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HAMILTON, MAR. 1, 1895.

What is a Church?

What is a church of Christ? This question is continually being raised, and answered. The answers vary. Popularly it is thought that a church of Christ is a society composed of professing Christians associated together as Christians for Christian worship and work. "Gathered together in the name of Christ," constitutes the company a church of Christ—it will be said. But what does "in the name of Christ" involve? It involves recognition of His will, obedience to His word. We cannot properly claim to do a thing in His name unless we have His authority for doing it. What He commands us to do, we may and ought to do in His name. What He does not command us to do, it is gross presumption for us to pretend to do in His name. So in considering what is a church of Christ, we have to inquire whether it is an institution of Christ Himself, regulated by His law and not by the laws of men.

In investigating the right of any body to be called a church of Christ, we would ask, What are the conditions of membership in it? Does it receive those whom the Lord would receive and reject those whom He would reject? Is it easier to get into it than it was to enter a church in apostolic days? Is it harder?

The basis of membership is always looked upon as fundamental. To tamper with that without authority is looked upon as a grave offense. So is it with regard to the society known as the church of Christ. The business of man is simply to find out Christ's law and apply it. It is no part of man's duty to seek to improve upon the Lord's plan by either adding to or taking from the conditions of membership determined upon by the Lord himself. To assume to do so is to sit in judgment upon the Saviour, and he who does that denies Christ, and to him Jesus ceases to be Lord, and to whom Jesus ceases to be Lord, He ceases to be Saviour.

And here we find the crowning sin of Popery, among Roman Catholics or Protestants. Protestants are in the habit of thinking that Popery is something that pertains to Roman Catholicism alone. But it is just as much Popery to require of a man to declare his belief in Calvinism before receiving him into church fellowship, as to demand that he declare his faith in the infallibility of the Pope of Rome; to require one to have his children sprinkled for baptism, as to believe in the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary; to believe in close communion, as to believe in transubstantiation.

Herein is the great evil of sectarianism. A sect is a body claiming to be a church of Christ that imposes unscriptural tests of fellowship; a church of Christ pure and simple receives people on the same conditions as the inspired apostles of our Lord received them. It

telligent Disciples see this distinction clearly; conscientious Disciples are careful to recognize it always.

Let us close for the present by suggesting to our readers that they submit the religious bodies around them to the test whether according to the principles laid down here they are really churches of Christ.

Editorial Notes.

"The right mode of baptism was discussed by several of the town pastors last Sunday evening, and as a consequence there have been lively discussions ever since, even amongst those who don't read their Bibles very much."

So says the *Blenheim News*. It was ever thus after union meetings. We await the next act in the drama.

We presume that every Christian who reads this paper believes in praying to God in the name of Jesus Christ. Would it be safe for us to presume that every Christian who reads this paper does regularly, privately, earnestly pray to God in the name of Jesus Christ? We fear not. How is it with you, reader?

And what about reading the Word of God? Consider now. What do you think? Does your observation lead you to conclude that, even among a people loudly professing loyalty to the Bible, the study of that sacred book is habitual? Is it not rather true that the neglect of it is habitual? When did you read the Bible last for your own spiritual welfare?

Sir Mackenzie Bowell has written to Dr. Carman, saying positively that the Dominion Government neither incurred nor authorized any expense "for masses for the repose of the soul of the late Premier." It pleases us to record this denial. We feared the thing had been done. And indeed the *Catholic Record*, of London, Ont., seems to share our opinion, for in a long editorial in its Feb. 16th, the act of paying for the mass by the Government is not only admitted but defended.

It is possible that some of our preaching brethren take it for granted that the Disciples are all well instructed in the gospel, understand its first principles, and are able to teach others. Experience shows that such an assumption is a mistake. Catechise the young Disciples as you happen to meet them, and if you have not yourself lost interest in the grand simplicity of the ancient gospel, you will resolve to give a rousing sermon or two on first principles. And you will also feel the necessity of supplementing your public discourses with a good deal of private talk. How do you find it in your locality, brother preacher? Remember, that sound doctrine means healthy, Christian life.

Were the Roman Catholic hierarchy, were any other denomination, in fact, to ask the Dominion Government for a grant of land on which to create a colony of reputable Canadians under the direct control of that sect, an effectual protest would promptly be forthcoming. Yet that is exactly what Gen. Booth wishes, except that he desires to people the colony with imported criminals.—*Toronto Star*.

We do not understand that Gen. Booth intends to people his proposed colony with imported criminals, but rather with imported persons who may have been criminals, but have been reformed through the agency of the Salvation Army. Nevertheless we think the point made by the *Star* is well taken, that as any other religious denomination would certainly and properly be refused if it made such a request as Gen. Booth has made, Gen. Booth's proposition should not be entertained for a moment by the Dominion Government.

Dr. McLeod, well known as a member of the Royal Commission on the Liquor Traffic, has declined the nomination of the Prohibitionists of York, N. B., for the House of Commons, on the ground that he is not convinced that it would be right for a preacher to enter political life. Most people will think he has acted wisely. But "most people" are not always right. And we do not think they are in this case. For our part we exceedingly regret that Dr. McLeod did not signify his willingness to stand. If the House of Commons is a fit place for any decent man, it is a fit place for a preacher. In what respect is a decent preacher better than any other decent man? This drawing the line at the preacher is a result of that sacerdotal idea which still hangs around even progressive Protestants. Let the preachers take it "rough and tumble" a little more with their fellows, and their fellows will respect them more. If circumstances point to a preacher as the leader of a great moral reform movement, and indicate that he could serve the good cause in Parliament, in our opinion he would not be acting unworthily of a Christian or a preacher to accept nomination and work for election. Dr. McLeod has missed such an opportunity as may never come to him again.

We clip the following from the *Sentinel*, of Toronto:

"The Rev. Dr. Carman, of the Methodist church, delivered educational sermons on Sunday, the 21st, in Kingston, and states his position in regard to public education holding for national schools, not where the doctrines of any church will be taught, but where at least morality and integrity will be inculcated. The Roman Catholics could come in certainly on that ground and allow all children to be instructed together. The speaker did not care for separate church schools. Any church that could not care for its people and maintain a particular doctrine should we wiped out. If the Methodist church cannot through its ministry, Sunday school and Epworth League, hold its people and teach the precious doctrine of entire sanctification, without the aid of a Government grant, then the sooner it goes by the board the better."

That's the kind of talk, Doctor. Let us have more of it and often. And won't the English Church people please speak out to the same effect?

We recently heard of a young preacher, supposed to be a Disciple, who did not know for certain whether he was a Disciple or no, who was even inclined to look kindly upon infant baptism, and whose preaching, therefore, was a grief of mind to well-instructed brethren and sisters. What an outrage on a church to have such a nondescript standing before them in the capacity of preacher! Another case lately brought to our attention was that of a preacher—not a young man—who when the Disciples did not wish his services any longer, began to court the Baptists, and appeared quite ready to turn his back on his reputed former self and join the Baptists for a job. Churches will do well to give such a man a wide berth. And while these cases are before us let us ask, When will churches learn to use as much caution and discretion in selecting a preacher as any one member would exercise in selecting a servant? We do not need a Bishop, nor a Conference, nor a Presbytery to select and appoint our preachers, but it is important that churches should not send their common sense away on a visit when they are considering and deciding whether a man is a fit and proper person to preach the gospel to sinners and to edify the saints.

Indigestion is stubborn but K. D. C. overcomes it.

Omnibus.

Mrs. D. Harris, Hamilton, has presented a copy of the "Christian Baptist" to the library of the Bible School. T. L. F.

Have you paid your subscription to the CANADIAN EVANGELIST? If not, please do so now: the publisher needs the money to pay the printer. Your dollar will count one.

A little girl, four years old, whose father went to work one morning and did not return, used to pray at night, "O God, please send papa home," and then turn to her mamma and say, "Papa will come now, won't he, mamma?"

"If you ever issued a better number than the Foreign Mission one received, I fail to remember it. It just lacks Dr. Butchart's picture." That is what one of our preachers says. We shall try to get Bro. Butchart's likeness yet.

PREMIUM BIBLE.—"The Bible came all right. I like it very much," so writes one subscriber. Another says: "The Bible came to-night, and I am well pleased with it." Don't you want one? For eight new subscribers we shall give you one.

The *Templar* devotes a long article to a criticism of our proposition in last EVANGELIST for getting prohibitionists in Parliament. We regret that we cannot find room for it in this paper. We shall give it entire in March 15th number.

In the excellent address by the President of the St. Thomas Auxiliary of the O. C. W. B. M., which will be found on page 6, the date 1882, according to our recollection, is about five years too early, as intimating the time when the Co-operation began to put forth special effort to establish the cause in cities.

"Neither political party here dare put a man in the field who does not profess good temperance principles." That was said of a Quebec county at the recent meeting in Montreal of the Quebec Alliance. And that is the condition which prohibitionists should aim to produce in every county in the Dominion.

A man went into a store the other day in this city as the woman was receiving a five dollar bill from a customer. He said, "Let me look at that bill." The woman hesitated to allow a stranger to handle the valuable piece of paper. But the man begged for the privilege, and declared that he only wished to feel and examine it. So his request was granted. He looked it over carefully, caressed it tenderly, and handed it back, saying, "Thank you; I was afraid, if someone would give me a bill, I would not know it."

"It is cheering to hear through the EVANGELIST what the brethren are doing. It is the only way I can learn what is going on among them, as I cannot now meet with any of them. Many thanks for the 'Pioneer Picture.' I knew them all but Bro. Sinclair. I fancied I could hear Bro. Anderson's voice as I was reading about him giving the discourses in Hamilton lately." This is from an isolated brother. His case illustrates well that of many other Disciples in Ontario. If you know of any such brethren and sisters, who do not get the EVANGELIST, please send us their address and we shall send them sample copies.

We have received a copy of the "Seiko," published in Tokyo, Japan, by our missionaries there. "Seiko"

means "Light of the World." Its objects are to proclaim Christ to the unconverted and to advocate the union of all believers. The price of the "Seiko" is 50c. a year, and the special object of this note is to say to our friends that the missionaries would be glad to have them assist in defraying the expenses of publication by paying the price of one or more subscriptions for Christian converts in Japan, most of whom are too poor to pay for it themselves. All such subscriptions sent by post office order to Miss Mary M. Riech, En-ki Machi, Ushigome Ku, Tokyo, Japan, will be gratefully received.

Church News.

TORONTO, Cecil Street.—Since last report there have been three added to the church—two by letter and one by confession and baptism, Attendance most encouraging. Sunday school growing. Four new scholars came yesterday. Our Y. P. S. C. E. continues to grow in interest. On Feb. 10 a joint meeting of the junior and senior Endeavor societies was held. The juniors conducted the meeting, and a most enjoyable and profitable time was had. Work, Watch and Pray.

J. L. L.

HANTS COUNTY, N. S.—DEAR BRO. MUNRO.—It is a long time since I have written anything for the CANADIAN EVANGELIST. In fact, I have written nothing since coming to this part of the field from P. E. Island. I finished my first year here some time ago, and to say the least, the year's work was encouraging. One new meeting-house at one of the points of preaching was built and opened free of debt. Two new Sunday schools were organized, making four in all, under my care. There were forty additions, mainly by baptism. An interest is aroused in our mission work, and as I enter the second year it is with the hope of doing more than was done last year. Twelve have made the good confession so far in this year. The brethren here are as good as you find them anywhere, and the outlook for good, progressive work is encouraging. The CANADIAN EVANGELIST is a welcome visitor, and I was sorry when some time ago it decreased in size, and I think the last double number should be the size of it. Surely our Canadian churches can keep up a good paper. I would like to see all the provinces unite in supporting such a paper, this would ensure the success of the venture. I read with interest the reports of work done in the upper provinces, and while not personally acquainted with brethren there, I have a fraternal interest in the work and am living in hope of some day attending one of your annual meetings and see how you do. I shall try and give you some more items of interest in the near future. Wishing you success in the work of the Master, I remain yours in the service,

W. H. HARDING
West Gore, Hants Co., N. S.

LONDON.—It will no doubt be a source of gratification to our brethren generally to hear of the progress being made by the church in London. About five months ago we were called upon to part with Bro. T. L. Fowler, who had been pastor of the church almost since its organization over three years ago. We then felt somewhat discouraged in losing one whom we had learned to love and esteem—one who had labored so earnestly and successfully in the upbuilding of the church. We believed no one could be found who could quite fill his place and were inclined to regard the future with feelings of despondency. It can be said, however, that Bro. Geo. Fowler