

"The Goodwill of Him that dwelt in the bush be with us."

JUNE.

1897.

CHURCH AND HOME



The Magazine of the Presbytery of St. John

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CHURCH and HOME

The Magazine of the Presbytery of St. John.

Vol. II.

ST. JOHN, N. B., JUNE, 1897.

No. 6

In times of difficulty and trial not only is it necessary that we obtain help, but it is important whence it comes. There is help worse than useless, for it relieves one difficulty by forming a greater. In the midst of trial we may obtain release, but our freedom may be gained at the expense of our manhood. The captive may save himself by the betrayal of his associates, but he forfeits the respect of all honourable men.

The cry of the human heart is for help; there are different directions in which it may be found. Take, for example, when the heart is desolate from the loss of friends. We may try to forget our sorrow by plunging into excess of enjoyment, and seek consolation amid gaiety and variety; or we may, by increased kindness and usefulness, lose ourselves in the service of others.

Difficulties may be in the path of duty. We may overcome by resolutely setting ourselves to do the right, or we may find a selfish ease by giving up and sitting in idleness. There is a help that makes us nobler, truer and better, that strengthens us to obey the truth at whatever cost to ourselves; and there is a help that debases by suggesting another way of escape. Is not this the nobility of Jesus' life? In all things He considered the will of God, and stead-

fastly obeyed. This greatness may be ours. Character is more than comfort; manliness is more than money; honour is more than safety. If we seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, in all things, we shall be more than conquerors through Him who loved us, and died to save us. *

Divided as the visible Church is into many branches, there is always in our midst a witness to its essential unity. The hymn books just issued, and which will soon be used from Sabbath to Sabbath in our churches, testify that the gifts of the Spirit are not limited, but that to men of widely different creeds it has been given to voice the aspirations and adoration of mankind, and to strike chords which find an echo in every believer's heart. In our new Hymnal we find "Rock of Ages," written by Toplady, who was a severe Calvinist. The beautiful hymns of Faber, a Roman Catholic, find an honoured place not only in our collection but in those of every Protestant church. Watts and Wesley, Keble and Bonar, all "sing to one clear harp in divers tones." Most wonderful of all, the favourite hymn, "Nearer my God to Thee," written by a Unitarian, can yet express the longing desire of those to whom the creed of the au-

thor was anathema. Surely the service of praise we use teaches us the Catholicity of the grace of God—the Church's unity in diversity. The thought should teach us that charity which never faileth, and lead us to recognise that those not of our own communion may be also of Christ. It is related of Michael Angelo that, while at work, he fastened a lighted candle to his artist cap, so that no shadow of himself might fall upon his work. Would that all of us had such candles. Too often the shadows we see are but the shadows of ourselves, and are prejudices. These hide from us the real beauty which otherwise we should see, and which we ought to see.

In their report just presented to the General Assembly, the Committee of Church Life and Work state that the prayer meeting service is not being taken advantage of as it should. In many cases prayer meetings seem to be dying a natural death, as they are generally attended only by a few women, even in large congregations. The office-bearers are conspicuous by their absence at this weekly gathering, and this may be taken as a good indication that somehow the prayer meeting does not now meet a felt need. Is life too fast and crowded that the people cannot find time for a church meeting during the week, or are the usual exercises at these meetings too stale? We wot not have the boldness to answer our own question but leave it to the consideration of the fathers

and leaders in our Church, in the hope that they will be able soon to suggest some remedy for the evil.

Organized Hypocrisy.

It is perhaps not surprising that hypocrisy should at all times, and in all countries, have proved a paying concern. Its very prevalence is a tribute to the universality of the religious principle in mankind. Men instinctively recognise that a man who lives, in the fear of God and strives to order his life after God's law, is one to be trusted and honoured. No doubt the argument is sound. If you are not going to place reliance upon a professed follower of the Divine Exemplar, where will you find one with a better title to regard? Little wonder, therefore, that knaves and rogues assume the garb and outward aspect of religion, and pray, like the Pharisees of old, at the corner of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily their cloaks cover a multitude of sins. They walk in pleasant places; the Church flatters them, the minister dines with them; their fellow-citizens vote them into high office; and yet all the time they are only masquerading under the guise of devotion, and playing on the religious feelings of their fellows. Whited sepulchres they were truly called. Fair to see outwardly, but inwardly full of dry bones and wickedness.

Despite the innumerable disclosures which take place, the trade of hypocrisy flourishes with undimin-

ished success. It matters not whether a man be of any colour or no colour, whether he comes without credentials or with them; whether he sings, preaches, or simply looks unutterable things—if, only, he comes with the accent of piety, and a tongue dropping the current cant of religion, he will find plenty of dupes to receive him with open arms. Nor does it do, in however mild or deprecatory a tone, to hint that a little enquiry would not be out of place, or that there is no harm in being careful. Who does not know the indignant chorus with which these maxims of worldly wisdom is received? What! distrust that dear, good man, who prays so beautifully, or preaches so affectingly, or gives so much to the church and to charities—the very thought is treason to religion. Perhaps some day the idol is broken, and his true character is revealed. Then you think, poor man, that surely the burnt child will dread the fire. But no! heads are shaken; there is a querulous cry from the victims, a few cursory remarks on the depravity of human nature, and then they are quite ready to be taken in and done for again by the next hypocritical rogue who happens to pass by.

We do not wish for one moment to insinuate that all who make a public exhibition of their devotion to religion are necessarily hypocrites. But we do wish to bring home the fact that many good people are criminally weak in this matter. They lay far too much stress on the pre-

sence or absence of those outward and visible acts which are so easily imitated, and ignore altogether other and more vital features. It is an easy thing to go to church regularly, to be a Sunday School teacher, to be a frequent attender and supporter of meetings in aid of religious and charitable schemes, and so forth. Nor is it difficult to give the necessary flavour of piety to conversation, so successfully indeed that the man ends by not only deceiving others but no less himself. Then if he is but wealthy, his riches will cover a multitude of sins. He may, if he will, become a little pope in the congregation to which he does the honour of belonging. Before the golden image which is so set up all will bow down to the ground, and with bated breath and whispering humbleness, wait the great man's pleasure. Yet all the time the profession may be a fraud and a lie. The crash comes, the ruin overwhelms the innocent with the guilty. Such is the history oftentimes repeated which church disclosures continually unfold to the world. It would not be amiss if Christian people generally laid less stress on public professions, and looked with a kindlier eye on those who, without making a parade of the externals of religion, may yet be true followers of Christ.

Rev. D. J. Fraser has returned from a pleasant vacation spent in and around Boston. His congregation is very pleased to welcome him back.

The Presbytery of St. John met in St. John's Church, Moncton, on Friday, June 4th, for the purpose of ordaining Mr. D. C. McIntosh, who is to take charge of Grand Bay and Jerusalem ordained missionary charge. There was a large congregation present and the service was a most interesting one. Rev J. M. Robinson acted as Moderator and constituted the Presbytery. There were also present Rev. Jas. Ross and the Clerk. After the usual formalities Rev. W. W. Rainnie conducted public worship, preaching from 1 Chron. 12 : 32. Thereafter Mr. Robinson put the questions set forth in the Formula, and satisfactory answers having been returned by Mr. McIntosh, Mr Robinson engaged in prayer, and by the laying on of hands Mr. McIntosh was solemnly set apart and ordained as a minister of the Gospel. The Moderator then welcomed the newly ordained missionary, and with the other members present gave him the right hand of fellowship. Mr. Robinson then gave an instructive and interesting address to the minister reminding him of the duties, privileges and responsibilities of his new position. Rev. Jas. Ross then addressed the congregation, giving a graphic and interesting account of the field and the work which had to be done there. The meeting was then brought to a close in the usual manner, Mr. McIntosh pronouncing the benediction.

The Woman's Home Missionary Society of St. John's Church has agreed to raise the sum of \$150, which is to go to the support of ordinances in the field where Mr. McIntosh will labour. Mr. Ross, on behalf of the Presbytery, thanked the Society and the congregation for their deep interest in Home Mission matters, and their generous contribution for the carrying on of the work within the bounds. At the close of the ordin-

ation service Mr. McIntosh was introduced to the members of the Society, and received many heartfelt good wishes for his success in the work to which he has dedicated himself.

The Presbytery of St. John met in Riverside, Albert Co., on the evening of the 7th, for the purpose of ordaining Mr. A. H. Foster to the ministry of the Church. A large congregation assembled. Rev. Jas. Ross presided. Rev. A. S. Morton preached a very appropriate sermon, and addressed the minister in a very sympathetic manner. Rev. J. D. McKay, Rev. A. Camben of the Methodist Church, and Rev. Mr. Caldwell of the Baptist Church, addressed words of counsel and encouragement to the congregation. Mr. Foster has courageously faced the difficulties which lay before him. May he have a large blessing from the Great Shepherd Himself.

The Presbytery of St. John met in St. Paul's Church, Fredericton, on the evening of the 9th, for the purpose of ordaining Mr. A. D. Archibald to the ministry. The congregation was very large for a week evening. Rev. W. Ross, Prince William, preached a very pointed and excellent discourse of an extremely practical character. Rev. J. A. McLean presided, and addressed the minister in an address of good common sense. Rev. James Ross spoke to the congregation. St. Paul's Church is to be congratulated as it has another minister and a large mission field included in its sphere of help and sympathy. St. Paul's Church is exercising increasing liberality towards the Schemes of the Church. The influence will widen and other congregations will also brush up a bit.

Shediac.

The Presbytery of St. John met in the Presbyterian Church, Shediac, on Thursday, June 3rd, for the purpose of ordaining the Rev. Edwin Smith, B. A. who takes charge of Shediac and Scotch Settlement, as an ordained missionary. The church was nicely decorated with flowers in honour of the occasion. Rev. J. S. Sutherland of Sussex acted as Moderator and Rev. J. D. MacKay was appointed clerk pro tem. After Presbytery had been constituted, Rev. J. A. McLean of Springfield, conducted public worship, preaching from Prov 8: 4. The usual questions were then put, after which Mr. Sutherland engaged in prayer, during which by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, Mr. Smith was solemnly set apart to the office of the ministry. The newly ordained missionary was then suitably addressed by Mr. Sutherland on his duties and responsibilities, while Rev. R. G. Vans of Buctouche spoke words of counsel and gave sound advice to the people regarding their duties.

Mr. Smith is no novice in the work, having already during his college career done excellent work in the mission fields of the Maritime Provinces, and also of the Canadian North West. He spent some part of his course in attendance at Manitoba College while working in the mission fields out there. Shediac is to be congratulated on having secured his services, and the best wishes of CHURCH AND HOME are extended to the congregation for their prosperity and welfare under his ministrations.

New Maryland and Hanwell are two stations recently opened, and our student reports that the people are manifesting a deep interest in the services.

Fredericton.

St. Paul's Church has generously given its minister, Rev. Willard Macdonald, two months holidays to enable him to see the Jubilee celebrations in the mother country. Last week St. Paul's held its annual congregational meeting. The following were elected Trustees: Julius L. Inches, James R. Howie, Geo. F. Gregory, Willard Kitchen, Z. R. Everett, H. H. Pitts, J. F. McMurray, T. G. Logie, James Hodge, Frank Morrison, Walter McFarlane and James D. McKay. The year just passed has been a successful and prosperous one. \$750 have been spent on repairs to the old kirk. The receipts were \$3,338.81, and the disbursements \$3,811.14, this includes the items spent on repairs. CHURCH AND HOME extends best wishes to St. Paul's and its genial pastor for future success and ever increasing usefulness.

St. Stephen's Church, St. John, held its annual meeting for the election of Trustees, on June 2nd. The following were chosen to fill that position for the ensuing year: Messrs. James Mowat, Dr. Murray McLaren, Alexander Jardine, Struan Robertson, David A. Sinclair, James Collins, John Johnston, James Wilson and John P. MacIntyre.

The total revenue for congregational purposes was \$3,500, and the expenditure \$3,432.30, leaving a balance on hand of \$67.70. All salaries have been paid in full, and a reduction of \$592.93, has been made on the church indebtedness. The building has been thoroughly cleaned and renovated under the supervision of the Ladies' Society, and the Willing Workers have made donations to the Choir Funds. A collection of \$154.29, was taken up for the Indian Famine Fund, and a donation of \$100 was made to Rev. W. W.

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During the year, besides what has been raised for strictly congregational purposes, the following amounts have been raised by various societies: Willing Workers \$430.85, Ladies' Society \$172.73, W. H. M. Society \$43, Dorcas Society \$35.03, Christian Endeavour \$79.04, Schemes of the Church \$220, W. F. M. S. \$100, Sunday School \$154, Bible Society \$40, Mission Band \$22.95. These amount to \$1,302.60, making a grand total for all purposes of \$4,802.60.

This is a very good showing for a congregation that has been vacant for half the year reported upon, and speaks well for the spirit of loyalty which animates the members. CHURCH AND HOME heartily congratulates St. Stephen's on its splendid condition, and wishes it all success and prosperity under its new pastor. May he be even more successful than his honoured predecessor.

CHURCH AND HOME regrets to learn of the continued illness of Rev. A. W. Mahon, of Greenock Church, St. Andrews. It extends sympathy to him in his ill health, and trusts to hear soon of his complete recovery and restoration to his wonted duties among his attached people.

A junior choir has been started in Fairville. The membership at the outset is thirty-two.

There will be, in the course of a week or two, as many as six new stations opened within the bounds.

Mr. Baird has opened up two new preaching stations—Salmon River and Ortonville—and proposes to work them in connection with Grand Falls.

Golden Grove and Loch Lomond are to be opened and supplied by a catechist. Mr. Harry Sedgewick, nephew of Dr. Sedgewick of Tata-magouch, is expected to take charge of this mission.

A missionary meeting was held in the Presbyterian Church, Glassville, on the evening of the 7th ult. The programme consisted of singing, recitations and dialogues. The singing by a band of little girls and boys was much appreciated. The attendance was good, the entertainment a decided success, and greatly enjoyed by all present. The receipts of the evening amounted to \$10, and is in aid of the W. F. M. S.

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Reverence in Worship.

“The Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before Him.”

God's people of old seem to have felt that silence was an essential feature of the worship of the Lord. The holy temple separated from the din of the busy world by walls and courts and terraces, its lofty columns wrapped in a mantle of silence, was God's home, and in stillness must the worshipper adore Him. Then when the voice of the Psalm-singers was raised it would breathe to the waiting souls the spirit of separateness from things common and unclean; it would breathe the beauty of holiness upon them.

So the silence of the Sabbath day, and especially the stillness of the Lord's house before service, does much to prepare our hearts for consecrated worship. That stillness in the Lord's house, hallowed by meditation and prayer, breathes upon the soul the sense of the beauty of holiness.

It must always be matter of keen regret to God's people that so often the stillness of His house on the Sabbath day is broken in upon. In the winter the assembling worshippers gather around the stove or register to take off the cold of their walk or drive, and too quickly the quiet friendly greeting becomes a flippant remark, or a piece of gossip. For them the stillness of the holy temple is gone, and worse still it is rudely driven from those who would meditate and pray.

Even in the summer things do not improve much, for the people assemble on the doorstep of the church or near by, and who can control the word or the laugh?

We have known the meditation of

the pew and pulpit to be rudely vanished by coarse laughter floating in by the door and window. Then when service begins the people come in, the last piece of news still clinging sweetly to their mind, the unhalloved smile still lingering on the face. Then how easy a thing it is to finish the tale and cap the joke in the very midst of the worship. The worst of it all is, that it is not the careless alone that suffer, but even to those who long for it, the silence and sacredness of the service is lost.

We know that we have not exaggerated matters. There is a deep seated irreverence in the community at large, and sacred things are profaned.

The cure lies in the hands of the reverent members of the church. Let the session and managers see to it, that the quiet of God's house is not broken in upon. It is not becoming to leave it to the minister to do police duty. One especially necessary thing is that the young folk sit with their parents.

Boys will be boys and play tricks, and girls will be girls and whisper when they get together. It is a crying necessity that parents take their sons and daughters, boys and girls, with them into the pew. They should remember that the young people often are thoughtless and careless, and that parents are responsible before God for their children, to give thought where these are thoughtless, and where they are careless to take care. If many good Christians knew how badly their sons and daughters behave in church as well as their minister does, there would be a stern revolution in many of our churches. Let us see if, while escaping from the stiffness of our fathers, we cannot preserve the silence and stillness of our churches, and so let the beauty of holiness abide in our worship.

Church Building

Perhaps never in the history of our Presbytery have our fields been better supplied than they are now. Many of our stations that hitherto have only had the services of a catechist during the summer months are in charge of ordained missionaries. This guarantees service throughout the whole year, and provides for the regular dispensation of the sacraments, together with the discharge of other duties of the ministry.

Our Superintendent has been unwearied in his labours, and it is almost wholly due to his efforts that our scattered fields are being so efficiently cared for. Some think if service be given that other matters are of but little consequence; but that preaching may have its perfect work, preacher and hearer must have something in common, and nothing unites them more strongly than sharing the joys and sorrows common to this mortal state. The mere peddler of orthodoxy may dispose of his wares in any market, but the minister must meet and touch his people under all the conditions of life. We give heed to the words of those we love. Congregations are more liable to give heed to the instruction of those whom they have learnt to know and trust than to the words of him who delivers a discourse and departs, often never to return. And in order that our missionaries may labour to the best advantage, it is necessary that there be a church wherever service is held. In every district where there is a church-building, there is steady progress. The church is a visible representation of things unseen. It becomes hallowed with memories, and sacred with associations. It may be only a sentiment that necessitates a building set apart for the worship of God, but

were our life robbed of sentiment we would be poor indeed.

The Presbytery has sanctioned the establishment of a church-building fund, subscriptions to the amount of three hundred dollars have been promised. We earnestly commend this fund to the liberality of our people, and hope that it may soon be established on a sure and permanent basis.

Women are most perfect when most womanly.

All men are liberal; some to those who are in need and others to themselves.

Evil would not be half so dangerous if it did not often wear the semblance of virtue.

The mind has more room in it than one would imagine, if you would furnish the apartments.

Know that thou art in the battlefield, where God and the angels and the saints are watching thee with intense interest.

It is seldom my duty to repeat true tales against others. Before I speak I ought to be quite sure that silence is failure to duty.

Half of the failures in life are from the want of faith, patience and persistence.

Praise no man too liberally before his face, nor censure him too lavishly behind his back; the one savours of flattery, the other of malice, and both are reprehensible.

THE EDITOR OF CHURCH AND HOME.

Sir,—One of the most burning religious questions of the day is, What relation does the Presbyterian Church hold to her statutory creed? The recent heresy trial in the Established Church Assembly of Scotland, the movement in the Presbyterian Synod of England against the Rev. John Watson, the Briggs and Smith trials in the United States, and the rumors of unorthodoxy amongst ourselves regarding prominent professors and ministers, indicate pretty plainly that all is not as it ought to be. The votes given on behalf of those placed on trial clearly indicate the sympathy that exists, at least among the younger men, with their views and position; and the question which puzzles us of the laity, *sir*, is this: what is the duty of a church which has outgrown its creed? What we would like to have explained is: what is the ultimate authority regarding those things which enter into the substance of the Faith? We would like to know whether it is right to continue to profess doctrines declared to mean something else than they were intended to mean, and allowed to be held in a sense destructive of their plain meaning. Were it not for the tortuosities and intricacies of the ecclesiastical mind, one would have imagined that, from a Protestant standpoint at least, no very great difficulty would be experienced in giving a straight-forward answer to these questions. Yet we, elders, have pondered over all we can learn on the subject, and there seems to be an insuperable obstacle to this very desirable consummation. The result, as far as we can make out, seems to be, that at this present moment no mortal man can say what the creed of the Presbyterian churches really is. Carlyle, with grim irony, asked what each one's share was of the universal food

trough, and made it out to be what each could get without being hung or sent to the galleys. So it seems to us that each individual in the church may follow the leading of his own reason and conscience until the church calls him to account and subjects him to discipline.

The Presbyterian churches have never hitherto formally claimed the right of interpreting the Scriptures in the sense in which that claim is made by the Church of Rome. But as things now stand most of us can find little that is of much essential difference between them and it. When the Westminster Confession of Faith was adopted as the standard of the Reformed Church of Scotland, it was so, as we understand it, because its doctrines were consonant to the prevailing belief of the people. Indeed we fail to see how they could have been otherwise, for what the Westminster Divines did was to embody that belief in an orderly and logical form. The Reformers cast aside the idea of an infallible church, alone possessing the right of interpreting the Scriptures. The Bible, in their eyes, was the only infallible Court of Appeal, and the Confession of Faith became the creed of the Church, because it was believed to contain the sum and substance of true Christian faith. That Confession still remains the ostensible creed of the Church, but as we listen to the conversation, and even sermons, of our ministers, we are forced to the conclusion that it has lost its hold on large numbers of those who have signed it, and on many of the most capable minds in the communions of which it is the doctrinal symbol. In other words, we find that to many ministers the Confession of Faith has ceased to represent the revelation of God as it is presented in Scripture, and it seems clear that it acting on the Protestant principle

of the right of individual interpretation, they are only doing as their fathers did. But what we would like to know is, how does this affect their relation to the Church? Should not some steps be taken for a reconstruction of the creed if they are to remain in the communion of the Presbyterian fold?

Professor Story, of Glasgow, once, when addressing the students at the opening of the Divinity Hall there, dealing with the subject, admitted the foregoing facts, and yet had no solution to offer to the problem. He referred with some sympathy to that ideal church, which some have held to be "a church without a formal creed, a church so united and so truth loving in its spirit, as not to need the united bond of any confession of its faith." That ideal may be only the dream of an enthusiast; but, Mr. Editor, can we not make an approach to it? It seems the only true remedy for the admitted difficulty. One of our own respected fathers in the faith used to declare that much in the Westminster Confession does not concern the essentials of the Faith, and should never have been there. If this be true why cant the Confession be reduced to a simpler form? Remove the stumbling-blocks which have already cost the Church so dear, and let it not be longer open to the reproach of pretending to believe in doctrines and statements, which have really been discarded and superseded. A man who so acted would rightly be esteemed either a hypocrite or the victim of self-deception—either as a knave or a fool. In neither case would his reputation assist his endeavours, and how can the Church hope to escape, when the scandal—for it is nothing else—is so patent to the world. If the reconstruction of the standards of the Church, as some think, would

weaken the confidence of the people, it seems to me, although only an ignorant layman, that the present uncertainty in matters of religion is infinitely more dangerous, and that we are rapidly nearing a general adhesion to the views expressed by Pope—

"For modes of faith let graceless zealots
fight,
His can't be wrong whose life is right,"

a theory which would make the present confusion worse confounded.

In an organization of laymen we have been trying just to find out how we stood towards the standards of our Church, and, as I have tried to show we are lost in the mists completely.

We would like very much if some of our ministers would let us hear their opinion through your valuable columns, and enable us to find our exact bearings that we may conscientiously discharge the duties of our office.

Yours respectfully,
A PUZZLED ELDER.

Revs. George Bruce, D.D., T. F. Fotheringham and J. M. Robinson, with Mr. W. C. Whittaker elder, have gone to represent the Presbytery at the meeting of the Assembly, to be held this month in Winnipeg. It will likely be July before they return to work in their respective congregations.

Mr. Colquhoun, our catechist at Clarendon, shot a large black bear the first week of his sojourn in his mission field. Bears are said to be very numerous in Mr. Colquhoun's field, but our catechist has proved himself a good shot, so our fears are allayed.

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