

The Canadian Independent.

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TORONTO, APRIL 28, 1881.

NOTICE!

Mr. Wm. Revell has kindly undertaken the business management of the INDEPENDENT. In the future, therefore, all remittances and letters about the subscription, or complaints, should be addressed to him, Box 2648, P. O. Toronto, and all articles for insertion, news of churches, &c., to Managing Editor, same address.

Mr. A. Christie, 9 Wilton Avenue, will continue to attend to the business of the Congregational Publishing Company, including arrears for the INDEPENDENT and the Year Book.

We would call the attention of our readers to their labels. All whose subscriptions expired Jan., '81, or earlier, are now due another year. Will they please remit.

We want as many items of news of the churches as possible, but will our correspondents be brief. Our space is limited, and we dislike to cut down.

BOGUS DIPLOMAS.

We regret to find that the letter of "Pastor S.," published in the INDEPENDENT of 14th inst., has been thought by some to have a personal reference. We need hardly say that if we had for a moment supposed such a thing, the letter would never have been published. We regarded it simply as the enunciation of a general principle; as such we were in sympathy with the views of our correspondent, and had no hesitation in letting him speak through our columns. That it was not intended to be personal our correspondent himself asserts in a private letter, from which we make the following extracts:—

"I have been surprised to find that the article written by me and published in the 7th of April issue of the C. I., has been regarded as a personal attack. The question of spurious diplomas was one which of late has been thoroughly discussed through the press. I regarded it as a public question, and my remarks were intended to bear on the general principle of these sham credentials.

"All the newspapers I take, or nearly all, were commenting on the trial of Buchanan, and his bogus diplomas, and I regarded it as a fit time for our denominational organ to say a few words against this kind of thing."

We trust that this will remove any suspicion in the minds of brethren as to a supposed personal application of the remarks. We should deeply regret that a slur should be suspected where only esteem is due.

Two papers of considerable importance occupy a large portion of our space to-day, to each of which we ask the patient attention of our readers. The first is a letter on the work of our churches up to 1855, from the same able pen whose letter to the *Nonconformist* we reprinted lately. We think that many of our readers will be surprised to find what vigor and energy were thrown into our work during that period. We shall look with much interest for the second letter, with the details of the work for another twenty-five years. We shall be mistaken if these letters do not form the basis of a thorough examination of all our departments of work, and a "new departure" in some of them. The other subject, "Church Extension," and in connec-

tion, a Church Building Fund, we leave in the able hands to which it has been entrusted. If we are to live as a body, we must be up and doing.

Our early issue of last week prevented us noticing the death of the Earl of Beaconsfield, which occurred in London on the 21st inst. All the papers have given more or less lengthened sketches of his life and works so that we need occupy but little space in our remarks respecting him. He was undoubtedly a man of genius, of steady determination of purpose, with unconquerable faith in himself and in his destiny. Although it is not much more than a century since his grandfather settled in England, Lord Beaconsfield was as thorough and loyal an Englishman as the representatives of the most ancient noble names. The greatness and glory of England was a passion, and for it he sacrificed much, too much as some thought. The time has not come when it is possible to speak without some bias, for or against, so prominent a man, yet we are mistaken if the impartial pen of the later historian does not record that the policy of his successor, based upon peace and righteousness, was the policy that more glorified and exalted England amongst the nations of the earth.

THE CENTRAL ASSOCIATION.

The Central Association will meet in Edgar, Oro, May 24th and 25th, 1881.

PROGRAMME.

May 24th. Union Social Tea at 5 p.m. Speeches by the brethren at 7 p.m. Short session of the Association.

Wednesday, 25th. Prayer meeting and reports from the churches, from 9 to 10 a.m., led by Rev. H. D. Powis.

10 a.m. Essay by Rev. R. Hay, "How to obtain more abundant Christian life."

10.30 a.m. Essay by Rev. M. S. Gray on "Our Missionary Society's Work."

P.M. session at 2 o'clock. Discussion on "Our Congregational College," led by Rev. H. D. Powis.

Discussion on "Indian Missions," led by Rev. J. Burton, B.D.

Evening meeting at 7.30 p.m.

SPEECHES.

(1) "Our Outlook," Rev. J. Burton, B.D.

(2) "Our Principles," Rev. W. H. Warriner, B.A.

(3) "Our Obstacles," Rev. J. Unsworth.

(4) "Our Successes," Rev. F. Ebbs. J. J. HINDLEY, M.A., Secretary.

N.B.—Brethren may reach Barrie via the Northern, or Hamilton and North-Western Railways. They will be met at Barrie at noon on the 24th, and conveyed to Edgar.

ST. FRANCIS' ASSOCIATION.

The next meeting of the St. Francis' Association will be held at Waterville, Que., on the second Tuesday, 10th day of May, 1881. Preacher, Rev. J. G. Sanderson, or Rev. R. K. Black.

Essays on "War and Christianity," by Rev. W. McIntosh; "The Sabbath," Rev. P. Adams; "Evangelists and Evangelistic Services," Rev. G. Purkis; Subject to be selected, Rev. J. G. Sanderson: Exegesis, Eph. i. 4, Rev. A. Duff; General texts for plans, John viii. 56. Public meeting on Wednesday evening, addresses by the brethren present on subjects of their own selection.

A. DUFF, Sec'y.

Sherbrooke, April 21, 1881.

STATISTICS.

I have now sent out the blank statistical forms. Pastors and secretaries of churches will greatly oblige by immediately and carefully filling up, and returning them to me. If by any oversight or misdirection any pastor should not receive a form, he will kindly inform me, and it shall be sent at once. We want the list to be as perfect as possible, and every church to appear.

W. H. WARRINER.

Yorkville, April 22, 1881.

Correspondence.

THE BOND STREET CHURCH.

To the Editor of the Canadian Independent:

DEAR SIR,—Your editorial remarks upon the contents of my letter seem to me to call for a word or two in reply. The statement or implication that the church, in approaching the rest of the city churches, assumed an independent position and expressed itself as content to remain so if they refused fellowship, is incorrect. The church never so expressed itself. Dr. Wild said in effect, "We shall be glad to work in harmony and fellowship with you if you will, but if not we will do our best without you." This, however, is quite different to your version of the case. The church was then and is to-day willing and anxious to be upon terms of fellowship with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth.

If it were otherwise we should be unworthy of our profession as a body of believers in Him.

Yours truly,

THOMAS ELGAR.

Toronto, April 22nd, 1881.

[Not a quite correct quotation of Dr. Wild's remarks—those were personal, and referred to his own views and feelings in the matter. But beyond anything the pastor may have said there has been very free talk by some of the Bond Street members, not only in the spirit, but almost in the exact words we put into the mouth of the wounded man in our last. That would not, however, we imagine, of itself, be a serious obstacle to fellowship; as we said before, let confidence be restored, and there will be no lack of sympathy. We think that there are few Congregationalists in Toronto who have not a tender spot in their hearts for the old Bond Street Church.—ED. C. I.]

THE POSITION AND WORK OF OUR CHURCHES IN CANADA.

To the Editor of the Canadian Independent.

SIR,—The visit of Mr. Hannay, with the suggestive article from his pen which has been reproduced in the INDEPENDENT, has led to the consideration of questions as to our history and work in Canada, which cannot fail, if wisely pursued, to be profitable.

Amongst the many noticeable remarks of this gentleman, none was more pregnant with meaning than the query: Have we a policy? It is a query which involves a review of the whole position we occupy now and have occupied in the past in this country, and goes at once to the root of sundry divergencies of idea and opinion which have their appropriate outcome in different lines of action.

You did me the honor recently to reproduce a letter I addressed some time ago to the "English Independent" on the subject of Aggressive Congregationalism. May I be permitted to occupy your space now with some considerations bearing on the same subject as it affects us in Canada. In so doing, let me ask a fair, candid, and unbiassed hearing for the facts that may be pre-

sented, and the observations these facts suggest.

In speaking of the churches of Canada, I may observe at the outset that it is intended in this letter to confine the term to Canada as it formerly was, viz. as comprising those two provinces of the Dominion which were formerly called Canada East and Canada West, and are now known as Ontario and Quebec.

The history of these churches, for several reasons, divides itself naturally into two periods, each distinguished by its own conditions and peculiarities. The first is from the beginning of things to the year 1855. The second embraces the period from 1855 to the present.

In the year 1854 the churches of the two provinces of Canada East and West united their energies and missionary organizations into one, and—so far as I have been able to gather—the first complete statistical table of the churches of United, Canada was published in 1855.

In 1854, too, the churches of Canada made their final protest against the continuance in any shape of a connection between church and state. In 1855 the last semblance of this connection was abolished by the secularization of the Clergy Reserves. Since then, the legal status of a Congregational Church and its minister has been on an equality with any other church or ministry in the country.

The same year, 1855, may also be taken as the beginning of the new era of railways in Canada, and all the extraordinary development and progress to which they have given rise. The period antecedent to this was that of slow and painful toiling over imperfect roads, through vast regions of partially cleared forest, the only exception being the travel by steamboat in summer—and only in summer—between the towns on the shores of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence.

The period since has witnessed incessant activity and constant pushing on of lines through every district of Upper and Lower Canada, until now the land is girdled and gridironed in all directions by railways. Communications that used to occupy days and weeks can now be made within the compass of a few hours. Of the immense increase in our population, wealth, extent of business, and every possible form of material development since 1855 it is not necessary to speak at present.

The year 1855 then commends itself to me as one where a dividing line may be drawn, and from which a reasonable outlook may be cast both backwards and forwards. The statistics of that year tell a most suggestive story of what had been accomplished up to that date. The reports in the last *Year Book*—that for 1880-1881—tell with equal suggestiveness of whatever has been accomplished since. Let us take the first of the periods, and see what it has to say for itself.

The first annual report of our missionary society, presented in 1854, gives the following interesting information as to the early days of our existence in Canada:—

"The primary movement of a missionary character in Canada connected with the body to which we belong, was made on a catholic basis, Independents, Presbyterians, and Baptists practically uniting in it. In the year 1826 the Canada Education and Home Mission Society was formed in Montreal, its Directors consisting of members of the above-mentioned three denominations. Under its auspices, as connected with our body, the Rev. A. J. Parker was introduced to Shipton as the first missionary of the Society, the church at Granby was originated, also the church at Eaton, and pastors obtained for them."

Mr. Parker entered the country in 1829. One or two previous attempts had been made to establish Congregational churches in the country, at