

British American Presbyterian.

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TORONTO FRIDAY DEC. 27, 1872.

NOTES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We must respectfully decline the insertion of a lengthened communication from the writer of the sermon on the "Blood of Christ." We are as anxious as any can be for free discourse, but we do not see that the farther consideration of that subject at present, would serve any good purpose. Had we known the character of the sermon, we should not have inserted it at first, and the author of it had much wider scope in stating his opinions, than others have heard its combating them. We have already declined to insert papers of criticism, hostile to the sermon, and with what has been said on each side, as far as our columns are concerned, the matter must rest as it is.

TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

Nothing of any great importance has taken place in Canada during the past week. In the political and religious world, everything has been quiet and undisturbed. In the one case as the other, routine work has been gone through, and that has been nearly all.

In the Canada presbyterian Church, a good many of the missionary meetings usually held in its congregations once a year, have taken place, and considerable interest has been manifested. It is too soon yet to say how the funds for the year will turn out, but unless there is a very great increase on the last, the operations of the Church will be greatly crippled.

In Scotland, a curious controversy has arisen in connection with the use of unfermented wine at the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. In a congregation in Edinburgh, two elders have for some time past been in the habit of passing the cup without partaking, on the plea that they could not consecutively use such wine. For this they were suspended from membership. On an appeal to the Presbytery, the action of the Session was sustained. Upon this there was an appeal taken to the U. P. Synod before which the whole case will be discussed at its next meeting.

After many unsuccessful efforts by the Canada Episcopal Synod to elect a Missionary Bishop for Algoma, the Rev. Mr. Dumoulin, of Hamilton, has been fixed upon, to the great regret, we understand, of his people in that city, by whom he is greatly and deservedly respected.

CHRISTMAS.

It has come with a great many newspapers to be the orthodox becoming thing always to have an article on Christmas, setting forth its meaning, and pressing in many cases, if not its religious observance, yet its social importance and the genial influence of its family reunions, and friendly feasting. We are not going to follow this course. The most of our readers know very well without our telling them that no one can say at what season of the year Christ was born, but that it amounts to a moral certainty that it was not on the 25th of December. The Romans were far too wise and politic administrators to set the people of the Holy Land all in commotion during the stormy season, which, in that country, corresponds to our December. With neither bridges nor roads of any consequence, and every water course flooded, it would have been all but physically impossible for every one to have at that time gone to his own city to be enrolled. It would have been a needless provocation to a people disaffected at any rate to have asked them to make such journeys at such a time, and it could not have been managed even if tried, with anything like the same efficiency as at some other period. Many settle it then as past all doubt, that while we cannot say positively when Christ was

born, we can say when he was not. Shepherds were not watching their flocks by night during the very height of the rainy season, and delicate women could not undertake a journey of sixty or eighty miles at that time on foot, and with only the slender appliances for personal comfort which Joseph could supply.

In the early churches, after the custom of celebrating the birth of Christ was introduced, there was no uniformity in the time observed. With some the festival was celebrated in the month of May, with others in April, and with others in January. The ultimate settling upon the 25th of December must be attributed more to heathenish influences than any other. The winter solstice with most heathen nations was regarded as the most important point of the year—as the beginning of the renewed life and activity of the powers of nature. We can accordingly easily see how the memories of the old religion would mingle with the ideas and hopes and aspirations of the new and eventually lead to the establishment and perpetuation of a festival which intimately associated with the religion which had been adopted at the same time brought up ideas and observances still in some measure interesting and precious though more immediately connected with that which had been cast aside.

The mere period when Christ's birth took place, however, is now a matter of minor importance, and though we are opposed to all observances of human invention, which to any degree savour of "peripetistical worship." Yet we could not wish to have eliminated from our social and individual life, all the humanizing and kindly influences and memories which in the course of ages have been gathered round the day so long celebrated in connection with the advent of Our Lord and Master, whose mission and message have ever been connected with peace on earth and good will to men. We do not see that a man necessarily tends towards either Popery or Prelacy, or must be one whit less of a Presbyterian because to him Christmas time has come to be one only of feasting and family reunions, but of hallowed memories and chastened gladness, as with more than usual solemnity he repeats, "To you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour who is called Christ the Lord. The very rigour of the season, also, can give these memories, with us special significance in telling those whom God has blessed with plenty to do good, and to communicate and to make the darkest and most trying life somewhat brighter and happier at that time when the thoughts and table of so many are turned to Bethlehem's manger, and David's Lord.

If every one of our readers shall have tried to bring a glimpse of sunshine into some darkened home on the past Christmas day, he need little trouble himself with the fear that in this he has been tending towards Popery, or that there has been anything wrong in his heart getting warm with him as he has listened to a Christmas carol chimed with special fervor in the angel song:—

THE PAST YEAR.

Before another copy of the *Presbyterian* is issued, Eighteen Hundred and Seventy-Two will have passed away. Compared with some of its more immediate predecessors it has not been a time to be spoken of as eventful, and yet many interesting and important occurrences have taken place during its course.

In Canada we have enjoyed great prosperity and external as well as internal tranquility. The different Provinces that make up our Dominion have been drawn more closely to each other, and welded more firmly into one harmonious whole. Various projects have been set on foot or carried successfully through for the development of our material resources, and in spite of all that has been done in connection with the Washington Treaty and the Geneva Award, Canada occupies to-day a more prominent as well as a more prosperous position than she has ever done in the course of her whole previous history. Her trade has been and is large and remunerative. Her harvest as a general thing very fair, if not absolutely abundant, her population has been swelled by a large amount of immigration; and the very discussion of her grievances and the supposed injury inflicted upon her interests by the proceedings of British statesmen have only brought her great and varied resources more prominently before the world and made an increasing number think of settling within her borders. Nor has it been merely in a temporal point of view that Canada has flourished. Her churches have had rest and also a very fair share of prosperity.

In the neighboring republic it has been the same thing. Without exception all classes have been prosperous, and have good reason to thank God for all his mercies.

The old world like the new has in general enjoyed the same blessings of outward well being which supplies but few materials for history. The world over God has been opening his hand liberally and giving all a

special blessing. There have been drawbacks, of course, trials of one kind and another which have been severe upon individuals and districts; but on the whole, 1872 will have to be referred to as a season of general peace among the nations, with prosperity and widely diffused quiet among the people.

Nor is it unbecoming to refer to our own venture in the *PRESBYTERIAN*, and the success which has so far crowned our efforts. We may not say that we have succeeded in supplying a weekly Presbyterian newspaper as successfully as we could have wished, or even to such an extent as we expected. We may have been over sanguine. Yet we can rejoice in the amount of encouragement we have received. We might have succeeded better, but we might also have done a great deal worse. A good many have stood coldly aloof, and wondered whether or not we should be able to make good our footing. But we have also had the sympathy and substantial help of not a few of the very best ministers and members of our church. To them we shall always be grateful. More especially have we been gratified in our publishing venture, by having secured the sympathy and assistance of some of our best students, who realizing how much the Presbyterians need a newspaper like the one we have been attempting to supply, have practically and earnestly rendered us effective assistance, both by tongue and pen. For this we are especially grateful. We feel that it would be a work of no ordinary importance, if we could awaken a deep general interest among the more talented of our Presbyterian students and younger ministers, and induce them to extend the range of their influence by writing for such publications as the *BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN*, to a far greater extent than any of them have yet attempted. Some of them have made a very promising beginning, and we trust during the coming year to delight and instruct our readers by many of their contributions, as well as by those of a good number of the most accomplished ministers and laymen in both sections of the Presbyterian church in Canada, who have kindly promised their co-operation during 1873.

As was to be expected, we have had a somewhat trying season at the commencement of our career, but at the close of the first twelve months we are not discouraged. On the contrary, we address ourselves to another year of editorial work with confidence and hope, and with the fervent prayer that God would graciously use our humble instrumentality for the advancement of his cause, and the good of his people.

SABBATH SCHOOL LESSONS.

The response to our query of last week has been so unanimously in favour of the International Series of Lessons, that we have decided to publish them during the coming year. The first instalment, notes by Dr. John Hall, of New York, appears in other columns. The notes for the next quarter will likely be by Dr. Ormiston, formerly of Hamilton, but now of New York.

MINISTERS AND CHURCHES.

The new Church at Bond Head, erected during the last season, for the first Canada Presbyterian congregation, of West Gwillimbury, under the pastorate of the Rev. W. Fraser, was opened for divine service, on Sunday last, the 15th instant. Able and eloquent discourses were delivered on the occasion by the Rev. Professors Gregg and Caven, of Knox College, Toronto. Professor Gregg preaching in the morning, from Isaiah 5. 5., and Professor Caven in the evening, from Psalms 84. 10. At both diets of worship the house was crowded to its utmost capacity; and in the evening a very considerable congregation, not finding room in the new house, assembled in the old church, adjoining, where an additional Service was kindly held by Professor Gregg. The collection in aid of the Building Fund amounted to \$78.27. The new church—the plan and specifications of which were furnished by Smith & Gemmill, architects, Toronto,—is built in the Gothic style of red brick, with white brick dressings. The outside dimensions are 56 feet by 35. A portion of the interior is partitioned off for vestry purposes—the audience chamber being 43 by 32. Altogether, the new edifice presents a fine appearance, and reflects very creditably on the taste and liberality of the congregation.—*Con.*

The congregation of Cartwright, ministered to by the Rev. W. C. Windel have erected a neat and comfortable house of worship, which was dedicated to the public service of God on Sabbath, the 15th inst., when very excellent and appropriate sermons were preached—in the morning, by the Rev. John Ewing, Mount Pleasant, in the afternoon by the pastor, the Rev. Wm. C. Windel, and in the evening by the Rev. W. Mitchell, of Millbrook. The audiences on each occasion were large and devout, but especially in the evening was the Church filled to its utmost capacity by a goodly representation of all religious denominations of the neighbourhood. In the afternoon

and evening of the next day a tea meeting was held in the drill-shed in Williamsburg, when between 600 and 700 persons were present, the young and promising Band of Cartwright discoursing sweet music while the refreshing beverage was being enjoyed. Tea over, the people were invited to the new Bible Christian Church in the village, which had been kindly offered for their accommodation; and to as many as could find sitting or standing-room, spirit-stirring and instructive addresses were delivered by the Chairman, the Rev. Messrs. Ewing and Mitchell, and the Rev. William Logan, M.A., lately minister of the Church of Langham in Cartwright, but now of Fenelon Falls. In the intervals between the speeches, and at other appropriate pauses, the choir of the W. M. Church, and Miss Grimin, of Clark, entertained and delighted the audience with selected and well-rendered music. The Building Committee have renounced, in connection with the opening services, the very handsome amount of about \$600, which will leave their church free of all debt. And certainly the ministers and congregation have reason to be cheered and encouraged by the countenance, sympathy and aid manifested toward them by the whole community around.—*Con.*

At the annual meeting of the Port Hope C. P. Church, recently held, Mr. James Craick, in a very happy speech, presented Mrs. Donald, their pastor's amiable wife, with a box containing a rich set of mink furs, a gift from the ladies of the congregation; immediately thereafter Mr. Wm. Quay took the platform and announced that he had been deputed to present a purse to the Rev. Mr. Donald. Mr. Donald though evidently taken by surprise managed to acknowledge his own, and Mr. Donald's sense of the kind treatment they had both experienced from the congregation since settling at Port Hope. Mr. Donald has proved himself a wise and energetic labourer, and his people have shown themselves reciprocally active and liberal. Subsequently Mrs. Roach, organist, was presented with a purse of \$850 as a small acknowledgment for valuable services gratuitously rendered for a length of time. During the presentations the chair was occupied by Mr. L. Ross, M.P., who, along with Messrs Galbraith, Donald, Craick, Chisholm, &c., delivered short addresses suitable to the occasion.

The annual soiree of the West Puslinch C. P. Congregation was held on the evening of the 12th inst. There was a large attendance. The Rev. Mr. McLean, pastor of the congregation occupied the chair, and addresses were delivered by Rev. Mr. Acheson, of Galt, Rev. Mr. Macdonald, of Elora, and Rev. J. Little, of Nassaguanay. A pleasant and profitable evening was spent.

Of the Rev. J. P. Dumoulin, Bishop elect of Algoma, the *Kingston News* says: "It is singular that the first graduate of a Canadian University, elected to the high and holy office of a chief pastor in the Anglican Church, should be a graduate of the Presbyterian University of this city. It would be a graceful act if the authorities of Queen's College at their next Convocation should recognise the high position in the Church gained by the reverend gentleman, and honour him, and themselves at the same time, by conferring a more honourable degree."

We understood that the Presbyterian Congregation of East Puslinch have agreed to call the Rev. Mr. Urquhart, late of Perrytown.

INDUCTION OF REV. J. L. MURRAY.

The Presbytery of Ontario met at Woodville, on Tuesday, the 17th inst., for the induction of the Rev. J. L. Murray. A large congregation assembled. The Rev. Dr. Thornton preached a truly excellent sermon from Luke 14. 47, "Beginning at Jerusalem." The moderator, the Rev. Jas. Thom, narrated the previous steps which had been regularly taken, and put the questions of the formula to the minister and people, which were satisfactorily answered. The Presbytery engaged in prayer, led by the moderator, and inducted Mr. Murray formally into the pastoral charge of the congregation. Highly appropriate addresses were delivered to the minister and the congregation by the Rev. J. B. Edmondson and Rev. J. R. Scott, respectively. There was read by the Clerk of the Presbytery, the Rev. Dr. Thornton, a letter from the Rev. John McTavish, expressing his great regret at not being able to be present, expressing also his joy and thankfulness to God at the pastoral vacancy being so happily filled, and conveying words of wise and affectionate counsel to the people. The members of the congregation, on retiring from the church, gave the right-hand of welcome to their new pastor, with manifestly great cordiality. It was also very evident that the Presbytery received Mr. Murray into their number with great joy, esteem and affection. Mr. Murray enters upon the pastorate of a large, united, prayerful and working congregation with very gladdening prospects of usefulness. In the evening, the congregation combined in public social reception of their pastor. Very happily the hours passed. The choir discoursed in hymns of praise. The audience listened with interest and edification to able and suitable speeches from a number of members of Presbytery and Rev. Mr. McCulloch, Wesleyan minister. The managers, in the course of the afternoon, handed to Mr. Murray a cheque for \$250.00, as first quarters salary.

LISTEN. Do you wish to do something towards making your home happy? Do you desire that your brothers and sisters should be glad to have you with them, and that you should always be a welcome companion to your parents or your children? Do you want to have your society coveted everywhere, and to feel, the while, that you are doing good as well as giving pleasure? Would you like to help people to think well, and to have them save their best thoughts for you? Would it please you to get all the good you can get of the people you know?

So, learn to listen. But first learn what listening is—for it is not merely the exercise of the sense of hearing. The stupidest of us all can keep our ears open and mouth shut. To listen properly means to make other people talk properly. That is a social defect, and it is not a Websterian one. The good listener is a cause of talking in others, and by a proper exercise of this valuable and too scarce gift, makes the difficult say what they think, and the verbose think what they say. For the greatest talkers are careful when they find they have a good listener. They know that they may not often be so fortunate, and they do their best. The adept in listening may sometimes hear more probing than he likes, but if he is skilful this will not often happen. When it is impossible to get anything interesting or useful out of a man, he need not listen to no longer. Every one of sense will agree to that. But it is astonishing how many good things some very unpromising persons will say if they be properly and conscientiously listened to.

To be sure it is very hard for some persons to listen. They have a gift for talking, and they like to exercise it. But these are the very persons who should do a great deal of listening. They know what a luxury it is to talk, and they should give their families and friends a chance to learn the art. Besides, like farmers, they will then find much advantage in a rotation of crops. A season of listening is often a most excellent preparative for a season of talk.

It is often supposed that if a man has a good thing to say, he will say it, but this is not necessarily the case. Very often he never says it, because no one will give him a chance. He don't want to waste his speech on fools, and the smart folks want him to content himself with hearing what they have to say. This happens—not in connection with very good things perhaps, but with things that might lead to very good things—every day and every hour in thousands of families, all over the land—to say nothing of society.

There are those who so seldom have a chance to speak to interested ears, that they gradually withdraw themselves into themselves, where, not generally finding much, they intellectually pine away.

To be sure we should not fail to become good talkers, if we can; but, do what we may, we can only make one talker out of ourselves, whereas, by proper listening, we may make a dozen of talkers to other people.—*Frank R. Stockton in Scribner's for January.*

A SCOTTISH TOURIST ON THE CONTINENT.

On the first stage of the journey between Nurnberg and Stuttgart, my fellow-traveller was a professor in a Roman Catholic College at Augsburg. A very lively conversation ensued. My friend entertained liberal views on the ecclesiastical questions which now agitate Germany. He is in sympathy with the Old Catholic party, but was shy of committing himself on particular points. He expresses liberal sentiments towards Protestants, but he is still a Romanist, notwithstanding the controversy that rages within the Church, he seems all for the church still. My hopes of a real movement towards Scriptural Christianity, I must confess, were not increased by close contact with one specimen of the reforming party.

My fellow traveller seemed himself to stand open to exact information on any subject, but he had evidently received very exaggerated reports on the progress of Popery in this country. One of his questions, for example, was: "Isn't Glasgow Catholic?" I told him I had lived many years in that city, and I knew it well. I gave him some sound information on the facts of the case. He received my statements thoughtfully and gravely, but without making reply. I think he considered my information correct, and that his notions on that subject underwent a considerable change.

I suspect that Popish zealots in this country, practice a pious fraud on their continental brethren. The "wish" and the "thought" do not seem to be kept sufficiently distinct in the reports which they transmit. Possibly alarmist Protestants may sometimes aid them in spreading the exaggeration.

It may not be amiss to record here a complaint which I received from the Bavarian professor, as it bears on a question in classical education, now undergoing revision in the country; and the more that the complaint was manifestly given, not personally to me, but to the method adopted in the classical schools of my country. At the close of our conversation, he said: "You speak Latin better than the English bishops who attended the Vatican Council at Rome last year." He referred of course to the vowel sounds, which in most of the Scottish schools, coincide with the system which prevails universally on the continent, and is in contrast with the usage in England. We understood each other perfectly and easily; whereas, if any one of the interlocutors had been a fellow of Oxford, there could have scarcely been any oral communication, although he might have more Latin in his head than both of us put together.

I understand that the great classical schools of England are even now in a transition state on that question; and I happen to know that the Edinburgh Academy, which has hitherto somewhat seriously followed all English tracks, has this year, for the first time, introduced the Scotch pronunciation, which brings its pupils into harmony with all the scholars of the European continent.—*From notes taken in Germany, by the editor of the "Family Treasury."*