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Contributors & Correspondents.

NEW BRUNSWICK.

REV. H. STOWELL BROWN IN ST. JOHN'S—THE MONEY MARKET—A "PECULIAR" CASE—A MORAL.

The visit of Hugh Stowell Brown to this city is quite an event, short as the visit was. At first it was announced that he would arrive on Saturday evening, and leave on Monday morning, but when he came he was prevailed on to stay another day. Consequently, he preached twice on Sunday, and on Monday evening he lectured on the "Proverbs of the People." All his appearances were in the Mechanics' Institute, which is the largest audience room in the city. It is to be regretted that when representative men like Stowell Brown and Punshon pay a casual visit, that is, are not brought here to do some special work like opening an ecclesiastical building, they are taken hold of by the denomination to which they belong, and treated as if they were the peculiar property of that denomination. It is never assumed that they belong to the great Christian commonwealth. Some denominational scheme or other, probably a college or academy, is in need, and hence the celebrity of the man is bartered and made into money for that purpose. Of course were the orator asked to come for that purpose nobody would have any right to find fault. To the thoughtful portion of those that heard him, Mr. Brown's ministrations were a great treat, as indeed might have been expected. His presentation of the Gospel though calm and unadorned with the oratory which is sometimes styled *highfalutin* are eminently characteristic in that they edify and inform the mind, they are so fresh and full of strength that any that hear aright cannot but be invigorated. But because of the calmness which characterised them, especially his sermons, some were disappointed. The crowd meant to hear what the crowd esteems a great thing, that is flights of oratory such as are heard at rare intervals, highly wrought periods that run up to the infinite distances of the stars and delivered with stentorian voice and action that galvanises the whole body from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet. The elements that constitute greatness in the estimation of the people, I don't mean the unwashed, but the washed and clothed to the pink of perfection, are volubility of utterance whether with or without grammar, style, and accuracy of information, fulness of voice, and violent gesture. Hence it is that men said of Hugh Stowell Brown's preaching, "Oh, it was just the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the old fashioned way." In other words it was not the gospel of somebody else in a new fashioned way. It is now as it was in Corinth, Paul would not have the ghost of a chance if Apollos was in the neighbourhood, that is if even the culture of Apollos would not stand in his way.

The tightness in the money market as it is called still continues, some say with some alleviation, and others affirm that no relief is felt yet. A strange piece of business, one that has called forth a great deal of feeling, and which has, it is said, its political as well as its commercial side, has evolved out of the crisis. To me it has its moral side which is far more important than either of the other two. It is so complicated that I will not take up your time with all the phases of it, I will just refer to one item. It has transpired that a firm which has gone to the wall owed the Custom house the enormous sum of \$32,000 for duties. It was understood that everybody was dealt with alike by the collector, that is on the ready money principle and that alone. Nobody, that is of the general public, believed that favoritism prevailed in the Custom House. One of the strangest features of the whole is that the Collector affirms that he knew nothing about it. How there could be such ignorance if the Collector is at all fit for his duties is hard to conceive. Surmises, however, need not be indulged in just now, as the Minister of Customs is at present on his way to hold an investigation. That there grave immorality somewhere there can no doubt. It reveals a phase of commercial unsoundness which it is not pleasant to contemplate. We hear from time to time of bribery and trademarks and deception the part of commercial men, what the same competition drives men to do, and some of these men among the first in riches and with an odour of sanctity put them that is somewhat extraordinary, all this, according to some, belongs to

retailers; the wholesale dealers are more honourable, or, at all events, have less temptation to act as they should not, that is if they have souls. Well, the wholesale dealer is not so much above his brother, if we only knew it all. And yet the community at large are not so guiltless as many of them imagine themselves to be. The merchant is able to tell the buyer what looks as bad as that which the seller does. For ladies either old or young to make a round of the stores and put the salesman to the trouble of shewing their wares when they have no intention of buying, and when they have seen all that they want to see, to tell the young man that waited on them that they will call again, when they have not the slightest intention of calling again, is not a practice that will stand the eye of the all seeing One any more than dishonest trademarks, or professing to sell below cost price, or asserting lustily that the goods have been imported this season when they have been in the store for several years. It is said that women that make the highest pretences to sanctity are accustomed to do that. When will professing Christians learn that the whole man has to be given to God, not a part of the man? That truth in the inward parts is requisite? That our life must be a harmonious whole, not wanting at any point? It is to be feared that no class of society has sufficient reason for casting a stone at any other class.

H.

St. John, 9th Oct., 1872.

"GREAT PRESBYTERIANS."

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

Sir—Would you allow me to refer to an article in the last Home and Foreign Record of the C. P. Church, which appears to me in very bad taste, and cannot fail to be damaging to our church. This article is headed "Great Presbyterians," being the leading article. Take the following extract. "It is unfortunate, to say the least, that 'Great Presbyterian,' and 'Great Scoundrel,' or 'Great Drunkard,' should be names for the same man." Was there ever such a libel perpetrated? I leave it to the common sense of your readers if anything more outrageous ever was penned. Again, I have never in all my experience found any person, who, "with wonderful fluency and fervour will dilate upon the constitution of a church by whose doctrine, practice, and discipline, they find themselves condemned." On the contrary, I have invariably found that a "Great Scoundrel," or a "Great Drunkard" faithfully dealt with by a Session for such traits of character is anything but a "great Presbyterian," and I must say that if the writer is "one of the clergy," he is one in whose Session discipline is one of the forgotten virtues. I wonder how he was not ashamed to write such an article, and I wonder still more that the Editor could print, as a leader, such arrant nonsense. "It is a dirty bird fouls its own nest." But leaving aside the nonsensical part of the article, which, I hope, is only intended as Artemus Ward would say as a "goak," referring to another point and presumably the main point of the argument of the article we find it to be as hurtful as the other is foolish. What is the cause of what Catholics call the divisions among Protestants. Is it a want of harmony upon the fundamental doctrine of Salvation, viz: Justification of Faith alone? No. It is minor matters, such as the church government or distinctive ceremonies in conducting divine worship and service such as Episcopalian and Presbyterian or comparatively slight divergencies on subordinate points of doctrine, while holding the one sure ground of hope. What then? It is a matter of no consequence that being right on the main point we may be one or other of the "Sectaries." If so, why does not the C. P. Church at once throw itself into the arms of one or the other of the bodies named and cease to exist. If so, what anathema should not that schismatic church incur that separates itself from and denounces as unchristian a church on the ground of state connection, &c. If so, why defer Union with a sister Presbyterian Church, if minor points of difference are of no consequence. If so, why is Dr. Macvicar struggling, fighting, starving, and almost dying in the effort to establish a Montreal College, when he is surrounded by such as Morin, Lennoxville, Queen's, Victoria, and Knox Colleges. He certainly is a "Great Presbyterian," but neither a "Great Drunkard" nor a "Great Scoundrel." If so, why should our church train French students, and not leave the French Canadian Missionary Society to the work they have

carried on for thirty five years. If so, why is it a matter of jubilation that the C. P. Church shows signs of success and increase, and matter of grief when losses are incurred in membership and efficiency. The answers to all these are the same, and apparent to shallowest intellect.

Is it on such principles as the writer enunciates that heroes are suckled. Oh shade of Janet Geddes veil your face! What unmerited agonies, sufferings, and deaths did your unreasonable spirit bring on your fellow-countrymen and countrywomen in days gone by. How different in the present day in which we find that lack-a-daisical spirit of accommodation that weakens the joints of the church, and unbuckles the harness and leaves her at the mercy of the foe. Is it not rather that being rooted and grounded in the fundamental doctrinal point of salvation by a Crucified Redeemer, it becomes us as a next step to ascertain how the services of God and the organization of His house may be conducted in accordance with his word, and has he not, think you, designated the means most likely to secure the glorious result of bringing the kingdom of this world to be the kingdoms of our Lord even in such a matter as these minor points. Perish the thought that is otherwise. And when we have convinced ourselves on these points, secondary though they be—shall we not hold them up as almost a "sine qua non" of our principles. Let us have "great Presbyterians," John Knoxes every one—in whom the spirit that martyrs are made is the predominant one, then we shall have fewer of our members—nay elders—leaving our communion and retrograding to an effete Episcopacy. If our church is not the truest church in her forms and ceremonies of service and of church government. If the church is not the best and best adopted to meet the wants of the people of our church and the world, if our church is not worth upholding in all its affairs as the nearest to the word of God, then let us either break up and amalgamate with some other denomination, it does not seem according to the writer much matter which or else adopt such principles and ceremonies as are nearest to the word of God than we find ourselves now to be possessed.

I glory in the Presbyterian organization, and above all things to meet with as I have many times and oft "great Presbyterians," and I grieve over those cold-hearted ones who are here to-day and away to-morrow; and while welcoming all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth, yet convinced as I am that Presbyterianism is the most Scriptural denomination, it has all my sympathy, and my desire is that there were no other. Well may we say in reference to article, "Great Presbyterians" save us from our friends."

Yours truly, R.

Montreal, 16th Oct., 1872.

EXAMINATION OF SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

At the Convention of Sunday School Teachers held last week at Montreal, Dr. MacVicar introduced the above subject for consideration. We give below the substance of his remarks.—He said:—

What I have been asked to bring before the convention is purely a matter of business, and therefore instead of making a speech, I wish to state as plainly as I can, the nature of this business.

You are asked to consider the propriety of instituting regular written examinations for Sunday School Teachers, to be held at such times and places as you may be pleased to appoint. The subjects for elementary certificates might embrace Scripture History and out line of Doctrine, Evidences of Christianity, and Principles and Art of Teaching. I merely mention these, however, as specimen of what should be aimed at, the filing of the precise subjects is a matter of detail. In England, where Sunday Schools originated, such examinations have been recently held with much success and have been even rendered competitive, prizes being awarded to successful candidates.

This is a new thing in Canada, but I trust that it will not on this account be summarily dismissed. Old things are not to be venerated and maintained simply because of their antiquity, and new things should not be rejected because of their novelty.

There are two questions which we may ask respecting this subject:—

First. Is the proposal a good one? I answer—We are all agreed that in secular

education strict and frequent written examinations are indispensable. Common School Teachers require to pass such scrutiny. Persons wishing to hold positions of trust and honor in the Army and in the civil service require to pass examinations. And are the children of this world to be wiser in their generation than the children of light? We introduce examinations into every department of sacred learning in our Theological Colleges. Candidates for the ministry in connection with all denominations are required to pass such, and where there is laxness or indifference on this subject a certain degree of incapacity and weakness are imposed upon the Church of God in the persons of her public Teachers. I do not regard the work of the Sunday School Teacher as more sacred than that of the minister of Jesus Christ; and I cannot think it to be an invasion upon the piety of a teacher to examine him thoroughly. To ascertain the extent and accuracy of his knowledge and his ability to communicate such knowledge to others is surely not to deteriorate his godliness. I have no idea that a man is entitled to take rank as possessing superior piety because his knowledge is so ill-digested and confused that he can give no intelligent account of it to others. Nor, on the other hand, am I ready to accept as pious and well qualified to do Sunday School work the person who can pass a first-class examination. What I want is piety and clear-headedness together. I feel sure that superintendents will agree with me as to the necessity of getting teachers of the highest order into our schools. Much has been said about retaining senior pupils in our classes, and many schemes and attractions have been proposed, but, I believe, that what we need to secure this end is simply to obtain a higher order of teachers. The notion has too long prevailed that teaching is a work for which any one is qualified; that a boy or girl with very scanty knowledge and no training in the principles and art of teaching is quite fit to take charge of a class in Sunday School. Spiritual power we want,—love to God and love to souls, vital heart-power, the presence of God's Spirit felt and enjoyed in the heart; but we want intellectual power and culture as well.

Now, if systematic written examinations will tend to develop and secure these qualifications they should certainly be instituted.

I presume that we are agreed as to the educating power of written examinations. If nothing can be alleged against them on the score of their influence on the piety and religious fervour of teachers, certainly very much can be advanced in favour of them as a means of intellectual culture. Solitary study, attendance upon lectures and lessons in the class room, discussion or conference with others are all valuable means of education; but experience has shown that written examinations in connection with such are indispensable. This is now conceded by all successful educators and we have accordingly frequent written examinations in all subjects from the highest taught in our colleges down to those embraced in the primary departments of our common schools. And if such are requisite to stimulate to healthful activity in secular matters, much more is this the case, I apprehend, with respect to sacred or religious subjects which by many are esteemed as dull and commonplace, or as sufficiently understood.

But let me suppose that we can agree that the proposal before this Convention is a wise one. We may now ask a second question, viz: Is it practicable, and in what manner? I answer, It is not at all probable that the majority, or even a large minority, of the present staff of teachers would come forward to be examined. They have earned to themselves "a good degree" without such scrutiny, and are contented and useful in their present positions.

In order to render the proposal practicable, I venture to suggest that proper means should be adopted for training teachers. This is, indeed, at the very foundation of progress and increased success in our work, and it is truly surprising that so little has been attempted and done in this direction. There are various ways in which teachers might be educated for their work. The pastor of each church might gather a certain number of young persons into a class and train them thoroughly in all the branches of the curriculum of study adopted by the Convention, or in any other course he might prefer. Such a class would prepare candidates for examinations, and would be found most convenient for Superintendents, enabling them to fill with competent persons vacancies which occur in their

schools; and it would tend also to secure more numerous recruits, and to elevate the standard of attainments among teachers. There can be no doubt that many persons who might render efficient service are lost to this most important department of the Church's work, because, when about to leave Sunday School or Bible Class, they are not systematically instructed and prepared to enter upon it.

In cities and towns one person might be secured to undertake the duty of training a class of teachers for several Churches, and the proposed written examinations might be conducted by him and by others associated with him for this purpose. Or, once more, why not have courses of lectures established for the purpose. We have now courses of lectures in History, in English Literature, in Astronomy, and various departments of science for the higher education of women. Why not similar lectures in the art of teaching, in the evidences of Christianity, and the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith.

My answer, therefore, to the second question is, that by adopting proper means for the training of young teachers, it may be found practicable to pass them through examinations, written or oral, or both, in the subjects upon which they have received instruction. And surely no one can doubt the propriety, indeed, the necessity, of the Church of God ascertaining the views, attainments, and aptitude to teach of those to whom she commits the care and training of the young. But let no one imagine that it is proposed to make these examinations compulsory, or to interfere in any way with the existing staff and arrangements of schools, or to limit superintendents in their choice of teachers to such as may pass such examinations. The intention is to increase the number of sound, efficient, and godly teachers; and I cannot suppose that a course of thorough evangelical instruction will hinder the spontaneous activity of their piety,—it will rather help it, and can certainly in no way impair the present simplicity of Sabbath School organization. But let it be distinctly understood, that without such instruction the attempt to examine Sabbath School teachers is hopeless.

I have said enough, Mr. Chairman, to introduce this subject, and perhaps to awaken discussion, and reserve further remarks for a future occasion.

SERMON READING.

A few years ago, an excellent writer was reading in his pulpit the words, "Let justice be done, though the Heavens fall." When he spoke of the Heavens he made a sweeping gesture, as if he would brush the skies away with his left hand; but he kept a sharp look-out for his papers, he kept his right hand fixed upon them, and seemed to feel that what he had written must be held fast, whatever became of the Heavens. Since the preceding sentences were penned, a fine scholar was reading in the pulpit an exhortation to instant repentance. But he must turn over the leaves of his manuscript, and while he was saying, "My heart's desire is to see—" he turned over two leaves instead of one, lost his place—what was he desiring to see?—"you instantly," he added. But the critical instant had already fled, and then, finding the right page, he subjoined, "begin a new course of life. Did any man ever change his course under the influence of such a broken sentence?"

While the president of a New England college was preaching on the text, "Take heed how ye hear," he read in a fixed monotone the following sentence: "If a man should knock at your window in the night, and cry, 'Fire, fire, the building is on fire; be quick, no time to be lost,' would you say, 'What a voice that man has, I do not like his tones, he does not make graceful gestures?'" This was the monotonous question. The honest answer must have been, "Yes; if a man should really come to my window at dead of night, and hold the president's paper in his hand, and read the president's identical words, 'Fire, fire,' with no other tones and gestures than those which the president employed, we should either repeat the president's criticisms upon the man, or else infer that the man was in sport, if not insane." It is easy to say that each of these faults is an abuse of the *revue* method, and may be avoided. This is true. It is not so much the actual fault as the tendency to it, which we now consider.—*Bibliotheca.*

Polycarp, the martyr, at four score said, "Seventy years I have found Christ precious, and to all eternity I expect to taste His love."

Many a child goes astray not because there is a want of prayer or virtue at home, but simply because home lacks sunshine.

It is easier to set a man against all the world than to make him fight with himself.—*Tillotson.*

When thy unfaithfulness would discourage thee, think of His faithfulness. Let thy weakness remind thee of His strength.—*Romaine.*