

# THE PRESBYTERIAN.

MARCH, 1870.

THE LATE REV. ALEXANDER MATHIESON, D.D.

SELDOM has it devolved upon any journalist to record the death of one who, in his life-time, enjoyed more largely the respect of his fellow-men than did the subject of this notice, the late Minister of Saint Andrew's Church, Montreal, who departed this life on Monday morning, the 14th of February, in the 75th year of his age, and the forty-fourth of his ministry in this City. Although our departed friend and father had thus passed the usual limits of man's age; yet his admirably developed physique, his robust constitution, his regularity of life, and the mental vigour retained by him to the last, were all such as justified the expectation that he might have attained a still greater longevity; and even he himself has been heard to express the hope that he would reach the years of his father who died at the age of 84. Nevertheless it may be said that he has gone down to the grave in a good old age, full of years and full of honour; and, what concerns us vastly more, full of faith in the doctrines of Christianity which he had so long preached to others, and full of assured hope for the life to come. We know that this humble tribute to his memory has been anticipated by others, and it accords better with our present feelings that we are found reflecting the public opinion, rather than seeking to form it. By the death of Dr. Mathieson, the City of Montreal has lost a good citizen, and society a distinguished ornament. Others will doubtless be found to enter upon those beneficent labours from which he has ceased. Another minister will supply the pulpit of Saint Andrew's Church; another member will occupy his seat at the Councils of the Temporalities' Board; another Trustee will be elected for Queen's College; another manager for the Ministers' Widows' and Orphans' Fund, another patron will

be found for the St. Andrew's Home; but there is a sense in which *his* place will not and cannot be filled. His removal from us is the disappearance of an old familiar land-mark, his separation from us, the severance of a link connecting the present with the past history of the country and the Church, that cannot be repaired. In looking back through the vista of years during which our late friend lived and laboured among us, if it is difficult to realize that changes so great and so varied should have transpired during a single life-time, it is no less difficult to form a correct estimate of the influence exerted upon a community by a Christian Minister, who, during all these years of unexampled progress and prosperity, occupied a prominent and an honourable position. In 1826, when Mr. Mathieson first took up his residence in Montreal, the city wore an aspect, scarcely a single feature of which can be recognized at the present time. Few cities in the world have undergone so thorough a transformation in so short a period. Then, it was an unimportant town, little more than an outport of Quebec, without wharves, without shipping, without manufactures, and without those means of communication that have made it what it is, having a population of probably not more than 22,000, and of these the English-speaking inhabitants forming scarcely an appreciable minority. Now, it is the commercial capital of British North America, the centre and seat of wealth, intelligence and enterprise. Its population has risen to 150,000, while recent statistics have brought to light the significant fact that the assessed value of the property held by Protestants is largely in excess of that held by the Roman Catholic population. Then, there were only two Presbyterian congregations in the city, now, there are