

# The Presbyterian;

## A MISSIONARY AND RELIGIOUS RECORD

OF THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CANADA IN CONNECTION WITH THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

CONDUCTED BY A COMMITTEE OF THE LAY ASSOCIATION.

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### THE CHURCH IN CANADA.

#### OBITUARY NOTICES.

Died, at Beauharnois, on the 27th August, the Rev. Walter Roach. Minister of the united Congregations of Beauharnois, Chateauguy and St. Louis, in the 43rd year of his age, and sixteenth of his Ministry.

The removal of this faithful servant of the Lord from the scene of his labours on earth, to, we trust, through the grace of the Redeemer, a heavenly inheritance, will be long felt as a grievous loss, both by the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland, and the Congregations which he had been the honoured instrument of forming, and to which he had so long ministered.

Mr. Roach was born in Edinburgh, and in early life was devoted by his parents to the service of God in the ministry of the Gospel. There is a class of society, almost peculiar to Scotland, distinguished for intelligence, industry, and profound piety, who deem it an honour and a sacred duty to consecrate one of their family to the service of the Lord, and often cheerfully endure the severest privations incident to poverty, to obtain the means of enabling the Dedicated one to prosecute his studies, through a long and expensive educational course. Mr. Roach's parents belonged to this class—poor, but highly respected; and often did he look back, with filial gratitude to them, and with thankfulness to God, on the struggles and hardships of his early life. He was licensed to preach the Gospel by the Presbytery of Edinburgh in 1832. Impatient to be employed in his Master's work, he soon afterwards

came to Canada, and in December, 1833, was ordained by the Presbytery of Montreal to the charge, in the faithful and zealous exercise of the duties of which he continued till the day of his death.

As a preacher he was distinguished for the fervour of his addresses, for the moral earnestness of his appeals to the hearts and consciences of his auditors, and for his faithful expositions of the word of God. His views of divine truth were clear, comprehensive, and strictly evangelical. There was often great vigour of thought displayed in his discourses, and his sentiments were expressed with simple eloquence, always redolent of sincere piety.

By education and conviction he was strongly attached to the principles of Presbyterian Church government, and gave a decided and conscientious preference to the Church of Scotland, as the most efficient instrument which he knew for disseminating the knowledge of the Gospel, and cherishing the virtues of the Christian life. His vigorous and discriminating mind enabled him to perceive and appreciate the wisdom and piety displayed in her institutions, and with Christian zeal he laboured to bring to his expatriated countrymen the religious privileges and consolations, which had so often gladdened their hearts in the land of their fathers. From principles, which he had so deliberately and conscientiously adopted, he was not to be shaken either by the opposition or flattery of men. During a time of trial, too recent to be yet forgotten, he calmly and firmly maintained his position. Though deeply grieved at seeing a few, for whom he had long cherished the warmest affection, withdraw

themselves from his Ministry, he wavered not; but from a love of peace, and with a generosity that evinced a mind free from intolerance and bigotry, and divested of every selfish consideration, cancelled the obligations they had come under to support him during the whole period of his incumbency. Believing as he did, that, in so far as they were concerned, they separated themselves from the purest convictions that they were doing what they thought right, his esteem for them was not diminished, although his conduct towards them, from the existing circumstances, became somewhat more reserved, and he followed them in his heart with his prayers, and best wishes for their everlasting welfare.

His talents for business, his unremitting attention to the public as well as the private duties of his office, and his sound judgment, rendered him a useful member of the Church Courts. The expression of his opinions was distinguished by strong good sense. The estimation in which he was held by his brethren, was evinced in his elevation, in 1847, to the office of Moderator of the Highest Church Court—an office which he filled with much dignity and efficiency.

The warmth of his heart, and the homely simplicity of his manners, made his intercourse with his people peculiarly agreeable, and secured for him their warmest attachment. In health he responded to their joy. In sickness he sympathised with their sorrow. In distress he flew to their relief, and spared no pains to soothe, comfort or console them. Night and day he was their servant in the Lord. It was not the members of his own flock alone that received his ten-