

British American Presbyterian.

Vol. 2

TORONTO, CANADA, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1873.

No. 55.

Contributors and Correspondents.

NEW BRUNSWICK.

CORRECTION—THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC—PROHIBITION DESIRED—A LOTTERY SCHEME—THE ST. JOHN PRESBYTERY.

I find that I made a mistake in my last when giving an account of a congregation here that has adopted the weekly offering system, and I hasten to correct it. I said that two of the members had declared beforehand that they would give between them \$5 per week. I learned since that I should have said \$7 instead of \$5, one of the two having said that he would be himself good for \$4. It is with pleasure that I make this correction.

Last year I gave the readers of the PRESBYTERIAN some account of efforts put forth in St. John to obtain better legislation on the liquor trade, efforts which I am sorry to say were unsuccessful. So influential is the liquor interest here, having had such a long lease of power that it is quite insolent and not without reason, I suppose, that our House of Assembly actually mocked at some of the most worthy citizens when they prepared by no means an extreme Bill and laid it before them. I don't think these representatives prepared for the fact that the peace-loving citizens would have resented the insult in the way that they did. This year preparations are being made to try again. The feeling is growing up that to be ruled in the Common Council and the Mayoralty as well as in the Hall of Legislature by Rum, and then to have the flower of our race ruined by the same enemy, is an intolerance that is not to be borne much longer. The yoke may not be entirely thrown off just now, but a beginning has been made that will by the blessing of God lead to freedom.

Each points as the following will be asked for this Session:—The shortening of the hours of sale, the isolation of the traffic of drink from traffic in other things, the suppression of billiard and other saloons on the premises where drink is to be sold, and probably the establishment of a License Board instead of leaving licenses as they are at present in the hands of the Mayor. The action of the Ontario Legislature is watched here with interest. The Bill to deprive a drunkard of the control of his property until he reforms, is an important step. I very much fear, however, that such a Bill would have very little chance in our Legislature as at present constituted. I was going to make a remark on the moral and moral calibre of the rank and file of our representatives, but I forbear.

A lottery scheme on an immense scale has been set on foot to clear off an embarrassing debt that rests on the Academy of Music which was built here within the last two years. The Committee of the Evangelical Alliance denounced the scheme as immoral and a scandal on the Christian profession of the city. A perfect howl has been raised on that account by a host of anonymous letter writers, backed in a sort of hesitating way by part of the secular press. The arguments of the legion of scribblers are models in logic as in modesty. I have not seen one letter that stood up right straight for the morality of the scheme. The howl at first rested on the ground that in many [church and benevolent bazaars lotteries were allowed, why therefore did the ministers of these churches come now to the front and condemn the principle. It was conveniently forgotten that the Rev. gentlemen who wrote the report which contained the condemnation, as well as others that took a leading part in the Alliance, never did permit such questionable practices in their churches; and also that others who had winked at such practices now came forward publicly and acknowledged their errors. Instead of taking such a confession in good faith, a storm of abuse was blown upon the men that did it. Truly the tender mercies of certain are cruelty. Another writer admitted that lotteries were wrong in general, but in this case they were justifiable, the end justifying the means. It seems questionable whether that letter was not ironical. But the height of absurdity was capped by a comparison drawn between the lottery scheme and the slave trade of Britain in former days, and concluding that the Alliance should buy out the debts of the Academy, and then teach morality after that! With this and the scheme discussed for the restriction of the liquor traffic, the pens of nameless scribes have been kept busy for some weeks past.

The Presbytery of St. John met last week and transacted fully the usual amount of business. Among other items of business the Rev. N. McKay was loosed from the charge of St. Daniel's Church, St. John, in order that he may be settled over

that of Summerside, P. E. I. Mr. McKay has been more than 11 years in this city and will be much missed. He is a native of Nova Scotia, is of Highland descent, and speaks the Gaelic language, though he has not used it in this Province. It is 17 years last September since he was first ordained to the pastorate, and he has been one of the most active and energetic workers in these Provinces. He leaves a blank in the Presbytery that it will not be easy to fill. Besides being Clerk for the last five years, he was ever head and front in every evangelical work that was to be done. And he was as amiable as he was active. The writer was intimately associated with him for some years past, and has seen him in all moods and tempers of life, and he cannot do less than say that there never was the shadow of a shade of coolness between them, not even anything approaching to that. The St. Daniel's congregation which is now vacated by Mr. McKay's removal is one of the most important and prominent charges in the Synod. It is an old Free Church charge, with the founding of which, about a quarter of a century ago, the late Dr. Burns, of Toronto, as the readers of his life will see, had not a little to do. Dr. John Thomson, now of 84th st., New York, was its first pastor, having been settled in England before he was sent out here. Having been here for some years he was induced to settle in the States, (that was one of the first "grand larcenies" made by our friends across the border) and he was succeeded by the Rev. Wm. Ferrie, also a man of culture and ability. In the quarter of a century existence it has had three pastors, which for length of settlement may be taken as a medium between the frequent changes which are so common in the United States and the life-long pastorates of the Old Country Churches. One good feature too is so to be marked. The first pastorate was not a tolerably long one and that followed by a shorter and then by a still briefer; no, the graduation has been the other way. Each successive one has been longer than that which went before. Hence there is not a tendency to depart from the good ways of the staid old land, but a disposition rather to follow in the steady track, or at all events to attain to the qualities that are so marked there. It remains to be seen whether the next settlement will be longer than that which now comes to a close.

St. John, 18th Feb., 1873.

PRESBYTERIAN NOTES FROM THE NORTH-WEST.

A few Presbyterian notes from the North-west may be of interest to our brethren in Canada. As the tide of immigration is rapidly filling up the fertile plains of this portion of the Union, the Presbyterian church, in common with the sister denominations, has a great work to accomplish, a large field in which to exercise its energies and do its share in causing the waste places to rejoice and blossom as the rose.

The influential position of our church in this country has been mainly due to its numerous educational institutions, especially its Theological Seminaries, manned as they are by talent of the first order. Many of the professors in these celebrated "schools of the prophets" have a world-wide reputation, and have stamped their impress not only upon the present age, but through their writings moulded thought in various departments, the influence of which shall be felt upon the future. It is to the eastern part of the Union that our church has hitherto chiefly looked for her supply of workmen. From these older institutions have gone forth from year to year watchmen to stand on Zion's walls in all parts of the world. But as the great north-western field is being so rapidly populated, the church will feel the importance of some of these centres of influence being located nearer home. The N. W. Theological Seminary is admirably adapted to meet this want for the present, situated as it is in the great metropolis of the west—Chicago. It has an important work to do in carrying forward the cause of truth. It is to form a basis of supplies for a large section of the church. Spared by a merciful Providence from the flames in the late fire, and being at present richly endowed; while prospectively, by means of land grants and money, the wealthiest seminary in the country, a career of usefulness is opened up before it which few theological schools have ever enjoyed. But notwithstanding the large avenues of influence which may open up for institutions, if they are not properly manned and supported the golden opportunities are lost, only to be seized upon by others who may be alive to the situation. In view of these facts, we think the Presbyterian Seminary of the North-West has been fortunate in securing the services of the Rev. Francis L. Patton to fill the chair

of "Didactic and Polemic Theology." It will be of interest to our Canadian brethren to know that he was at one time connected with the Canada church, and received part of his education at Knox College, Toronto. From thence he went to Princeton, where he graduated. After graduation he had a successful pastorate first in New York and afterwards in one of the leading churches in Brooklyn, where he was laboring when called by the General Assembly to the highest position of trust in her gift to bestow, at a salary of \$5,000. The professor is comparatively a young man and gives promise of an eminently useful career as an instructor and writer by moulding theological thought in a large section of the church. His inaugural address is an able vindication of theological science, remarkable for its freshness and vigor of thought, clear style, and ability in dealing with the great theological issues of the day.

The Interior, the leading Presbyterian journal of the west, has lately changed hands, being now published by Cyrus H. McCormick, with Prof. Patton as editor and Revs. Arthur Mitchell and Abbot E. Kirtidge as special contributors. With such a wealthy and liberal publisher, and edited by such earnest and talented men, we anticipate in the Interior an able and fearless exponent of the doctrines of our church, and an influential advocate of the questions which concern the moral and social welfare of the country. In the present restless age, when progress is the watchword of society in all departments, if the Church is to do her work efficiently she must keep abreast of the times in this enterprising spirit, and press all the forces at her command into the aggressive work of conquering the world for her Lord. In this divine mission the religious press is to prove a mighty auxiliary. In the evil world it has proved itself one of the mightiest forces in society, and it is high time that the church should be fully alive to the importance of a press consecrated to the glorious design of establishing truth and righteousness throughout the earth. We rejoice to see our Presbyterian brethren in Canada laboring in this field through the columns of the BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN. We hope your journal may be long sustained to disseminate truth throughout the Dominion. The church should feel it incumbent upon her to lay her wealth and talent under contribution in order to send those messengers of good will on their errands of mercy throughout the land.

Chicago, Feb. 15, 1873.

PRESBYTERIAN WRONGS.

No. 7.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN

DEAR SIR,—In my last letter I argued the necessity of making an immediate appointment to the chair of Homiletics and Pastoral Theology in Knox College. I suspect that a great many persons will be very hard to convince that this chair should be preferred in importance to that of Systematic Theology; but I am pretty sure that the day is fast approaching when my suggestion will meet with general approval, and I am sure that it will, now, meet with the heartiest approval of the students, who are the parties most interested.

I now propose to suggest a few other particulars in which the course the General Assembly is pursuing seems to be wrong. The first is the sort of men that the Church, generally, seems disposed to push forward to professorships. The general principle, which seems to guide in the matter, is that the man who is most favorably known in the church as a preacher, and who has exerted the widest influence among the people, ought to be selected. Now I maintain that this principle is one in the highest degree unsafe. Popular preachers are not, as a rule, the most scholarly men; but, whatever a professor lacks, he must have scholarship. Amongst the students themselves there are quite a number of men of high scholastic attainments; and, now that we have begun to draw upon the University for the preliminary training of our students, we may expect that the proportion of well trained men will rapidly increase. In this matter we must legislate for the future. If then we expect to have University Medalists among our students, we need not imagine that any old minister that turns up will do for a professor. The times in which we live demand that not only men who are known to have "good minds," but men who are known to be thoroughly accomplished scholars, must be sought out to supply our College chairs. A man who is possessed merely of ordinarily good abilities, and who can keeplermorely a day's work or so ahead of his students in his own studies, will simply not do. And yet the matter of scholarship seems scarcely ever to come into notice in the ordinary talks, in church courts, and out of them, as to who shall be professor. Among ordinary people it is usually taken for granted that any man, who has gone through a course in a Theological Seminary, is quite capable of undertaking the duties of a professor's chair. The fact that a man is a minister and a very popular preacher does not guarantee that he can even read the Greek

Testament. Besides we cannot afford to thrust our best preachers into the quietude of professional life. We need more of them instead of fewer; and the church herself, in every part of her membership, must suffer from every such appointment. We have now some vacant chairs, and we have an opportunity which we may not have again for many a year, and which we cannot afford to let slip, of filling them with thoroughly qualified men.

Another error is made in regard to the age of men who are fit for professors. The principle generally adopted is that a man must have grown gray in the labours of the pulpit before he can be entrusted with the responsibilities of a professorship. It is a desirable thing that men placed in such a responsible position should be well tried; but it is very undesirable that they should have exhausted their powers with previous work, and grown rusty in their minds, from want of study. To be a good professor, a man wants to be in his prime. He needs to be in possession of full bodily vigor and a growing, strengthening intellect. As a professor, a man can be nothing but useless unless he has been an extensive and thorough reader, and that, a faithful pastor never can be; so that the very fact that a man has spent his life time in the ceaseless activity of pastoral duties is the next thing to proof positive that he is unfitted for a professor. Every scholar, who has gone into the ministry and spent his strength among his people instead of among his books, knows that the time at which he was best fitted to enter upon a professorship was a year or two after he had completed his own collegiate course. In Scotland they have become convinced of this, and begun to appoint young men. The late appointments in Glasgow of Profs. Candlish and Murray have inaugurated a new era in that country, and established a precedent which future generations will be too wise not to follow. The Americans have long seen the wisdom of appointing young men. The young professor has his life-time before him to read and perfect his lectures, and thus students get the benefit of the projections of a man who has devoted his life to his own department of study, instead of being fed with scraps of old sermons by worn-out ministers.

The third error is a fundamental one; and, if it were corrected, the others I have mentioned would disappear. The whole General Assembly votes for a professor. Most of the lay members know nothing about the capabilities of any one of the candidates; and therefore, as they admit, vote entirely in the dark. Most of the clerical members know very little more, and are likely to vote for their personal favorites. No method of election could be more objectionable. Why should not a committee be appointed to recommend to the General Assembly a man whom they know to be qualified. It is the way in which all such appointments should be made. We would then be likely to secure the best men. Besides it would be a great deal more comfortable, surely, for the candidates. They would not then have to be pitchedforked into public notice by presbyterial nominations, only to run the risk of being voted down by the General Assembly.

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DR. TALMAGE AND THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION.

MR. EDITOR.—We are being favored this winter in Toronto, as you know, by visits from a large number of popular lecturers, lay and clerical. They seem to be on the whole well attended—a great change from the time, not so distant, when the crowded skating rinks emptied the lecture rooms of the city. You, of course, in the interests of the large and I hope increasing circle addressed by you from week to week, attend them all. You were present at least, as appears from your last issue, at the first lecture given in Shaftsbury Hall. Amid the wide diversity of opinion obtaining as to the merits of the lecture, and the good taste of the lecturer, I was glad to read your discriminating and on the whole commendatory estimate. Could you not have gone a little more into details? or were you afraid with the recollection of the lecturer's satire still vivid, to find yourself in the ranks of the Grumbler?

Dr. Talmage's lecture must be pronounced a success. It thoroughly interested and amused for the time a large proportion of the audience. Many of us had never seen a large audience so general and hearty in its laughter, with out being uproarious. In addition to the eures for asymptotic weaknesses, which the lecturer described at great length and with much picturesqueness, including boating, fishing and dining, he might have added, if modesty would have allowed it, his own lecture on Grumble & Co. Here the general effect of the lecture must be pronounced, we believe, to have been good and wholesome. It did something more than amuse for the time. If, dealing mainly with the foibles and weaknesses of humanity it did not aim at producing effects of the highest kind, yet in the comparatively low though by no means unimportant sphere in which it ranged, it certainly told, and we believe told for good. This result was due, on the one hand, to the keen sense of humor of the lecturer, to his careful avoidance of all obstructions, to the truly life-like character of his denunciations, and on the other, to the sympathy he doubtless has as a cultivated christian man with what is noble and generous in life.

The lecture, however, had serious drawbacks. In the first place, the subject did not seem quite worthy either of the occasion—the opening of the lecture-room of a

Young Man's Christian Association, or of the lecturer as a minister of the gospel, coming from so great a distance. Then were there not one or two passages slightly irreverent, fitted to impair rather than to strengthen the regard for what is sacred, and which a clergyman of all men should know how to value? We have heard serious objection to the lecture on this score, and do not know how it can be fully met. The humor may we be permitted to add, was more easily appreciated than the eloquence, the naturalness of the one contrasting strongly with the elaboration of the other. But we must not proceed any farther in this line lest we should be at once uncourteous to a distinguished stranger, and ungrateful for an hour of the whole very pleasant entertainment.

There was, however, one feature in the lecture, as in most lectures of the kind, on which I ask room for a word or two. I refer to the element of mimicry which characterized it throughout. The weaknesses, foibles, and meannesses of various classes of character were not simply described, they were represented in tone and gesture, and with a skill that would have done credit to a practised actor. Now very many have the greatest aversion to this form of delineation in a man whose life-work is to deal with the moral and spiritual nature of man. Is the aversion well founded, or is it simply an educational and narrow prejudice? It would seem all but certain that a feeling so general, and often found strongest in persons of the most decided worth, must rest on some valid though not always perceived ground. Is the ground something of this nature? That to mimic one's fellow-men either in their foibles or in their virtues implies on the part of the speaker a momentary identification of himself with these; while the prevailing conviction in regard to a minister of the gospel is that his sympathy with what is noble and pure in human character ought to be so strong as to render him incapable of such identification even in appearance,—as to make him shrink from it even when he has the good purpose of rendering the characters delineated objects of scorn to his audience. Whether this be the true explanation or not, I believe a moral teacher, a man whose life-work is to lead men to God, cannot impersonate weakness, folly or vice, not only without loss of dignity, but without loss of moral power. Still in justice to Dr. Talmage, let it be said that he does not sin alone in this respect, or so offensively as many others in the case of whom the bright moral aim is neither so manifestly sought nor so successfully reached.

SIGMA.

QUERY.

Has a minister who has ample means of his own any claim either legal or moral on the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund as it at present exists? Will some one of your correspondents or readers answer the question?

H.

POOR GIRLS.

The poorest girls in the world are those who have never been taught to work. Rich parents have peited them; they have been taught to despise labor, and depend upon others for a living, and are perfectly helpless. If misfortune comes upon their friends as it often does, their case is hopeless. The most forlorn and miserable woman on earth belongs to this class. It belongs to parents to protect their daughters from this deplorable condition. They do them a great wrong if they neglect it. Every daughter should be taught to earn her own living. The rich as well as the poor require this training. The wheel of fortune rolls swiftly round—the rich are very likely to become poor, and the poor rich. Skill to labor is no disadvantage to the rich, and is indispensable to the poor. Well-to-do parents must educate their daughters to work; no reform is more imperative than this.

To be without Jesus is a grievous hell; and to be with Jesus, a sweet paradise.

If Jesus be with thee, no enemy shall be able to hurt thee.

If that findeth Jesus findeth a good treasure—yea, a good above all good.

Most poor is he who liveth without Jesus, and he most rich who is dear to Jesus.

Love all for Jesus, but Jesus for himself.

Jesus Christ alone is singularly to be loved; and he alone is found good and faithful above all friends.

The highest and most profitable lesson is the true knowledge and lowly esteem of ourselves.

It is great wisdom and perfection to think nothing of ourselves, and to think always well and highly of others.

I wish to place on record my conviction that belief cannot now be defended by reticence any more than by railing, or by any privileges and assumptions. Nor, again, can it be defended exclusively by its "standing army"—by priests and ministers of religion. To them, I do not doubt, will fall the chief share of the burden, and of the honor, and of the victory. But we cannot commit a fatal error if we allow this to become a merely professional question. It is the affair of all. It is very difficult in handling such controversies to avoid the tone of assumption and denunciation. I desire, therefore, to abjure all imputations against motives or characters. Equal credit for the love of truth should be allowed by all to all, and the epilogue made, or at least intended, to unite plain speaking with personal respect.—W. E. Gladstone.