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## Contributors & Correspondents.

### NEW BRUNSWICK.

Presbytery of St. John — Interesting Statistics — The School Question in New Brunswick — Personal — Rev'd Richard Smith, D.D., of Londonderry.

The Presbytery of St. John has just held its quarterly meeting, and so much business had it to transact that it took two entire days to get through it. Besides the ordinary routine work there was the Annual Report on the State of Religion, prepared by a Committee, and based on answers to queries which were sent to Sessions about the end of last year; there was a Report on Statistics; a considerable amount of Home Mission work; the examination and hearing of the trials of a candidate for licence; the visitation of one of the city congregations; the nomination of a candidate for the Moderatorship of the Synod, etc., etc. It was a very harmonious and satisfactory meeting, though not so largely attended by the members as it might have been. There were only three Elders present, and one of the three only, was from the city in which the court met. One of the others came over 60 miles, and the remaining one 107. It is greatly to be regretted that Elders, at least in this Province, and in a few cases Ministers, make such poor attendance on the meetings of the Presbytery.

The Report on Statistics was prepared with some labour, and presented a large amount of information. There are at present 21 congregations under the care of the Presbytery, 18 of which have pastors, and 6 or 8 mission stations. The aggregate population of adherents reported is over 8,000, the families over 1,600, and the communicants 2,000. It will be seen by this that many of the congregations cannot be large, which is the case. The extent of the congregations, that is of those in the country, is large enough, some of the ministers having districts not less than 40 miles by 20, and some even larger than that, with from five to seven preaching places. On this feature I need not dwell, as in the more thinly peopled portions of the Upper Provinces the same rule prevails. About \$16,000 were paid to all objects during the year. There is a small increase over the previous year in the sums paid to the pastors, and a more considerable increase in the contributions made to the schemes of the Church. While there is much in the entire report to encourage there is also a great deal to be done yet in every way. The Presbytery however manifests an earnestness and a vigor to do the work that lies before them. Never was it more manifest than at this meeting that they are girding themselves to the task of overcoming the difficulties that are in the way, and sufficiently formidable those difficulties are. The circulation of the *Record*, in the bounds of the Presbytery, is 650, or about an average of one to two and a half families and a gross increase of more than 100 over the previous year.

The discussion that was raised in Parliament on the School Bill which was passed by the Legislature of this Province over a year ago, was very satisfactory in one way and was not at all satisfactory in another. It is consoling to know from the highest legal authorities in the Dominion, that our law on that question is in no way inconsistent with the Act of Confederation, and therefore that it is unassailable on that side. All the members of the ministry that spoke were unequivocal enough on that point. It is not satisfactory to have from the utterance of the same ministers that their personal bias is strongly in favor of separate schools, and that they recommended the agitators to continue agitation in the sphere that is legitimate to them, namely in the Legislature that passed the Bill. They might have saved themselves the trouble of offering such counsel: it was entirely a work of supererogation. Messrs. Anglin, Rea, and Co., we can assure the ministry, would have followed that course without fail, whether such sapient advice were given or not. These gentlemen and their confederates are never tired of quoting Quebec as an example to New Brunswick, telling us that the overwhelming majority of that Province are

so generous as to give separate Schools to the Protestant handful, why then are we so ungracious as to withhold the same boon from the Roman Catholics here? Those that argue in that way must either be very ignorant or greatly deceived. That many of the people are the former I do not doubt, but there is a little doubt that no ignorance whatever characterises the newspaper writer and parliamentary orators, whose work it is or ought to be, to mould public opinion. The latter know very well that there is no comparison between the law of Common Schools in Quebec and the same law in this Province. The law in Quebec is intensely sectarian, it is one entirely in the interest of the Church of Rome; the law that is now in operation in this Province is non-sectarian to the core. If Protestant children attend the schools in Quebec proselytising influences are brought to bear on them every day and every hour of the day, the books, and the surroundings, and the teaching are all meant to point in that direction, prominently and palpably that is their character. But here the faith of no child can be tampered with, either through the eye or the ear. It is grossly dishonest for any man that knows anything about the question to argue from analogy in that case.

I mentioned in a former letter that Dr. Porter was coming over to this Continent to represent the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Since then I learn that another eminent representative of the same Church is on his way, probably has arrived by the time those words are written. I had the news first in a private letter from his former colleague and convener of the Colonial Mission, and since then I read a notice of the same in the religious papers of New York and Philadelphia. I refer to Richard Smyth, D.D., and Professor of Systematic Theology in Magee College. If a newspaper correspondent can be supposed to have any personality, which is doubtful, some of the organs of opinion in Nova Scotia notwithstanding, I might add that he is a very respected friend of my own. I remember with pride and affection the days I spent in his classes. He did not fill the chair that he does now, but that of Hebrew and Exegetics. Besides being highly successful as a professor, he is also pre-eminent as a preacher, and no man in the Church to which he belongs wields a greater influence as a leader in church courts. He has been Moderator of Assembly for two years in succession, and was probably the youngest man ever raised there to that office.

St. John, May 9, 1872.

### TOTAL ABSTINENCE IN THE CHURCH.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

Sir,—I have thought it expedient to address a few words to you on the subject of Temperance, requesting the favor of their insertion, a short time previous to the meeting of the Assembly in June next.

I have no doubt it is the earnest conviction of many, as well as myself, that the Church, as such, ought to take a more active lead in advancing this good cause. We would not be without good precedents in such an undertaking. The Free Church of Scotland has a Temperance Committee now, as I see from "The Free Church Record;" and our Republican neighbors are quite enthusiastic in the matter, being represented in the General Assembly by such men as Dr. Caylor and others, whose praise is in all the churches; while I understand the United Presbyterians have given earnest heed to the advancement of Total Abstinence, as the only satisfactory and radical cure of the wide spread evils of strong drink. So much for good company; now for a little argument, which may be regarded as more convincing:—1. It is surely best for the Church of God to lead and guide any movement which has been proved to be really for the good of the public. Many do not admire the rather quixotic display which has often been associated with the cause. Banners and regalia, late hours and dancing will never convert a wicked world to God. Besides children and young people are much better calculated to be impressed for good when assembled with their parents and guardians, the pastor being at their head explaining the true principles of Temperance, than when crowded up in some lodge-room which may never be sanctified either by prayer or the reading of God's Holy Word. Let the congregation assemble along with others of God's people if you will and do battle in the name of God in a public open manner, and

parents will be less anxious about the welfare of their children after the curtain of night has fallen upon them.

2. The church ought to employ an instrumentality, which God has placed in its hand for the accomplishment of so much good.

We know that many who have been the victims of drunkenness are now seated every Lord's Day in the house of God, "clothed and in their right mind," who had it not been for the efforts of Temperance men, to all human appearance at least, would yet be holding their revelry not during the sacred hours of devotion—breaking God's Sabbath and forsaking His sanctuary.

Let the church then examine the subject next General Assembly (for you see, sir, that I am not entering into details) and let an Assembly's standing committee be appointed so that a full investigation may be made whether it is not our duty to take more definite steps, than have ever been taken before as regards this important matter.

Might there not be an association formed, for the more systematically advancing those measures which pertain to Total Abstinence? To influence the legislature of the Land, for instance, in order that the whole nuisance connected with the manufacturing and sale of strong drink may be brought to an end, and so to educate our people in the mean time, that when such a law may be passed, there shall be enough of moral force to carry it into good effect? Surely it is high time something more definite was done, when we who are at the head of sessions are continually grieved, by the loss of those, who, to all human appearance, were it not for this sin, might be ornaments to society and an honor to the church.

There was a man of my own congregation, who otherwise was of a most amiable disposition, overcome by this vice. He was reproved by the session, suspended, and finally excommunicated. I pleaded with him to abstain from strong drink, distinctly showed him the sin of his course, entreated him, and prayed with him and his; all in vain.

What was the tragical result? He met with a fatal accident, and his dead body was brought home to his heart-broken wife and disconsolate children on an awfully solemn Sabbath morning last fall. What minister lives, of any lengthened experience, who could not tell a similar tale of death easily traceable to the hatefully intoxicating cup?

Let me, in conclusion, quote the following:—"Mr. Arnot, of Edinburgh, whose noble countenance and soul-stirring appeals have justly captivated so many audiences on either side of the Atlantic, said, when charged with excitement when speaking on total abstinence: 'People need not tell me that I am excited on these questions. I know that I am. I should be ashamed before God and man if I were not. There is more in the public-houses of Glasgow to stir the spirit of a minister than all that Paul said at Athens. In my ministry I meet the horrid fruits of those whiskey-shops. I see men and women perishing in these pit-falls. The number of the victims is so great that it overwhelms me. My brain is burning, my heart is breaking. The church is asleep, and the world too, and they are hugging each other. I am weary with holding in. I must cry. I would rather be regarded singular in the judgment of men than be unfaithful in the judgment of God.'"

If, then, we have such a man as the great Arnot speaking after this manner in good old Scotland, may there not be a possibility that, if we had more of his spirit amongst us, we might likewise have more of his earnest utterances.

I am, Sir,  
Yours most sincerely,  
PASTOR.

### THE ITALIAN BIBLE SOCIETY.

The first annual meeting of this Society in Rome, held on March 4th, in the Argentina Theatre, was even a more spirited gathering than the cable account at that time indicated. According to a report in the *London Christian*:

Pere Hyacinthe was greeted with bursts of applause and delivered a powerful address. He dwelt upon the common ground of sympathy and conviction between himself and the Protestants, namely, the acceptance of the Holy Scriptures as supreme authority, the abhorrence of all deviation from the standard of primitive Christianity, and the resolution to withstand the exaggerated pretensions of the Papacy.

Next spoke Signor Sciaralli, a Protes-

tant pastor, who had originated the discussion as to St. Peter ever having been in Rome. He showed that the two great evils of Italy now were superstition and infidelity. The Bible, he concluded, was the efficient remedy and safeguard; these sacred writings had proved the true beacon and guide of civilization. The Roman Catholic clergy, in keeping them back from the people, or supplying them only with notes and comments, had neutralized their proper influence, and frustrated the great purposes for which they had been given to man, whence had arisen on one side an alienation from the Scriptures, and on the other a debasing superstition.

Signor Gavazzi followed. His long address was characterized by his usual fervor, dramatic power, and fluency. He advised a full cooperation with the English religious societies, for promoting objects dear to all Italian Protestants. He showed that Protestants do not forsake the standard of the ancient faith, but that, on the contrary, the Romanists are the apostates, in abandoning the principles of the apostolic church. The historic Church of Rome had been founded by St. Paul, and the great object was to restore it to its true character and purer life.

Signor Ribetti and Signor Pons, pastors of the Waldensian church in Rome, next spoke, dwelling on the necessity of a reformed and cordially-accepted faith as the efficient means of exalting the Italian character and promoting the true national welfare.

Among the English speakers were Admiral Fishbourne; Rev. Mr. Haunton, of Rome; Rev. Henry West, of Monkstown; Mr. Bruce of the Bible Society; and Mr. Wall, a zealous evangelist. Their addresses were interpreted to the audience. The meeting was closed with an extempore prayer by Mr. Wall.

It is difficult to realize the importance of this meeting. Romans and Italians publicly holding a meeting for the circulation of the Bible in Rome and Italy, and assembling openly in Rome itself, within sight of the Vatican!

### STILL ERECT.

Bishop Strossmayer was the most eloquent opposer of the "Infallibility" dogma in the Council at Rome. The newspapers generally have lately announced his submission to the Ultramontanists, but *L'Esperance*, the Reform Catholic journal recently begun in Rome, denies the report. It says: "Different journals have announced the submission of Bishop Strossmayer to the doctrine of papal infallibility. We are in a position to assure our readers in the most express manner that M. Strossmayer has not made any submission, or retracted any of the positions which he maintained so brilliantly before the Council of the Vatican." We are glad to hear of this instance of self-respect and courage amidst the many deplorable examples of submission in the Catholic hierarchy. The priestly office throughout the world has been sadly disparaged by the treason of the Catholic prelates to truth and conscience in this case. Strossmayer stands now almost alone among the bishops in its vindication. Great as he is, the vindication can be little more than personal; the intelligent world will respect him, but hardly his class. How long can we be certain of his integrity may yet be a question, after a gradual falling away of so many others. It is fortunate, perhaps, that he is within the Turkish dominion. Neighboring Austria, according to late reports, goes, as of old, to the Ultramontanists—her court at least. Of course her hierarchy will go with the court—or, rather the latter with the former.—*Independent*.

### AN EDUCATED MINISTRY.

Uneducated people are as apt to discover the presence of a *thinker* in the pulpit, as the most cultivated people in the audience. Mind, acting with native vigor, will demand a response, and will receive it, even if the hearers are in humble stations, and have enjoyed but few literary advantages. But a drone; a dullard; a man who deals out platitudes of dreary desolations, will disgust the educated, and weary all classes of his hearers.—*Baltimore Episcopal Methodist*.

A new spelling is proposed for the first word in the phrase "personal consecration to Christ." It should be *purse-and-all*. Those who scowl when the contribution-box comes around will please take notice.

### Random Readings.

A little girl wanted to say that she had a fan, but had forgotten the name, so she described it as "a thing to brush the warm off you with."

Frederick the Great once asked a Lutheran pastor for some brief summary of the evidences of Christianity. He simply replied: "The Jews, your Majesty."

The ancient Saxons used to engrave upon certain square sticks, about a foot in length the course of the moon for the whole of the year, such carved sticks they called *al-mou-uglit*, literally all moon-heel, hence our modern word, almanac.

Let amusements fill up the chinks of your existence, not the great spaces thereof. Let your pleasures be taken as Daniel took his prayers,—with his windows open, pleasures which need not cause a single blush on an ingenious cheek.—*Parker*.

A Protestant gentleman being triumphantly asked by a Roman Catholic, "Where was your church before Luther?" replied: "Did you wash your face this morning?" "Yes." "Well, then, where was your face before it was washed?"

Good, kind, true, holy words dropped in conversation may be little thought of, but they are like seeds of flower or fruitful tree falling by the wayside, borne by some bird afar, haply thereafter to fringe with beauty some barren mountain side, or to make glad some lonely wilderness.

"Live in the sight of God. This is what heaven will be—the eternal presence of God. Do nothing you would not like God to see; say nothing you would not like Him to hear; write nothing you would not like Him to read, and read nothing of which you would not like God to say, 'Show it to me.'"

If I were suddenly asked to give a proof of the goodness of God to us, I think I should say that it is most manifested in the exquisite difference he has made between the souls of women and men, so as to create the possibility of the most charming companionship that the mind of man can imagine.—*Arthur Helps*.

Do not think of one falsity as harmless, and another as slight, and another as unintended. Cast them all aside; they may be light and accidental, but they are ugly soot from the smoke of the pit, for all that, and it is better that our hearts should be swept clean of them, without one care as to which is the largest or blackest.—*Ruskin*.

I am quite sure it is a most solemn duty to cultivate our understandings to the uttermost, for I have seen the evil moral consequences of *faucitism* to a greater degree than I ever expected to see them realized; and I am satisfied that a neglected intellect is far oftener the cause of mischief to a man than a perverted or overvalued one.—*Dr. Arnold*.

It is not truth which makes man worthy, but the striving after truth. If God in His right hand held every truth, and in His left the one inward impulse after truth, although with the condition that I should err forever, and bade me choose, I would humbly incline to the left hand, saying, O Father, give me that; pure truth for thee alone.—*Lessing*.

What makes you green hill so beautiful? Not the outstanding peak, or stately elm, but the bright sward which clothes its slopes, composed of innumerable blades of grass. It is of small things that a great life is made up; and he who will acknowledge no life as great, save that which is built up of great things, will find little in Bible characters to admire or copy.

We can understand, I think, the possibility that the worst sins in real character and in ultimate results may not be the blackest in present appearance or immediate consequences. We can understand that there may be forms of evil which are so subtle, deep and deceptive as not to give much clue to their existence until they have done their dreadful work.

To thousands this is no fiction, no illusion of an overhatched imagination. To-day, to-morrow, every day in the thousands, the end of the world is close at hand. And why should we fear it? We walk here as in the crypts of life; at times, from the great cathedral above us we can hear the organ and the chanting of the choir; we see the light stream through the open door when some friend goes up before us; and shall we fear to mount the narrow staircase of the grave, that leads us out of this uncertain twilight into the serene mansions of the life eternal?—*Longfellow*.