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Contributors and Correspondents.

HOURS WITH A CHURCH COURT

V. NEAKING NOONTIDE.

We are now to have a brief pause in the more ordinary concerns, and enjoy the pleasure of a resting place, on the principle that an agreeable change in the occupation of the thoughts is of the nature of a rest to the ever thinking human mind. This is our first landing place, as we may say, along the stream of reminiscence; and a not unwelcome sort of one it is, by any means. The scribe may rest his hand, and lay aside his pen awhile. Nerves too highly strained may now relax a few degrees. The languid spirit may now enjoy the quickening of a refreshing draught, and find therein some fresh motive power for its daily tasks, and some fresh strength to carry easily its daily burdens. So is it, as a usual thing, with the hours spent in our great annual councils of the Church, in hearing the "good words" of delegates from other branches of the great brotherhood of Christians everywhere, and mostly from other lands, and we are now to have the first of these—an early comer, but not the less welcome on that account. Such an event is usually hailed as constituting one of the most pleasing features of those yearly meetings—as one object in the foreground of the picture on which the eye delights to rest. It is not alone the good things that may be said; nor the eloquence, with which these good things may be spoken; nor the witching spell a foreign voice sometimes carries with it, but, better than all, in the presence and living words of one or more, the embodiment of the empathic and good wishes of thousands of kind human hearts, that under other skies, or other auspices, are sailing side by side with ourselves on the same great voyage of life. To us, therefore, there would seem to be something wanting, if no such deputy were on the ground—a link or two wanting in the golden chain.

Hardly had the vision of the great pan-council vanished from view with its mixture of races, and its varieties of characteristics, from those of the tropics to those of the frigid zone, when our current of reflection in that direction ceased suddenly to flow, by a respected brother communicating to us the news of the arrival of a deputy from the United States, and from the United Presbyterian Church there—Rev. H. Gordon, the name he gave, with which he connected at the same time both a pleasant reminiscence and a kindly word, which rather served to increase our interest than otherwise on the occasion. He was known to him of old, and was of sterling worth. He was also of a good old stock! Such announcements were a good preparative for hearing, you may be sure.

This quiet bit of news was speedily succeeded by an announcement in regular canonical form, when Mr Gordon took the platform and delivered his fraternal message, saying many things, which must have found a sympathetic response in the hearts of his learned auditory. The speech was marked by a certain nervous eloquence, which reminded us in some degree of one of England's greatest Statesmen, of him we mean who but lately guided the affairs of State, and was succeeded by a cultured compeer of Jewish origin. Among the many excellent things to which utterance was given, we shall notice one or two, as especially worthy of remembrance. As to religious teaching, in these days when error is so outspoken, he recognized and strongly urged the necessity of imparting a larger element of solid truth from the pulpit to the people, in contrast to merely appealing to the feelings, in contrast to the mere sensational, which may create a stir for the moment, but leave no good permanent results behind. The understanding needs to be enlightened, while the emotional nature is affected. That has been a marked characteristic in the preaching of the Presbyterian Church in the past, and it is greatly to be regretted. Error must be counteracted with the weighty words of truth. In carrying out our mission as a Church, he thought that a little more *esprit de corps* would not be amiss. So say we, and so a good many agree with us in saying. There may be a certain kind of enthusiasm without any real religion at the root of it, but when you have got no more semblance of religion, it will greatly commend its graces, by something of the enthusiastic spirit being brought into operation with it. More *esprit de corps* then let it be.

Again, in speaking of the position and distinctive features of the Presbyterian Church, he remarked that there were some who passed for Presbyterians, some in office within its pale, who sometimes put on an apologetic air for being Presbyterians, as if they were ashamed of the connection. With this there followed an electric burst from the speaker, of a kind to put to shame every half-hearted apologist for his Church, when he asked the question, "What have they to be ashamed of in the Presbyterian Church? Is its history one of which any one need be ashamed? Has it not been a great power for good in the world? Is it not doing a glorious work

now?" Other Churches, he considered had done much good service in the common cause, but none of them could show a nobler record than that with which they were identified. Presbyterians ought to be in the van, united, standing shoulder to shoulder, meeting the wants, and grappling with the problems of the age in which we live, laboring for the salvation of men; never having their banner trailing in the dust. Noble sentiments these! Would that they were realized in every Church in Christendom. And now we bid this delegate good bye, feeling all the more kindly towards America in general, after listening to his glowing words. Such interchange of sentiment and salutation not only serves to impress upon us the truth that "God hath made of one blood all nations of the earth"; but also brings vividly to light a notable oneness in the animating Spirit, and helps not a little to draw those together in Spirit, whom oceans keep apart, or political lines divide. Americans seem to have been thought rather an *outré* sort of people once by some, honoured with the names of Washington, and Johnston Edwards, and other noble Spirits, though they were; and some literature even of not half a century ago were not of a greatly different state of mind; but times change, and with them all things change. We have seen in later days a stony many invaluable gems dug out of that soil. There is one of these, among the most precious specimens, which deserves our notice, in the persons of the two honoured gentlemen, who have been such a power in Christian effort of later in the mother land. The names, Moody and Sankey, will for generations remain as household words in many a British home, and call up benedictions from many a British heart. But when the people of that great country were only imperfectly known and understood, it is not at all surprising that unhappy mistakes were occasionally committed in the estimates that were formed in regard to their characteristics and their ways. That as a common rock on which imperfect knowledge stumbles, in men's thoughts of men and things. Side by side with such mistakes compare a significant little incident told us on good authority in regard to the respected lady of a certain gentleman formerly of one of the Provinces now composing this young Dominion of Canada, the date of which was not many years ago. That same gentleman, who was of Scottish birth and education, paid a visit with his wife to the land of his birth, after a few years residence abroad, when of course Scotland was new to his companion in life, and she was new to Scotland too. During this visit of his, one of his old friends in particular, an old lady in the eastern section of the country, under whose care he had been placed while in his boyish days, was not only proud to see her quondam protegee again, but likewise curious to see the partner of his fortunes, especially as she had conjured up in fancy some rather singular notions as to what she would be like. At length her desire was gratified, but on seeing the object of her curiosity, he idly underwent a sudden and perfect revolution; for she expected to behold a lady of a somewhat different colour from the ordinary white! and lo! she was never more mistaken in her life. So vision dispels many a chimeric of the human imagination, enabling us to see our brothers, not as trees walking, but as wonderfully like ourselves.

MEMORIA.

HOME MISSIONS—LAKE SUPERIOR AND MANITOBA

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN

DEAR SIR:—The following extracts from letters recently received from our Missionaries in Lake Superior and Manitoba may interest your readers:—

The Rev. Mr. Caswell of Silver Islet writes:—

"I have neglected to write to you sooner, partly because of having been kept busily occupied, and partly because I was anxious to be able to report what success there might be in forming a regular organisation in this place.

When I came here in June, I found the Wesleyan minister absent at conference, and with the expectation of being sent elsewhere and my returning here to remove his household goods. I proceeded with my work, preaching twice on Sabbath, and attending the Sabbath School for nearly two months, when the Wesleyan minister returned, having been sent for another year. In the meantime I had been visiting from house to house, Presbyterians, Methodists, and all indeed who were Protestants. I stated my object was not only to preach the Gospel, but also to organize a Church for the full enjoyment of all Church privileges. When I heard of the probable return of the Wesleyan Brother, and the probable division of the Protestants, I began collecting statistics, that I might know how many adherents could be counted upon as well as of all desirous of becoming members in full communion. The numbers are as follows:

Members 18;—Adherents who are heads of families 50,—and adherents unmarried 18. All the above with their children form a population of about 130. Of the latter class of adherents, there are no doubt many more, who have been brought up as Presbyterians, but the associations of a mining

village are such that many grow careless and are perhaps unwilling to avow what they are. There is always a good attentive class of young men at Sabbath services, and indeed I have been surprised at their attendance at the Tuesday evening prayer meeting. Of the first named class of adherents, most of them are staunch Presbyterians as far as the name is concerned, but having lived on the North Shore many years and away from Church organization, have united with no other Church, and have only occasionally heard the voice of one of their own ministers or missionaries. These that are members have mostly belonged in other places to our own Church, or to the Kirk or Congregationalist body.

"After many delays, owing to the busy occupation here during the summer months, we succeeded in getting together a good meeting on 21st July, and elected seven managers, two auditors and two elders. Of the two elders chosen, only one gave his consent. The elder elected who has consented to act will, we have no doubt, prove a man of sterling worth and of good influence in the community—Mr John Livingstone of the Custom House—whom you met when here last year, and with whom you have since been in correspondence.

Upon my coming here the people had taken rooms at the hotel for Mrs. Caswell and myself, for which board we pay \$40 per month. I am anxious to get a house, so as to settle down with the feeling of a home, but I am put off from time to time, with the promise of one in the fall. Every house in the village belongs to the mining company, and as they require all for their own workmen, I am beginning to despair of getting one at all. I have been asking the people to build a manse, for without a Church or manse they can have but a slight hold upon the place, besides the comfort and feeling of welcome that a manse would give to their Minister.

"The school was pressed upon me shortly after I came, though I thought it would interfere with my other labors. But as the Presbyterians especially wished me to accept it I have done so. I now teach four days in the week, preach every Sabbath, attend Sabbath School, and prayer meeting on Tuesday evening and do as much as I can in pastoral visitations. This is surely enough work for one man. Of course if I find it too much the teaching must be given up. I think that our young Church will flourish and gather strength both in numbers and in Godliness as each year is added to its age. The attendance at services is all that can be expected; at the evening service on Sabbath the house is filled to the doors."

Sault Ste Marie, where the Rev. W Kay is settled, is in many respects a more difficult field, necessitating three sermons every Sabbath, and a drive over a road which is reported by every one who has travelled it to be one of the very worst in Canada.

Mr Kay in two communications received says:—"When we arrived here we found that we had our choice of two houses:—one the half of a new double house belonging to the Sheriff of Algoma and within a few weeks of being finished, and the other an old house said to be very cold in winter. We chose the former and although it is a very small house, we are to pay \$100 a year of rent. We expected to find it very expensive living here, but the reality considerably exceeds our expectations. Until our furniture arrived we had to board at a house whose usual rate was \$1.50 per day for each person. Provisions are very dear, milk 10 cents a quart and water carted from the river at the rate of 10 cents a barrel, with everything else in proportion on *"

The congregations are very small—especially the one at Korah, in the country. The people in the country have apparently hard work to make ends meet, and can raise I fear but little for the support of a minister. * * * When I came here, I was told that I would have to preach twice every Sabbath at the Sault. I did not calculate on this, but was willing to try. I find it very hard work, however, as the road to Korah is very bad,—the worst I ever travelled, and seven miles instead of four as reported to me. The people at Korah expect me to preach every day also. If I were relieved of the Korah station, it would simplify matters considerably as I find the governing of a horse and conveyance the greatest difficulty I have to contend with. I have tried to make arrangements to hire a horse, that I might always depend on getting, but have not yet succeeded.

"The people here are very kind to us and we may soon feel at home here, at least among families who do not use liquor, which I am sorry to say are very few. Drinking is a great evil here. People use it unblushingly, and some even boast of it.

"The attendance at Korah and at the Sault are very good. The building used at the Sault and the situation (near some stables) is very much against us. I don't see how we can worship in it at all in winter, while the Methodist and Episcopalians have very neat Churches. The people here, however, subscribed \$1,700 for a Church."

Mr. McKellar, the student sent out by the missionary Society of Knox College along with Mr Currie, writes from Poloine, Manitoba, of date August 21st. * *

"Although I have been here but a short time, I begin to feel a deep interest in the work. The Presbyterian element is largely represented, indeed it constitutes the majority of the new settlers in the western district of the Province. And although we should always be glad to have our people, when not supplied by our own missionaries, visited by English Church and Wesleyan ministers, yet our Church must not have her people too long under the influence of others. The other denominations are not so here. They have zealous and pains taking men, wherever settlements are springing up, no matter how few may be the number of their adherents. The present prospect of our Church is as good and in some respects better than that of any other Protestant denomination in the new settlements, provided that a sufficient number of able and self denying missionaries are sent out from time to time, who will follow the tide of emigration if need be to the foot of the Rocky Mountains. Among the emigrants coming up with us on the Dawson Route it was easily seen that the majority of them were Presbyterians. I have four mission stations to supply, at considerable distances apart. The meetings are not very large, but encouraging. All the four stations are likely to receive large accessions to their number next summer. Other new settlements are springing up rapidly on every hand. About fifty miles west of this there are two localities which are attracting considerable attention, viz:—The Little Saskatchewan and Riding Mountain settlements. These are likely to become places of considerable importance, from the fact that it is proposed to settle one with Canadians from Michigan and the other with Scotch emigrants. Mr Ralston, the agent for the American colony, passed through about three weeks since with one of the advanced parties forming the colony and another is expected in September. I hope to be able to get it soon to visit these new and rising settlements. * *

"The grasshopper plague has done much damage throughout the whole of the western district of the Province. It is thought the wheat will yield about half a crop, and those who have a fair quantity of it so far hope to have what will keep themselves and families in flour during the winter. The potato crop is generally very good; oats are badly damaged and barley entirely destroyed. This latter remark, may also be made in regard to all vegetable and garden produce. No doubt there will be a considerable number of people throughout the Province who must be supported during the winter from other sources than the yield of their farms."

I trust, Mr Editor these extracts will be sufficient to show the members of our Church, the absolute necessity of increased contributions to the Home Mission Fund for the present year. If the work in Manitoba is to keep pace with emigration the outlay will be at least one half more than last year, while the stations in Lake Superior not hitherto supplied during the winter season, will be largely dependent for support upon the Home Mission Fund.

Yours truly,

Brantford Ont., Wm. COCHRANE CON-
Sept. 7th. CONVENOR HOME MISSION COM.

NORTH WESTERN STATES.

(From our own Correspondent.)

Your readers need hardly be informed at this late day that Presbyterianism in its practical workings is not the same over here, that it is with you in Canada. To dwell on this would I fear be almost a thread bare story now. Perhaps, however, it may not be so very unprofitable to call attention to some of the differentials once again. It may help to strengthen you in that which is stable and conservative, in that which your correspondent believes to be one of the greatest glories of our form and order, and if these words happen to meet the eye of any candid reader on this side it may possibly awaken a desire for a nearer approach to that which prevails with you. I know that very many, both ministers and people, are longing for such a result, not only longing but labouring to bring it about. As I attended a meeting of the Presbytery of this district a few days ago, I can give impressions that are based on personal observations as well as on the hearing of the ear.

One of the most marked characteristics, one that anybody with the eyes open can avoid seeing, is the small amount of oversight that the Presbytery exercises over congregations here compared with what is done in Canada. With you the authority of Presbytery is something tangible; here it is exceedingly shadowy. The supplying of vacant congregations and of mission stations with ordinances is in Canada the duty of Presbytery, a duty which that court always discharges itself or through a committee appointed for that purpose; here the congregation does that work itself. It is not the Session as such that attends to the duty, but a committee appointed by the congregation, and sometimes the members of the committee are not even Communicants. To such an extent, and the same meaning is obvious in other directions as well, does Congregationalism prevail here. The consequences of that mode of procedure are the following. If the con-

gregation be large and wealthy enough there will be a regular supply of preaching of some kind, but the Presbytery has no guarantee that the pulpit is always filled by men that have a right to be there, the preachers may be no Anythings or Nothings according to the taste or temper of the Committee of supply, or as chance may arise. On the other hand if the congregation be small and weak in a financial sense there may not be preaching half the time there unless preachers are available that can and will give their services free. The congregation may go to lock and ruin in such circumstances and the Presbytery knows nothing about it, and can do very little if it did know. Another consequence of such want of oversight is that preachers, whether licentiates or ordained ministers without charge, have no regular work assigned them, and many of them that are able and willing to work and whose preaching is acceptable do not get employment half their time. It depends on a man's friends whether he cannot get as much temporary employment as will secure him pocket money. This is a striking contrast with the state of things in Canada where each preacher gets employment every Sabbath of the year with a reasonable amount of remuneration guaranteed. To show that I am not drawing on imagination I quote a case that I have heard of and that I have every reason to believe is strictly and accurately true. A minister without charge in an Eastern Presbytery thought that there was more need for his services in the West. He had noticed that there was a constant cry maintained for laborers, that the field was inviting and employment was ample. Such cries enter the ears of every one, of that there can be no doubt. Well, he came West and took up his abode within the bounds of a Presbytery in which there were several vacancies. Now for four months experience. He was willing to work, he was able to work, he let it be known as widely as he could within the bounds of modesty that he was eager to get employment. At the end of four months he had received for services the sum of \$80, and ten of that he got for a day that he preached in a Baptist Church. Here are a few instances worth noting and remembering. Soon after his arrival in the West, he was asked to supply a day in Church near to where he was staying. It was vacant at the time, a man was called but he had not arrived. It is perhaps the largest Church so far as membership goes in the State of Michigan, at all events the largest out of Detroit, and there is considerable wealth, commercial as well as agricultural in it. The pulpit was filled that day, time passed, months went by, and no offer of remuneration was made. When ten or twelve weeks had elapsed the brother dropped a modest note to one of the elders that asked him, reminding him of the oversight, he did not believe for a moment that there was any oversight but he wanted to be courteous. At the end of three weeks more he got a note from the Treasurer of the Church that numbers about 400 communicants enclosing the magnificent sum, of \$101! He had sufficient self-respect left to send it back with a little bit of his mind. Since then he has heard no more from that model treasurer, and the model officers that stand behind him and direct his movements. Were a private person to serve a man he has employed in that way the world would say he was dishonest, but Boards of Trustees like other corporations are said to have neither a soul to be saved nor a body to be kicked. When about a month in the place he was invited to fill a vacancy some distance off, to discharge the duty he was some \$2.50 out of pocket going and returning, and although he wrote twice he never heard from that Church since, not even to get his railway fare. The third instance is a contrast to these. He was invited to another vacancy, and but for a circumstance that arose might have been pastor to-day. Some weeks after \$10 was sent for his services with the request to say whether that was enough. He replied that it was not and \$10 more was sent. It is to be hoped that the experience of this brother is not common, but there it is, a plain unvarnished taste. The two first instances prove that Trustees of Churches are no more honest and honourable than other men, that it is not the office in the Church that makes the man, but something else. This is too true a specimen of philosophising, it is one that your readers know already. However let it pass.

This letter has become long enough, and I will reserve further comparisons for future communications.

LEUMAS.

Southern Michigan, Sept., 1874.

Acknowledgment.

Mr. Editor,—I am glad to acknowledge the receipt of £100 sterling from the Irish Presbyterian Church, to aid our Home-Mission work. I trust that the same kindly interest in us may soon be shown by our brethren in Scotland of the United Presbyterian and Free Church.

Yours truly,

WILLIAM COCHRANE.

Brantford, Sept. 8, 1874.

Ingratitude is always a kind of weakness. I have never seen that clever men have been ungrateful.—Goethe.

Courage is always greatest when blended with meekness; intellectual ability is most admirable when it sparkles in the setting of a modest self distrust; and never does the human soul appear so strong as when it foregoes revenge and dares to forgive an injury.