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## Contributors and Correspondents. PRESBYTERIAN WRONGS.

No. 6.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR.—It has come to my knowledge that the language I used in my third letter, in reference to the Exegetical work of Knox College, has been understood by some as being an attack upon Prof. Caven. Nothing could have been farther from my intention; and I am sorry that my language, on account of its brevity, was capable of being thus misinterpreted. What I said was this: No one can find fault with his mode of teaching his subject. It is just what young ministers need. It is better that a Class should read *six verses well*, than any amount in a slovenly manner. But that does not hinder students from reading by themselves a great deal more than they read in the class-room. They could easily read over one of the Gospels each session; and then they would have made some approximation towards the reading of the whole of the New Testament, before they leave College. And therefore I think that the Board of Examiners should demand more than *three chapters* for an examination. I wish to make the fullest apology for having even *appeared* to cast reflections upon the zeal of Prof. Caven. He has no greater admirer than I.

In my last letter I made some suggestions regarding the establishing of a full staff of Professors. No doubt the General Assembly will address itself to this question soon. But I believe that there are some radical errors connected with the manner in which the Church, generally, is disposed to perform the work.

Some of the Presbyteries have already made nominations for the chair of Systematic Theology and have been somewhat snubbed for their eagerness, seeing that Prof. Inglis's resignation has not yet been accepted. And yet, when we remember that we have to pay for many a little formality in the General Assembly, by the loss of a whole year of precious time, I am inclined to think that the conduct of these "eager" Presbyteries is to be commended.

But the whole Church seems bent on devoting its first energies to the appointment of a Professor of Systematic Theology. It never seems to have occurred to our leading men that 'his may not be the wisest course. I am thoroughly convinced that it is not. There is another chair, still unprovided for, which now-a-days seems to be of far greater importance.

This point is worthy of thoughtful consideration. It has probably been the habit of Presbyterians, generally, to place the department of Systematic Theology far above all others in importance. Doubtless this was right in times gone by—times that have been made famous by theological warfare. The truth is being forced upon us, whether we will learn it or not, that we are never going to disseminate the principles of Christianity by battling against heresy. Less still are we going to save souls. If good is to be done, ministers must stand up and tell their hearers the *truth* and do so with all the earnestness of men who have not time to be chasing error from corner to corner. I am not saying a word against the study of Systematic Theology; but I am convinced that the necessities of the times have altered its *relative* importance. Besides, when we remember that very nearly all the students we ever find in Presbyterian Colleges are of either Scottish or Irish descent, and that these are the very persons who enjoyed, in their childhood, the thorough theological training so characteristic of these nationalities, we can understand that they know quite enough of polemical theology before they ever enter College. And above all, they have at hand the great work of Dr. Hodge, a book that has rendered all lecturing on the subject, by men of ordinary ability, simply a waste of time.

What we want now is a class of preachers who know their Bibles well, and are able, with divine unction, to tell its truths to their fellow-men. In order to this, there are two great requirements. Preachers must, first, be constant students of the living theology of the Word of God, and, secondly, they must know how to bring what they do know to bear with power on the consciences of men. And if a College can do anything to prepare its students for their work, it must train them in Exegetics, as of supreme importance, and in Homiletics and Pastoral and Evangelistic Theology, as ranking next. These four branches constitute the "art" of successful preaching. Students can read Church History for themselves. They can read Apologetics and Systematic Theology for themselves. But, in the "art" of their profession, they cannot work alone. They must

receive regular drilling. They must, by constant practice, under a skilful master, learn how to make the Bible yield its truth, and, by practice just as regular and just as careful, learn to be effective preachers.

From all this, I hold that what the General Assembly should do next is to appoint a Professor in the Departments of Homiletics and Pastoral (including Evangelistic) Theology, and a teacher in Education. As for Systematic Theology, the students can be examined on Hodge's text-book. No lecturer is needed; for no man can get up a *useful* course of lectures in that Department at six months' notice.

Let us have a full staff of Professors, if possible. But if that cannot be done, let us not waste strength where it is least needed, and refuse our students help, where they need it most.

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## KNOX COLLEGE.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR.—The correspondence on instrumental music seems to have changed to that of Knox College, and in my opinion is an agreeable change, one which is of more practical benefit to the church. We have done and I hope we can still do without organs in the church but not so without the college. I believe as the college is maintained, so will the standing of the church be; the college is to the church what the spring is to the river, the *source* from which a learned and efficient ministry is to come. I believe that a college is much needed from what has already appeared in your columns, and I desire to offer this suggestion as to the best plan for raising the funds towards the erection and endowment of one suitable to the wants of the church, viz: That each office-bearer would solicit subscriptions from every member and adherent of their congregations, and to remit the sum so subscribed with the name of the congregation to their respective Presbyteries, and to be remitted by them to the committee appointed to receive contributions for the erection and endowment of new college buildings in Toronto. I believe the scheme is practicable if it only be properly laid, before the members and adherents in the manner here suggested; and I have not the least doubt but that the Rev. Prof. Caven will be agreeably surprised when he finds after a fair trial similar to the above has been once given, that there will be enough for both purposes. I fully coincide with the Rev. Professor's remarks about exaggeration and all classes uniting in this work of contributing as liberally as God has given them means. The truth requires no exaggeration to substantiate it, and such exaggeration only tends to cause mistrust and doubt.

I do not expect that I will ever see, let alone enter the college, yet I will contribute six months' earnings towards the purposes above mentioned. Hoping that immediate action will be taken in this matter,

I remain, yours truly,

R. F. S.

Sharon, January 25th, 1872.

## AMUSEMENT—A COUPLE OF SUGGESTIONS.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—I am glad that you have said on the Music Question—enough. Glad was I that such a civil old Scotchman answered my questions. I rather like him; in short, I hope you will see fit one day to invite all your correspondents to a cup of tea and tell us all to pick out our opponents. I am sure that I would have good times with the old man. I have a great many questions to put yet on the Organ Question. Hoeh me! No, let that be taboo. But on—Amusement. This is a big question, Mr. Editor.

You have read the Greysin's Letters. In that extraordinary passage on the "Madman and the Devil," tools are made to ask, "I am sair wracked for a temptation." Have ye no a temptation? Well sir, I am sair wracked for a question on Amusement. Yet I don't desire a kind-hearted Scotchman to answer the questions. If I could get the longest faced, worst tempered, smallest hearted reader to listen, he is the man for me. Query—What is the difference between amusement and relaxation? I say not very much in many instances.

Q. Is it amusement to learn and teach God's praise on the Sabbath? I say, whatever it is, it is right. I know my opponent will say it is wrong.

Is it right for a Christian to sing a Psalm or Hymn to himself or herself on the Sabbath? I say—Yes.

Such is only a kind of sample of questions, Mr. Editor. But all this is not the reason for writing to you to-day. I send you my next year's subscription, also other \$2, with the request that you will be so kind as to forward a copy to a dear sister in wild Scotland. I think so much of your paper that I send my own copy to my neighbour; aye, or to an old grandmother, and a dear brother. Na, na, I cannot treat your paper like the *Globe*, read it one day and kindle the fire with it the next morning. I hope you will have great success. That you will reach the understanding hearts and pockets of many old Scotchmen like myself. Your late friend, QUARRY.

## THE THIRSTY.

BY REV. W. ORMSFON, D.D.

What a scene of busy, bustling activity surrounds us! "All things are full of labour." The surging multitude press eagerly, hurriedly on, each urgent in the pursuit of some purpose. Many, wholly absorbed in their own immediate care, seem to be utterly alone in the midst of the throng, all animated by one common sentiment, the desire of happiness or the wish to secure some personal good, make unwearied, indefatigable, continually renewed efforts to attain it.

Much of this restless activity is laudable and well directed, and, in a measure, successful, yet it fails to satisfy the hunger of the heart, or assuage the thirst for happiness in the human soul. We are formed for enjoyment, and we long for it. We need a soul-satisfying good, and we seek it. Yet few seem to find it. Is happiness, then, unreal or unattainable? Is it only a fair illusion, which, receding as we approach, ever eludes the grasp, or a deceitful mirage, which awakens desire only to tantalize with continued disappointment? No. Happiness is as real as the aching heart which thirsts for it, and accessible to all who seek it aright. Many seek it in objects which are not fitted to yield it, because neither in harmony with the laws of our nature nor in accordance with the appointment of God. Constituted and endowed as we are, our happiness depends upon the Divine favor and fellowship, and the proper exercise of all our higher spiritual faculties. Companion with God is the need of every human soul; without it, pure and permanent peace and joy are impossible. The radical necessity of our nature is reconciliation with God, and until this is secured, our life will prove one long series of failure, disappointments, and chagrin. For this all men thirst, many unconsciously, not knowing what they need, only feeling a sense of want, which urges them on in eager quest for what as yet they have not found.

The grand mission of the Saviour into our world was to make this reconciliation possible and easy; to bring man back to fellowship with God, and restore him to the Divine favor; to give peace and purity, holiness and happiness to the human heart. His invitation to every unsatisfied, aching, seeking, thirsty heart is, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." These were his words of sympathy and counsel addressed to the restless multitudes in his own day, who failed to find peace in the joys of home or social life; in the pursuits of business or of pleasure; or even in the observance of ordinances and the services of the sanctuary.

Looking out upon the vast throng gathered at Jerusalem to celebrate the harvest home of the nation by a joyous religious festival, watching them as they entered into all the hilarious festivities and sacred solemnities of the occasion, He saw behind the gorgeous and pompous ceremonial so much formality, weariness, and hunger of heart; and within the leaf-covered booths, where social gatherings met, so much sorrow, dissatisfaction, disappointment, and unfulfilled desire—felt, though unexpressed—that, standing up in their midst, He appealed to their sense of need, and proffered a supply, and what He did then He does now. Would that the anxious, unsatisfied, unhappy multitudes to-day might hear His voice, and drink and be satisfied.

His proposal is earnest and universal. The term thirsty is highly descriptive and very comprehensive. It is not to be unduly restricted to those alone who are conscious of guilt, ignorance, and wretchedness, and who feel their need of a Saviour, and hunger and thirst after righteousness. It embraces all who long after what they have not got, all the destitute who seek, though in vain, for relief, all uneasy, restless, sorrowful, troubled souls everywhere. Only the perfectly happy and such as have no desire for happiness are excluded; and where are any such to be found?

The invitation is addressed to the worldly and the ungodly, the careless and the indifferent, including all who spend their money for that which is not bread, and their labour for that which satisfieth not, who toil hard, hewing out cisterns which, when finished, hold no water; who find that prosperity does not bring peace, and that their highest success is a painful failure. To the eye of Him who came "to heal the broken-hearted," the whole world seems like a company of wanderers in a dreary desert, faint, sick at heart, and sinking, toiling over burning sands in which they dig in vain for water, or seeking to quench their thirst with what they find in marshes. To each and all he proffers living water, which will both satisfy and strengthen. His welcome is as wide as human will, as earnest as divine love. His gift is adapted to every case; His supply exhaustless; none have ever really applied in vain, or been disappointed in the issue. Why then are there so many empty, aching hearts; so many fevered, thirsty spirits; so many who feel that life is but an empty show? Why so many even among the professed followers of the Lord, who "walk in darkness and have no light," whose hearts are full of heaviness; whose lives are joyless, and whose religious duties are only a kind of task-work? If we go to Christ and drink the waters which He supplies, our souls will be healthful and our lives helpful. He came that we might have life in joyous freedom; fulness, and fruitfulness. Is it true that there is help, and hope, and happiness in all the gospel of Christ? Most assuredly. Jesus speaks to each one of the thronging multitude around us by His word, by His providence, and by His ministers; and His message is, hear

and your souls shall live. And, dear reader, do not your reason, and your conscience, your want and woes your trials and sorrows, and the very thirst of your spirit for some satisfactory, permanent good, urge you to comply? Why perish with thirst while the fountain is high, whence freely flow the life-giving waters? Accept the Saviour's invitation and be glad.

## INTERNATIONAL S. S. SERIES AND INFANT CLASSES.

LESSON VII.

Gen. xi. 1-9.

### Confusion of Tongues.

A word about bad boys. In every class you find them; and in every instance they need careful prayerful treatment. I had one in my class who was very bad. He was six or seven years old. He smoked. He chewed tobacco. He swore and was a complete street rowdy. He came to Sunday School; and knowing just what he ought not to do, he brought a cigar and in all the ways he possibly could tried to annoy me and the little boys around him. He was as sly as a fox, and as daring as he was sly. I gave my class (those of them who are good during the class) papers. On the first Sunday, being among the bad boys, of course, in the distribution he did not get one, and I told him why. All this time I had been watching everything he had been doing, not letting him know it, however, except by a reprimand in a few instances. He laughed and didn't seem to care about a paper, and began snatching and tearing to pieces the papers of boys around him. He did that four times. You may know my brain was working very rapidly, and that I was earnestly seeking direction at a throne of Grace to know how to deal with that boy. I knew he was watching me and testing me. For, young as I have said he was, he was twice that age in head and hands and wickedness.

Before the close of School, when he had torn the fourth paper, just when in the act I thought I would try an experiment. I seized him by the collar quite sternly and decidedly, and standing him before all the school I asked, "What is the first thing I have told you I want you to learn?" They all called out "Order!" "Well, now, here is a new scholar to-day. You have all seen what he has done. You all know what he has done these things for—to annoy the school and me. (Then I went over everything he had done. I could see that both he and the school were very much astonished to find I had seen so much.) Now we are all here to be taught. We can't be taught unless we have nice order. We don't want this boy to stay away, but we want him to be good and orderly like the rest. Don't we, boys?" "Yes, sir!" He felt it very much, but made faces and tried to laugh it off. Next Sunday he came back and was just the same almost; not quite so bold, however. Near the close, without letting the others see, I told him to wait after the others had gone; I wanted to tell him something. He waited. I reasoned with him kindly, and as clearly as I was able, and told him I would pray that he might become a good boy. I got him to promise, telling him I would give him five minutes to think over his answer, for I was going to trust that he would keep his promise, that he would try to be a good boy. Next Sunday he tried to do everything for me, and has kept his promise ever since.

We were speaking in last Sunday's lesson of the Bow in the Heavens that God pointed to and told Noah would be a sign to him and to you and me that there never would be a flood of waters again on the earth. Now you would think that all the family would be good and do just as God told them to do after he had been so good to them and saved them from the great flood of waters. Wouldn't you? You would think they would never forget the flood. Wouldn't you? You would think they would never sin again against God. Now I think if you try and remember you will find you have sometimes done just as those people did—do wrong, get punished for it, and then, forgetting all about it, do the very same thing again. Don't some of you remember sometimes, when your mother sent you to school, that instead of going you played truant with some other boys, or went off all alone. And how careful you were to get home at four o'clock, just as if you had been at school. But you were found out some way and punished for it. But you did it again and again. You forgot.

There was a young man whom his mother taught to pray before going to bed and when getting up in the morning, but who did it just because he was taught it and had never given his heart to God. I don't think he would pray night and morning because he loved God and loved to pray to God unless he loved Jesus.

Well, this young man got one of his fingers cut off one day when he was cutting straw at a machine. He was stopping in the house until his hand would get well. There was a minister there who had the day before been speaking to him and telling him of how much Jesus loved him and wanted him to give his heart to Him. And the young man that night before going to bed had got down on his knees and asked God to give him a new heart, and God gave it. And what do you think it was that made him do that? He told the minister that for a long time before he had been going to bed and getting up in the morning, and forgetting all about praying to God. But when he cut his finger off and looked down among the straw and saw his finger laying down there, the first thing he thought of was that he had forgotten to say in the morning, "Defend me, O Lord, from all danger and accident this day," as he had

been used to do. Now that young man remembered God from such a little thing as that. That was not like the people of Noah's family. God sent a great calamity upon them, but they soon forgot all about it and did not give their hearts to God. But that young man—he is a minister now and says he owes it to having cut his finger off that time—thought when he saw his finger and looked at his hand with only three fingers on, "Well, now, I might have been killed instead of only having my finger cut off, and yet this very morning I forgot to pray to God, and I have never given my heart to Jesus." Now, if you could just do as he did, for the same things are happening to you. (These are incidents of my own class and only useful to it, of course, in this connection.) You know two or three weeks ago Thomas Johnston was taken sick on Wednesday and died on Saturday. And last week you know Tommy Smith, who is here to-day, fell down stairs and only broke his arm. He might have been killed. But it was God that spared him and took Tommy Johnston away. Now don't let any of us forget. Well, I said that Noah's family after a while forgot all about the flood and the ark and the rainbow. God told them, when he came down and showed them the rainbow in the cloud, that they were to scatter themselves all over the earth and fill it with people. Don't you think they ought to have done that, after God had done so much for them?

Well, they didn't. After there had grown to be a great many families—about a thousand—they travelled till they came to a nice level country, where the ground was good, and where there was water and everything pleasant. And what do you think they said and did? They said, "We'll not scatter all over the earth and fill it, but we'll stay here and build a great city and be a great people. And we'll build a great high tower away up to the sky, so that if another flood comes we can go up into it and not be drowned." So they went to work to make bricks to build the city and the tower. You have all seen bricks, haven't you? What shape are they? What are they made of? How are they made so hard? Well, they built the houses with these bricks, and then went to work to build the great high tower. You have seen men building a house of brick, haven't you? How do they stick the bricks together? Who do you think was watching them doing all this? They thought if they would build this great high tower they would be a very great people, and everybody would be talking about them, and think them great. God let them go on building for a long time and then He came down to stop them. I wonder if any of you could guess how God stopped them from working. Well, he did it in a very strange way. He didn't throw down the wall, although he could have done that. He didn't kill them all for their wickedness, for thinking that they could become so great that they would not need to thank of God, but could do without, and live without Him. But He made them speak different languages, so that they couldn't understand one another. We didn't it be very strange? One man on top of the tower would call down to the man below for more bricks, but God had changed his speech and the man below did not understand what he was asking for. Another man asked for mortar, but no one knew what he was saying, for God had changed his speech too. You can go and ask your mother or your father for anything and they will understand you. But if you try to speak to little baby in the cradle, she can't understand you, can she? Well, it was just like that among these men building that great tower. God made them all speak different languages so that they could not understand what they were saying to each other. So they had to stop building. Then they would have to scatter because there was no use in living together when they couldn't understand each other. Ever since then there have been men on the world speaking different languages. (I have a better opportunity of illustrating this lesson to my class since some of them can speak German and some cannot; some can understand German and others cannot.) You know a Frenchman can't understand what you say and you cannot understand what a Frenchman says. Now you can tell me why it is that people in some countries have a different language from the people in other countries, can't you? Now I am going to write down on the board the name of that tower. Try and remember it, and whenever you hear a man speaking a language you cannot understand try and remember that it is because men long ago sinned against God by building a high tower that they might be independent of Him. There it is—

### Babel.

Now think what a dreadful thing sin must be, and how many evil things it has brought upon men. You remember how Adam and Eve sinned at the tree. What did God do to them for that? You remember how Cain sinned, and what happened to him? Then what did God send the Flood for? And in our lesson to-day, why were men made to speak different languages? All these things were on account of sin. How afraid we should be to sin against God, for fear he should punish us. If we swear, if we tell lies, if we disobey our parents, God is watching us and knows it all, and marks it down in Heaven against us.

TEACHER.

Upwards of fifty of the members of Rev. Mr. Torrance's congregation, Cheltenham, surprised him and his family on Saturday evening last. They carried provisions with them, and set out a table with good things. After tea they presented Mrs. Torrance with a purse of \$49, as a token of their esteem for her and her family.