

EDITORIAL.

The church of God is of divine origin; both Jewish and Christian. But the membership is human. God founded the first preparatory to the second. Jerusalem and its Temple stood in symbol, type and prophecy, the precursor of the New Testament church. Much of what is said in Old Testament prophecy concerning Jerusalem and the Temple, has its principal and spiritual significance centred in the New Testament institution. The constitution of the New Testament church is all of God. It is therefore unlike any earthly establishment, and needs to borrow nothing from human wisdom to make it more complete. Its final consummation is set forth in Scripture teaching as the crowning glory of all Jehovah's work. John the Apostle had a glowing picture of it in its pristine beauty after the corrupt accretions of the ages were removed, as the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven; the Bride—the Lamb's wife—prepared as a bride to meet the bridegroom. Such is the picture of the latter-day New Testament church, and such it was in the beginning. But human innovations have put many spots and blemishes on the divine original. But before the Bridegroom comes to receive her, every spot and blemish, yea, and the wrinkles of them, are to be erased; and he will present it to himself a glorious ch. ch. To this perfect type all denominationalism should converge. Christianity and church-anity to-day are not harmonious. It will be well for christianity when church-anity gets back to its *Genesis*. As to its New Testament meaning almost all scholars are agreed, however variant may be their ecclesiastical connections and practices. We shall give a brief summary of its contents and implications, that is of the New Testament church, and in doing so we will subjoin some extracts from a paper written by Rev. Lemuel Moss, D. D.:

First. Genesis and Constituents of the Church.—The origin and continued life of the Church is in Jesus Christ. By the attraction of His grace men are gathered about Him as the great spiritual magnet, who said that if He were "lifted up" He would "draw all men to Himself." Hence the Church is composed of those who by Him are separated, set apart, sanctified, "called out," as the word *ecclesia* literally signifies, the elect, or selected ones, the elite, who show the spirit and character of Christ. Personal union with Christ is the first and essential prerequisite in Church building. Every stone is a living spiritual stone. The ordinances of the Church are without significance or value except to those who are already regenerate in heart and are in vital oneness with Christ.

Second. Organization of the Church.—Organization is the product of life, and not antecedent to it. The Church is thus organized after the manner of a living organism, and not after the manner of an inorganic machine. The organs or officers of the Church, of whatever sort, must grow out of the Church, like the limbs from the body, to serve it and not to dominate it. In the New Testament Church there was no hierarchy, or priesthood, or ruling eldership, distinct from the common membership and over it in authority. Whatever officers there were, as bishops, elders, pastors, deacons, were chosen or appointed for instruction, oversight, evangelization, various forms of ministrations; not to lord it over God's people, but to lead them and be examples to them. As

Bishop Lightfoot, the eminent English scholar and prelate, says: "The only priests under the Gospel, designated as such in the New Testament, are the saints, the members of the Christian brotherhood." The Church, therefore, is a company of men and women who are spiritual equals.

Third. The Unity of the Church.—This also is spiritual, after the analogy of the oneness between God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son. The New Testament Churches were locally distinct, but spiritually one. There was no ecclesiastical organization that included the Churches of Judea, Asia Minor, Greece, Italy, but there was unity of belief, of purpose, of obedience to Christ. Each member of a local church felt himself to be a member of the universal church; but the local church managed its own affairs in its own way, under the guidance of the apostles while living, and afterwards according to the teaching of the apostolic writings. The present divisions of Christianity have come through departure from the original spiritual unity and the attempt to accomplish by ecclesiastical machinery what can only be secured by a return to the primitive conditions. Complete restoration to Christ will bring complete concord and unity among all his disciples.

Fourth. The Authority of the Church.—In a most important sense the Church has no authority of legislation and can only administer the laws of its Head and Lord. It cannot even determine the conditions of membership in its own body, but can only declare the terms which have been fixed by Jesus Christ. The assumption by the Church of the power to legislate, to decree rites and ceremonies, to change ordinances, to compromise controversies, has been the source of hurtful schisms, of gross wrongs, of cruel persecutions. The authority of the Church is solely the authority of the truth entrusted to her, which she is to hold aloft in the lives of all her members and in her constant teaching. The New Testament is the statute book of the Church. The alliance of the Church with the State and all the evils springing from it and the secular organization of the Church itself flow from her unwarranted assumption of supreme authority.

Fifth. The Functions or Offices of the Church.—These are two-fold—the edification of the membership of the church and the evangelization of the world. The local church is the unit of evangelizing forces. It is to carry the spirit and motives of the gospel into all the activities of life throughout the community and, so far as possible, throughout the world—into the homes, the business, the culture, the literature, the social and political affairs of all men. The church is to be fed and trained by its pastors, that it may minister to others, edification and evangelization thus acting and re-acting to the perfection of both. And this requires the indwelling life of the Holy Spirit. Only his constant presence can make an efficient church.

Sixth. The Destiny of the Church.—Christ has declared that the gates of destruction shall never prevail against his church. He has not only destined it to glorious victory, but to spotless perfection and eternal blessedness. The revealed purposes of God underlie the assurances of scripture in this regard. Christ shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied. He shall bring many sons into glory. The Church is called the Bride of Christ, and at the last he shall "present to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing." These are "they that have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

News of the Churches.

ELGIN.

Pastor Davidson has been holding special services at Goshen, with good success. A large number have manifested a desire for salvation, and several have already been baptized and added to the church.

THE RANGE.

Bro. Patterson is engaged in revival work in this part of the Second Grand Lake field. The meetings have been marked with spiritual power, resulting in a general quickening of the church members. Several new voices are also being heard, seeking their way into the kingdom.

TOBIQUE VALLEY.

The new house of worship recently erected here was opened on Christmas day. Bro. D. F. Millin, who has been stationed on this field during the last year, writes encouragingly of the prospects for the coming season. A lively interest is manifested by the church members in every good word and work.

CARDIGAN.

Elder P. O. Rees, who has given a portion of his time during the past year to this church, reports that there are but twenty-nine church members resident in the field. With failing health and increasing infirmities of body, he has still persevered in active ministerial labors. His circumstances have been most trying. Speaking of these in his last report, he adds: "But the Lord has been better to me than my fears. I did the best I could and trusted the Lord for a living. I am faring pretty poorly, but I hope to get through the winter and aid my brethren in the work if life is spared."

The Board has sent our brother twenty-five dollars; it should have been twice that amount but our circumstances would not permit it.

BUCTOCHE, KENT CO.

Mr. R. Barry Smith, of Moncton, has engaged with this field, and prospects seem more hopeful. Good congregations attend the preaching of the word. The New Brunswick Convention Board continues its grant during the coming year.

CHIPMAN STATION.

On the evening of December 26th, the children of this Sunday-school gave a Christmas concert, realizing \$19.50. We have a new church building in course of erection, which when completed, will be one of the attractions of the village. The pastor has to acknowledge a recent donation visit which makes winter seem bright and sunny. The parsonage was filled with cheery friends, whose visit will be remembered with gratitude.

HAVELOCK (BUTTERNUT RIDGE.)

On December 11th, baptized eleven, with the work still going on. Pray for us. On Xmas eve the children of the Sunday-school were entertained. A large Christmas tree was placed in the church, and this, through the kindness of many friends of the school, was loaded down with presents, not one being forgotten out of a company of over eighty children, besides teachers.

We expect the Hon. F. Emerson, of Sackville, and Rev. Mr. Lawson, of Halifax, with us on December 23rd, for the purpose of addressing our young people and seeking to interest them in Christian work. This is very necessary at the present time, in view of the many who have lately put on Christ in baptism.