

British American Presbyterian.

VOL. I.

TORONTO, CANADA, FRIDAY, APRIL 19, 1872.

No. 10

Contributors & Correspondents.

NEW BRUNSWICK.

Presbyterianism in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia—Interesting Particulars—Terrible Snow Storms—Trains Delayed—Threatened Financial Crisis.

From our own Correspondent.

Presbyterianism is far from being as strong comparatively in this Province as it is in the neighboring Province of Nova Scotia. There are some parts of the latter where our Church occupies a position in proportion to the population as a whole, and also in the maturity to which the organization has grown, not much unlike Scotland, and the North of Ireland. This is especially the case in the County of Pictou, and in a considerable portion of the County of Colchester. There are also vigorous and wealthy sections elsewhere, as for example in Halifax, and in the important towns of Windsor and Yarmouth. We are very much weaker both in members and in strength. A far larger proportion of the congregations in this Province receive aid from what we call the Supplement Fund, a scheme which some years ago was separated from the Home Mission proper, probably with an idea that it might be developed still further into a Sustentation Fund, similar to that of the Free Church and latterly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Nevertheless when we take into account the late period at which our church took root in this Province, the growth is not to be despised, especially when it is remembered that if a Church is not planted at the same time that the settlers take possession, if an opportunity be given to other denominations to take the lead, it is doubly difficult to do the work again. It was only in 1818 that the first Presbyterian Church was opened in the Province of New Brunswick and a regular congregation organized. There had been preaching tours made by brethren of Nova Scotia, chiefly by the veteran pioneer, Dr. McTavish, but so far as I know, no congregation was formed until the year mentioned. The man that opened St. Andrew's Church in this city and ministered here for several years, still lives. It was the Rev. George Burns, brother to Dr. Robert Burns of Toronto, in later years, and uncle of the present Dr. R. F. Burns of Montreal. It is only a few days ago that I read in the *Scottish Christian Herald*, several articles on the state of New Brunswick at that time, and of St. John in particular, written by George Burns after his return to his native land. He gives some very interesting particulars of the opening services, and of the sensation with which Ronsse's version of the Psalms was introduced into this city for the first time. That one congregation has grown into 41, the number which the two branches of our Zion masters now, 26 of the one and 15 of the other. I would not exaggerate in the least were I to say, that had any exertion been made at the proper time, had there been men sent out of a true missionary spirit, that is a sufficient number of men, there would have been double the number of congregations to-day, and these congregations as a rule far stronger. In all parts of the Province are to be found men, who either themselves were brought up in our communion in Scotland or in Ulster, or else their fathers were, and they are to-day the bone and sinew of the Baptist and Wesleyan Churches. It was of necessity that this was the result, after waiting for years to see whether a pastor of their own would come along they were compelled to fall in with the organization that was there or else sink into indifference. It is sad to find these lost to our communion; but assuredly it is better to see them where they are than to find them regardless of all religion as some are. The church of Scotland may be said to have had the Province to themselves so far as the Presbyterians were concerned until the disruption, there never were more than two Secession congregations at one time, with one or two of Covenanters that grew up at a later period. In 1846 three of the ministers went out and formed the Free Church. They were somewhat ambitious in their views for they began by calling themselves a synod, where a Presbytery might have sufficed for a time. They abated their pretensions afterwards and fell back on the more humble title. Two of the three are still in harness within the bounds of the Presbytery of St. John, the third is in New Zealand now.

Even as they were compared with the Church they left, they soon outgrew their rivals, for in 1866 when they were merged in the Church of the Lower Provinces they numbered 19 ministers with some 22 or 23 congregations. But I have given you enough of history for one letter. I will return to the growth that was made in particular sections and the present position of some of the charges hereafter from time to time.

A most extraordinary succession of snow storms has passed over these Eastern Provinces and the State of Maine during the past few weeks. Nothing approaching to them in severity has occurred for many years. For two days last week and four this one there were no trains able to pass between here and Bangor, and now after the way being cleared it is closed again as bad as ever. On the eastern side and in Nova Scotia it is quite as bad if not worse. When such is the state of the main arteries of travel as may be expected the branch lines are still worse. It is said that some of the latter will not be opened until a thaw comes. Being now in the middle of March that is not a very pretty prospect, even though it be delayed somewhat beyond the usual time. Between here and Halifax the roads are very bad. The English mail for this city was despatched from Halifax three days ago (in ordinary times the distance is some twelve or thirteen hours and might be made in less) whether we will get the letters this evening or not I don't know. Only two mails have been got from the States and the Upper Provinces for the last week. The storm seems to be confined to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick and the portion of Maine lying next to us. It is a very serious loss to the city in the stopping up of traffic. It is said that if it continues much longer we will have a financial crisis, as it is very hard to get money just now. It is to be hoped that no such calamity will fall on the commercial world here as that threatens.

St. John, 16th March, 1872.

UNION IN CONNECTION WITH THE COLLEGES.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

Sir: In the view of many, the Colleges present the greatest difficulties in the way of union. These difficulties may be viewed in a general way, both as matters involving principles, and as purely practical; and to these must now be added the experimental difficulty revealed in the failure of the Endowment Committee, to raise any considerable amount of the money required. These three points I purpose to discuss, confining myself to the first in this paper.

The question whether the raising of \$250,000 was intended to be considered a condition of union, I shall not at present discuss. I have already expressed the opinion that it was not. I am satisfied that those most anxious for union, on both sides, are influenced by brotherly love, and by a sincere desire to extend and consolidate Presbyterianism in this Dominion, and thus, in their view, to do much for the welfare of the country and the Glory of Christ. No pecuniary obstacle could effectually resist the force of these philanthropic, fraternal and pious affections. Those therefore who seem anxious to erect such an obstacle, or to magnify it if it does exist, will be miserably disappointed if they expect it to arrest the progress of the union movement a single day.

That the state of the question may be distinctly seen, the following misapprehensions must be removed:

1st. That the union is to a large extent a pecuniary matter—a thing to be purchased with money, and that money to be paid by us. Some present it as "a preliminary qualification for being united with the Old Kirk, that the Canadian Presbyterian Church should raise \$250,000 to endow the Halls in Toronto and Montreal." The union is thus represented as involving a heavy outlay of money; but is this a fair way of putting the case? We, as a church, felt the need of an endowment for our Colleges, long before union with the Kirk was talked of; we even made an attempt to endow one chair as a fair beginning, and failed, it is supposed, mainly because the endowment contemplated was only partial; and more than three months before the Joint Committee met, the General Assembly, at Quebec, resolved that a general effort be made to raise \$250,000, as an endowment for Knox College, Toronto, and for Montreal College. And, even if the union

negotiations should go no further, the necessity of an endowment would be felt as much as ever. Is it fair then, to charge to the union this great expenditure of money, the necessity of raising which existed, and does exist, independently of union altogether, and which, when raised, will be paid not to the Kirk, but to ourselves?

2nd. That it is contrary to the principles of our Church, to engage in the work of secular education, is another grave misapprehension. As a Church, we have pronounced against the granting of public money to denominational Colleges. Thus far we have gone, and no further; and from this I trust, we never shall recede one iota. I admit that great diversity of opinion exists among our ministers and people on the question of education in general. Some maintain that the office of the Government is not a teaching office at all, although a non-denominational system of education may, as in this country, be of great value and worthy of cordial support, others maintain that the teaching of the people devolves on the Government; others, that it devolves on the Church; others, that it should be left very much to private enterprise; others, that this great work may be carried on by all these agencies combined. So far as the present argument is concerned, it matters not which of these opinions is right. All that I am concerned with is, that our Church has made no declaration on the merits of the case; and that it has wisely confined its testimony to the single point already stated. There is, therefore, no principle when, as a Church, we assert and maintain, that we will be infringed on in the smallest degree, by the reception of Queen's College precisely as it is, and into the same relation to the United Church in which it now stands to the Kirk.

So far as I am aware, no Presbyterian Church in Christendom has ever declared that the Church cannot rightly engage in the work of general education. It would be a sad pity if we, under the influence of any theory, especially held by a very small minority, should thus suddenly limit our basis of operation as a church.

Those who oppose, on principle, the reception of Queen's College, are virtually seeking to commit the church to an authoritative declaration on this point. They are thus endeavoring to erect a barrier against the admission of the College which does not exist in the declared principles of our church. Instead of widening the Church door, in view of the great enlargement of the edifice, they are endeavoring to narrow it. And to meet their views, it would require to be greatly contracted; because the statement that the church should not in general engage in secular education would not serve their purpose. They would require a declaration that the church should not in any circumstances engage in this work. For, merely, the reception of Queen's College might be considered an exceptional case, if any such could exist. It is not as if our Kirk friends wished to erect Presbyterian Colleges all over the country to impart higher education; or as if they wished to exclude other denominations from the Colleges, or to compel even our own students to attend it; or as if they wished to erect subordinate schools to compete with the public schools of the country; or as if they wished now to commence the erection of a College. All they wish is simply the reception of a College which had a reasonable and even necessary origin, which has long existed, for which they have put forth great efforts and made great sacrifices, and which has now a place not only in their church's organization, but also in their most cherished affections.

3rd. That the College question with us involves the very principles which underlie the great school controversy which is at present agitating Britain, and especially the British Churches, is another misapprehension. The points at issue in Britain, so far as I know, are giving public money to denominational schools, or allowing denominational religious teaching in public schools. To present this as the principle involved in our College question, is simply to raise a false issue. Not one of the negotiating churches in this Dominion, is opposed to the non-sectarian system of education which we enjoy, or is desirous in any way of supplanting it. Our Kirk friends receive no public money for their Colleges and they do not ask it.

The amount of the whole is, the reception of Queen's College does not in the slightest degree conflict with any principle which, as a church, we have asserted and maintained. As church principle has nothing to do with the

matter, it must be viewed merely as a question of practical ability or expediency. In this aspect, I shall be glad (D. V.) with your permission, to present it in a subsequent paper.

Yours, &c.,

Arthur

MR. CHINIQUY AND HIS WORK FOR BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIANS.

St. Anne, where the Rev. Mr. Chiniquy lives and labors, is a neat little village of about 100 families of French Canadians, ten miles from Kankakee, the county town, and about 64 miles south of Chicago, Illinois. For many years Kankakee was the nearest railroad station to St. Anne. But since last summer the Chicago, Danville, and Vincennes Railroad was constructed, and now St. Anne has its Railroad station, Telegraph, and Express offices, which make it convenient to its own people and quite accessible to the travelling public. It is also expected that an air-line railroad will be constructed shortly between New York and San Francisco, and that it will cross the present road at St. Anne, where it will have a station. If this expectation be realized, St. Anne will become a place of considerable importance. Being in Chicago during the latter part of January, I felt very anxious to visit Mr. Chiniquy and his mission. I left Chicago at 7 a. m., and reached St. Anne at about ten o'clock when I was met by Mr. Chiniquy and many of his people who gave me a most hearty reception. Notice of my arrival and of my intention to preach at 7 p. m. in the church, was at once given out, and the American flag was raised as the usual token to the people that a Protestant minister had come to visit them. The "Stars and Stripes" were kept flying until after I had lost sight of St. Anne, as we sped along that vast and waveless ocean of land, at the rate of twenty-five miles an hour, toward Chicago. We went at once to the house where I had a warm welcome from Mrs. Chiniquy and other ladies who were present. Mr. Chiniquy's family consists of one little girl, who is a lively and loving miniature of all that is living, lovely, and lovable in this lower world—she is a world of happiness and kindness in herself. What a well of life to her father amid all his troubles!—In the afternoon we went to see the Church and the school, both of which are within the same building, the upper part being used for a church, and the lower for school purposes, the junior classes being separated from the senior by sliding doors.

The whole building cost \$600, is painted white, and is of the very best kind of frame buildings, in order to resist the strong winds of the prairie. The junior classes are taught by a young lady whose name I do not now remember, but who appears to do her work well; and the senior ones are taught by the Rev. Mr. Lafontaine who was once Professor of Theology in the Roman Catholic College at St. Hyacinth, in the Province of Quebec. I was very much pleased with the general proficiency, especially with the deportment of the scholars. From a worldly point of view, Professor Lafontaine has lost heavily by accepting the Gospel of God, instead of clinging to the mummies of Rome. The winter is very mild in the county of Kankakee, and all over that region, so much so that sleighing is a rare luxury. During the first week of February, when I was there, one would see an occasional sleigh, but there was no more than two or three inches of snow. The sight in summer will be magnificent, and yet the level monotony must eventually become somewhat oppressive. Let the reader imagine himself on the guret, and looking out through the skylight of the highest house in a village on an ocean frozen in a calva, and he will have the best picture of the sight which one can see from the upper windows of Mr. Chiniquy's house or Church. But the time for divine service came round, and when we went into the church to my great surprise there was a congregation of at least one hundred people; and I am in duty bound to say, that I never before, nor have I since, preached to more attentive or intelligent looking hearers. I have travelled Canada, East and West, and I do not know of another place, having the same number of Presbyterians, where on a week evening, and on so short a notice, more than one half the number of people would

come out to an ordinary service. The Church, consisting of the young people of the congregation, gave us music which would compare favorably with the best music in our city churches. The Rev. Mr. Parndt, of Kankakee, who was present, and with whom I studied some years ago, deserves much credit in this connection, as it was he who trained the choir. Mr. Chiniquy is a wonderful man; full of life and indomitable perseverance, he has endured more persecution and done more good, so far as man can see, than ten ordinary men could do. At Paul was hated by the Jews ever after his conversion, and for a long time suspected by the disciples; so Mr. Chiniquy has been persecuted by the papists, and suspected, if not abused, by some Protestants. But before one should abuse Mr. Chiniquy, he ought to look round to see whether he himself has as much or more evidence of being owned of God, whether he himself has as many souls for "seeds" to his ministry. Let those who have done better, who have brought more souls out of darkness into day, cast the first stone at Mr. Chiniquy, who is now getting old, whereas the most of those who suspect him are comparatively young. About three thousand years ago an old warrior said to a boasting youth, "Let not him that putteth on the harness boast like him that putteth off." Still Mr. Chiniquy is hale and hearty, and working hard for Christ; "troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." A Romish Priest will not stay in St. Anne, because Mr. Chiniquy at once challenges him to a debate, and then he must face either Mr. Chiniquy or his own people, and he dare not meet the former, nor can he endure the latter, who will very logically say to him,—"If Mr. Chiniquy is wrong, if the Bible and history are both on your side, and against him, why not meet and expose him?" Hence no priest will live in St. Anne. When in Montreal two years ago this winter, Mr. Chiniquy would stand on the platform and hold out \$100 in gold as a reward to anyone who would bring a priest to discuss the matter. The poor Roman Catholics would run the next day from bishop to priest, for the gold was very tempting, but, alas! neither priest nor bishop would venture to make his appearance. It was once announced that, on a certain evening, a great champion would appear—the evening came—the crowd was immense—the Roman Catholics were hopeful, bold, and numerous. Mr. Chiniquy was in his glory, with gold and books on hand, gold to pay the reward, and Romish books by which to confront and confute his opponent. But, alas! to the terrible mortification of Roman Catholics, no champion appeared to either defend or represent them. I know of no other living man who has such powerful influence among the French people. It would require ten ordinary men to make one "Father Chiniquy." Such disappointments and defeats as the above told like grape and cannon, or bombshells among the Roman Catholic French.—Dr. McTavish, a good Presbyterian, and a medical gentleman of first class character, has lately gone to St. Anne to settle down and practice medicine, and such a man there in comparison with the other doctors who are smokers and drunkards, will be of great service to Mr. Chiniquy, in the way of commending Protestantism to those French people there who are still in the darkness of popery. As I had something to do with negotiating the above arrangement, I hope that much good will come out of it, and that both Mr. Chiniquy and Dr. McTavish will be long spared to benefit the souls and bodies of their fellow beings. Let me here add what I should have said in its proper connection, that the number of scholars on the roll is about one hundred, and that some of them are the children of Roman Catholics.

Yours truly,

A MINISTER OF THE C. P. CHURCH.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Two parties are brought to view, God and man. God loves and gives, man believes and receives. This is the gospel.

The only religion possible to man is the religion of penitence. The righteousness of man cannot be the integrity of the virgin citadel which has never admitted the enemy; it can never be more than the integrity of the city which has been surprised and ransomed, and which, having expelled the invader with blood in the streets, has suffered great inward loss.