

TERMS AND NOTICES.

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Religious Intelligencer.

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Rev. Joseph McLeod, D. D., •• Editor.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1, 1904.

Editorial.

—Presbyterian and Methodist meetings all over Canada continue to pass resolutions endorsing the proposed union of the bodies.

—The three Methodist denominations in England now contemplating union—the New Connexion, the Bible Christians and the Methodist Free Churches—have seven hundred ministers and one hundred and seventy thousand members. They would make a very strong body.

—If the whole membership of the church would attend the prayer-meetings just one night revival would be already begun, Bishop McCabe says. Who can doubt it? There can be no great and widespread revival till the people are before the Lord in prayer.

—Even the *Church Times* is compelled to acknowledge that the English Education Act is a failure, and that it is useless to waste time and energy in trying to make it operative. The Non-conformist conscience and determination, as expressed in the Passive Resistance movement, is telling.

—At the conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which closed Monday, six bishops were placed on the superannuation list, owing to age, and eight new bishops were appointed. There were, also, four missionary bishops elected. The work of the church is growing so rapidly that this increase of missionary superintendents is needed.

—This is a bishop's testimony to the value of the religious paper. Bishop Hoss, of the Methodist Episcopal church, says:

A good religious newspaper, widely circulated, is the best assistant that any pastor can possibly secure. The reason for such a statement is not far to seek. Christianity is the religion of intelligence, and not of ignorance. It appeals always and everywhere to an enlightened understanding, and seeks to commend itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. Repudiating the use of

force, and rejecting the very thought of sacerdotal helps and manipulations, it is thrown back upon the necessity of relying on intellectual and moral agencies. Being in its essence rational and not magical, it has no option except to convince the judgments and pervade the wills of those to whom it goes with its message of life.

—In an article on churchless pastors and pastorless churches, the *Watchman* deals with the tendency to call only young men, and sets forth some facts which churches would do well to consider. It is becoming more and more difficult, it says, for ministers in middle life, to say nothing of older men, although of excellent character, and having a good record for usefulness, to secure pastoral settlements. This condition affects the character of the ministry, and involves the welfare of the churches. Three results of this custom of the churches are specified thus:

One is that an increasing number of ministers in youth and middle life are entering secular employment. The old saying, "Once a minister always a minister," has been filed away as of no further use. The idea of the life-long sacredness of ordination vows has been destroyed in the Protestant churches by the stern necessity of doing something to get a living. Another is, that it is keeping some of the brightest of the Christian young men in the churches out of the ministry. We know of young men of talents and ability who, after considering the question of entering the ministry prayerfully, have decided that they could not best invest their lives in a service in which increasing years and experience would count against them rather than for them. A third is the discouraging effect it has upon the ministers in active service. Ministers are but human, and from the delicate nature of their work, are peculiarly susceptible to encouragement and discouragement. To find that their accumulated stores of knowledge and experience are hindrances rather than helps, and to look forward to dropping from larger to smaller fields of labor and perhaps ultimately to being dropped out of the ministry, is certainly not encouraging even to a young man just entering the pastorate.

THE DISTRICT MEETINGS.

Very soon the annual District Meetings will begin. Announcement of the date and place of each is on page thirteen of this paper. The first of them—that of the Second District, will be held on the 24th inst.

The District Meeting is the part of the denominational organization most nearly related to the churches. It is composed of the pastors and appointed representatives of the churches within its limits. Its business is to hear reports from its churches, to consider and act upon requests and appeals from churches, to look carefully into the condition of the work as set forth in the reports and otherwise, and to exercise a general superintendence and care of the churches, seeking to promote their strength and efficiency.

The work of a District Meeting rightly done always sends the churches into a new year of life and work with clearer view of responsibility and privilege, and with more purpose and courage.

Every church should report to its District Meeting. Failure to do this is a violation of the church rule, which says each church "shall send a written

report, in which shall be given the church statistics and an account of the state of the church."

And yet some churches seem quite careless about reporting. Last year forty-four churches failed to report. The only district in which all the churches were reported was the Seventh, which embraces St. John and Charlotte Counties. The delinquents in the other six districts were, respectively, fourteen, seven, thirteen, one, six and three. All of these churches report sometimes, some of them about every other year, and some at longer intervals. There is no good reason why they do not report every year. Their failure to do so leaves the District Meetings without information necessary to a proper supervision of the work, and is weakening to the cause which all should be anxious to promote. Let us hope that this year every church will be reported. If pastors of churches not reported last year, or in cases where there are no pastors, church officers will give just a little attention to the matter, all those churches may answer to roll call in their respective District Meetings this year. Try it, brethren.

To make easier the work of reporting, and, also, to assure uniformity in the reports, blank forms are furnished the churches. The forms for use this year were distributed several weeks ago. If any church clerk has not received a form, one can be had by writing the clerk of his district. The names and addresses of clerks of districts are given on page thirteen. The report form indicates the matters concerning which information is desired. It ought not to be difficult to give all the facts asked for. Frequently reports are very incomplete, and concerning many things the District Meetings are left to guess. In most cases this incompleteness is, probably, due to the fact that reports are not made up till a day or two before the District Meeting, and then are hastily done. To assure completeness, the preparation of a report should be begun early. And every fact called for should be furnished. Membership statistics and the financial features of the reports need to be as accurate as possible. The form has a place for the statement of matters not specified in other parts of it. It is well to use this for a brief statement of the condition of the church, its needs, etc. That a report may not be a statement of personal feelings and views, it should be endorsed by the church as provided for in the rule, which says it "shall be read before the church and approved, and so certified by the clerk."

The full number of delegates which a church is entitled to send should be sent. And they should be men who will attend and remain in attendance till the work is done. Pastors should surely attend. Other engagements ought not be allowed to interfere with their duty to their District Meetings. And the ministers appointed by Conference should endeavor to be present. If any of them find it quite impossible to keep the appointments made for them, with their consent, they should write the clerk of the district concerned, explaining their non-attendance.

The churches with which the District

Meetings are to be held will, as they always do, make ample preparation. We have never known a church to fail to do this part of the work well. While providing for the entertainment of the members of the meeting and others, there is, doubtless, in the hearts of those doing this, a desire that the session may be the means of blessing to the church where it is held, and to the whole community. It ought to be. And all the churches of a district should make special prayer that their annual session may be used of the Lord to help the Christian life of the church and people where they meet. Let all do their best, and pray feverently, that the District Meetings of 1904 may be the best yet held—having more reports, fuller reports, and more manifestations of the divine presence.

COUNTRY vs. CITY CHURCHES.

Dr. F. L. Patton, dean of the theological faculty of Princeton Seminary (Presbyterian), in an address to the graduating class a few days ago, gave the young men some excellent advice about fields of labor. Among other things he said:

After years of ministerial labor some of you will still be disposed to look on certain of your brethren as more fortunate than yourselves because they are filling city churches while you are in country parishes. Accept my advice and fight shy of the city call, if it comes to you as a temptation, for it too often comes as such. I have been through all the ins and outs of the situation and know it thoroughly. The city church has no more content to offer than the country chapel. Human nature is the same, whether in country or in city.

This is excellent. Dr. Patton could even go farther and say that the typical country church is more desirable than the typical city church; and more than one city pastor whose lines seem to have fallen in pleasant places would gladly exchange his pastorate for the pulpit of a flourishing country church. Yes, young man, get into the country, if you can; Nature herself will do much for you if you "consider" the lilies, listen to the songs of the birds, watch the flowers and keep your ear close to Nature's heart.

VOICES AND ECHOES.

Drunkards of Iowa will hereafter be imprisoned in a hospital that is to be erected at a cost of \$125,000. A judge may commit a man for an indefinite term in the inebriate hospital.

Would not it be better to stop the traffic which makes the drunkards, for which it is necessary to erect and maintain a hospital at so large expense? It would be more sensible, more humane, and cheaper. The last mentioned consideration is the one that would influence many people—if they had gumption enough to see its truth.

That Shakespeare wrote the Psalms is easily proved, Sir Edward Clarke jocularly observed at a London club dinner lately. "Shakespear," properly spelled, he said, has four vowels and six consonants. In the forty-sixth Psalm the forty-sixth word from the beginning is 'shake,' and the forty-sixth word from the end is 'spear.'

It sounds absurd, and is absurd, but there is nothing in the Baconian theory about the authorship of Shakespeare any more conclusive than this.