

PROVIDENTIAL TEACHING.

Late in August our fields were rich with the promise of a bountiful harvest. Our farmers were already rejoicing in the rewards of their toil which seemed almost realized. Our orchards promised abundance of fruit. The sea also was yielding its harvest and our fishermen and traders were busy along our coasts. Alas, how frail is the tenure by which we hold all earthly good! Suddenly a mighty storm rose, the rain descended, the floods came, the hurricane swept over the land and sea. For twenty-four hours the tempest raged with deadly violence, carrying mourning, desolation and woe into thousands of homes. The shores of Cape Breton and Prince Edward Island were strewn with wrecks. Many lives were lost and an immense amount of property was destroyed. Our farmers as well as our fishermen in some districts suffered terribly. Houses and barns were swept away or wrecked. Fields of ripening grain were reduced to utter ruin. The hopes of the husbandmen were blighted just when on the verge of realization. Saddest of all, many widows and orphans mourn those who can never return to them again on earth.

God rules the winds and seas. The terrible gale of the 24th August was held in his hand. He said to the billows and to the winds, Hitherto and no further! How weak are we in the presence of the tempest! How helpless and forlorn!

God intends that we should learn our entire dependence upon Him. We can plant and watch and water, but He alone can give the increase and ward off all harm. When we consider ourselves surest of the fruits of our toils, then the word may be uttered by His mouth, His winds may blow and all our treasured wealth may become as the chaff of the threshing floor. Our ships, our orchards, or fields, our barns, like ourselves, are all in His keeping.

Let us therefore be ever ready to acknowledge in word and deed our dependence upon God. He claims our property as His own. Let us not be slow to give to His cause what is needed for its efficient maintenance and due extension. If we refuse

to respond to His calls, He can commission His blights and frosts, His floods and winds and fires to destroy our possessions that we hold back with greedy grasp from Him.

Let us give then, not with slavish fear, to appease the wrath of an angry Deity, but with loving alacrity to prove that we love God and trust Him as our Father, and that we deem His Son our dear Saviour. He teaches us by many monitors,—by fruitful seasons, and by seasons of trial and distress, by storm and calm, by peace and war, by life and death. Let us not be dull scholars in His school. In the midst of affliction and distress let us ask, "Lord what wilt Thou have me to do?"—"to do with my houses and lands, with my ships, my goods, my gold and silver. All are Thine! Make me a wise steward of Thy bounties."

The Baird Trust.

A wealthy Scotsman, James Baird, has gifted Five Hundred Thousand Pounds sterling for religious and benevolent objects in connection with the Church of Scotland. This is probably the largest gift ever made by one man to a Church in his own lifetime. Men are often willing to give when they can hold on to the prize no longer. They have to leave all and so they hand a portion of it to the Church perhaps with the hope that its good influence may meet them on the other side! Mr. Baird has set a good example before others in disposing of his property before his death. He will now have the satisfaction of seeing the good results that flow from his beneficence.

Union.

The proposed union of the Churches has met with the cordial and unanimous approval of the Presbytery of St. John. The subject has not been dealt with so far as we can recall, by any other Presbytery in our bounds.

We are sorry to see that opposition is being organized in Ontario by ministers in both the negotiating churches.