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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Letters and articles intended for the next issue should be in the hands of the Editor not later than Tuesday morning. All communications must be accompanied by the writer's name, otherwise they will not be inserted. Articles not accepted will be returned, if at the time they are sent, a request is made to that effect, and sufficient postage stamps are enclosed. Manuscripts not accompanied will not be preserved, and subsequent requests for their return cannot be complied with.

NOTES TO CORRESPONDENTS. READER: Another letter on the same subject appears in this issue, so we refrain from publishing yours. J. A. TIVERTON: will be glad to hear from you again.

British American Presbyterian, FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 1876.

THE PREMIUM PHOTOGRAPH.

We have not yet exhausted the stock of photographs on hand, and shall continue sending them out in the order in which we receive subscriptions until further notice. If our readers will kindly make mention of this fact, it will be serviceable to us, and help the circulation of the paper.

ASSEMBLY'S FOREIGN MISSION.

As it has been thought desirable that the Rev. J. F. Campbell should have a full opportunity of intercourse with Knox College students before the close of the Session, some of the appointments previously published as given to that gentleman, are cancelled in the meantime. After holding a meeting in Port Hope on the 28th of March, he will proceed to Toronto. Other arrangements will be notified in due time.

KNOX COLLEGE STUDENTS' MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The last monthly meeting of this society for the present session was held in the College on Wednesday evening, 8th March. There was a large attendance, and the interest of the meeting was greatly enhanced by the presence of the Professors. Mission fields were selected and Missionaries appointed to them as follows:—Waubashene and Port Severn Mr. McCulloch; North Hastings, Mr. James Ross; Manitoulin Island, Mr. H. Mackay to the North Side, and Mr. A. Baird to the South; Roseau, etc., (Muskeoka), Mr. J. Johnston, McMurrich, etc., (Muskeoka), Mr. Geo. Mackay, Mersea, (Co. Essex), Mr. F. Ba'lantyne, M.A.

A long and interesting letter was read from Rev. H. McKellar, Prince Albert Mission, Saskatchewan, which earnestly pressed upon the Church the necessity of sending more missionaries to the great North-west. Letters of fraternal greeting were also read from the Missionary Societies of three of the sister Colleges of the Church, viz:—the Presbyterian College, Montreal; Queen's College, Kingston; and the Theological Hall, Halifax. These letters breathed a spirit of brotherly love, and will do not a little to bring the students of the different Colleges into closer sympathy.

The Professors gave short and appropriate addresses calling special attention to the claims of the Foreign Mission Field.

At the close of the meeting a short time was spent in devotional exercises.

AN exchange says:—"Rev. Geo. M. Grant lectured recently in favour of the separate school system, and said that the granting of such schools on the same terms as in Ontario in the Maritime Provinces would be a wise policy. The Presbyterian body in Nova Scotia being very generally determined opponents of sectarian schools, Mr. Grant's remarks have surprised many."

The sales of church lands in Italy, the last eight years, have reached the sum of 493,798,239 lire, or nearly \$100,000,000.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

As there is a report of the General Assembly upon this subject now before the church, and the subject is one of great importance on many accounts, we commend the following extract from an American paper to the notice and consideration of our ministers and elders:

"The American Presbyterian Church General Assembly has become too large to accomplish its business. The unwieldiness of this immense body has given rise to several propositions in reference to the reduction of its size. As it now stands, commissioners are sent by the Presbytery, and a full Assembly would number between five hundred and sixty members. The only way that seems feasible to reduce the number is to change the basis of representation and send commissioners from Synods instead of from Presbyteries. It is now proposed to send from each Synod one minister and one elder for every thirty-five hundred church members. There are many things to be said in favor of the change, which would reduce the body to about two hundred and eighteen members. As things now stand each Assembly costs £6,000, which expense could be materially reduced if a less number of commissioners had to travel. Now it is impossible to attend carefully to judicial cases; and a large proportion of the members of the Assembly have no opportunity of engaging in the debates. The principal objection urged against the proposed change is that it is considered by some to be a violation of the fundamental principles of Presbyterian order, namely, the representation of the Presbyteries."

From the circumstances of the union which has lately been happily consummated between the Presbyterians in this country, there will to many appear strong reasons why the representation of the church should be upon a large basis. There is great fear that the magnitude of our church now, both in numbers and area, may be overlooked by each separate Presbytery, and consequently that the General Assembly may be formed upon a basis of representation that will make it unwieldy. While it is desirable that it should include so many ministers and elders as will give its decisions weight in the church, its character of a deliberative body should not be forgotten. While numbers may in one sense tend to secure the fullest consideration of any subject from every point of view, and so secure that the decisions arrived at shall be the best possible, it cannot on the other hand be doubted, that large numbers are unfavourable to the despatch of business, and add greatly to the expense necessarily connected with every meeting of the General Assembly. The rapid advance of our church in numbers in the past, and what we trust will be its more rapid advance in the future, should not be forgotten in arranging the basis of representation. The proportion which would at present seem to constitute a comparatively small Assembly, will, in a few years, should our body make such progress as we have every reason to anticipate, will form a large deliberative and judicial body. It will be found much easier to avoid the evil we should hope, than to correct it after a mistake has been made. There is a peculiarity also in the character of the Assembly as the highest court of the church, favourable to the limitation of its numbers, consistently with its decisions reflecting the opinion of the whole church, and consequently having weight, it is that between it and the individual members there is a gradation of courts to which all important questions are almost invariably first referred for their discussion and decision. These are the session, Presbytery, and synod. In this respect it differs from the highest political representative and deliberative bodies. Another important aspect in which it differs from these latter and also favourable to limitation, is its being an annually elective body. Although very important questions may be originated in and disposed of by the same Assembly, yet all questions of greatest moment to the church are usually before it for a considerably longer time, so that the Assembly being annually elective, can always be made to represent the preponderating opinion in the church.

The question of expense also is by no means unimportant. The wide extent of our church now, will force upon our consideration some other means of meeting the expenses of members to and from the place of meeting than that which at present prevails. We do not suppose that any minister or intelligent office-bearer of our church would say that, it is of no consequence to the well-being of the whole church, whether the humblest of her ministers should ever be a member of the General Assembly or not, whether or no the weakest and most distant congregation is ever represented in the Assembly by its own minister or not. Our constitution is based upon the opposite supposition, and very wisely we think. If this is the theory of our system, that as a rule every minister may some time expect to be a member of Assembly, and every church may some time expect to be represented there by its own minister, it is obviously not a sound principle that a poor congregation, say in Manitoba, for instance, should be expected to pay its minister's

expenses, or that he should bear them himself to and from one of the cities in Ontario or Quebec, or one of the Lower Provinces, while some of our wealthiest churches may have no expense at all of that kind to bear. There is here one obvious and injurious inequality which has already been often and severely felt, and which, under our altered circumstances, will have to be renewed. Efficiency and expense both, therefore, call for the most careful consideration of this subject, so that it may be settled in such a way that it will not need, as in the American Presbyterian Church, to be readjusted in the course of a very few years.

PRESBYTERIANISM AND ITS NATIONAL TYPES.

It is almost needless to say that one and the same institution will assume different forms according to the nationality in which it is found. University education has its marked idiosyncracies in Scotland, England, and America. Benevolent institutions are more or less according to the bent of the people. It is so with churches. The Episcopal Church is very different in Scotland from what it is in England. Methodism in England has characteristics which are wanting in the Methodism of America. The Baptist Church of the old world is unlike the Baptist Church of the New in many respects. And so the types of Presbyterianism in Scotland, England, Canada, and the United States are found to vary considerably amongst themselves. To illustrate this point let us look at the Presbyterian Churches in the States and in our own land. While they are the same as to their essential principles, there are important points of non-agreement which it will be instructive for us to consider.

It is not too much to say that the congregational element enters largely into the Presbyterianism of our neighbors. While it would be unfair to assert that Presbyteries in the United States exercise no control over congregations, it is true that congregations are left very much to manage themselves. There is, for example, practically no moderation of a call. The congregation meet when called, even only once from the pulpit. They may or may not invite a member of Presbytery to preside at the election of a pastor. Commissioners from the congregation appear before Presbytery with the call, and the ordination or installation may take place on that very day. In point of fact, it generally takes place on the Lord's day, immediately following, and that without asking for objections, if there be any, to be lodged. A congregation can mortgage its Church property without even consulting with the Presbytery. In New York alone during the last few years a number of churches have been sold to other parties by the congregations, and the Presbytery were not even informed of the fact—until it was too late to give a helping hand. Again, a congregation may sell out and build elsewhere; they may erect mission chapels which are never intended to be self-supporting; they may put these up side by side with organized churches; without reference to the Presbytery. But more than this, a meeting of session may be held without a minister as moderator. Many cases could be adduced of session-work being done by a single ruling elder during vacancies of several years. Again, all ministers without charge are members of Presbytery. It is frequently seen that there are more *bona*, or perhaps we should say, *malis fide*, members of a Presbytery who are engaged in merchandise than there are regular pastors. The Presbytery of New York has upwards of one hundred and fifty ministers on the roll, and of these there are not forty ministers in actual charge. Allowing for professors, editors, secretaries, who are perhaps entitled to sit as members, there are still upwards of a hundred ministers in the Presbytery named who are book agents, or Wall Street brokers, or otherwise engaged in trade. The Presbytery in the United States is thus a heterogeneous body. This of course affects the composition of a Synod, as all these ministers, with charge or without, constitute its membership. It follows also that the General Assembly may be in part composed of men who are not doing pastoral work in the most remote sense of the times. In many other ways, marked differences from the Presbyterianism of Canada drop out. A congregation can adopt any hymn-book they please; they can elect elders without presbyterial supervision; they can appoint elders to serve for life or for a limited period.

It is sufficient to say that in regard to all these points and many more we could name, the Presbyterianism of Canada is in marked contrast. The Presbytery has a felt presence and power. Every congregation knows there is a court above them, that can look into their affairs, that can advise with them of its own accord, and that can interpose in between them and the disorganizing agencies they may in-

troduce. The effect upon the management of property for instance will be at once seen and appreciated. Such a thing as a church building being heavily mortgaged or sold to Roman Catholics or any other party, without consent of the Presbytery could not occur in the Presbyterian Church of Canada. That would be abnormal and out of the question. Hence, what has so frequently taken place in New York could not happen in Little York, or as it is better known, in Toronto. In this city such a thing as a church property being lost without consent of Presbytery is entirely unknown. Special leave has to be obtained even for mortgaging the property. That this conserves Presbyterian interests is obvious at a glance. The mission chapel system is happily unknown on this side of the line. The Presbyterian Church follows the analogy of nature in building up her congregations. They commence with a Sunday School. Preaching is then added. When sufficient members are found they are organized. This nucleus is carefully fostered. It is watched during its infantile years. By means of the Home Mission the missionary becomes a pastor. In a few years the congregation is worked up to the self-sustaining point. Then it can do for itself. But the chapel system is different. "Once a chapel, aye a chapel" is the motto in many a United States Presbytery. There is thus growing up a kind of semi-episcopacy. A large and wealthy congregation has its two, or five, or ten Mission Chapels which are intended to revolve as satellites for ever around the parent Church. In Canada again none but a *bona fide* minister is a presbyter. Professors of Divinity, and Secretaries of Boards are, we presume, without exception, entitled to sit as members of the Church Courts, and very properly so. But that Tom, Dick, and Harry, the one of whom has bought a farm, or the other is a speculator, or the third has married a rich wife, and therefore cannot preach, should be on equality with the ministers of churches who are bearing the heat and burden of the day, is clearly nonsense in the Presbyterian sense, and the Canada Presbyterian Church is happily free of the anomaly.

There is a deeper reason for these features of Presbyterianism in the United States than necessity. They are in keeping with the people, with their whole tone and manner. It is in harmony with the go-ahead quality that enters into their every day life. A Presbytery in the States would not spend days in the discussion of some nice point of law or precedent. They go like an arrow to the target. They are quick, active, energetic, and impatient of form. They do not set so much store by a clergyman in harness as we do, and are quick to dispose of him should he not be coming up to the mark, or making the funds come in! At the same time, it is evident that our American cousins are becoming more alive to the value of the essential principles of Presbyterianism, and we would not be surprised to see the day when many of these evils will disappear. While we are led to the above remarks in order to show the superior character of Presbyterianism on this side, and to make our own people love their Zion all the more, we are second to none in our admiration of the American Presbyterian churches, both North and South, in our appreciation of their many great measures and distinguished men, and in our gratitude to God for the invaluable work they have been enabled to accomplish both at home and abroad. It is rather with the view of helping forward the day when the Presbyterian Churches throughout the world will become as they are homogeneous—more like each other as to their external forms, that we write these words. Then we may look for a true confederation of the various national Presbyterian bodies.

Presbyterian Union in England.

We have had occasion to notice from time to time in our columns the progress of Presbyterianism in England. Hitherto it has been represented chiefly by the English Presbyterian Church, and Churches in connection with the United Presbyterian Church in Scotland. For a considerable time negotiations have been going on to bring about a union of these two bodies. They have at least been so successful as to point to a speedy and harmonious union. The Union Committee of the two Churches have held their last meeting, and it now only remains for the Synods of the respective bodies to pronounce upon the terms finally agreed to, and union will be consummated. But as the articles of union have already in substance been accepted by the highest courts, no obstacle is anticipated, and if these expectations are realized union will take place in Liverpool on the 25th of May next. The following abstract of an article upon "The Coming Union" from the *Weekly Review*, the organ of English Presbyterianism, will, we are sure, be acceptable and interesting to our readers.

This union is likely to be fruitful of happy consequences for the Church, and even for the Kingdom. The spectacle of Presbyterian Churches in the same place having no connection or contending as rivals, yet holding the same doctrine, policy and worship, has always been puzzling to Englishmen and difficult to justify. That will be removed by union, and many others with more seriously injurious practical results, similar to those with which we have been too well acquainted in Canada. Chief among these is the waste of men and money inseparable from keeping up two sets of machinery to do the work which can better be done by only one. When this union is effected, if all come into it, the new Presbyterian Church of England will number two hundred and fifty-eight congregations.

As has been said, a large number of the negotiating Churches belong to the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and one of the chief difficulties in the way of union has been the warm attachment of these Churches and their ministers to the parent Church, and their natural reluctance to sever their connection with it. To advance this union that Church has agreed to give up over one hundred congregations, an act which speaks volumes for the urgent necessity which dictates it, and for the noble and disinterested spirit of the United Presbyterian Church which has enabled her to yield so much to advance the general interest of Christ's cause as identified with Presbyterianism in England.

The peculiar character of the relations of the negotiating Churches has led to the introduction into the terms of union of some strange and unique conditions. These affect first of all the Church that is to be the English Presbyterian Church and the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Closer relations, indeed, are proposed than at present obtain between any two Presbyterian Churches in Britain. They are not only to suffer each other's ministers or preachers to receive calls—as is already done with the Free Church of Scotland, for example; they are to substitute for the formal "deputation" which at present allied Churches send to make a speech at one another's Supreme Courts, a more substantial representation, entitled to take part, without a vote, in the deliberations of the sister body. They undertake to endeavour by-and-by to co-operate more than is at present possible in missionary movements. And, finally, as if to provide against possible occasions of alienation between such friendly bodies, and secure for each of them the moral support of the other in all weighty emergencies, it is arranged that the two Synods, when they see cause, shall confer together on questions of common concern through an advising council of thirty-five from each side. These latter provisions are novel experiments in the way of Church alliance. It is possible they may need modification by experience, but they point in a direction in which Presbyterians will probably be found moving more and more as years pass. That the promoters of this movement do not mean to keep such close terms to themselves, but really contemplate a wider league for more mutual support, is evident from one clause in the articles, which actually invites the Free Church of Scotland to enter on a "similar relationship." Perhaps the invitation may be extended still further some day. A federation of all Presbyterian Churches in the United Kingdom on some such footing of counsel and sympathy as has here been sketched would fulfil the dream of many, even if it should surpass the anticipations of all.

This will be applying on a smaller scale some of those principles upon which the great alliance of all the Presbyterian bodies is based. The experiment to be made of its practical working is novel, and will be watched with interest. If it can be wrought successfully, may it not lead to a closer interest and union between the great body of Presbyterians in this country and in the United States?

We give entire the concluding sentences of the article from which these notes are taken.

"That future Church in the South will be heir to the past history of orthodox English Presbyterianism. It will gather to itself all the strength of imported Presbyterianism from Ireland and Scotland, which is at present dissipated through disunion. It will carry on unbroken the noble work to which the Presbyterian Church in England has given itself. It will maintain the most fraternal ties with that larger and not less prosperous communion from which it will have drawn so important a contribution to its total strength. It will bulk bigger before English eyes, and will, we trust, commend itself to the respect of all English Christians by doing well and faithfully its sacred work, and living on kindly terms with all its neighbours. The auspicious accomplishment of a change so long desired and laboured after deserves to be signalled by a special outburst of Christian bounty and thankfulness on the part of the Churches interested, and will, it is to be hoped, impart fresh impetus to their efforts both after consolidation on the ground already gained, and after further