

mented wine at the communion. They have no other, and have no idea of any other."

Gavazzi, the Italian evangelist, says: "I have indulged in the expression, *unfermented wine*, for the sake of argument, although to me, as an Italian, the expression imports downright nonsense. In fact, wine is only wine by fermentation, and to speak of unfermented wine is to speak of dry water, of nightly sun, of unelectric lightning." These testimonies may suffice on this point.

If you please, you may further give your readers the following extracts, which will shew to what blasphemous extremes a man may be forced by the logical consequences of the positions objected to. Dr. Fowler, in the New York "Christian Advocate," of which he was editor, is reported to have said in a lecture delivered by him, that if Jesus Christ drank alcoholic wine, He must be "put on trial not as a sot, but as a moderate drinker, who, according to the law of human nature, with so many million illustrations, was possibly saved from becoming an example for sots, by being crucified in early manhood." Also in a pamphlet by the same Dr. Fowler, and published by the National Temperance Society, New York, page 13, it is said: "Jesus Christ is put on trial as a drinking man; for the alcoholic view of wines makes it necessary to say that Jesus is on the side of wine-drinkers. It puts him on trial again, not for His life, but for infinitely more than life, for honour and virtue, and integrity and character, and for all that is of value in His religion."

Of a truth, they still live who revile the Son of God as a wine-bibber because he used wine, and so long as men hold that to taste fermented wine is sinful, the blasphemy will be continued. Surely, Mr. Editor, there is no need for such arguments; why separate brethren by using them? Why repel godly men from co-operation in the temperance cause, by insisting on such extreme views? Why denounce as enemies to the cause, as friends of publicans and sinners, as props of drunkenness, earnest Christian men, because they cannot and will not assent to the wrestling of Scripture, which these positions make absolutely necessary? Surely we have common ground on which to stand, wide enough and strong enough, without weakening the cause of temperance by assuming such indefensible positions.

JOHN LAING.

Dundas, Ont., Jan. 25th, 1881.

### MARRIAGE QUESTION.

MR. EDITOR,—The letter of "L" in your issue of the 14th inst., anent marriage with a deceased wife's sister, more than astonished me. The ignorance of our Church standards and of the action of the last General Assembly respecting the marriage question, the shameless exposure of an "elder of our Church," who is regarded by him as "a central pillar of the congregation with which he is connected," if not the exposure he makes of himself by this letter, are marvellous, astounding, and most humiliating.

Is he not aware that every deacon, elder, and minister, must answer in the affirmative to the following question before he can be ordained or inducted, namely, "Do you believe the Westminster Confession of Faith, as adopted by this Church in the basis of union, to be founded on and agreeable to the Word of God, and in your teaching will you faithfully adhere thereto?" Does he not know that in chap. 24, sec. 4, it is explicitly stated that "the man may not marry any of his wife's kindred nearer in blood than he may of his own, nor the woman of her husband's kindred nearer in blood than of her own?" Thus the Church declares this marriage to be forbidden by the Word of God, and all her office-bearers and ministers say it is forbidden, and that this prohibition is "founded on and agreeable to the Word of God." And yet "L" says, "I am not aware that anyone maintains that such unions are clearly condemned in the Word." Why, the whole Church as a body, and each deacon, elder and minister, in particular, by adopting this clear doctrine I have just quoted from the 24th chapter of the Confession, a doctrine held by the universal Church down to modern, I may say present times, has declared that "such unions are clearly condemned in the Word"—clearly condemned by good and necessary inference which has been ever held to be as valid and as binding as if by positive statement. Oh, the blinding influence which "a central pillar" in a congregation may exert over others, if not over ministers themselves!

"Are we," he asks, "to bring such influence as we can as a Church to bear on our legislation or not?" Does he not know that this question was decided at the last meeting of the Assembly, and that a special committee was appointed for this very purpose? Can he possibly be so ignorant, or does he think he has the right to ignore and thwart, and, if possible, set such action aside? Surely he must entertain some such ideas, or he would not have written as he has done.

But let us look at his arguments. "Men and women," he says, "think for themselves, and such unions will be formed. Is the Church to declare such unions unlawful, or even incestuous?" Yes, men and women think for themselves and act for themselves, and often good men do so. Jacob did so, and had two sisters to wife at the same time. David did so, and committed great sin, and brought down upon himself God's chastening rod; therefore, the Church must alter her standards, change her terms of communion, and relax her discipline. She must abandon what she has ever held as the only rule of faith and practice, and be guided by the example of fallible men, especially when they are central pillars in congregations, such as the one exhibited in this extraordinary letter.

"An elder of our Church and a pillar of the congregation with which he is connected" has married his deceased wife's sister. Now, not to say anything about his conduct in relation to the profession he made and vows he came under at his ordination, consider his conduct in relation to his marriage. I take him to be an intelligent man—one who reads, and is generally well informed. He knew not only the profession he made and the vows he came under when he was ordained, if "L" did not know them; but he knew that such a marriage, in the Dominion, was not legal, and hence the agitation to have it and another, still more offensive, made legal by Act of Parliament. Was he married under the laws of Ontario and by license or certificate? Such a man, it is highly probable, an "elder and a pillar," was not proclaimed "in the congregation with which he is connected." How, then, did he procure the license? Why, in the way in which every other man must obtain it, by making oath and swearing to the following, among other things, namely, "That according to the best of my knowledge and belief there is no affinity, consanguinity, pre-contract, or any lawful cause or legal impediment, to bar or hinder the solemnization of said marriage." I leave it to your readers to characterize such conduct on the part of an "elder of our Church and a central pillar of the congregation with which he is connected." If that congregation has any more such central pillars, allowed to go undisciplined, let them beware lest their moral and spiritual building go to ruins. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." What do his session say; Has the influence of this "central pillar" benumbed their moral perceptions? What do his Presbytery, both with respect to himself and the minister who married him, say? Are they, too, morally paralyzed? Look at the example of such a one flaunted by this letter in the face of the whole Church. How far-reaching, how damaging to morals? Let these Church courts arise to their duty and purge the Church of such sin and scandal. For, if elders and ministers are allowed to play fast and loose with their ordination vows, with the sanctity of an oath, and make little of immoral conduct, the Church will inevitably be corrupted or divided.

BETA.

### PRINCE ALBERT MISSION.

Dr. Cochrane has received the following letter from Mr. Sieveright. Although primarily intended for the Home Mission Committee, we are sure it will interest all our readers.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have now visited all the Presbyterian stations in this section of country, and submit for the consideration of your Committee, a brief but comprehensive report. They are seven in number.

#### 1. PRINCE ALBERT

is the first in importance. Presbyterian population, forty-two families, not including fourteen Cree families, who have not removed to the Indian reserve. Two things are essential to future progress—the erection of a church and manse, and having two services every Sabbath. The attendance, considering the cold, uncomfortable building, is encouraging—frequently over one hundred. The Foreign Mission Committee have given two acres as church property on the front of their lot, and ten acres farther back

as a glebe. A building committee have been appointed, and a vigorous effort will be put forth to erect suitable buildings. The era of log buildings is nearly at an end. Several brick edifices have been erected, and that will likely be the future material. Building operations cost at least twice as much as in Ontario. Without outside aid it will be impossible to complete buildings necessary to hold our own as a denomination. Prince Albert is on the border-land of civilization. The outcries of Pagan Sioux, celebrating their religious rites, often intermingle with the sounds of Christian praise and prayer.

#### 2. M'BETH'S,

down the river, comprises eighteen families—thirteen Presbyterian. Three more intend to settle on their claims in the spring. The nearest family is five miles—the farthest, fifteen. A belt of firs four miles long intervenes. Beyond, a settlement has been begun never yet visited by any minister. Some progress has (near the forks of the river) already been made in the McBeth settlement for the erection of a place of worship.

#### 3. FLETT'S,

twenty-two miles south, near the forks of the road where the Winnipeg and Carlton trails meet. It contains seventeen families—all Presbyterian. Four more to settle in the spring. A building committee has been appointed, and a site given for a church and burying-ground.

#### 4. RED DEER HILL,

twelve miles south. Four Presbyterian families; nine of other denominations.

#### 5. RIDGE,

twelve miles south-west. Eleven Presbyterian families; twenty of other denominations. A church was erected in this settlement during the ministry of Rev. H. McKellar. It was resolved that year to remove it to a more central locality. No agreement could be arrived at as to the site. The timber now lies useless for building purposes, in several localities—a practical illustration of the folly of trying to bring a church to every man's door. There is hope of a new edifice even here.

#### 6. MINER'S,

fourteen miles west. Eleven Presbyterian families. Indian element predominates.

#### 7. CARROT RIVER,

forty miles south-east by winter trail, about fifty by the summer one. The only houses the whole way are at the Indian reserve, on the bank of the South Saskatchewan, which must be crossed going to Carrot River. A journey there alone is by no means unattended with danger. The shafts of my sleigh broke, about half-way in the wilderness. After kindling a fire, and spending three hours in the vain attempt to repair them, there was no resource left but to walk with my horse fourteen miles, over an unknown trail, ignorant whether I would land at Fort Lacorne or the place I was anxious to reach—the thermometer forty degrees below zero. I was fortunate to arrive at the place of my destination, at four o'clock in the morning. That evening I preached to an audience of nineteen persons, including one Cree. The present statistics are eight families, and twenty-eight young men who have taken up claims; nearly all Presbyterians. It is one of the most fertile spots in the North-West. Other settlements near—Carrot River, Pai-Wah-Nah, Lacorne and Stony Creek.

It is plain one missionary cannot do anything like efficient work, in a field so extensive, among Presbyterian families scattered over a region of ninety miles long and twenty broad. All these stations are situated in tracts of land, excellent in quality, and increasing rapidly in population. There has been no preaching at Carrot River, the Ridge, or Miner's. Even with this abridgment of his labours, the health of the last missionary has been seriously impaired by excessive work. There are only two ways of it, either supply a sufficient force of missionaries to overtake the work, or else abandon half the stations, as has been practically done for some time past, and allow denominations more zealous to occupy the field. At least two additional labourers are needed. Who can doubt the ability and willingness of the Presbyterian Church in Canada to enter the wide doors of usefulness God in His providence has thrown open to it in the North-West?

JAMES SIEVERIGHT.

THE State trials in Ireland resulted in a disagreement of the jury.