

# The Dominion Presbyterian

IS PUBLISHED  
AT 232 St JAMES STREET, MONTREAL

TERMS  
\$1.50 per Year, in Advance

The Mount Royal Publishing Co'y

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TORONTO OFFICE: 5 JORDAN STREET.

Wednesday, January 4th, 1899.

## The New Year.

We are told that "hope springs eternal in the human breast," and while it is true that hope has a natural basis in the human constitution, we must never forget that it is enrolled among the highest Christian graces. There are no words more suitable for the opening year than those of the great Apostle: "Now abideth faith, hope and love, but the greatest of these is love." As the years roll by we feel that these are the things which do abide, because they are not mere things, but spiritual forces, which, coming forth from God, give freshness and joy to the life of man. Other things die, bright illusions fade or are condensed into hard, prosaic facts, our ideals change, but faith, hope and charity must continue to be our inspiration and our strength. The great problem of life is to make both past and future minister to the living present. There is danger of living too much in the past, thinking that Providence is exhausted, and that we have done our little part. There is equal danger of living exclusively in the future, so that our life is merely a dream of what we may or shall do. Paul tells us that all things are ours "things present or things to come;" the present things which gather up the life of the past, and the future things which grow out of the trembling present. And this is because we are Christ's and Christ is God's. In this spirit we should go forth to meet a new year, not cynical and despairing because of past failures, not moved by vain, light-hearted confidence, but strong in hope, because our life is rooted in God, and because we have the assurance that the Christ is Lord of past, present and future, and links for his people all times into a living unity. To the faith of a true disciple that word is ever sounding, "Behold I make all things new." So let our New Year begin with a prayer for that open mind and willing heart which is ever waiting at the Cross to receive new lessons of life.

Gather my broken fragments to a whole,  
As these four quarters make a shining day  
Into thy basket, for my golden bowl.

Take up the things that I have cast away.  
In vice or indolence or unwise play.  
Let mine be a merry, all-receiving heart.  
But make it a whole, with light in every part.

## THE DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN

### The Aged Minister.

Many Presbyterians will read with a sense of keenest pain the circular letter addressed to the Church through the Press by the Church Agent on behalf of the Aged Ministers' Fund and the Ministers' Widows and Orphans Fund. Surely the body of church members throughout our Church in Canada do not understand the situation. Is it so that they cast off the widow and children of the man who has been God's ambassador to them! Do they really renounce all responsibility for the generous care of the white-haired minister who has served them all his life! We hope there are not many who would say with one who sits in the Elder's chair: "The minister should provide for himself and his family as I am doing. He has a comfortable stipend." What minister? The one who preaches to him now, or the one who baptized him forty years ago. The former is making provision for his wife and family, and is not asking the elder to contribute to a fund for his benefit. The minister of the present day contributes five dollars to the elder's one dollar for the benefit of the aged ministers. He is not contributing to a fund for his own benefit. Every dollar he pays, together with every dollar contributed by his congregation, goes to the scanty annuity paid to the ministers who are now past the threescore and ten, and whose stipend averaged less than six hundred dollars per annum. Surely if the congregations understood this they would join their minister in the effort to maintain the aged ministers in some measure of comfort. Should we not esteem them for their work's sake?

### The Duke on the Archbishop.

During the last three months much controversial correspondence has been published in the London Times and other English newspapers over a charge recently delivered by the Archbishop of Canterbury to the clergy of his diocese on the ritual extravagances which have crept into the Anglican Church, and on the doctrine of that church on Confession and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The charge, though not an official authoritative pronouncement, and not binding on the Bishops or the clergy of other dioceses, has been received with much respect, due, doubtless, to the high personal character and deep learning of the Archbishop; nevertheless, it has provoked much controversy. The latest contribution to the correspondence is a long letter from the Duke of Argyll, occupying nearly two columns of large type in the Times of the 17th of December, in which the Duke contends that the Archbishop has, no doubt unintentionally, misrepresented the teaching of the Presbyterian churches of Scotland and Eng-

land on the Lord's Supper. The letter is a remarkable one, written with all the force of language and logical argument of which the Duke is a master. After remarking that the charge divides the whole of Christendom, as regards the Eucharistic doctrine, into two distinct groups, the first of those groups being "those who hold that there is no special gift bestowed in the sacrament," and that this group (while excluding the Lutheran Church) must contain all the Evangelical Protestant churches of Germany, France, Britain and her colonies, America, together with the Established Church of Scotland, with all its offshoots, the Duke proceeds as follows: "I feel sure of the perfect fairness of the Primate's intentions. But he must allow me to say that we cannot quite trust the definition of our beliefs to men who confess themselves unable to define their own. Still less can we trust that definition to men whose minds have been prejudiced from the cradle by inherited antagonisms on questions which affect them almost personally. In feeling they are always unsympathetic, and on facts they are almost always ignorant. It is very hard indeed for an Anglican Bishop to be quite fair to Presbyterian Theology. I have seen many proofs of this most genuine apostolical succession. More than fifty years ago my old and dear friend Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, in a letter to one of his clergy, gave exactly the same account of the Eucharistic teaching of those whom (generically) he called the 'Puritans.' His words, though fewer, are practically identical with the words of the Primate now. 'The Puritans,' he said, 'denied that there was in the sacraments any special grace conveyed beyond that which by faithful men was always attained by prayer and hearing the Word.' I deem it my duty now, in so far as the Presbyterian churches in Scotland and England are concerned to denounce the whole of this language, purporting to describe our Eucharistic doctrine, as nothing better than a broad and inexcusable misrepresentation. I call it inexcusable because our authoritative Confessions are accessible to all. We have had in Scotland since the Reformation two authoritative Confessions, one sanctioned in 1567 by the Reformation Parliament, and the other, drawn up in 1649 by the Westminster Assembly of Divines. Of the first of these it is enough to say that its chapter on the Eucharist teaches what may be called the highest sacramental doctrine, and expresses it in language so strong and so literal as to make a dangerous approach to transubstantiation. Of course, this particular conception it emphatically repudiates. Nevertheless, it uses phrases which are not easily distinguishable from it. Moreover, the authors of that Confession, being aware that the same falsehoods about their doctrine on the Eucharist were even then spread abroad by their enemies, put on record this indignant passage: