's University which has already the power of conferring Degrees in Divinity? A sufficient reply is, Queen's University is not in relation to the Church at all. The Church neither appoints its governing body nor its professors, not even the professors in its theological department. Then it may be said,—let Queen's come under the Church like the other colleges. This involves: 1st., the willingness of the authorities of Queen's to give up their autonomy, which is problematic; 2nd., the willingness of the Church, in which there is a strong opinion against ecclesiastical bodies undertaking secular education, to receive Queen's even if it should offer itself; and, 3rd., a change of charter which would be as troublesome as the obtaining of one entirely new.

Then let Queen's as it is, associate the professors of all our colleges with its senate for the purposes of degrees in Theology. This is to help Queen's to enlarge its Senate by subordinating other Theological Colleges. It also would need a change of charter establishing virtually a new purely theological University at Kingston. Why go there to establish it?

By such a scheme no objection is removed, for the principles of locality, subordination, and freedom from entire Church control, still continue.

Let the Church affiliate all its Theological Colleges, that of Queen's and Morrin being numbered among them by severing their present literary relations, under its own University, whose Senate, or self, shall consist of all its theological professors and a larger number of scholarly men whether ministers or lay graduates of Universities appointed from time to time in open Assembly. Let this Senate, by its examining body, which shall be independent of the colleges, send under seal, to these institutions, examination papers prepared according to a curriculum worthy of the Church, the answers to which, being returned under seal to the examiners, shall decide who are to be the B.D.'s of the year. Thus the student may compete without deserting his legitimate studies or leaving the institution which has had the labour of preparing him for his honours. Graduates in theology would thus remain graduates of their own colleges by virtue of their affiliation with the Church University, and the University of Texas with its sonorous and euphonious degrees would need to look elsewhere for its alumni.

The "Halifax Witness" thinks that the Church and its colleges can exist without degrees, and that the best course is to do nothing. But this is just where the colleges differ with the editor of the "Witness." Many of our scholarly ministers who deserve well at the hands of the Church, are not known perhaps, in Texas, and may not be favorites at Kingston even. The maker of a good article is permitted to stamp it with the sign of worth, and those who prepare students of a high order of learning should be able to put their seal upon it, whether it be B.A. and M.A., or B.D. and D.D. that mark the nature of its excellence. Let this be done by the Church, as the Church, and not learning only but real worth and sound doctrine will have a recognition second to none in the world.

This matter will come before the next Assembly, and it is hoped will be settled in a way that will preserve a good understanding among our colleges by giving equal rights to all; that will favour the interest of theological education, and confer upon our Church the power to recognize merit, and so to recognize it that her own usefulness may be extended and her dignity enhanced.

## "WHAT ARE THE RESULTS TO BE LOOKED FOR FROM SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHING?"

PAPER READ AT THE PRESBYTERIAN SABBATH SCHOOL CONFERENCE AT GALT, JANUARY 22ND, 1879, BY REV. JAMES MIDDLEMISS.

In connection with the subject now before the Conference, I shall only call attention to two important general principles which ought to be kept in view in the religious training of the young, and which are much overlooked, though probably not so much at the present time as they have sometimes been.

1. Much evil has resulted from the notion, which is still largely prevalent, that the religious instruction of the young is, and can only be, chiefly if not entirely, the preparation of materials for *future* use in their conversion, edification, and religious practice. Many who feel strongly the obligation to communicate religious knowledge to the young, are not impressed with the conviction that, while even little children are sinners and as such need the only salvation, they are capable of being religious in the highest sense of the term. It might perhaps be too much to say that they believe children to be incapable of spiritual religion; but it is certainly not too much to say that they communicate religious knowledge to them without *expecting* to see in them, *in the meantime*, any decided indications of their being the subjects of the saving influences of the Holy Spirit. They only hope that when they are older and have acquired a good measure of Christian intelligence, they will be able rightly to apprehend the Gospel method of salvation, and undergo such an experience as shall constitute them truly religious. Of course, all this is unscriptural; and I do not believe that any of our people of ordinary intelligence would attempt to vindicate such notions, implying, as they do, that the Spirit of God cannot work, or cannot be expected to work, savingly in the soul, until it has been furnished with some considerable amount of knowledge, and its powers have made some considerable advance towards maturity. But many feel and act as if it were so; and there are so many that we might almost venture to make the general assertion that, while our children are being