Church News.

We are thankful for items of Church News courteously stated; or for marked copies or clippings from local exchanges, which we would not otherwise see. To insure publication in next number, they must reach us by noon on Monday. A condensation of items is unavoidable.

PASTORS and READERS.

Pastors are respectfully requested to announce to their congregations, and our readers to tell their friends, that the numbers of this paper for the remainder of the present year will be furnished free of charge to all new subscribers for 1889, so that they will receive THE PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW for FIFTEEN MONTHS for the price of ONE YEAR'S subscription, $1.50, postage included.

We will promptly send specimen copies of the paper to all persons whose addresses may be furnished us.

PRESBYTERIAN NEWS CO.

THE new church, Richmond, Que., will be dedicated next Sabbath, Rev. Prof. Scrimger and Rev. F. C. Dewey, of Montreal, conducting the services. The new building is said to be a commodious and remarkably well appointed place of worship. Under the auditorium—which has a gallery—there is a basement the full size of the building.

On the evening of Tuesday, Oct. 30, the congregation of Chalmers' church, Quebec city, tendered a farewell social to the retiring pastor, Rev. Dr. Mathews, Secretary-elect of the Presbyterian Alliance. The chair was occupied by Robt. Brodie, Esq. and addresses, highly eulogistic of Dr. Mathews' labours in Quebec, were delivered by Rev. Dr. Warden, Prof. Scrimger, Rev. W. B. Clark and Rev. Mr. Barnham. A very handsomely illuminated address was presented by the congregation and another by the Young People's Association, accompanied by a number of handsome gifts to Dr. Mathews and members of his family. Dr. Mathews made suitable reply.

PRESBYTERIANISM IN OTTAWA.

THE Ottawa *Citizen* has been interviewing leading ministers and laymen in the Capital, with a view to obtaining answers to the following queries:—Are Ottawa Protestants church-goers? Will the churches contain them if they go? Are any of them who do not attend kept away because they cannot pay for sittings? Are the poor looked after, so far as their religion is concerned? What churches endeavour to attract that considerable portion of the community not regularly attending any set place? The following is the report of his interviews with some Presbyterian ministers and laymen:—

Rev. Mr. Paxton, of Knox church, said that the seating capacity in his church was about 1,200. The revenue was received from weekly offerings, and the pews were free, although they were appropriated to parties who regularly attended the services. There were very few really poor people in the congregation, almost all of the attendants being capable of contributing something to the church fund. What poor people were in need of assistance were assisted by a fund, under the control of the Session, for the relief of any who may be in distress. He said that from a long experience in the city he was convinced that almost all the poor people either attend some church, or at least claim that they do so. The revenue for his church was derived from the envelope system, and it was found to work well.

Mr. Whitlaw, trustee of St. Paul's Presbyterian church, said: There are about 750 sittings, nearly all being taken up. The pews are not rented, but are apportioned to the attendants. Whether a workman gives much or little, he can get a seat, and there is no preference in any case. There are not many poor in the congregation, almost all being able to contribute something. There are a few people who have to be helped by the congregation. The envelope system is in vogue in this church. Last year the income derived from that source amounted to about $1,850.

Mr. Hugh Allan stated that there were about 700 sittings in the Bank Street church. The revenue is mainly derived from the envelope system. Almost everyone in the congregation can pay something. Although not a wealthy body, there are very few really poor in the congregation. The seats are apportioned. Anybody who announces his intention of attending the church, is immediately provided with a seat. He is simply asked to contribute what he can. If he can afford to give nothing he is still welcome, and has a seat of his own. The man who gives five cents a Sunday gets a seat just as good as the man who gives five dollars a Sunday. The name of each pewholder is placed on the seat.

St. Andrew's Presbyterian church has a warm and earnest supporter in Mr. Peter Larmouth. With his usual affability that gentleman related the following facts to *The Citizen*:—The seating capacity of St. Andrew's is about 900. Every seat is filled, and consequently vacant seats there are none, with the exception of a few in the gallery reserved for strangers. The pews are rented, and an income of $4,000 is derived from the same. It has been found necessary to refuse a large number of applications for sittings. Among the congregation are a great number of what are termed labouring men. Questioned as to the number of poor in the congregation, Mr. Larmouth said: "They are very few; we attend to them and contribute to the support of a great number outside our own congregation."

At the New Edinburgh church there is seating accommodation for 400 persons. The seats are allotted and the revenue is raised from envelope contributions.

Erskine church, Rochesterville, has a seating capacity for 600, with allotted seats and the envelope system.

A prominent gentleman in the Presbyterian communion remarked to *The Citizen* yesterday that among the Presbyterians there were literally no poor. It was in the Anglican and Roman Catholic communions that this class was found. He held that there was not a poor Protestant in Ottawa who, if he chose to attend church, would not have a seat allotted to him, whether he chose to pay anything to the support of the church or not.

HOME MISSIONS AND AUGMENTATION.

ANNUAL CIRCULAR LETTERS.

THE following circular letters in connection with our Home Mission and Augmentation work have been forwarded:—

HOME MISSION FUND.

(*To Ministers*)

MY DEAR SIR,—

As the time is near at hand when Congregations and Missionary Associations make their appropriations to the various Schemes of the Church, permit me to remind you of the increasing demands made upon

THE HOME MISSION FUND.

The Report presented to last General Assembly contains the names of 247 mission fields, or 744 preaching stations under the care of and assisted by the Committee, with a Sabbath attendance of 27,369, and a Communion Roll of 9,714. The stations themselves gave last year for the support of Gospel ordinances the sum of $48,636, showing most conclusively that despite their average poverty, they are giving with praiseworthy liberality for the maintenance of ordinances.

IN MANITOBA AND THE NORTH-WEST

the work done and the prospects for the future are exceedingly encouraging. The appeals made by Dr. Robertson through the press, for both men and means, indicate the vast fields that are opening up for settlement and for ministerial supply.

IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

the mission stations are exceedingly prosperous, and in many cases will soon be self-supporting. A much larger expenditure of money will, however, soon be required to meet the calls that are made from this comparatively new field.

The expenditure of the Committee for the year ending March 31, 1889, will be nearly $50,000 (exclusive of the $28,000 required for augmentation). This amount can easily be reached, if the necessities of the fund are conscientiously placed before congregations by ministers and office bearers, and opportunity taken to state in detail the work that is being done by our self-denying missionaries, in the nearer and more remote mission fields.

Relying on your individual efforts in your own congregation and presbytery to enable the Committee to meet its indebtedness next March,

Believe me, yours very truly,

WM. COCHRANE.

BRANTFORD, *Oct. 31, 1888.*

P.S.—Will you kindly see to having all contributions from your congregation for Home Missions and Augmentation, sent to Dr. Reid, not later than 1st March, 1889.

(*To Presbyteries.*)

Clerk of Presbytery.....

MY DEAR SIR,—

At the meeting of the Executive of the Home Mission Committee held on the 30th of this month, I was directed to issue circulars to presbyteries, specifying the amount assigned to each, to meet the estimates for the year, and to urge very earnestly the claims of the fund upon the liberality of the Church.

After a very careful estimate of the membership and ability of all the presbyteries in the western section of the Church, the sum of $..... was apportioned to the Presbytery of.....for Home Missions. I trust that your Presbytery will, without loss of time, take steps to inform the different congregations and mission stations within the bounds of what is expected of them, in order that at least the amount specified may be raised. The total amount placed in the estimates for the current year for Home Missions was $48,000, but in view of several new grants made to the North-West and elsewhere, at the meeting in October, this amount will be exceeded.

At the present date the fund is not simply exhausted, but $20,000 have been borrowed to pay the salaries due missionaries 30th September last. It is therefore earnestly urged that the contributions of congregations be sent in to Dr. Reid, at the earliest possible date, and that Presbyteries make every effort to call forth the liberality of congregations, so as to meet the increasing demands made upon the funds.

All contributions should be forwarded *not later* than 1st March, 1889.

Yours very truly,

WM. COCHRANE,

Convener Home Mission Com.

BRANTFORD, *Oct. 31, 1888.*

AUGMENTATION FUND.

Clerk of Presbytery.....

MY DEAR SIR,—

At the meeting of the Home Mission Committee in March last, the amounts that had been suggested as desirable contributions from the several Presbyteries in the western section of the Church to the Augmentation Fund, were carefully revised in view of the probable needs of the fund for the current year.

The whole sum required for this year is about $28,000. Of this amount, the Committee think that $..... is a fair share to suggest to the Presbytery of..... and it is earnestly hoped that the Presbytery will use all reasonable effort to secure the raising of this amount from the congregations within its bounds.

Your Presbytery last year contributed to the fund $....., and drew from it $..... for the benefit of weak charges within your bounds.

The Sub-Committee would respectfully urge upon Presbyteries in which there are charges requiring aid, the importance of a thorough consideration of each case before application for a grant is made or renewed.

I am, yours faithfully,

D. J. MACDONNELL,

Convener of Augmentation Sub-Com.

TORONTO.

ROMANISM IN CANADA — ITS PRESENT POSITION AND ATTITUDE.*

BY REV. DR. MACVICAR, PRINCIPAL PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE, MONTREAL.

After a few introductory remarks, Dr. MacVicar said: The attitude of the Romish Church is always the same. Seeing the claims to be unchangeable, she must be held responsible for her past history, however dark and deplorable; her attitude must be defined by the decrees of her councils and bulls and encyclicals of popes.

It is of the utmost importance to understand the legal status of the Church of Rome in Canada. Throughout the Dominion, with the exception of the Province of Quebec, all religious denominations enjoy substantially the same legal status. But in this province the Church of Rome has a conspicuous prominence, being distinctly established by law. This has been brought about by several successive steps. The first step was taken in 1759, at the time of the conquest of the province by Great Britain. The twentieth article of capitulation declares that the Catholic inhabitants of Canada were "granted the free exercise of the Romish religion, the obligation of paying tithes to the priest to depend on the King's pleasure." This, it will be observed, settled only one matter, that of religious toleration, but did not effect any legal establishment of the Church. The next step in that direction was taken in the Treaty of Peace, July 10th, 1763. The clause touching this matter declares that "His Britannic Majesty agrees to grant liberty of the Catholic Religion to the inhabitants of Canada. He will consequently give the most effectual orders that his new Roman Catholic subjects may profess the worship of their religion according to the rites of the Romish Church as far as the laws of Great Britain permit." But the laws of Great Britain did not then establish Romanism or fasten it upon the people in the manner which it now exists in this province, either in Britain or in the colonies.

Still more, the terms of this treaty did not authorise any such establishment; hence its provisions were undeniably far exceeded by the subsequent Act of the British Parliament, 14 Geo. III., cap. 83, which conferred powers on the clergy not contained in the treaty, and finally settled the legal status of the Church. By this settlement, and by subsequent Canadian legislation, the clergy are fully empowered to collect tithes and levy taxes as they may judge necessary for Church purposes.

THE PRINCIPLES OF RELIGIOUS EQUALITY.

In the Imperial Act of 1774 it was stipulated that the old land, for the maintenance of churches, parsonages, and priests, should be restored only with respect to the 81 parishes which then existed. The intention was that the parish system, with its manifestly oppressive exactions, should never extend beyond its existing limits at that time. But this restriction, too, has been set aside, and new bishops of their own will, and in the exercise of their legal powers, erect new parishes, and, with the Legislature of Quebec since 1867 virtually under ecclesiastical control, it is not surprising that any legislation that may be thought necessary for the still firmer establishment of the Church can be readily procured. By this means the liberties of the people are being more and more invaded, and the principle of religious equality in our country is set aside by Romanists being undeniably placed in a position in relation to British law wholly different from that of other creeds.

Government has no right, we hold, to discriminate in this fashion in favour of one set of dogmas and to clothe the teachers of them with wide powers such as those just mentioned. The French people themselves in the exercise of their personal rights and freedom should cast off this intolerable mediæval incubus of tithes and taxes, and support, as they judge proper, the religion of their choice, deliberately decided upon in the light of God's truth and not under compulsion of Acts of Parliament, and we should not only urge them to do so in the interests of our common country and of human freedom, but also aid them in every way in our power to accomplish the national reformation.

THE WEALTH OF THE CHURCH.

As to the income of the Established Church, the main source of revenue may be enumerated in a single sentence. They are tithes; pew rents, fees for sacraments and for special masses for the dead; proceeds of lotteries and of services rendered by nuns as managers of convents, asylums, and hospitals, and as manufacturers and vendors of trinkets, charms, and fetishes; bequests, rents, and interest from capital. It may be safely said that no one can state accurately the aggregate revenue from all these sources, for while the Church denounces secret societies, she practices the utmost secrecy in conducting her own business. Unlike civil governments, banking houses, manufacturing companies, and Protestant denominations, she publishes no statement of revenue and expenditure.

The chief facts regarding tithes may be stated in a few words. They were instituted in Quebec in 1663, and enforced since 1667, a period of more than two centuries. They were not from the first and are not now levied as formerly in France, or in accordance with the requirements of the canon law, which demanded a tenth of all the products of the soil; but were fixed originally at one-thirteenth. This continued to be the law for a time, but it was complained of as oppressive, and consequently the tithe or *dîme* was more carefully defined, and finally restricted by a decree of the Council of State, July 12, 1707, to one-twenty-sixth of certain grains to be harvested, threshed, winnowed, and delivered at the priest's parsonage. It is unnecessary here to specify the kinds of grain referred to, but it may be mentioned as an item of curious information and as illustrative of the watchfulness of the priesthood regarding revenue, that for a long time peas, which were little cultivated by the French people, were classified as vegetables, and as such were free from tithes. By-and-by, however, it was found profitable to grow peas on a large scale, especially upon impoverished clay soils; and the clergy, discovering this was being done, brought the matter before the Legislature, and succeeded in having peas declared to be no longer vegetables, but grain, and therefore subject to tithes.

THE LATEST ESTIMATE.

One of the latest estimates of the entire revenues and wealth of the Church in the Province of Quebec is by the Rev. A. B. Crochet, of this city, in an article published on the 15th ult. in the *Revue de Théologie Pratique*, of Paris. He claims that his figures are from authentic sources. They are substantially as follows:—

"The number of farms under cultivation in the Province is estimated at 300,000. Many of these produce barely enough to give bread to the numerous families who cultivate them. The Province of Quebec produces a total of 31,280,000 bushels of tithable cereals, valued at $18,000,000, and yielding a *dîme*, or tithe, of $700,000. The taxes on families who do not possess land amount to no less than $300,000. The fees for baptisms, marriages, funerals and masses, payments for pew rents and objects of piety, yield not less than $2,000,000. Voluntary gifts received from house to house, legacies, and revenue derived from property of unknown extent held in mortmain, all put together, probably exceed $3,000,000. The taxes for the construction and maintenance of churches, priests' houses, and fabrique schools amount to about $2,000,000. The Romish Church therefore receives as the average annually from the people of Quebec the enormous sum of $8,000,000 for the exclusive ends of her worship, that is to say, for the maintenance of 900 parishes at $8,000 each. This seems incredible. The figures, however, are far from giving a complete idea of the revenues of the Church in our happy Province."

THE CHURCH'S INVESTMENTS.

Mr. Crochet then gives the following inventory of the Church's property:—"In 1759 she received 2,117,000 acres of land, which valuable possession has since been greatly added to by property gained by diplomacy and continual begging, and by the natural increase in the values of certain kinds of real estate. She owns 900 churches, valued at $37,000,000; 900 parsonages, along with the palaces of the cardinal, the archbishops and bishops, valued at $9,000,000; twelve seminaries, worth $600,000; seventeen classical colleges, $850,000; 259 boarding schools and academies, $6,000,000; 800 convents, $4,000,000; sixty-eight hospitals and asylums, $4,000,000—a total of $61,310,000. As to lands, shops, houses and invested capital, it is impossible to reach absolute certainty. We know that some ecclesiastical orders are enormously rich. Catholics themselves declare that the Sulpicians, for example, are richer than the Bank of Montreal, the most powerful institution of the kind in America."

Such is Mr. Crochet's general estimate. It takes no account of several large items and underrates others. Indeed, since he published his article he has been distinctly informed by a distinguished ecclesiastic that the Church is far richer than she is made to appear by his figures.

OTHER ITEMS.

I have no doubt of it. She owns a great part of certain towns and villages which are not mentioned. Jolliette, for example, is valued at one million dollars, the half of which belongs to the Church, and is exempt from municipal taxation, as is the case with all ecclesiastical property. Besides, Mr. Crochet has not been able to report the vast endowments which must exist in order to carry on the array of schools, colleges, convents, hospitals and asylums which he enumerates. He underestimates the value of the grounds and buildings of hospitals and asylums. About two years ago Sister St. Therese, Mother Superior of the Longue Pointe asylum, stated to a representative of the press that the nuns had built that institution with their own funds at a cost of a million dollars, which is one-fourth of the entire amount set down by Mr. Crochet as the value of sixty-eight hospitals and asylums. Then there are the profits realised by such institutions. The Longue Pointe asylum holds a contract from the Quebec Government, under which it receives about $90,000 per annum for the treatment of patients, which we may be certain is not a losing business. And who can ascertain what is gained by convents where the daughters of wealthy, easy-going Protestants are found in hundreds, many of whom become Roman Catholics, and many more extremely tolerant of all manner of superstition?

THE LOTTERY SYSTEM.

In connection with Church revenues it should also be remembered that some of the methods followed are thoroughly corrupting to the hearts and consciences of the people. It is well known that according to the casuistry and ethics of Rome what is wholly immoral in ordinary business may be properly employed in behalf of religion. Hence a wheel of fortune was used for monetary purposes not very long ago within the walls of the unfinished St. Peter's, Montreal. And we had in our city several years ago, under the highest ecclesiastical sanction and patronage, the Grand Lottery of the Sacred Heart, in connection with which tickets were offered for sale, it was said, to the value of millions of dollars, and prizes amounting to over half a million. In St. James street may be seen any day the sign-board of the National Lottery. Nor is the evil confined to this Province. On the 10th ult. one of our daily papers made the following editorial announcement: "Like many other Roman Catholic dioceses, that of London, Ont., has resolved itself into a gambling agency. We have received a package of tickets of a lottery scheme entitled 'Grand Charity Bazaar,' carried on under the patronage and approval of Bishop Walsh, who appears as the giver of the principal prize." This traffic is utterly indefensible. The world is teaching the Church a lesson in this respect; even the secular authorities of civilised nations have, with singular unanimity, pronounced against the gambling by lotteries now homologated as part of the dominant religious system of this Province.

(*To be continued.*)

*A Paper read at the Montreal Christian Conference, furnished by the author for the PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

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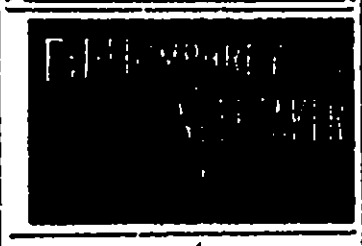

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