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PROSPECTUS

or TIM

"British American Presbyterian."

The want of a journal devoted to the interests of the Canas. Presbyterian Church—in the columns of which, at the same time the sister Presbyterian Churches of the Dominion could meet with us, as upon a common platferm, for the discussion of questions in which all have a mutual interest, and for the free interchange of sontinents,—has long been felt. To supply this deficiency the undersigned has been induced by the encouragement received from many kind friends—lay and clerical—to undertake the work.

Preferring to be judged by what we want has been induced.

Preferring to be judged by what we may be able to acc amplish rather than pretentions promises of excellencies which may never be realized, our re-ference to special features of this paper will be brief.

brief.

The "British American Presententan" will contain full reports of the proceedings of Church Courts; a complete digost of Ecclesiastical Intelligence—holes and foreign—specially furnished by correspondents; statistics of denominational progress; a carefully prepared summary of the news of the day; market quotations at the principal trade centres; and able articles on Church, Religious, Literary and Social questions.

Literary and Social questions.

The movement for Prosbyterian Union, already so auspiciously inaugurated, rhall be warmly and persistently advocated; and we shall make use of all proper means likely to disarm projudices, reconcile differences, and remove obstacles to the early consummation of so desirable a project.

In a word we shall spare no efforts to produce a paper which will be noted for the variety, purity, and comprehensiveness of its contents; which will be useful to the people, an and to the Pastor, and a welcome visitor in thousands of Prosbyterian homes.

The "Battrian Ampulean Prognature" will be

welcome visitor in thousands of Presbyterian homes.
The "British American Prisbryterian" will be an Eight-page Paper, published every Thursday, at \$2 00 per annum, invariably in advance; and immediately efter the appearance of the first number, a thorough canvass of the country, from Winnipeg to Halifax. will be made; and we venture to ask, on behalf of our agents, a cordial reception from Presbyterians throughout the Dominion.

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON,

Publisher and Proprietor.

TO CONTRIBUTORS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

Letters and articles intended for the next issue hould be in the hands of the Editor not later should be in the nanu than Tuesday morning.

All communications must be accompanied by the writer's name, otherwise they will not be inserted. Letters for this office should be addressed simply BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN, BOX 600, Toronto, Canada.

Anticlos not accepted will be returned, if, at the time they are sent, a request is made to that effectual sufficient postage staining are enclosed. Manuscripts not so accompanied will not be preserved, and subsequent requests for their return cannot be compiled with.

We invite the active co-operation of friends in every section of the Dominion, in order to secure a large circulation for the Buttish American Paresertenian; and to promote the interests of the paper by furnishing early intelligence of Church, Missionary and Presbyterial news suitable for our columns.

British American Presbyterian.

TORONTO, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1872.

DIVERSITY IN ORDER OF WORSHIP.

We cannot expect uniformity in practice to exist among worshippers who have been brought up in different lands and very different associations. Every man clings, with a tenacity proportioned to the strength of his religious nature, to the forms and usages to which in early life he was accustomed. We do not wonder then that such a diversity exists among Presbyterians in Canada. Still a Canadian generation is rising to be the heads of families, and the elders, deacons and managers of our congregations, and Canadian trained men are gradually becoming the majority of our ministers; and it may be well to enquire whether, an order of worship can not be established among us which may meet the tastes and circumstances of our new and growing Church. We do not ask for any departure from the spirit of the Westminster Directory; nay, we plead to carry out that spirit and to take such steps as may be necessary to secure a more perfect adaptation of our worship to times and circumstances than it suggests. We may have something to say in Liturgies at another time, enough now to state that we do not wish any such innovation, nor any interference with the perfect freedom of ministers and congregations. We need however, only suggest one or two particulars in order to show how far the Westminster Directory is from meeting the wants or regulating the practice of our Church in Canada. It provides "that ordinarily one chapter of each Testament be read at every meeting" says "It is requisite that all the canonical works be read over in order" &c., and adds that expounding of any part that is read shall not take place "until the whole chapter or psalm be ended." Then in giving direction as to prayer it requires prayer to be made "for the deliverance of the true to the Reformers' spirit who refuse distressed churches abroad from the to be bound by shackles just because

blasphemies of the Turks; for the blessing of God upon the reformed Churches, especially upon the Churches and kingdoms of Scotland, England and Ireland, now more strictly and religiously united in the solemn league and covenant; and for our plantations in the remote parts of the world &c." It is unnecessary to make any further quotation to convince a candid reader that compliance with the letter of the Directory is not possible; or if obtained would make our worship in this country and time simply riniculous.

But if we are to depart from this Directory, what guide are we to follow How shall such a divorgence and difference be promoted as may prove offensive to none of our people. The American Church has felt this difficulty and has wisely provided a Directory for themselves. Some intelligent friends of our Church hero also complain, and some have rather gone to a Liturgical Church than be subjected to all the consequences of an unchecked, unguided liberty of worship. The preparation of a Directory such as we need and suited to our times and circumstances, is a work of great importance not to be set about lightly or hastily. Still we think there is a call for such a Directory, and we are sure that such a Directory can be prepared among us and would be welcomed.

A little reflection on the varying practices which obtain among us may help to clear the way for such an undertaking.

For example, we find some congregations begin with a short prayer of invocation, some with singing; some stand in singing and in prayer, others sit in in singing and stand in prayer, and others still stand in singing and sit in prayer. Some read two lessons, some one; some expound the chapter and psalms read, others do not; some sing psalms only, some Psalms and Pharaphrases; while the United Presbyterians, and the English Presbyterian Church hymn book are used by others. Some have in strumental music, choirs, &c.; others have seldom a Psalm sung for want of a leader.

Again, some lay vows on the parents in baptism and bind them to the confession of faith, while others satisfy themselves with a few exhortations of a general kind before administering the ordinance. At the Lord's supper some fence the tables, others do not; some have long addresses, others simply dispense the elements; some give thanks only once, others before both bread and

At funerals again, prayer is generally offered at the grave, although the Westminster Directory expressely says that "praying, reading, and singing, both in going to and at the grave * * * * and all such things be laid aside." And at marriages also a difference of rite ob-

We might numerate other things which call for regulation but the above will suggest many respects in which we may seek more order and uniformity.

We are of opinion that this matter can be dealt with only by the Supreme Court. So long as no authoritative guide exists, every man will seek to improve for himself, and with the best intentions we shall have practices introduced among us which are far from commendable. If our General Assembly were to prepare a guide and recommend it for use there can be little doubt that the majority of our best people would at once adopt it. Besides, improvements are needed, and congregations otherwise slow to move would be influenced by the weight and authority of the supreme court, and adapt their worship to the habits and tastes of our day.

Nor can we heed the timid cry of those who fear to tamper with our standards. Did not the men of 1648 boldly relinquish their own confession, the Westminster divines had prepared; and that simply because these latter were better suited to the times and circumstances? In holding on then to what has waxed old and cannot be reduced to practice, and refusing to adapt ourselves to our age and country, we do not follow the example of our fathers either of the First or Second Reformawhen they made changes. They are

been served and the advance of the Church requires that new steps be taken and now forms adopted. Have we no faith in our Head? Was the Holy Spirit present with those hely men at Westminster, according to his promise, and yet will He not deign to guide us in Canada in our day and circumstances? We must be alive. So long as the Church has an outward form, she must have outward ordinances of worship but as to the external administration thereof there are "circumstances concerning the worship of God which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed." Conf. I. 6.

FRIENDLY TALKS WITH PRESBY TERIANS.

We like to be on the most friendly and confidential footing with our readers; to tell them what we think and how we feel on almost every subject, and to have them doing the same thing with us in return. This answers all purposes best, so we mean to follow it, and expect in this, as in other things, a reciprocation of kind favours.

These readers of ours are not yet so numerous as we should like them to be, nor as we expect very soon to see them. Still they are increasing as rapidly as in reason we could expect, and while we thank them for their kindness, we can't help asking, if, in this newspaper venture, they think they have done all their duty when they have individually handed in the yearly subscription, or paid their five cents of a Friday evening for the Presnyreman. We don't think at their hands. Something more we do ask; something more we think we have a right to expect.

In the matter of newspapers, as in many other things, the chil iren of this the children of light. Recognizing the need of some means for disseminating their principles and defending their practise, the members of a political party will be found every now and then embarking considerable sums in the establishment of an organ, and showing a hearty personal interest in its prosperity and success. What influence they possess they will exert freely to secure subscribers and advertisements, and when they can do nothing else they will at any rate be hearty in their commendations and prompt in remitting their own subscriptions.

A good many enterprizes that looked feeble and weekly at first have in this way been nursed into strength, and have far more than repaid all the expenditure of time and means bestowed upon them.

Now isn't it too often the case that Christian people act a very different part in their treatment of what is called the religious press? There is nothing, for instance, which is more generally acknowledged among the Presbyterians of Canada, and has been for years past, than the need of a good Presbyterian newspaper, which might handle secular matters in a somewhat religious spirit, and afford means for the members of that denomination throughout Canada communicating with each, and discussing various matters which as Christians and Presbyterians they are deeply interested in. Yet what effort worth while has ever been made to have this need supplied? Scarcely any; while all that has been attempted has been by individual enterprize, and at individual risk, with but little sympathy and encouragement from the denomination in general.

If success could only have been achieved, many would before this been very glad, but little in the way of assistance, let us frankly say, has been done to make that success a certainty for liturgy, and discipline for those which | those who have tried the work before us. It has been thought a kind of charity to subscribe to such a paper-a thing to be reckoned as a condescension and a merit by and by.

The weekly or the daily paper from the city comes as a matter of course, and must be taken however much it may ignore or even outrage all the religious side of a man's sympathies and tion, but of those who opposed them and interests. It may be of the earth earthy, may be foul with all the violent and unscrupulous insolence of party warfare, but that does not matter. It tyranny of the anti-Christian fashion they are old, and to bow to the ordi- has become a necessity let it say almost and form the cruel oppressions and nances of men, when their purpose has what it likes.

Then the local paper must be taken also as a matter of course. It gives the local gossip, and tells what the neighbours are doing in the way of advertis-

After these is there room for anything more? Scarcely. The religious or denominational newspaper is looked upon as a superfluity, perhaps even an impertinence, and a couple of dollars a year spent on it may often be thought little better than thrown away.

Cautiously men wait till they see whether or not it is going to live, and their caution very effectually helps it to

We quite grant that it is only a newspaper that is worth supporting that will in the long run be supported, or ought to be, but the misery is that the "religious newspaper" very often does not get a chance for its life.

It is not such a terrible thing, even though one does risk a couple of dollars as a subscription for such an enterprize with the possibility of not getting pennyworths for one's money. Everywhere in other matters this is done every day without a thought. But with many professedly religious men it is a rather formidable enterprize when the question is the life and death of a religious news-

People say, "We shall wait and see." when prompt action and hearty co-operation would give the very strength and stability the absence of which may be complained of, and be urged as a reason for hesitation.

Now is such a kind of procedure right? Is it manly? Is it businessthey have; yet we ask very little more like? Individually we have no reason to complain; and we are not complaining. But how many who ought to be hearty kind friends, and willing and energetic co-operators, are shaking their heads in doubt about us and our venworld are wiser and more practical than ture, recalling how other such undertakings have fared in the past, and are waiting helplessly to see what will become of us and our little sheet, when a little zeal and active effort would settle that question once and for all, and in the right way.

> We don't ask for charity- We feel in no need of pitying forbearance. We ask no man's pardon for the misfortune of being in existence. But, risking a good deal in order to supply a generally felt want, we think we have a right to look for a kind word and a little friendly assistance.

> We have not come with the sound of trumpets, nor have we indulged in boastful promises. We leave our work to be judged of as it is; but we whisper, at the same time, that what our paper is now can give but a very faint idea of what it may speedily become, if subscribers are numerous and prompt, and if the general support and encouragement of Presbyterians be anything like what it ought to be.

We have already secured many kind friends; the number of subscribers received is encouraging; friendly words and friendly acts have not been wanting.

Credit we can't risk. It is the high road to ruin, so that subscriptions must all be in advance. It is an easy thing for us to make the paper larger when adequate means are supplied. We pledge ourselves to do this whenever our subscription list will warrant it. Meanwhile we confidently cast ourselves upon the support of the numerous, well-to-do, and intelligent Presbyterians of this Dominion, and fully reckon upon their ready and active co-operation in the establishment on a firm basis of a periodical which may week by week be cordially welcomed to their homes, and may help to advance effectively the best interests of the Church and community in "this Canada of ours."

Grace, through a beautiful child, is but a child that must be upheld by the father's arms.

Dr. Holland, in "Bitter Sweet." sings:

"Life evermore is fed by death In earth and sea and sky. And that a rose may breathe its breath, Something must die."

The doctrine finds exemplification in the history of his magazine, Scribner's Monthly. It has now swallowed up its fourth magazine. Hours at Home, Putnam's Magazine, and the Riverside, gave up the ghost in its fourth year; and a Southern periodical, the Mosaic, published at Nashville, Tenn., has followed in the path of its greater "absorbed sisters.

THE POWER OF TRUE GOD. LINESS.

Christian man of humble life in Scot-

land. When a grown lad he went south

- was the son of a very worthy

to push his way in life. Soon he found himself among the busy scenes of a manufacturing city in England, where religious influence was unfelt, and profanity and infidelity were life. The shafts of ridicule hurled at him and the communications which of necessity he had with irreligious men had their effect. S- became careless, prayerless, churchless and Bible-less .- With a conscience far from sacred he could not rest; with an intellect powerful and inquiring, which was supplied with stimulating reading, he grew in pride of reason and began to think that the form: of religion to which he had been accustomed were all a matter of prejudice, the results of an old-fashioned, priest ridden faith, which only kept down the poor and scrved the rich; which with the advancing light and liberty of this nineteenth century, all thinking men should cast off as shackles upon fine thought and chains for the working-men. He had agreeable companions too, men who seemed to wish for his happiness and to be prospering themselves and they had no religion. In this state of mind he came to the great commercial metropolis of the United States. Freedom pleased him much, and the utter indifference to all religious denominations by the great proportion of those he met with, as well as the inscinuous, light and flippant character of the religion he witnessed. when compared with his own early experience strengthened his doubts and confirmed his irreligious tendencies. Still God'r Spirit had not forsaken him; good wrestled with the evil in his inner man, and ever and anon in his serious moments of retrivment, hallowlowed memories would come over him, and restless and yearnings after rest. He left the city and went into newer settlements, a sceptic indeed, but not without misgivings as to his now want of faith, for some things had presented themselves to his reflecting mind as the natural result of the want of religion which he saw around him; things which manifestly forboded no good but only evil to the individual and the community. He thought and struggled but prayed not. In the course of his journeyings, he was spending the night at a tavern far in the back-woods. He supped and was sitting reading when two young men entered and cutting for the necessary concommitants of a social meeting sat down to drink and smoke and enjoy themselves. He overheard their conversation. At last it drifted towards religion. Many sentements were uttered similar to those which he had silently cherished in his own bosom, but he had never seen or heard them put in language before. They startled him. A fine handling of Scripture with Scoff and Hunter followed, and our two youth ploughed at Christians, and religion, and boasted that they feared neither God nor man; they would enjoy the world and let heaven and hell alone. While thus they uttered profanity and blasahemy the - was stirred to its depths. His heart was hot within him. At length one said, "It is all hypocrisy, I don't believe any Christian is what he protends to be." "That's so," replied his companion with a coarse outh that made the flesh of S-creep. "There's no as religion, its all a sham; and our Christians are all a pack of knaves and scoundrel." S—could bear it no longer, dropping the magazino he held in his hand, he looked across and said, "See here, my lads, I have heard all your talk; I am no Christian myself; but I tell you you are wrong. There is such a thing as religion, and Christians who are what they profess to be. I know it, for my father was a Christian, and I know he was a good man."

He rose and left the scorners, a wiser man. From that day forth better thoughts got the mastery; and though the conflict was long and cruel; though to his dying day, he may carry spiritual scars showing where infidelity wounded him, yet he has been for years a consistent member of the Church of Christ. In all his doubts and strayings, all unknown to himself, his heart was held by a father's love; his conscience influenced by a holy life; and his understanding convinced by the living illustration of godliness which a just and devout father had afforded.

A little-sin may at once bar the door

of heave a, and open the door of hell. A man has not risen very high who expends his energy only in scorning and contempt for the evil. The ox will not grow very at and strong which spends its hours in the pasture field horning and scraping up the thistles, to the ne-glect of filling his stomach with sweet and nutritious grass. And so in the church, the men who boast they can scent out heresy in the very hair of a man's head, or in the cut of his clothes, are very lean and miserable saints for the most part.