

Others of the Presbyterian Ministers have also been removed. But we have still some of the pioneers of Presbyterianism amongst us, such as Dr. Boyd, and Mr Smart, and we doubt not these brethren could supply materials, which would not merely prove interesting, but which might be really useful and important in after years. In all probability there are also many documents connected with the early Presbyterian congregations, such as St. Gabriel Street, Montreal, and some of those in Glengarry, which might be of service in illustrating the early history of the Church; and with the view of preserving those, and gathering such details as some of the fathers of the Church might be able to supply, we would suggest the organization of a Presbyterian Historical Society in Canada. Through such an organization, we apprehend much more might be done than in any other way, in collecting and preserving whatever may be interesting and valuable in connection with the past. We throw out the hint, and shall be glad if it is taken up by any of the Office-Bearers or members of the Church. In the meantime we shall be happy to receive, and publish in the pages of the *Record* any interesting accounts of the past, believing that such would be read with general pleasure.

#### CHURCH ARCHITECTURE.

On turning over the pages of Wilson's Presbyterian Historical Almanac, we were much struck with the diversity of style in the Ecclesiastical Edifices which make their appearance in that volume. Some are really elegant and splendid buildings, such as the Presbyterian Church in New Orleans, and the Presbyterian Church in Chicago. Others are commodious, comfortable looking houses, without any special attempt at ornament, while others are plain and unpretending in the extreme. The same variety may be observed in the church edifices in any particular city, or in any section of country. Some are well proportioned, neat, tasteful buildings, while others appear to be constructed without any regard to taste, or even to neatness or convenience. We, by no means approve of a lavish and unnecessary expenditure of money in the erection of a place of worship, especially if it is necessary to contract debt. For we would most decidedly prefer a very plain structure to a more handsome one, that could not be erected without debt. But very often the same amount of money, which has been used in erecting an unseemly, and inconvenient structure, might, if judiciously expended, have secured the erection of a really handsome and tasteful building. Generally speaking more attention should be given to this matter. As it is, the style of the building, especially in country places, is left very much to accident. There is much good sense in the following article which we extract from the Philadelphia *Presbyterian*. These things are sometimes carried too far among our neighbours in the States, but on the whole there is less danger, at any rate in Canada, of this, than of a contrary extreme. It

may be proper to explain that the article copied from the *Presbyterian*, was written partly in reply to a correspondent who had expressed himself strongly in favour of the old established order of things in the matter of Church building.

"We have a very great respect for that sentiment which attaches one strongly to old familiar things; and we have no sympathy with that modern vandalism which would prostrate all that is venerable and time hallowed, for the gratification of a meretricious taste, or an ostentatious pride. We have a special admiration for the old church where generations have worshipped, with its venerable gray walls and moss-covered roof, nestling among overhanging trees. Even as regards the interior, we would sometimes almost be inclined to say, "Carpenter, spare those high-backed pews, and that cramped-up, wine-glass pulpit." So many good sermons have been preached from that pulpit, and so many good people have sat in these pews, that they deserve to be kept sacred for the excellent things with which they are associated. If, however, the gospel can be proclaimed with better effect, and heard to more edification, by some other arrangement, let us not sacrifice spiritual good to mere sentiment. The pulpit may be so far above the congregation as to carry the preaching over their heads; and the high-backed pews may render hearers too uncomfortable to listen with profit.

We can by no means concur with our correspondent in his desire to "restore our church edifices to what they were in the days of our fathers." We see no special reason for believing that "our fathers" had attained the *ultima thule* in church architecture. We do not know why they must have hit upon precisely that form and arrangement of ecclesiastical structure which would suit not only themselves but all after generations. On the contrary, we are quite sure that they have left abundant evidence, and in a very palpable shape, that such was not the fact. Their leading idea, especially in rural church architecture, seems to have been a parallelogram roofed, lighted, and seated, regardless of taste, convenience, and comfort. Why this should be perpetuated is not clear, at least to our minds. If one is to endure martyrdom, it need not be inflicted on such friendly territory as in his own place of worship, nor piece-meal every Sabbath.

As to undue expenditure of money in church edifices, the cases in which that occurs are very rare. Provided it is only promptly paid, and the building be not encumbered with a mill-stone of debt, there is no reason why money should not be laid out on the house of God as well as upon our own houses. The fact should also be borne in mind, that what is given for this purpose would not probably have been contributed to any other religious object. It is not, as is often intimated, just so much deducted from the general claims of benevolence. The question is not between expending a given amount on their own church, or giving it to build a score of churches in the wild and destitute places. It is between putting it into their own sanctuary, or keeping it in their own pockets; and in this view of the case we would unhesitatingly prefer the former alternative.

Moreover, where we find one church-building indicating extravagance, we see scores of them indicating meanness. Some of the latter, indeed, are a disgrace to the congregations worshipping in them, and to the very name of Christianity. Whilst the people themselves are living in commodious, tasteful, and often expensive houses, they are content that the house of God shall be without comeliness—sometimes even without plaster and paint, without a suitable enclosure and surroundings—

in fact, almost without ordinary decency. From those who thus cast disrespect upon the worship of God, and disparage their own religion, complaints of the extravagance of their brethren elsewhere come with a bad grace. For ourselves, we are free to say that whenever we see a forlorn, gone-to-wreck barn of a church in the midst of a prosperous neighbourhood, we take it for granted that piety and liberality are at a low point there. On the contrary, a neat and tasteful structure usually makes a favourable impression of the Christian character of the people, and of their appreciation of their gospel privileges.

Whilst there are indications of improvement, we still think that too little attention is given to the matter of taste in erecting new churches, particularly in our villages and rural congregations. In this respect some other denominations—we may mention particularly the Episcopalians, and perhaps also the Congregationalists, are ahead of Presbyterians. Our Episcopal and Congregational brethren probably expend no more money on their churches than we do, but they have the taste and tact to lay it out to better advantage. It is often lamentable to see many thousands of dollars expended upon what proves to be a permanent eyesore, instead of what might have been an ornament and an honour to the congregation and the locality. Building committees greatly err in thinking, that because a man can lay bricks well, or do good carpenter work, he is necessarily competent to design a creditable church edifice. The most common-place marble worker may chisel from the massive block exquisite forms of sculpture, but he must first be furnished with the beautiful conceptions, and thoroughly studied models of a Powers or a Crawford. The mechanic is the mere tool in the hand of genius for giving permanent body and form to its ideal creations. The same thing is true also in regard to architecture. Let all building committees take warning from the monstrous abortions in brick and mortar, which abound on every hand, and learn that when architecture is wanted, it is necessary to apply to a competent professional architect. A well-proportioned, symmetrical, tasteful structure, will ordinarily cost no more than a shapeless and unseemly pile; oftentimes, perhaps, not so much; and, at all events, the amount paid for a proper design and plans will be far more than returned in increased comfort and beauty.

#### ENGLISH PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD.

The Annual Meeting of the Synod took place in the Rev. Dr. Hamilton's Church in Regent Square, on the Evening of Monday, 18th April. Dr. McCrie, retiring Moderator, preached an able sermon, from Galatians iv. 26. The Rev. Mr. McCaw of Manchester was chosen Moderator for the year.

Various important matters were discussed, which our space prevents us from noticing fully. The Synod's school scheme was reported to be in a flourishing state. The contributions amounted to £300. Two new applications for schools had been made. The whole number of schools connected with the Synod was 40.

The Report on Foreign Missions was given in by Rev. Dr. Hamilton. The amount received, including the balance for last year, was £2205 11s. 11d. The balance in hand was £889 4s. 5d.

Mr. Ballantyne, Trinity, presented the Report on the College. The Report stated that premises had been rented in Queen's Square,