

British American Presbyterian

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FRIDAY, SEPT. 4, 1874.

TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

There is some talk of a religious daily being started in this city, to be under the control of the Methodist denomination. So says the Toronto correspondent of the London Advertiser.

The number of pilgrims who visited the tomb of Mohammed at Mecca, this year, is said to have been 100,000, and owing to the precautions adopted by the Egyptian government, their health has been unusually good.

The rapid increase of the Irish population in New England cities, particularly Boston, Mass., is attracting the attention of our American friends. Recent statistics show that some noted family names have six or eight hundred representatives in the city.

The Russian Government has refused to recognize the Spanish Republic. It is in consequence of this that the other powers delay complete recognition, but it is reported that the Governments of Austria and Germany have sent credentials to their representatives to Madrid.

The New York Observer says:—“A few days ago we received a request to present the name of an excellent minister to a church wanting a pastor. We cheerfully complied, and to our letter received the reply:—“We have sixty candidates already, and several States to hear from.”

The new Unitarian Review says that the two great problems for their denomination to solve is, first to find some motive power to continual action equal to the orthodox doctrine of eternal punishment of sin; and, second, it must find a form of truth that shall make God as near and helpful to the soul as the orthodox of the Deity of Jesus.

We are pleased to notice that a canvass has been commenced by the temperance friends in Ottawa, for subscriptions to erect public drinking fountains. Mr. George Hay has put his name down for one fountain, and the Hon. R. W. Scott has followed his worthy example. This is a much needed as well as a most commendable undertaking; and we would like to see a similar movement inaugurated in Toronto.

The Mark Lane Express, in its weekly review of the breadstuffs market, has the following:—“Bad weather has prevailed throughout the past week, but our farmers have kept a sharp lookout, and have secured their crops. There are no reports of sprouting, though much wheat was stacked in poor condition in consequence of high winds and low temperature. The same weather has ruled on the Continent. This will bring good samples to the front, and increase the value of old stock. There is little difference in prices since last reports, although the tendency is downward. France is sending back here the cargoes shipped hence. The crops here and in France are mostly secure, and the dependence of both countries on foreigners is materially lessened. The latest estimates put the crop at seven per centum below the average.

We are requested to intimate that the Seventh Sabbath School Convention for the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec will (D.V.) be held at Brantford on the 13th, 14th and 15th of October. No doubt there will be a large and profitable gathering of the friends of Sabbath Schools.

Rev. Dr. McCosh recently addressed the London Presbytery on his project of a Pan-Presbyterian Council, and advised that a public meeting be called in London to consider what should be done. The various Presbyterian Assemblies in Scotland have approved of the Council.

Rev. Mr. Ewing, United Presbyterian missionary in Egypt, recently used the cable telegraph to announce his own resignation and that of his fellow missionaries at Alexandria if their salaries were fixed at the lower rates proposed by the Board. The Board revoked its action in the salary question but accepted Mr. Ewing's resignation.

BACKWARD, HO!

It is a common remark that all the great cities of the world are stretching westward. In this same direction are moving the conquering races of the world. Canada has set out on the same track; and as regards telegraphs, railways, of surveys and settlements, her face is towards the Pacific. In matters commercial and colonial; in matter mundane and temporal, the cry Westward, Ho! is the cry that is on the air and in the ear.

It would seem, however, that in matters ecclesiastical, the cry is Backward, Ho! In our last issue, in chronicling the “end of an old song,” we saw the Kirk of Scotland leaping back one hundred and sixty-three years at one bound, and settling herself down in the good old days when there was no patronage; when, as regards the State, there was no King in Israel, and the Kirk therefore lived,—

“Sine rege, sine lege, sine terore.”

In Germany, the Old Catholics, with Dr. Dollinger at their head, startled by the Dogma of Infallibility, “pulled up stakes,” and moved their tents back a dozen of centuries, where they hoped to find a place of rest. But as an American, once out loose from his Connecticut home to go West, seldom settles down in his first “location,” but presses on towards the setting sun, so the Old Catholics, once adrift, seem inclined to settle down in the dreary location of the Dark Ages, as they proposed, but are preparing to push back a little nearer the rising sun and the days of the Apostles. Here is their last Backward, Ho! contained in a circular addressed to the Christian Churches of the world:

“On the 14th of September next and following days a conference composed of men belonging to different churches, and desiring the great future union of Christians, will meet at Bonn. The purpose of this conference is to examine the formulae of faith of the first centuries of the Church, as also the doctrines and institutions which were held essential and indispensable in the universal Church of the East and West, before the great separation. There is no question whatever of a union by absorption or a fusion of the different churches, but of the establishment of an ecclesiastical communion on the basis of ‘unity in things necessary,’ with the maintenance of every church's peculiarities which do not alter the substance of the ancient faith.

“The Committee of the Reunion of the Churches. DOLLINGER.”

Among the Episcopalians of the United States, the cry for a day's march backward is now heard. The Reformed Episcopal Church, under the leadership of Dr. Cumming, finding itself in too close proximity to dangerous errors here, “pulled up stakes,” and have moved their Church back to the ground occupied by the Church of England in the days of Cranmer, Ridley and Latimer.

As Presbyterians who profess to have got their system of Government, Doctrine and Worship—not from Knox or Calvin, nor Councils or Fathers—but from the Acts of the Apostles, and the Lord Jesus, the alone King of His Church; we rejoice at this tendency of the churches to seek settlement for themselves in the distant past. Like our American Pioneers, who do not tire and who cannot rest in their westward aspirations till they draw breath on the shores of the Pacific, so we trust the churches will go on moving backward and still backward, until the questions heard will be, not What prayer-book was used by Cranmer, but what prayer-book was used by Paul; not what were the functions of Bishops in the time of Elizabeth or Constantine, but what were the functions of Bishops when Paul addressed the Ephesian Bishops at Miletus.

But in this backward movement there may be a step too many, a stage too far back. It is the inability to discern this that constitutes the fundamental error of Romanism and Ritualism. In their movement backward the Romanist (and in this point the Ritualist is at one with him) is not content to go back to Christ, and these stop, but passes Him to get to Moses. The gist of the leading Church controversy in our day, waxing each year hotter, is just this—Moses or Christ—the very controversy that wrung from Paul the tears, the beseeching of his Galatian Epistle against the Judaizing teachers of his day. It is good to look backward and to cling to the old in the church's doctrine, government and worship, but it is the part of true wisdom to know where to stop in the backward march, for a step too many is as bad as a step too few. The times of Christ and his Apostles is the clear mountain top of the Church's history. From Adam to Christ it is a constant ascent, and from Christ to our day, at least, a constant descent in the line of the Church of Rome. Every step, therefore, in the direction of Apostolic times, is an ascent towards purer air and brighter prospects, but every step away from Christ on the other side of the mountain top is a journey towards the bondage, the beggarly elements from which Christ made his people free.

Mr. W. Johnson, Barrister, delivered a most interesting lecture recently at Lucknow, on “John Knox and the Scottish Reformation.”

THE LATE REV. O. C. STEWART.

In our last issue we conveyed to our readers the sad news of the death of the Rev. O. C. Stewart, one of the ablest and most promising of the young men of the Canada Presbyterian Church. Had God spared him and given him health, he would no doubt have occupied a conspicuous and useful place in the Church he loved so well.

His funeral was large, the town of Owen Sound testifying its appreciation of his worth by closing places of business. The funeral sermon was preached last Sabbath in Division Street Church, by the Rev. James Cameron, of Chatham, to a very large audience, many of whom were deeply affected. Mr. Cameron took for his text the 12th verse of 6th chapter of the Hebrews, “Be not slothful, but followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises,” and after exposition, made application as follows:

It is not difficult for you, members of this congregation, to make application of this subject and this text to yourselves. Your late Pastor is to-day among those who inherit the promises; whose full and complete happiness is now in possession not in prospect, as it is with us. And in the language and spirit of the text, I therefore say, “Be ye followers of him,” in so far, however, as he was a follower of Christ; but not a stop further.

It is just four years next month since he was ordained in this Church. He came among you young, he came fresh from College, with College honours, which he wore meekly; with the close, correct, methodical habits of a student, which he retained to the last, with a zeal and an appetite for work characteristic of young Christians; with a kind, gentle way, which got him many friends in the congregation, and among others, in town and country; but he came with a weak constitution, with the seeds of the disease which has at last carried him to his grave. “Long dawning makes cold sheets at last.” This is not the time, nor the day, nor the occasion, nor the office for exalting man. “But ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblameably he behaved himself among you that believe.” Without going beyond the bounds of truth, I can and ought to urge you to be followers of him, and to urge this on you, with all the solemnity of the grave, before which we recently stood, and where we will soon lie, and the judgment seat before which we must soon stand.

Be ye followers of him (1) As to his youthful piety. He gave his heart to Christ, or rather Christ came and took it when he was very young. At the age of nine months, that king of preachers, entered his home, and mother and children were gathered round a father's coffin. This was at that age a sore but useful discipline. It coloured his after life, and helped to decide his future course.

“The grief that marks our dawning years To memory ever clings, And o'er the path of future years, A lengthened shadow flings. The gayest hours pass lightly by, And leave the faintest trace; But the deep, deep track that sorrow wears, No time can ever efface.”

He turned to God as the guide of his youth, and God led him gently on, brought him kindly up, brought him safely through, and has now mercifully taken him home. To the young of this congregation I would say, Be ye followers of him. Remember your Creator in the days of your youth. It is good to bear the yoke in one's youth. Be ye followers of him (2) in his constant diligence. God gave him talents (it does not become us to say how many). And he was far removed from the wicked and slothful servant who hid his master's money. He studied carefully and critically the Word; earnestly and simply preaching the Gospel, preaching often when he should be in his bed. You can see now the meaning of what he once said speaking about money: “When we ask people for money, they think it is the greatest thing that can be given; but I am often called to duties so painful that to give money would be nothing in comparison.” And then he took the pen and through the press spoke to thousands who never saw his face in the flesh. And by these books and articles while dead, he is yet speaking. You cannot follow him in these departments of usefulness; but in your own sphere go and do likewise. I need not exhort you to diligence in your worldly calling. There is competition and ambition enough to keep men alive to their temporal interests and busy about them; but what about the work of God? Elders of this congregation; teachers, parents, be stirred up by the death of your pastor, to increased diligence, for your own salvation and those of others. Work while it is day; for the night cometh when no man can work.

Be ye followers of him (3) in his faith. Faith as you know is trust in God; but this covers wide ground. To trust in God is to receive his word as our law. His Son as our Saviour, His Promises as our inheritance. I need not tell you how implicitly he bowed before the Bible, nor how lovingly he embraced God's Son, nor how joyfully he walked in the hope of the Promises that he now inherits. This is to you a matter of knowledge. But very strongly did this faith come out at last. At one time while he thought he was dying he said to his wife “Bring these children up to Jesus; and then to one of his elders, “Toll the congregation that nothing but the blood of Jesus will do.” His chief desire for getting better was to preach Jesus more fully and earnestly than ever before. At the beginning of his sickness, he selected several passages of scripture, fixed them in his memory, and said “Upon these promises will I rest my soul.” He did so, and passed through the valley of the Shadow of Death, in faith that grew stronger as his troubles grew heavier. Have faith in God, it will make you strong, joyful and useful.

Be ye followers of Him in (4) Patience. “The experience of God's people shows,” an eminent author remarks, “that bodily

pain has a special office to perform in the work of sanctification. In the unrenewed its tendency is to exasperate; when self-inflicted its tendency is to debase and fill the soul with grovelling ideas of God and religion and with low self-conceit. But when inflicted by God on his own children it, more than anything, teaches them their weakness and dependence, and calls upon them to submit, when submission is most difficult.”

From bodily pain and weakness, this precious discipline of patience, he was never entirely free from his first coming among you. But with the beginning of last winter there came a sudden increase of both. On his way to this church to preach he was arrested, sent back to his home, I might say to his room, which he hardly ever left till you carried him to his grave. You knew him as he entered the dark valley of suffering, but you could not know him as he left it. You saw his wasted form; but you could not know the attainments he made in this great grace of patience, which can be learned nowhere but in the school of trouble. In the Gethsemane to which God sent him there was given him a cup to drink. At first he started back, saying, let the cup pass from me, but like his master he took the cup saying “Not my will but thine be done.” We do not know what trials and troubles awaited us, but in this world we will have tribulation. “Be ye also patient, establish your hearts for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.” As a congregation you have passed through a severe trial in the long illness of your late pastor. I state a fact well known to all, when I say that you have shown towards him great kindness and consideration. Our Lord has said “He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophets reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man, in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward.” You have your reward in some measure already. But as to its fullness, you must wait for it,—till you hear the words “Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me.”

I commend you to God and the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified.”

SECTARIAN EDUCATION.

The following extracts are from an address delivered by Arch-Bishop Lynch, in Toronto, two Sabbaths ago. There is much in the address from which we must dissent, but the statement of the question in the first extract is fair; and the position of the Romanist is temperately set forth. Perhaps, too, these words may strike a chord in many a christian heart that is mourning over the irreligious training of our Public Schools. The question is this:—

Whether religious instruction should form part of public education or not. The clergy of the Church of England, and many other denominations of Christians, say with the Catholic clergy that education is not only incomplete without religious instruction, but harmful. Education will render a man more potent for evil without religion. The secularists, many of whom profess no religion, and others not overcharged with any religion, say let the state supply an education in all the branches of secular knowledge, and eliminate from the schools all religious teaching, let religion, they say, be taught by parents at home, or by ministers of the various denominations on Sundays. In other words, let religion be a home and Sunday affair. The difficulty of the Sunday and home religion is, the parents themselves are very often ignorant and too much occupied to teach their children. The state, it is argued, should take the wants of the little ones, and the father is working all day and comes home weary at night, and cares not to teach his children their catechism, even were he to know how. The Sunday teaching occurring only once a week will be ineffective. Children, as in the United States, find Sunday-school too irksome and will end by having no religion at all, as is the case with a great majority there.

In the nineteenth century, in this our present age when every man, except the Catholic, of course, claims the right to make up a religion of his own, to suit his own views or eccentricities, and when there is so large a number of pretty well defined sects and denominations of Christians, it is very difficult, I concede, for parents to give to so many individuals an education to assure the views of no many individuals. We hold that it is the parent's duty and his right to educate his children in that form of belief which he considers before God to be the best. It is the duty of the State to help the parent to fulfil the duty which he owes to God and to his children, to assume the obligations of parenthood, to instruct the children in any State religion. It is true that the State has a right to see that its citizens are properly trained for the duties of citizens, but it can do so without interfering with the consciences of its subjects. Would it not be enough for the State to require certain conditions of school requisites which it can do by means of inspectors: then subdivide these schools, as is done in England, according to the number of pupils attending them. Then the State would have the most pupils, and the most attentive will to which they wish to send, and all will be satisfied, except perhaps the teacher who is unfit to teach. All Protestants have a kindred spirit, they can easily agree to have their children associate, for their differences are after all very inconsiderable in this country, but let them enjoy the same privileges as Protestants enjoy, both for a higher and minor education.

We must acknowledge that parental instruction and our Sabbath-Schools are not securing for our children a thorough Scriptural training. We put the Bible out of our schools, not by legal enactment, but most effectually, professedly that our Roman Catholic fellow citizens might support our schools, and to avoid sectarian strife. The former object has not been attained, there are Separate Schools, and instead of religious strife, we have irreligious indifference, just as ruinous as the evil we shun.

We agree entirely with the Arch-Bishop's view as to the duty and right of the parent, and of the State in education. But we are yet quite prepared to endorse government aid to denominational schools. It may, yet come to that, but we are not convinced that there is no better way. One thing should be aimed at, namely Biblical instruction in our schools, if that cannot be attained under our present system, then something else must be tried. We hope, however, to see a movement in the right direction, and wait in hope.

The last clause of the extract is suggestive showing, as it does, that our R. C. fellow citizens cannot unite with us in educational matters, and the determination of the Roman Catholic Clergy to commence an

agitation for Sectarian grants to Separate, High or Normal Schools, and Roman Catholic Colleges. How will our present Governments act? On their action will depend the maintenance of our present educational system. The minor education cannot be non-Sectarian if the higher be denominational. Nor can we see why Roman Catholics should enjoy the privilege of giving their children a religious education with State funds, while Protestants cannot do so.

MISSION INCIDENT AT PAPUA.

The latest enterprise of the London Missionary Society has a decided flavor of romance about it. The island of Papua, or New Guinea, which is the scene of these new labors, is the least known of all the islands of the Pacific. Its coastline has not yet been fully explored, and the interior, from which snow-capped mountains look out over thick groves of tropical trees toward the sea, is entirely unknown. Dutch missionaries have already been laboring on the northern shore since 1855, at four stations; but the work of the London Society, planned on a larger scale and more widely reported among English readers, has for the first time brought this second largest island in the world into the circle of our missionary interest. The climate on the coast and on the small islands between Cape York and the New Guinean mainland is regarded too unhealthy for the residence of European missionaries. These have, therefore, been stationed at Cape York, to superintend the mission, while the work on the islands in Torres Straits and on the main land has been intrusted to Polynesian converts, 18 in number, who have received very kind treatment from the natives, both Papuan and Malay. The worst that has yet happened to them was the flight of several of their number in consequence of the rough language of the chief on the Island Tanaan. They have returned to their posts. How much these people need the gospel of peace will appear from an extract out of the journal of Rev. Mr. Murray in regard to the raids which the inhabitants of one village are accustomed to make on those of another:

“They come stealthily upon the village selected as the object of attack during the night, and kill such as do not succeed in getting out of their way, and carry off the heads of the slain. To obtain these is said to be their sole object. The skulls are carefully prepared and traded with to other tribes or retained as precious treasures by the parties who obtain them. They take them with them on their fishing excursions and when they go to work on their plantations. It would seem as if they attributed to them some sort of talismanic influence.”

On entering Redsear Bay, Mr. Murray met several of those New Guinean vessels which from their strange appearance excited the dread of earlier visitors. Seven canoes lashed together and held fast by means of traverse spars, form the basis on which the structure rests. At each end is a house, strong and well thatched, and these are united by a bamboo palisade, about six feet in height, with doorways close to the houses, and, outside of all is a rudely constructed platform, about three feet wide, forming a pathway all round. The whole structure is about 50 feet in length and 25 in breadth. There are two mast sails not more than three or four feet wide, tapering to a point, from which float gay streamers and other ornaments. Some forty or fifty painted savages moving round the outer deck and crowding the little doorways, complete the formidable appearance of these lumbering structures. There have as yet been no conversions, but the natives seem to be much interested in their teachers, and contribute liberally to their support.

MISSIONARY NOTES.

The N. Y. Independent says: “Antioch, the cradle of the Gentile Church, has scarcely any record in modern missionary enterprise which is reviving Christianity in the East. It has a small mission congregation of ten or fifteen members, without settled pastor, and at present ministered to by a student from the Rebek Seminary.”

A Parsee writes to the Bombay Guardian that the only hope of their race, numbering some 80,000 in India, being saved from extinction is in adopting Christianity. That journal states that there are thousands of educated Parsees in Bombay who have entirely lost confidence in their own system of religion, and are perfectly convinced of the truth of Christianity.

The work of the American Presbyterian Mission at Tabriz, Persia has called forth persecution. A number of Mohammedans became interested in the mission services, which seems to be the case in other parts of this field. They were apprehended, and such of them as had possessed the faith of the Christians were severely beaten. Subsequent despatches from Toheran proclaimed toleration for the Christians.

The High Church party in England are circulating a petition among the clergy of their wing of the church, “praying that the Archbishops and Bishops may be relieved from their duties in the House of Lords.”