

We publish a long report of the proceedings of the Presbytery of Montreal, as the question discussed is one of great

interest, as to the powers of Kirk Sessions.

Correspondence.

TOLERATION.

To the Editor of the Presbyterian.

Amidst many disadvantages, one of the gains growing out of sectarianism is the exercise of toleration and kindness which it imposes—a proper regard for the opinions of those who do not agree with us in religion or politics. Our nationality imposes obligations on us in the same way. In honouring our own beloved flag or church, it is not necessary that we should despise the flag or the church of others. We ought to rise superior to such unworthy feelings.

Our neighbour's religious creed and political flag are to him very dear. He loves them from the teachings of his mother. Do you blame him for his attachment to them? When you say aught against either, you send the blood in anger to his combative region, and throw him into a very undesirable condition for pleasurable or profitable companionship. We should act with our opinions somewhat as the honest countryman does on the highway, when, in the interest of peace and goodwill, he gives up more than his share of the road. Destructive collisions had better be avoided.

It is only in great crises that we are allowed to intensify our sectarianism or nationality—only when others are doing violence to the royal rule we advocate. Out on the ocean our war-vessels salute the flag of other nations with respect. The opinions and peculiarities of opponents whom we meet on the ocean of thought are entitled to the same courtesy. The man who reads his Bible with care and mingles most with the world,—particularly the honest reader of his Bible,—has the least prejudice and the kindest consideration for those of different blood and other schools; for, he finds under every form of government, and under all creeds, men equally lovable with the best of his own circle.

The self-denying St. Paul got him trophies and friends everywhere. On the barbarous island of Melita he met men who showed him no little kindness. In all directions he found rich soil bringing forth good fruit. When all things earthly

are ended, the grand and good men of all tribes will be proclaimed worthy because they lived kindly in Christ.

If worshipping acceptably under our own vine and fig tree, and, as a consequence, enjoying the favour of heaven, we cannot be without goodwill to every human being. Without this kindly spirit we are in darkness. There is only one way of dispelling this darkness. The Captain of our Salvation, the Light of the World, bids us come into the light. Shall we not go and possess our share?

The fidelity and modesty of true military men are proverbial. Here is instruction by one of that class: he was in trouble, for his devoted servant was sick; he needed for him divine medicine and sought an introduction to the master. The words of the introduction are: "He is worthy; he has built us a synagogue." His monument of marble has long ago crumbled into dust; but the meritorious words of the Apostles about him are still ringing through and cheering the world. The heart and the purse of the noble centurion knew not the limit of sect or country. Penurious Scotchmen, shame upon us all! we who so generally forget that the labourer is worthy of his hire; who starve our ministers and leave them without libraries or magazines. See our Redeemer recognizing and rewarding the centurion for his large-heartedness.

Those imperishable words, "He is worthy," make us love a nature so humble and generous,—natures which drag us, in spite of ourselves, out of the miserable traces of a narrow sectarianism into a broader and better state of universal Christian brotherhood.

We all love our Church and country, because, in their proper place, they deserve our veneration. At the appearance of our flag in foreign countries we instinctively uncover our heads; we see in it an old friend. Some years ago it went marching through Abyssinia for our restoration to freedom. We have a Captain and a Shepherd who follows us with greater care to free us from the tyrant Sin. Let him have our best devotion and most liberal country.