

the steps that had led him to being called to the work in Winnipeg. He had not sought a change. He was happy and contented in his work. But he believed the call to go to Winnipeg was a call from God, and he could not resist it. "At your call" he said, "I came here now nearly five years ago, and I have never sought or desired to go elsewhere. No pastor could possibly be happier in his work than I have been during these years. You have shown me every kindness and affection and devotion. With the officers of the church, the deacons, superintendent and teachers of the Sunday-school I have labored in happiest accord. Our hearts and hands have been bound in Christian love—this church is dear to me. Our relation to one another is peculiar. You are my first flock and I your first pastor. Many of you are the fruits of my ministry here. I have watched and laboured and prayed for you with you many a day, and if it had been God's will I would have desired nothing better than to have lived and laboured and died amongst you. But the hand of God is on me and I must go. When I gave myself to the ministry I felt that I had no right to choose my field. I must go where my King and Bishop sends me. There is a Providence in our lives. There is One that guides and overrules all. An unseen hand led me here, and now a voice Divine calls me away. The will of the Lord be done. Brethren, as I go to the far North-West to preach Christ's gospel, may I not go in the assurance that the Christian love, and sympathy, and prayers of you my fellow-labourers and companions in the kingdom and patience of Christ will go with me. My prayer is that God may bless this church yet more and more. May it ever stand as the pillar and ground of the truth; may every member be loyal to Christ; and may personal love to a personal Saviour be the one strong bond that unites you in Christian fellowship and in Christian work."

Deacon Sanderson, after expressing the kind feeling of himself and brother deacons and members toward their pastor with whom they had always labored in Christian love and harmony, stated that after having heard the pastors explanation of the steps that led to his being called to Winnipeg, and being persuaded that he considered it his duty to go, they felt it would be wrong for them as a church to stand between him and duty, he "therefore moved that this church accept Mr. Silcox's resignation of the pastorate, sending him, in the name of the Lord to the Congregational Church in Winnipeg, praying that the great Head of the Church may bless him in his new field of labor as He has here; that he may be the instrument in the hands of God in bringing many into the fold of Christ; and thus extending and strengthening the Church of Christ in the North-West."

Several members spoke on the motion, all testifying their love and respect for the pastor, and regrets at his contemplated departure. The resolution was passed unanimously by a standing vote. The meeting joined in singing the hymn:—

Ye messengers of Christ,
His Sovereign voice obey;
Arise and follow where he leads,
And peace attend your way.
We wish you in His name
The most divine success;
Assured that He who sends you forth,
Will your endeavours bless.

Thus, in a truly primitive and apostolic fashion, Mr. Silcox is dismissed from the pastorate of the Western Church, Toronto, to undertake mission work in our great North-West.

OUR WORK IN MANITOBA AND THE NORTH WEST.

A most important step has just been taken in the development and progress of our work in the great regions of the North

West. The Rev. J. B. Silcox, of Toronto, having been called to the pastorate of the Winnipeg Church, vacant by the resignation of the Rev. Wm. Ewing, has seen it to be the path of duty to accept the call. He will proceed to Manitoba about the end of the year, and enter on his labors with the opening of the year 1881. And all who have in their hearts the interest of the churches as a body, and desire the extension of Congregational influences over new fields, will surely bid him God speed, and pray that he may be sent forth by the Holy Ghost.

The steps that have led to this consummation are such as to indicate very clear providential guidance. The great Leader and Head of the Churches has apparently marked the way, and led all who are concerned by a path of which they were not aware.

When our brother, the Rev. W. Ewing, undertook with so much courage and self-reliance to proceed at his own charges to Manitoba, he was honored to lay the foundations of our work by gathering together a few faithful brethren and unite them in church fellowship. But from the first he was willing to allow it to be determined by events, whether he was chosen of God to carry on the work he had begun. Progress was slow, in the absence of a house of worship. The little band found it exceedingly difficult to gather others round them. A mere meeting, in a bare and comfortless hall, whose associations were of municipal politics and theatricals rather than of worship, was not the sort of a place to which strangers and casual hearers would be likely to resort.

A church building became a necessity, and a most admirable lot having been secured, arrangements were made for Mr. Ewing to proceed to the older Provinces of Canada to collect funds for its erection. In this effort he has been, as successful as could have been expected.

It was arranged that Mr. Silcox, with the consent of the Western Church, Toronto, who generously released him for the summer, should supply the pulpit in Winnipeg during Mr. Ewing's absence. He remained some eight or nine weeks in all. During his ministrations a very marked increase took place in the congregation, and in the income of the church. A profound impression was produced on those who had the lead and charge of the infant community; and they had many indications from heads of families, not of their number, that it only needed the permanent settlement of such a one as was then ministering to them, to ensure the gathering of a large and regular congregation.

On the pastor's return, he, being made acquainted with the state of matters, and what had transpired, released the church in the most honorable manner from all embarrassment. Many other fields of labor were open, and he expressed a perfect readiness to labor in one of them, should it be the Master's will to call him elsewhere.

The Manitoba Mission Committee, consisting of brethren in Montreal who were charged with the overseeing of the work, were made acquainted with the events that had transpired. The Winnipeg Church had the matter before them and earnestly entreated help and guidance. On full consideration the committee concluded that the interests of the denomination in the North West would be best promoted by the employment of Mr. Ewing in some other part of the field, and by the settlement of Mr. Silcox as pastor over the Winnipeg Church.

A resolution to that effect was passed by the committee, pledging a certain salary for the first year, if their recommendations were concurred in; this was done in reliance on the generous aid of the Colonial Missionary Society and of the Cana-

dian Churches. It was also expected that the contributions of the Winnipeg Church and congregation would be largely augmented. Of this we believe no doubt need be entertained.

Mr. Ewing having resigned his charge, a formal and unanimous call sent to Mr. Silcox, which, having accepted, he communicated the result to the Western Church.

Thereupon, however, arose a great and serious difficulty. The church was warmly attached to its pastor. He had a strong hold on the affections of the congregation, of the Sunday School, and of the members of the Bible Class. To part with him they felt would not only be a matter of deep personal regret, but might impede the growth of the church, which under his pastorate had been steadily growing since its formation five years ago. The resignation was, therefore, not accepted. The brethren urged and pressed their pastor to withdraw it and remain amongst them. And so strong was the loving pressure that at one time it seemed impossible to withstand it.

After a few days delay, however, on a calm consideration of what would best promote the large interest of the denomination generally, and of the Kingdom of Christ, remembering the great work to be done in the North West, and the providential circumstances which seemed clearly to indicate a Divine call to that field; having taken council with friends and having their various opinions on the matter, Mr. Silcox finally concluded it to be the way of duty to accept the invitation of the Winnipeg Church and proceed to Manitoba.

And the church, though hearing his decision with deep and profound regret, have acquiesced in it, and are prepared to send him forth with prayers and "God speed."

We trust that both Mr. Silcox and Mr. Ewing, as representatives of our cause in the great North West, will be sustained both by the prayers and contributions of our brethren both in Canada and Great Britain. They have a right to look for this, and our expectation is that they will not be disappointed.

Correspondence

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—We cannot assume the insertion of any matter in the week's issue reaching us later than the Monday preceding. The Editor is not responsible for the opinions of Correspondents.

THE POLICY OF THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

Editor of "The Canadian Independent."

DEAR SIR,—In your last paper I read with much interest the report of Rev. A. Hannay's meetings in Toronto; more particularly that of the Monday evening social conference in which the question of colonial methods of church extension was discussed. The view of Mr. Hannay, in which the convention seemed in the main to concur, was that the country should be abandoned by the Missionary Society, and the "policy" in the future be to strengthen the great centres." They must not spend their money, it was not wisdom nor duty to do so, in sparsely settled districts, until they had "strong centres." They are not to look out for villages inadequately supplied with preachers, nothing of the kind; but for the suburbs of great cities, and plant themselves there. This was the only policy for a denomination to follow that sought to extend itself. We had neglected it, and had not looked at things in a business light."

To this new policy many will strongly object. City and country are mutually dependent upon each other in all things spiritual as well as material, and the history of the past proves that country churches have largely supplied the cities, both with ministers and members, and have thus aided them socially, financially, and in moral power. This stream always flows toward the "great centres." If a new policy must be inaugurated, let it be in harmony with nature's law, which ordains that the country builds the town. The present writer knows small country churches that have sent influential members to a neighbouring city by the score, and have never received one in return during a period of more than twenty-five years. Now, if the suburbs of the great cities are to be fostered until they become great centres of Congregationalism, and the remote settlements neglected meantime, what is likely to be the outcome? Why that the strongly organized churches would come in and eat them up, and the great recruiting ground of the city churches would be lost. The Missionary Society should hear and answer the Macedonian cry whether from city or country, but especially from the latter, as their seems to be too much gravitation at present of both ministers and money to the highly cultured centres. The early Christians erred in this way, and persecution became necessary to scatter them to all parts that the gospel might be preached to the nations. It proved a wise policy, for shortly after the Apostle Paul was the bearer of large contributions to the poor saints at Jerusalem.

Yours truly,
RURAL DEAN.

—The City of New York is very largely under the rule of its ten thousand grog-shops. These grog-shops are, in effect, so many political club-houses, and they are thus a controlling force in municipal affairs. Of course the best interests of the city suffer in such hands in many ways. Recently the Board of Park Commissioners have made a most disgraceful surrender to the liquor influence by appointing to the responsible position of Superintendent of Public Parks one of these rum-shop politicians. This is one of the most objectionable appointments of its kind yet made. It will expose the beautiful Central Park and other parks of the city largely to incursions from the vicious and criminal classes, from whose dangerous presence they have hitherto been kept comparatively free. The grog-shop influence must itself be subordinated, or it will ultimately subordinate everything else to its own corrupt and unholy purposes.

SILLY AND FANATICAL.—As their progress in converting England to the Roman Catholic faith by the regular way is slow, the Catholics of England, a large company of them, headed by Cardinal Manning, have planned a pilgrimage to Lourdes, to beg the intercession of the miraculous Virgin for the restoration of England to the Roman faith. Nobody in Heaven wishes England so ill as to have such a restoration. But what a queer thing it is for so intelligent a man as Cardinal Manning to head so grotesque a pilgrimage in the year of our Lord 1880!