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The Indian war is the chief topic of interest in the States at present. The Modocs have treacherously murdered those who were sent to treat with them about peace, and their extermination is therefore decreed. No doubt the Modocs were to blame, but they and others of their race have been treated in a manner so treacherous and cavalier by the agents of the U. S. Government that their conduct cannot be wondered at, even when it is condemned. The history of the intercourse between the Anglo-Saxon race and the aborigines of the different countries in which they have formed settlements has in general been as discreditable to the pale-faces as can well be conceived. How many might adopt the language of Macmurtrei, the South African chief, and say, "Oh that I could write a book, that I might be able to tell the wrongs of my country!" It is to be hoped that in Canada will take a lesson from the bitter experiences of our neighbor to the west, and in all our intercourse with the natives of our North West display the most unimpeachable honesty, straightforwardness, truth and justice. As a general thing the British Government has scrupulously kept its engagements with the different tribes of Indians, and it will be well if Canadians even improve if possible upon the noble example set them.

The Pope, it is said, is dying, and there is a flutter among the cardinals gathered at Rome to see about the appointment of a successor. The career of Pius the Ninth has been a long and remarkable one. He tried at first the absurd and self-contradictory role of a reformer, but soon went back to his terror from his own handwork. He has since been a violent reactionary, as every Pope ought to be, opposed to free thought, free speech, and free action. His Pontificate will be remembered for the establishment of the dogmas of the Immaculate Conception and Papal Infallibility, as well as for the downfall of the Temporal Power. We are not, however, to come to the conclusion that the self-made prisoner of the Vatican has become altogether powerless. Very much the reverse, as any one can see when he notes the fact that that feeble old man at Rome, or at least those who use his name and authority, has recently been able to overstep the strongest minister that England has seen for many a day.

DISTRICT SYNODS AND A GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

Though not very frequently or very loudly avowed, there is a wide-spread feeling of regret among both ministers and members of the Canada Presbyterian Church, that the present arrangement of a General Assembly and District Synods had been adopted. The union between the Free and the United Presbyterian Synods was, at the time when this change was resolved upon, too recent, and the church, after all, was not sufficiently large to make a delegated Synod a Court either desirable or necessary. The yearly opportunity of all the ministers of the body meeting in Synod served very important ends, while, as a matter of fact, the decisions of one-third of their number under the name of a General Assembly have not varied with them that amount of weight which they would have done had they been those of the whole body of ministers and representative elders. It was, besides, that the local Synods would transact and finally dispose of a good deal of business, and that thus the time of the Supreme Court would not be so much taken up with comparatively frivolous appeal cases, and all but interminable speeches. This hope, however, has not been realized. The local Synods have really almost no business worth speaking about, and even what they have is generally carried by appeal to the Assembly. There is as much irrelevant speaking at the Assembly as even there was at the Synod, and the business of the Court is not expedited in the slightest degree. We shall say nothing about the secret plans which we have heard whispered about to secure the election of certain members every year to the Assembly, as if the work could not possibly be done without their presence and direction. We don't see much wrong in this, though we can easily understand how it causes unpleasant feelings among those who can only hope to be members of the Supreme Court once every three years at most, though they may feel that their business facility is quite as fully developed as that of their more favored brethren.

No doubt when a Presbyterian church grows to a certain size it must necessarily come to the General Assembly arrangement, in due time, and if the present negotiations for union are successful, such a supreme court would be indispensable. But in reference to that very question, every one can see how much more for an indefinite decision of the whole body of ministers and representative elders of the Canada Presbyterian Church would have had than any feeling at which the Assembly may arrive. The only really valid argument for an Assembly is the difficulty found in accommodating so large a body of men as now focus the ministry and leadership of

the Canada Presbyterian Church. We know that if the negotiations for union fail a good many would willingly return to the old plan. Such an apparently retrograde movement may perhaps at the time be desirable or possible. But the Synods, at any rate, might be abolished without any loss and leave only Presbyteries and the Assembly. This, perhaps, might be thought to cut down unduly the regular gradation of courts. It would, however, inflict no substantial injury, for these Synods are regarded, and with reason, by nineteen-twentieths of those who attend them as little better than a nullity if they are not something of a nuisance.

DR. TIFFANY AND SPREAD-EAGLEISM.

The Rev. Dr. Ormiston of New York, who had promised to deliver one of the course of lectures got up by the Young Men's Christian Association of Toronto, having asked to be relieved from his engagement, the Managing Committee requested the Rev. Dr. Tiffany to supply the Doctor's lack of service. This he agreed to do, and accordingly lectured in St. Andrew's Hall on Thursday of last week to a tolerably large audience. His subject was "The New Civilization," and many were the speculations about what he would make that out to be. It was found in the judgment of the lecturer to be nothing but what is being developed among our neighbors on the other side of the lines. The whole effort, in short, was rather of the Spread-Eagle character, and in very much more than questionable taste.

Canadians are always very happy to see and hear prominent men and vigorous thinkers from the neighboring Republic, but it is just as well that the more or less eminent orators who occasionally favor us with their presence and instruction should understand that even in these benighted provincial regions rank does not always pass muster always as eloquence, and that Canadian nationality is every year becoming more decidedly hostile to any thing like annexation. We love our excellent Christian brethren who glory in the stars and stripes, and sincerely hope that nothing shall ever interrupt the kindly feeling and intercourse at present prevailing between them and ourselves, but politically our courses lie separate, and it is far better for both sides to recognize and act on that very manifest fact. No doubt Dr. Tiffany favored his Toronto audience with an old fourth of July oration, corrected and enlarged, and nobody could be angry with the marvellously patriotic effort; but perhaps another subject less gushingly handled might have been more appropriate for the place, the occasion, and the audience.

With a good many, the somewhat grotesque exhibition of Dr. De Witt Talmage at the opening lecture of the same course was rather painfully trying, and led them, though neither grumblers nor hypocritical, to wonder if that was the sort of thing that passed for eloquence "away down South" in Brooklyn and elsewhere. They laughed, however, and let it pass.

And so we hope they will do with the recent dose on "manifest destiny" and all that. Our neighbors are no doubt a very great people, and we are poor provincials that ought to be thankful for the sweeping of their stances, but what is the use of blowing their trumpet so very loud? It is better to be perfectly natural and leave the "Erebus vim" to landing boys of sixteen and under.

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND AND UNION.

On Tuesday evening last a meeting of members of the "Kirk" was held in the Agricultural Hall, Toronto, to consider the terms of the Union proposed to be entered into with the Canada Presbyterian and other churches in the Dominion.

Among those present were Rev. Messrs. Carmichael, West, King, Aitken, Vaughan, Dobbin, Milton, McDonald, Nettawast, Fraser, Whitty, &c., and Messrs. J. A. Maclean, John Gibson, Capt. Perry, Dugdale, MacMurray, Archibald MacMurray, James Melvie, Wm. Mitchell, &c.

Mr. Jas. Mitchell, was appointed Chairman, and Rev. Mr. Dobbin Secretary.

Letters of apology were read from Rev. Messrs. Barnett, Hamilton, Wilson, Linton, Cochrane, McMillan, Watson, Thorpe, Simpson, Leitch, Judge Mullen of Milton, and others all expressive of sympathy with the object of the meeting.

The first Resolution was moved by Mr. Barker, seconded by Mr. Aitken, and was as follows:—That the members and adherents of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in the Church of Scotland have always and do now applaud and approve of the action of our Church in 1844, whereby connection with the Church of Scotland was preserved and maintained.

2nd Resolution.—Moved by Rev. Mr. Dobbin, seconded by Mr. Wm. Mitchell, was to the following effect:—That in the opinion of this meeting the interests of our Church are mainly being sacrificed in the terms of the present Union Committee.

Rev. D. J. Macdonnell here proposed to offer an amendment, but was told the meeting was exclusively for those opposed to Union on the proposed basis.

3rd Resolution.—Moved by Mr. John Gordon, seconded by Rev. Mr. Carmichael, of King, to the following effect:—

"That while prepared to act in union with the whole Christian Church in the endeavor to do the work of the Lord and Savior, yet in the opinion of this meeting no sufficient reasons have been shown, or necessity, why members of the Church of Scotland in Canada should seek to break the ties that bind us to the mother Church."

4th Resolution, moved by Rev. Mr. Carmichael, (Markham), seconded by Mr. D. J. MacMurray, and supported by Mr. D. McLean, was as follows:—

"That, sympathizing as we do in all things with the Church of Scotland, we desire to continue our present connection with that Church, and pledge ourselves to use every effort to maintain such connection."

Mr. Arthur then moved "That a Committee be appointed to lay the resolutions carried at this meeting before the courts of the Church, and with power to call a future meeting in carrying out the objects of this meeting." The Committee consisted of the Rev. Messrs. Inghie, Carmichael, (King), Carmichael, (Markham), Barnett, Aitken, and Messrs. Melvie, Barker, Gibson, Mitchell, Gilmore and Maclean. The attendance was not large—not above 23 or 30—but the spirit displayed against Union was, we regret to say, very strong.

NEWS OF THE CHURCHES.

We understand that the Rev. Dr. Waters, of St. Mary's, has been called by a congregation in Brooklyn, L. I. It is indeed highly complimentary to our Canadian ministers that so many of them should be invited to occupy prominent positions in the States, but we rather deem to this continued drain upon our ministerial supply, and hope, therefore, that Dr. Waters will see his way clear to remain in Canada.

The Joint Committee on Union of the different Presbyterian bodies in Canada has been holding a meeting in St. John's, N. B. for the purpose of preparing for the yearly meeting of the different Synods. We shall be better able to say what has been done at this meeting, and how far it has been satisfactory when an authoritative statement comes to hand. It would appear that the College question has been settled so far as the Committee is concerned by the adoption of the resolutions of the Minor Committee of 1871 with the following additional clause:

"That the negotiating Churches shall enter into union with the theological and literary institutions which they now have, and that application be made to Parliament for such legislation as will bring the Queen's University and College, Knox College, the Presbyterian College of Montreal, Wesleyan College, and the Theological Hall at Halifax, into relations to the United Church similar to those which they now hold to their respective Churches, and to preserve their corporate existence, government, and functions on terms and conditions like to those under which they now exist, but the United Church shall not be required to elect trustees in their department of any of the above named colleges."

The wording is rather obscure but it appears as if this finding, were it adopted, would leave the difficulty very much as it was. The clause, as such, to be committed to the work of secular education?

Welcome Home.—The congregation of Charles Street Canada P. Church, Toronto, held a social meeting on the 9th inst. as a "welcome home" to their pastor, the Rev. John Campbell, on his return from Montreal. Though the evening was stormy, the lecture room was well filled, and the whole proceedings were of the most pleasant enjoyable description. The refreshments provided were excellent and so was the music. The speeches were appropriate to the occasion, and neither heavy, dull nor long, while at the same time they were not as mere speeches sometimes are, mere pronouncements and foolish talking. The Rev. Wm. Armstrong, probationer, who has been supplying the pulpit during Mr. Campbell's absence, was presented with a token of the appreciation of his able and praiseworthy services. Both Mr. James Brown and Mr. S. C. Duncan, of Clark testified to the high regard entertained for Mr. A. by the whole of the Charles Street Congregation. The Rev. James Nesbit of Saskatchewan was also present, and addressed the meeting in an interesting manner. Altogether the meeting was a exceedingly successful one. On the following Friday afternoon the children of the two Sabbath Schools connected with the congregation were regaled with tea, cake &c., in the same place, and addressed by the Rev. Messrs. Campbell and Armstrong and Mr. Egan.—O.S.

We understand that the Trustees of Knox Church, Toronto, have resolved upon building a large and commodious school room in rear of the church. It is to cost from twelve to fifteen thousand dollars,—a which have been already subscribed. When this building has been completed, the congregation will have in every respect very complete and commodious ecclesiastical premises.

The church built in New York for the Rev. George H. Hepworth, who recently left the Unitarian body, was opened on the 1st of this month. The sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Taylor, and the Rev. Drs. Tying and Ormiston took part also in the service. As it is felt that generally religion has become in New York much too expensive a luxury to be indulged in by persons of limited means the attempt is to be made in this church to have the Gospel preached to the poor. Poor rates are to be 50 per cent below the average, and none are to be turned away from inability to pay for a seat. We wish the enterprise all success, both in New York, and wherever else it may be tried and needed.

The Presbytery of London met in St. Andrew's Church, Stratford, on Thursday of last week, to induct the Rev. T. Wilkins, late of Nova Scotia, to the pastoral charge of the congregation. The following was the order of exercises observed on the occasion:—Rev. Wm. Bell, M. A., preached and presided; Rev. J. Gordon, M. A., addressed the minister, and Rev. R. Chambers, B. A., the people, on their respective duties. The services were of a very solemn character and were listened to with deep attention. All united in giving the newly inducted pastor a cordial welcome. This congregation has been without a pastor since the death of Dr. George, in 1870, and after several efforts to obtain a minister, they have united in giving a unanimous call to Mr. Wilkins, who has just been placed over them. We believe Mr. Wilkins comes highly recommended from the Lower Provinces, and we hope his pastoral over this congregation will be a long and happy one.—O.S.

SABBATH TRAFFIC ON RAILWAYS.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR MR. EDITOR.—May I state for the information of your readers that an official of the Great Western Railway has informed me at the meeting of the Synod of London that the directors and managers of the Great Western Railway are unanimous in their desire that all their employees on their line of traffic shall enjoy the rest of the Christian Sabbath. There is not one of their employees compelled to serve on Sabbath against his will. With the exception, if I remember rightly, of one train for the accommodation of such as may be travelling on work of necessity and mercy, they would wish to have no other.

If the public will not demand the service of their employees, the company themselves do not wish one of their servants to be deprived of gospel ordinances. They are compelled to convey passengers that are booked through from New York to Chicago, else they are liable in heavy damages, as they have repeatedly been, for detention of travellers at Niagara over Sabbath.

The immense freight traffic across their line on Sabbath is done wholly by the servants of their connecting lines on the other side, who supply their own servants. With it, the servants of the Great Western in Canada have nothing to do. Those men who are employed on Sabbath through it was induced, as an volunteers for the sake of higher wages, and members (it was said) of the Church of Rome.

The proper remedy, therefore, lies in the churches of Canada making an appeal to the churches of the United States, and a respectful representation, in a friendly spirit, to the officials of the Church of Rome. As the Church of Christ is the educator of the people, all the branches of Christ's Church must co-operate in a kind, Christian, and brotherly spirit for the accomplishment of this purpose.

Legislation may do good, but our legislators generally follow the people, and legislation is a reflection of the interests of the people. If the people are determined to have Sabbath traffic, I do not see that any amount of the most strenuous legislation could prevent it, nor would it be desirable, even if it could, for the Sabbath would be broken in a more objectionable way. The more faithfully the Church of Christ does her duty in teaching the sanctity of the Sabbath, the more easily can our legislators enact, and the executive enforce the law in regard to the Christian Sabbath.

I do not see that the railroad companies are to blame. So far as I can judge they are compelled against their wishes to yield to the demands of the community, who serve them really are. Let the Church and the State do their duty, and I am sure the railway companies will place no unnecessary temptations in their way. I have perhaps erred in not sooner giving prompt publicity to this statement of the case. As per usual, I am, Sir, yours truly,

JAMES DUNN, Esq.,
 Port Bedford, 7th April, 1878.

British American Presbyterian.

FRIDAY, APRIL 18, 1878.

TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

The political crisis at Ottawa has not yet come.

In Ontario a bitter discussion has been going on about the character and conduct of the Rev. Horrocks Cocks and another person of the name of Whellans, both emigration agents of the Ontario Government in Britain. The political animus of the attack is too manifest. The great object of attack is the Ontario authorities, especially Mr. McKellar. He is called "Elgin" and "the old man" still getting an occasional turn over. In fact the parties in both at Ottawa and Toronto has become perfectly rabid. Political opponents are represented as destitute of every virtue, and capable of almost any crime short of murder, if even that limit is allowed. The general public is accordingly coming to the conclusion that neither side is so awfully black as its opponents would have it believed to be. Real offenders in fact are in danger of escaping without condemnation from it being thought that the charges urged against them are simply part of the ordinary stock-in-trade of slanderous misrepresentation. We have kept ready to serve political purposes.