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THE LOWER PROVINCES.

(From our own Correspondent.)

The Synod so far has not through a deal of business, but there remains very much still to be taken up. The foreign mission is reported to be in a flourishing state. At present there are four ordained missionaries on the New Hebrides islands and two on the island of Trinidad. In addition to these, another has just been designated to the former field. The newly appointed brother will spend some months in visiting the congregations and will sail late in the Fall so as to be able to reach the islands next summer. The Home Mission Board presented a pretty full and satisfactory report of the proceedings of the year. The greatest want which this Board feels is that of labourers, and never has the want been felt more pressing, at least in late years, than last winter. This summer, however, the aspect of things is changed. In addition to a good many of our own students who have completed their studies, quite a number of young men have been secured from the Seminaries of the States, especially those of New York and Princeton. Of course the latter remain for the summer months only, but even that will secure a good object. It is unnecessary to dwell at greater length on the need that there is for labourers, as that phase is just the same in the Upper Provinces as here, and if there be any difference Ontario feels the necessity more intensely than we do. The reports on Temperance, on Sabbath observance, and on the state of religion did not present any features of striking importance, save that the tendencies of the times in which we live imperatively demand no less but even more attention to be given to such topics. The state of the supplement Fund is at the present moment more unsatisfactory than any of the others. The Committee having charge of that scheme are in the greatest perplexity as to what is to be done. The present financial state is the natural, necessary result, of the inequality which the recently published statistics, as I pointed out in a former letter, show so prominently in the contributions given to this as compared with those given to other schemes. The condition of the Fund is this. There is a debt of more than \$400, there is due at this date more than \$1,500, that is to say to say some \$2000 of liabilities lie against it at this moment while there is but a little over \$800 in the Treasurer's hands. It should be added that the supplement scheme is separate here from the Home Mission Fund, the separation having been made some years ago while with the other churches, the Canada Presbyterian among the number, it is but a part of the Home Scheme. The deputations from the American churches were heard on Friday afternoon. Mr. Robb the deputy of the United Presbyterian Church of North America was heard first, and his speech was brief and to the point. The schemes and statistics of his Church were closely adhered to, and while there was not great brilliance the interest was maintained to the end. The same can hardly be said of the representatives of the American Church, at all events it cannot be said of the first speaker. It was felt by many that he occupied far too much time, and the interest was by no means kept up. A deputation is yet to be received from the Wesleyan Conference which is at present sitting in this city.

One of the most interesting and important subjects brought before the Synod was a scheme for insuring churches. The year before last two church edifices were destroyed by fire about the same time, one of them being a city church whose value was not less than \$12,000. This it was that led some to think that a mutual scheme might be advantageously wrought and under the supervision of the Church itself. The matter was brought up at last annual meeting when a minister and two elders of large financial experience were appointed to mature a plan for the purpose. A report has now been brought up, admirable in its character and so far as can be seen most feasible in its working provided a sufficient number of congregations join heartily in the plan. It is not proposed to include in the plan the expensive

city churches because if one of them was received at its full value and it be burned the Fund would be entirely swamped at once. It is proposed that the churches be admitted in grades, varying from \$1000 to \$10000, and the most expensive church may be included to such an extent, and the trustees may secure the remaining value in the ordinary way as they have heretofore done. I may refer in more detail to the plan when I see it before me in type. It is sufficient to say that it was received with the utmost cordiality, and the committee was instructed to ascertain as speedily as possible to what extent congregations will fall in with the plan and if as many as would make the scheme safe signify their acceptance of it to proceed to carry it out. It is seldom that a church building is destroyed in that way, but in future where a calamity of the kind does occur this plan will prevent an undue burden from falling on congregations that are pressed sufficiently already and will also obviate the necessity of appealing to the Church as a whole.

One subject promises to occupy a large portion of the present session of the Synod. It is that of the marriage affinity question. It may seem strange that the lawfulness of permitting a man to marry the sister of his deceased wife or a woman to marry the brother of her deceased husband should be mooted at all in a Presbyterian church. And yet so it is. I cannot tell you as yet the result reached as the discussion is only in progress. The view that is almost if not altogether considered heretofore amongst Presbyterians was put forward with great clearness and erudition and power by Professor McKnight. Whether he is right or wrong in the conclusions at which he has arrived no man who is candid and impartial himself can for a moment deny that Professor McKnight in all that he said, as indeed his conduct has ever been, was thoroughly candid and honest and truth-loving, not shrinking in the least degree from the statement of what he is convinced to be the teaching of the Word of God. It demands no little boldness on the part of a man occupying the position which he holds to set forth such views. For it must be confessed that with not a few of the members of Synod and with perhaps a still larger proportion of the members of the Church the reputation of the Professor of theology is now very seriously at stake. It is easy to understand how great the alarm is that many feel, I should say horror rather than alarm, that such sentiments should be entertained by one that fills such a responsible position. What conclusion will be reached I will be able to inform you in my next.

Yours truly,

H.

Halifax, 1st July, 1872.

MONTREAL.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

When I so abruptly closed my last letter, I was speaking of the position and claims of the Montreal College. I trust that I shall not be considered tedious if I dwell a little longer on the same topic. On purely a priori grounds Montreal might well seem peculiarly fitted to be the seat of such an institution. Its central situation and commercial pre-eminence, constitute obvious advantages—the importance of which is enhanced when we remember that this city, so singularly favored in many respects, is still a stronghold of superstition and a focus of error. We presume that it is the weight of these and similar considerations, which has led our friends of the Methodist communion to fix on Montreal as the seat of their proposed theological institution. We trust, however, that there is little need to insist on these points, recognised and admitted as they doubtless are by most of those who have given any attention to the subject. It will indeed be an auspicious omen for the future, not of Montreal only, but of the Dominion at large, when side by side with her secular sister, McGill College, there shall rise a hall of sacred learning—destined let us trust and pray, to send forth many "good soldiers of Jesus Christ" ready to "endure hardness for His sake, and to do battle with the vice and ignorance that are so prevalent in our midst. The two institutions are already affiliated, and when the intimate connection now existing is cemented and strengthened by local contiguity, we may well hope to find in the history of these schools of religion and culture, a truthful image of the ideal so finely sketched by the laureate:—

"Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell;
That mind and soul, according well,
May make one music as before."

I have already alluded to the fact that the Wesleyans are showing their appreciation of the advantages of an educated ministry by taking steps for the erection of a theological college in this city. Much has already been done in the matter provisionally. A large amount of money has been subscribed chiefly by liberal-minded residents in Montreal, and the Rev. Dr. Douglas has been appointed theological tutor in connection with the scheme. To those who have seen and heard the reverend gentleman, this appointment will give ample assurance that the first professional chair in the Montreal Wesleyan College will not lack the adornment of dignity, culture and eloquence.

Many of your readers would be pleased, in common with myself, to see the statement of your New Brunswick correspondent to the effect that unwonted interest had been evoked in that region by the efforts of the student evangelists there. These gentlemen, you are probably aware, were and are students of the College here, and from a personal knowledge of their character and qualifications, I am not at all surprised at their success. Some of the readers of the B. A. P. may not be aware that there exists in the same institution to which I have referred so often, a missionary society, having for its main object the propagation of the Gospel among the French and Highland Roman Catholics. Two missionaries were sent out by the society last year, with such encouraging results, that this year the number was doubled, so that there are now four students laboring amongst the class above referred to, in different parts of Ontario and Quebec. This is not only a "labour of love" but in great measure a "work of faith" also, seeing that the necessary expenses connected with it are met by the subscriptions collected for that purpose by the students of the college during their summer's engagements. It is surely not needful to commend the merits of this work, or to enforce its claims on those to whom they may be presented.

Might I be allowed a few words on the letter which appeared in your columns last week, written by a correspondent who signs himself "One who knows." It had reference to the late Dr. Norman McLeod, and his claims upon the respect and approbation of Christians. Judging from the tone of the letter, I fear that "One who knows" moves in no very extended or symmetrical circle, either of knowledge or charity. The charges which he brings against Dr. McLeod are extremely vague and unsubstantial. We imagine that their gist and import may be summed up as follows: "Norman was something of a latitudinarian, and did not further much the cause of 'vital godliness,' in himself and others." We would humbly suggest to "One who knows" that this vague, intangible accusation seems hardly to warrant him in assailing the memory and blackening the fame of the author of "The Earnest Student," the unwearied disseminator of "Good Words," the eloquent advocate with tongue and pen of things that are "pure, lovely, and of good report." I, for one, am strongly inclined to believe in the vitality of a godliness which finds its outflow and its evidence in words of charity and deeds of love.

"DIGAMMA."

Montreal, July 8th, 1872.

TOBACCO AND STRONG DRINK.

Why is that these two things always go together, except that they belong to the same category. Ministers used to indulge in drinking till the people waked up, or, perhaps, they themselves and to drink became disreputable. Of course there is no special rule for ministers that people should not follow for they are "examples to the flock" yet by common consent the people do things that ministers may not.

Let us see how it looks? Imagine the Apostle John with a cigar in his mouth or the Apostle Paul with a pipe or quid. Do you start? It is revolting, but why should that be unbecoming which is all right and proper in their successors in their work? What the Apostle said to Timothy, "Keep thyself pure," has need to be the injunction to many a minister young and old. And it is not a question of purity alone this tobacco business, the habit is making fearful havoc with the well being of

our race. The revenue of our country is affected by it and next to spirits tobacco stands the second in value as yielding revenue. Then we learn that in France, the increase of insanity and idleness and kindred diseases has just kept pace with the increased revenue from the tax on tobacco all that saves us is that women abstain. Those parts of the country where women use tobacco are said to be not worth saving. However, let us come back to our text. Smoking and drinking how naturally they go together, let them go but not carry with them, Christians or the Ministers of God. Slavery has been abolished in the U. S. Let emancipation be here declared, and the people set free for no slavery is equal to that of a bad habit.

I have seen members, chewing by my side at the Lord's Table, and no sooner the service is over than you will see no less than a dozen pulling the fumes in your face. Having spoken against it to several I have been told that our minister smokes, our Elders smoke, Deacons smoke and drink, Members do the same only to a greater extent. I have had to stand the taunts from the careless, and it is something I cannot deny. Yes, mine out of every ten of our Ministers, Elders, Deacons and Members are guilty of less or more of the accursed thing. We say then in view of the above fearful facts that the church and the government can no longer find an excuse for their inactivity in the great and good cause of temperance, but should rise; the church in Her Majesty, and the state with its legal power and crush at once this God provoking and soul destroying system of strong drink. But it is said by some that we shall never see the day, when the use of either will be prohibited. But we say in view of the fearful effects of the common use of drink and tobacco, every lover of his country, and every Christian should not cease to contend and to pray until the plague is driven from our land. And I say the church in Canada is not worthy of her high privilege, if it does not expel the reptile from its pale, nor yet is our country or government worthy of the great Blessings with which it has been distinguished in its signal deliverance from invading foes.

Is the Bible inconsistent in itself? Certainly not. Wine, that is pronounced as a Blessing is unfermented and free from injury. Fermented wine and strong drink are strictly forbidden, either to look at it or to give to our neighbour. With these facts and numerous others which (if time and space permitted) could be brought against the accursed thing, I appeal to you, I appeal to the church, and to Christians, young and old to raise their voices against the devils greatest servants. Leaving this with you.

I am your well wisher,

A PRESBYTERIAN.

NORMAN McLEOD.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

Sir,—“One who knows,” in last number of the PRESBYTERIAN, published a letter, apparently having in view to cast a stain upon the memory of Norman McLeod and his ancestors. I am not by any means a blind admirer of the McLeods, but I ask you Sir, is it seemly thus to asperse one of Scotland's noblest sons, the moment he is laid in his grave? Take him all in all, Norman McLeod was one of the best specimens of an Evangelical ministry, that the present century has given to the world. He was indeed too liberal a man for the tastes of many in the church to which he belonged and had sympathies with all good men, whether found in his own or other evangelical denominations. While it is perfectly fair to criticise the public actions of such a man, to say as the writer of the letter referred to does, that "Norman McLeod cannot be said to have done much to promote vital godliness," is surely in direct opposition to fact, as every one can testify, who is in any measure acquainted with his missionary labours in Glasgow and his consuming zeal as convener of the Indian Missions of the Church of Scotland. As I dislike anonymous communications above all things, I trust, should the writer of the letter, desire to continue this correspondence he will do so by subscribing his name.

In haste,

Yours very truly,

WM. COCHRANE.

Brantford, Ont., July 8th, 1872.

There is infinite pathos in unsuccessful authorship. The book that perishes unread is the deaf mute of literature.—Holmes.

WHY AM I A PRESBYTERIAN?

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

Sir,—Some time ago I read in your paper the question from an enquiring mind: What is the ground or reason for being a Presbyterian? I have been looking for an answer. None has appeared. Allow me to state briefly the reasons why I am a Presbyterian. In reading the New Testament, Matt. 23-8, I find "One is your master, even Christ, all ye are brethren." Here is the fundamental law of Presbyterianism. No Pope, no bishop, no priest, no clergy. All upon one democratic plank—brethren. All elders, pastors, ministers, clergy if you will, are the elected chosen of or by the brethren. You destroy the essential element of Presbyterianism by patronage in any form. The clergy of the Scotch Church are as independent of the people as the Bishops in the English Church.

Being brethren, Christians are judicially bound to each other. Take away this bond and you make Congregationalism. You destroy brotherhood. Our democratic brethren who limit government to those who worship in one house, make stone and lime a fundamental plank. You do not destroy Presbyterianism by the ascending narrowing scale of election.

I have stated my belief briefly. The curse and ruin of religious papers is long-winded, exhaustive articles. I see you are pestered with these double column geetry. Send them to Jericho.

I could not be a Methodist—I speak as regards government. With them the people are nothing. Suppose a body of people were to elect their pastors or clergy, and these clergy were to elect a permanent head, I could join that body call it by what name you please.

In conclusion if Presbyterians generally are like the ex-moderator who preached before the General Assembly at Detroit on the permanent and the changing, I must be so plain as to say they are not very clear headed.

Yours truly,

A HEARTY WELL-WISHER TO YOUR PAPER.

SPIDERS.

Spiders are wonderful in structure as they are in their habits and general economy. Most of them have six eyes on each side of the head, in two rows at the point of the nipple like papillae. One set are telescopic, while the other six are microscopic. Next, spiders are right-handed, working more adroitly with the right claw than the left in extending the words of a web. The orifices through which the silky fluid is forced out at will that instantly hardens into an elastic thread, vary in number in different families of spiders. In some of them quite a number of threads unite in the spinning process to make a strong line. Those minute openings are termini of ducts from the bags in which web material is secreted, controlled by sphincter muscles acting in obedience to the will. All their movements in weaving and arranging a fly trap indicate circulation, and are therefore a step quite beyond blind instinct. An examination of a broken cord—mending it and seeking the best point for an attachment to keep the web tense in all directions, certainly exhibits thought. Their manner of approaching entangled game, securing each limb of the prisoner artistically binding them so no resistance can be offered that would be injurious to themselves before savagely eating into their vitals is a marvellous proof of the elements of the mind, far superior to most of the quadrupeds, and yet spiders are without a brain! Nothing is more surprising in the natural history of this very common, but poorly understood insect, than the ferocity of the female towards the male, which she pounces upon when the fertilization of the eggs have been secured, and rarely fails of killing him instantly, and then feasts deliberately on the mangled carcass. Without spiders, which subservise the same important purpose on land that sharks do in the ocean, vegetation could hardly survive the unrestrained depredations of millions of vegetable-eating insects. By the silent warfare of spiders upon them their too great multiplication is regulated so that a balance of power is maintained in nature, essential to the preservation of order without the extinction of any. Spiders, therefore, humble as they are in the scale of being, are just as important to the comfort of man as many higher orders that seem to have a more prominent claim to distinction.