

uncomfortable. Many are weak and sickly, and the church is hot and close. Yet amidst all this uneasiness and intense longing for a breath of fresh air the good man insists on continuing his discourse, until, fairly done out, he at last sets his captives free greatly both to their physical and spiritual enjoyment. It is really a mystery to most persons how ministers fail to see the utter uselessness of prolonging the services after the congregation has become listless."

But the grievance which seems to trouble our correspondent more than any other is "fencing the table." This process he characterizes as "useless," "uninteresting," "wearisome," "illogical," "unscriptural," "a relic of a by-gone age," tending to the propagation of false views and in this way keeping the young from church work and church fellowship," and "begetting and fostering on the part of members a sense of hypocrisy." Now, we have no special liking for the term "fencing the table." It is not very elegant, neither is it properly descriptive of the work to which it is applied. Very few ministers use the expression. In the course of twenty years we have heard it but once or twice from the pulpit. But it is not the mere name that our friend finds fault with; it is the thing that the name represents. It is the appeal to the conscience of members as to their worthiness that he objects to; and he seems to think it a great pity that the ranks of the Presbyterian Church should be kept thin by any unnecessary distinctions between the clean and the unclean. Now, though very few ministers in our day *speak of* fencing the table we think they all *do it*, each in his own way and at his own time. It may be on the Communion Sabbath; it may be shortly before it, or it may be at some other time. Still we are confident that the work is done to a greater or less extent by all. Does not every faithful minister of the gospel try to get his hearers to understand what it is to be a Christian? And what is this but instructing them as to what is meant by making a profession of religion? And is not that fencing the Lord's table? There is a wrong view which brings people to the table who ought not to be there, as well as a wrong view which keeps back those who ought to be there. Happy are they who are free from both of these. Is it not the duty of ministers to instruct their people so that all these false views may be removed? Surely that would not be a model minister who would allow all and sundry to come forward and make a false profession or a true one, just as it might happen, without a word of warning. Passing an examination before the session does not make a candidate *worthy*, neither is worthiness secured by the fact of previous membership. And is it not right that people should be informed of this and given to understand that their worthiness is still a matter between God and their consciences? Our correspondent finds fault with ministers for placing people's fitness for heaven and their worthiness to sit at the Lord's table on the same basis. We think he has misunderstood them. It is not *fitness* for heaven, but the *title to* heaven, that rests on the same basis as worthiness to sit at the Lord's table. It is the believer in Christ that is qualified to sit at His table; and the believer has had his sins forgiven through the

merits of the Atonement and has become a partaker of Christ's righteousness through union to Him by faith. It is in this that he finds both his worthiness to sit at the Lord's table and his title to heaven. It is quite true that the worthy partaker is, as our correspondent says, "penitent," "seeking for more grace," and "trying to keep the commandments," but he does not find his worthiness in any of these things. It is the preaching of the gospel in all its freeness and fulness that will remove "wrong views of the Lord's Supper."

METHODISM AND THE YOUNG.

Whereas the discipline, page 17, makes special provision for the spiritual oversight of the young, and directs that they shall be gathered into classes under suitable leaders. This quarterly meeting of Dorchester street Church, Montreal, requests the General Conference: (I.) To exclude from the children's fund tax all young persons under fifteen years of age. (II.) That a separate column shall be prepared in the membership schedule in which this class of members shall be entered. (III.) That the following clause shall be added to section B, page 18, "of the relations of baptized children to the Church":—"Clause 7. When years of intelligence have been reached—say ten or twelve—let young people 'suitably cultured and spiritually desirous' be formally recognized by the Church as members." (IV.) That the form as now contained in the discipline be simplified and adapted to the capacity of the candidates.

That this Quarterly Meeting requests the General Conference to enact that special prominence shall be given at each District Meeting to the enquiry, "Have the provisions of the discipline on pages 17 and 18 been faithfully carried out during the year?"

It is with feelings of great thankfulness and hope that we clip the above resolution of the Montreal Conference. In this direction we look for the abatement of the evil so much dwelt upon in the report presented at last Assembly in reference to the large number of our young people who do not make a profession of attachment to the Saviour. The fact must be admitted that our practice is far behind our theory. Baptized children of professing Christians *are* members of the Church, and they should be "*recognized*" and treated as such. Our Methodist brethren do well in this matter, and they will reap the happy fruits. It is a mistake into which good, earnest souls are very apt to fall, to look upon all children as *unconverted* and outside of Christ's Church, until they are old enough to reflect upon their own condition, discern the work of God within them, and give credible evidence of their conversion. Thus they confound conversion with a consciousness of an interest in Christ, and make the new life begin with the hour of *conscious* acceptance of the Saviour, or surrender of the heart to Him. It is, however, matter of experience as well as of revelation, that in the kingdom of God there are little children. Nay more, we have every reason to believe that the children of Christian parents, properly trained in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, are at a very early period "*led by the Spirit of God,*" and are his children. What is needed in their case is not special services for conversion, but the steady appliance of ordinary means in the use of which these children of God may grow up in a conscious experience of His "*love constraining*" them to a holy life. We want, what the Bible gives us, an every day religion which reaches to "*whatsoever ye do, whether ye eat or drink,*" etc., not a religion based on a mere *feeling* that we have been converted at a particular time and in a particular manner by *special* instrumentalities. It is no imaginary evil consequence of these latter views that they lead our young

people to say, "I am not a Christian, therefore not obliged to live a holy life; and I am waiting and hoping to be converted some day, when a revival breaks out in our town."

DESTROYING AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS.

IN our day we are familiar with all sorts of burglarious attempts. But the newest thing out in this line is the wholesale destruction of agricultural implements in some of the Western States. This is surely Socialism run mad. It is the most short-sighted and most demoniacal conduct possible. It is done at the instigation of men whose refusal to labour on fair terms has originated the ingenuity, skill and enterprise displayed in the wonderful variety of such implements. Had labour not demanded too much, we are certain that the invention of such implements would not have taken place. But the despotism of labour has led to invention and discovery, and now labour seeks to do a work of miserable destruction in order to accomplish its own selfish ends. We trust that these enemies of civilization will meet with their desert. They may succeed in damaging individual farmers, but they may as well try to stem the Niagara as stay the triumphant advance of scientific invention.

PRESBYTERY OF TORONTO.—This Presbytery met in the usual place on the 2nd current, and transacted the following items of business. Rev. Dr. Robb was appointed Moderator for the next twelve months, and took the chair accordingly. Agreeably to leave given by the General Assembly, Rev. Dr. J. Collins was received as a minister, and Rev. S. R. Warrander as a probationer, of the Church. The Assembly having granted leave to the Presbytery to take Mr. David Fotheringham on public probationary trials for license, Rev. E. D. McLaren and the Clerk were appointed a committee to assign him subjects for trial discourses. Revs. J. Carmichael of King, A. Gilray and W. Frizzell were appointed a committee to assign subjects for discourses or essays to such theological students as are resident within the bounds; said discourses or essays to be given before the re-opening of Knox College. Messrs. John Wilkie, M.A.; Joseph McCoy, M.A.; Francis R. Beattie, M.A.; and John Johnstone, all of them theological students who had finished their course of study, were taken on public trials for license; and after being carefully examined on the usual subjects, and also having given the various discourses required of them to the satisfaction of the Presbytery, they were suitably addressed by the Moderator, and duly licensed to preach the gospel. Attention was called to the fact that since last meeting the Senate of Hanover College, in the State of Indiana, had conferred the degree of Doctor of Divinity on Rev. Professor Gregg; and it was agreed to record the gratification of the Presbytery with the step thus taken. A paper was read from the congregation of Sutton, setting forth the number of its families and communicants, guaranteeing a stipend of \$500 together with a manse and five acres of glebe, and asking the Presbytery to apply on their behalf to the Assembly's Home Mission Committee for a supplement of \$200 in the meantime, that so they may proceed to the calling of a minister as soon as possible. After some consideration, it was agreed to apply on their behalf for a supplement of \$150. It was stated on behalf of Mr. A. F. Ballantyne, M.A., theological student, that he wishes a transfer to the new Presbytery of Lanark and Renfrew, and the Clerk was instructed to transfer him accordingly. Considerable time was given to certain matters brought up from the congregations of Boston Church, Esquesing, and Knox Church, Milton. A finding was adopted thereanent, and a committee was appointed consisting of the Moderator (Convener), Rev. Dr. Topp, Rev. J. Alexander, Rev. D. Mitchell, Mr. T. W. Taylor and Mr. Hugh McKay, to enquire into the condition of these congregations, and especially as to the grounds of their financial shortcomings. Other items of business were brought up and disposed of, but they do not call for public notice. The next ordinary meeting was appointed to be held in the usual place on the first Tuesday of September, at 11 a.m.—R. MONTEATH, Pres. Clerk.