

British American Presbyterian.

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TORONTO, FRIDAY, MARCH 1, 1872.

The large space allowed contributors and correspondents this week, renders it impossible for us to give the usual quantity of editorial matter.

MONTREAL PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE.

We learn from Montreal that at a numerously attended meeting of influential laymen, in connection with the Canada Presbyterian Church in the Province of Quebec, held in that city, on the evening of 9th inst., the following resolutions were unanimously agreed to:

Resolved.—That whereas during the discussion of the union of the Presbyterian bodies of the Dominion, the question has been raised as to the existence or continuance of a theological college in the city of Montreal, this meeting desires to give expression to the opinion which is believed to be general in the Province of Quebec, that the continuance and extension of the theological college in Montreal are essential to the welfare of the Church in this section of Canada, and consequently that it is our duty to place said college in such a position with respect to permanency and efficiency as to preclude the possibility of any such question being entertained.

Resolved.—"That since it appears from the statements of the Rev. John Laing that practical action in the Assembly's Endowment Scheme is likely to be postponed, and since the wants of the Montreal College are urgent, it is the judgement of this meeting that the College Board should proceed at once to solicit subscriptions, for the maintenance of one or more additional chairs, for not less than five years, and also for providing a suitable building for the College, it being understood that this movement shall not conflict with the Assembly's scheme should it be found practicable, but that the amount of such subscriptions shall be definitely secured to the Montreal College." (True Copy.)

(Signed,) F. W. TORRANCE, Chairman. F. W. HAULTAIN, Secretary.

MANY CANADIAN readers will be grieved to learn that the Rev. Dr. McCosh, Principal of Princeton College, N. J., is lying dangerously ill with pneumonia. He has been ill for several days, and fears are entertained for his recovery.

Rev. Dr. Cuyler furnishes to the New York Evangelist a thoughtful article on religion among the "Higher Classes." He notices the fact that in the largest Presbyterian and Congregational churches of New York and Brooklyn the additions by profession are mostly from the humbler classes, worshipping in auxiliary chapels and mission schools, and accounts for the apparent decrease of conversions among the "higher classes" on these grounds: 1. The growth of wealth brings a snare; 2. The present social habits of the "higher classes" are not favourable to Evangelical influences; 3. These classes discourage plain and arousing preaching.

SOME 260 of the most eminent men of London have signed a protest against the inconsiderate prescription of large quantities of alcoholic liquids by medical men, as giving rise in many instances to the formation of intemperate habits. They declare that, though alcohol is important in certain diseases, "no medical practitioner should prescribe it without a sense of grave responsibility." They lay down the principle that it should always be prescribed with as much care as any powerful drug, and that the direction for its use should be so framed as not to be interpreted as a sanction for excess, or necessity for the continuance of its use when the occasion is past. And, without passing on the much-debated question whether alcohol is in any sense a food, they declare unanimously that "many people immensely exaggerate the value of alcohol as an article of diet." Is there not in this combined action of the leading physicians of London a suggestion for the consideration of the medical profession in Canada.

OUR PAPER.

DEAR SIR,—I am sorry to learn from the "talk with Presbyterians" in your last issue that you have not as large a subscription list to begin with as was expected. Perhaps you are not a little to blame yourself. Many in the west, like myself, were misled by the statement in the Prospectus, that "immediately after the appearance of the first number, a thorough canvass of the country, from Winnipeg to Halifax, would be made." We very naturally waited to be called upon by your agent, not understanding that we were expected to make the canvass. But now that our misapprehension on this point is removed we must exert ourselves, and, if we do so we are bound to succeed.

Permit me to present a few facts which may encourage you in your enterprise, and also stimulate friends to maintain it vigorously.

The want of a denominational organ has long been felt in our Church. At the last meeting of the Synod of London, an overture to the General Assembly with the view of obtaining such an organ was adopted, but owing to the press of business at Quebec, was laid on the table till next Assembly. I was not the Synods wish that the periodical whatever might have been its form, should be under control of the Church Courts, but merely that the Assembly should hold out such inducements—even pecuniary to a certain extent, if need be, as to warrant some one to engage in the enterprise on which you have entered. Your paper is, therefore, fitted to supply a real want which has long been felt. Judging from the numbers which have appeared, I believe that it can be made to supply that want adequately. I question if the Assembly, after long deliberation, could have suggested any thing better either in form or in matter than the BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

Our Church needs such a paper for the following reasons:—

- 1. To present and maintain our distinctive principles. These are at present culpably suppressed, or, at least, they are not asserted as they should be. If they are not worth the trouble of advocating, or if we are ashamed of them, what apology can be offered for our maintaining any longer a separate organization as a church? If a church has not distinctive principles to which it is warmly and enthusiastically attached, it never can be aggressive; as it can not have either unity, vitality, or power. The Christian charity which is alleged in opposition to this must be spurious, as it is subversive of principle; besides it is a kind of charity which no church in the country, except our own, lays claim to.
- 2. To stimulate our people to sustain the general schemes of the Church. The people are becoming every year more intelligent and discriminating in contributions. Hence, if we would fully enlist their sympathies in the work of the Church, we must take them into our confidence and communicate to them ample information. This information never will be communicated by resolutions of Assembly, nor by statistical tables. Our people, in general, read neither the one nor the other. Let the people know the extent and the necessities of our Home Mission field, and the magnitude of the work in which we are engaged; let them have the claims of the heathen, and of Christ to whom the heathen are given, constantly presented to them, accompanied by habitual reference to our high privileges by which compassion is generated; let the great cost of an educated ministry, and urgent need of it, particularly in the present age, be constantly and faithfully insisted on, and we will soon have both men and means furnished to carry on efficiently the great work entrusted to us.
- 3. To guide our Church courts in their deliberations. Without changing, or even tampering with, fundamental principles of doctrine and government, much must be done to adapt our legislation and activity to the country and the age in which we live. We must know the wants of the Church, its peculiar circumstances, and its very tastes, if we would be in a position to influence and guide it wisely. Thus a great many questions need to be discussed in a denominational paper that the mind of the Church may be known, and its very best thoughts and feelings may be expressed. It is truly deplorable to see many of the ablest and the most pious and devoted of our Church office-bearers travelling to the General Assembly without any definite idea of what ought to be done, merely to see what will turn up. Hence crude legislation, and the want of all living sympathy between our people and our Church courts.
- 4. To foster the development of the inner life of the Church. This, of course, must correspond with our doc-

trines. There is much religious experience in the Church, there are many indications of spiritual growth and progress which ought to be carefully recorded and cherished. These, if known, would give tone to the Church's sentiments, and greatly promote brotherly love. There is no reason why we should be indebted to other countries and churches for our religious sentiments. Our Church should have a distinctly marked individuality in its religious life. Until this is acquired it never can be truly united and consolidated. How gladly would I see the ripe religious experience and careful observations of our own ministers and members largely substituted for the valuable extracts on the inner pages of your paper!

To neutralize the intensely worldly influence of our secular papers. Such papers are more worldly in Canada I believe, than in any other country. They are "of the earth, earthly." This is largely due to the absence of any great principles to contend for. It is a pity that our people should have no other periodical literature than these furnish. Why should politicians and ambitious worldly men have the almost exclusive control of the periodical press? Why should the Church neglect an agency for good, so powerful if rightly directed? We could surely present to our people more edifying biographies than those of living politicians; more valuable narratives than sickening details of crime and criminal trials; and more pleasing and truthful illustrations of human nature, bad as it is, than are furnished by the relentless and implacable fury with which political antagonists are pursued and persecuted!

For these, and many other reasons which might be adduced, we must have a paper of our own; and we must endeavour to secure its admission into every family in the Church. This object is worthy of any effort or any sacrifice which may be needed to secure it.

Yours truly A MEMBER OF THE SYNOD OF LONDON. HINTS ON GIVING.

HINTS ON GIVING.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—With all my heart I congratulate you on the outset of your paper, and wish you all success. Your letter box, which you have kindly opened, will no doubt be much used and prove very useful—even common sense things in plain language may turn out useful hints. If you have no objections I may send you a few lines now and then; only, Dear Sir, do not strike the letters that come too hard. Really I thought our Post master, the other day, would knock the stamps through and through some letters. Dear Sir, with your correspondents and you may draw out some useful thoughts. You know we are all apt to imagine we have some thoughts worth printing. Perhaps you say that's conceit. A minister, who had a good deal of that article, one day looking very sad and laying his hand on his breast, said to a brother, "There is something here." "Very likely a little wind," was the rather cutting reply. But wind or not wind, there is one tho't I would like to see ventilated in connection with our Church. "That there is a great advantage in frequent and individual giving." There is nothing new, nothing original in that idea. That's so, but it is worth being made a text and having a few heads and particulars written on it, and if you see fit sir I shall try and do so, but not in this letter, farther than to say a few words in connection with your paper. We wish to see the

BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN a great success. In order to this, there must be a large number of subscribers. Now sir many are already taking other papers, a local, the Globe, the Witness, &c., and would wish to take the PRESBYTERIAN—but what? cannot afford it. Two dollars a year! two dollars! Must deny myself the pleasure and the profit or reading this new first-class family and church paper. Mr. Editor, perhaps this may catch the eye of some friend who feels so. Now allow me a word with him. My friend lay aside meantime the two dollars a year—and look at the paper as about four cents a week. Not over four cents a week in my case for there are four of us—myself, my wife, my son, my daughter, all working—each entitled to wages and a right to subscribe and read, each for himself and herself. Well here is a club of four, each paying one cent per week and each has a read of eight pages weekly of excellent matter, church news, &c., benefiting the cause and improving ourselves. Do not say cannot afford it. Perhaps the friend may say the case does not suit him, he has a family. Well then is he not the more able to afford it? If not, let him take a step forward and get wealthy. But enough for the present, with your leave I may write you again on the advantage of frequent giving and individual giving in connection with our church. Meantime, I remain, sincerely yours, J. W.

NOTES FROM CORRESPONDENTS.

There is scarcely any diminution in the steady stream of congratulatory correspondence which some time ago commenced to flow in upon us. We are not at all offended, nor do we find it troublesome to open and peruse dozens of letters every day, especially when many of the missives cover subscriptions to the BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN, and useful contributions for its columns. We again make a few extracts, which may not be uninteresting to the reader.

One of our ministers in an eastern county pertinently remarks:—"I do not see why Ontario, the leading Province of the Dominion, should not be able to support a Presbyterian paper of its own, especially as each of the maritime Provinces, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and even little Prince Edward Island, can do so. If our churches here should fail in doing so, it is certainly not for want of means or talent, but for want of zeal in the Redeemer's cause. The Press is a power for good or for evil; and the Church of Christ cannot, therefore, dispense with its use. It is one of those means by which light is to be diffused and the darkness dispelled, till the glory of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, as the waters cover the channels of the great deep."

The same writer adds a few items with respect to the congregations and people in his vicinity:—

"We have had our missionary meetings last week in this county and in Prescott. The weather has been unfavourable, and some of the roads impassable at night, yet the attendance generally has been pretty good. The people in the north of Glengarry, with the exception of a few Romanists, Baptists, and Congregationalists, are all Presbyterians. There are four large churches within a range of fifteen miles. One is in connection with the Church of Scotland, and three are in connection with our own Canadian Church. In Lochiel we have one of the largest Presbyterian congregations in Canada, with a communion roll of upwards of two hundred. The people are generally in very good circumstances. The old log-houses are rapidly passing away, and fine, substantial buildings are supplying their place. The land is good, and by a proper system of farming large crops can be raised. The people are a fine, intelligent, moral people, hospitable to a proverb. They love and respect their ministers, and a Scotch minister among them feels very much as if he were at home. On the north, east, and south they are enclosed with the almost impenetrable darkness of Romanism. From them westward, however, like the course of empire, the light of Gospel truth shines, with all the blessings of civil and religious liberty. God grant that the darkness of Popery may soon be dispelled, and that poor deluded Romanists may see great light. I trust a better day is dawning for them and for the world."

The Rev. W. T. McMullen, of Woodstock, after writing words of approbation on the "style, tone, and general appearance" of the BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN, goes on to say:—

"I hope our ministers and people generally will not be so simple as to wait to see what is to come of it, and thus take the most direct way of killing a much needed and exceedingly promising denominational organ. If we are to have a vigorous and successful Presbyterian newspaper, I am convinced, it must be—not by the Church appointing an editor, under a committee of management—but by the private enterprise of a man who, loyal to the Church, shall be his own master, and start precisely as you have done. Under the patronage of such a large, intelligent, and influential denomination, the BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN should rise to the very front rank in influence and power among the newspapers of our country."

A TIMELY HINT.

The following note, from a friend in an eastern town, illustrates very plainly how a little individual effort may assist us in extending the circulation of the BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN. We shall let our correspondent tell his own story:—

MR. EDITOR,—One or two zealous Presbyterians in every congregation could, with a very little exertion, in a very few days, put your excellent paper on a magnificent basis. Yesterday I enquired at our post office if many copies of your paper were received there; I found there were only two. I was sure this could not be from any lack of interest in the success of your paper, but from the want of direct application to the members of our congregation. Believing this, unsolicited by any one, I went out this afternoon, and in less than an hour got six subscribers and

their subscriptions too. I hope to send you a dozen more, with the money, soon.

Hoping that many of your readers will, from heart loyalty to the cause of Presbyterianism, do as I have done, I am yours, A. M.

Feb. 23rd, 1872.

Reader! Go thou and do likewise.

"W. D. B." ON "ALIQUIS" LETTER.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—There is no wish on my part to enter into or keep up a controversy on the subject of Union with the Kirk. But as somebody has been kind enough to offer himself as a guide to your younger correspondents, of whom I am willing to be considered as one, I shall ask his guidance a little further in this matter. I do not wish to be misled, nor that any of your readers should be, and I am sure that "Aliquis" cannot mean to lead any one astray.

He says, "The subject of Union will clearly not be before next Assembly in June." I should like to ask our guide, and many besides myself would like to know, if, with the reports of Presbyteries and Sessions upon Union lying on the table, the next Assembly in June will yet not have that subject before it in some shape or other? I am the more puzzled about this because in your editorial upon Union you plainly intimate that it will be before the Assembly. If you are right—and I suspect you are not a young correspondent—then somebody needs guiding. I am only anxious that the truth should be known, and kept clearly before our people.

Again, "Aliquis" says, "The reason why three years were mentioned in the resolution was that, in the ordinary course of church procedure, this period would elapse before the Union could be consummated." But you mention June, 1873, as the time when Union may be consummated in the ordinary course of church procedure—just half the time our guide says. I am not writing just now in favour of hastening this matter; but many of our people are very impatient of unnecessary delay, and I am only anxious that the truth should be known. Which is right—one year and a half, or three years?

It is thought that I am labouring under a misconception in saying that the raising of a certain amount of money is the all-controlling reason for delay. It is said that the raising of that money has nothing to do with delay of the Union. I distinctly admit in my previous letter that the raising of that money does not necessarily involve delay of three years. Perhaps I put it too strongly, although I am not convinced of that, in saying that raising money was the all-controlling reason. I frankly acknowledge that there are difficult questions of arrangement with respect to the colleges and theological halls to be settled; at the same time no one can have listened to the discussion in the Assembly without being satisfied beyond any doubt that the raising of our endowment, if not the all-controlling reason, had very much to do with, and was stated again and again as being the reason why three years were mentioned as the time at, if not within, which Union might take place.

"Cunctator" pleads that what may be called the prejudices of a small but not contemptible minority should be treated with tenderness and respect. It has never been the fault of our Supreme Court not to deal tenderly with what many call prejudices. It has dealt so tenderly with them in the matter of instrumental music, for example, that not a few of our churches and ministers have taken the matter into their own hands, and, if not set at defiance, yet have ignored and so weakened the authority of our Assembly to a degree that I think is very greatly to be deplored. I hope that in this case these may yield in time to reason, and not be obstinately persisted in till the outside pressure shall become so great as to prevent even the exercise of calm reason and sound judgment.

But, sir, this is dangerous ground. I shall be glad if, in the providence of God, this union shall be accomplished soon; but, equally with those who counsel delay, I am chiefly anxious that—when it does take place—it may be so firmly based on a clear understanding between the parties to it, on feelings of such mutual confidence, respect, and Christian love, that it shall be one of the most happy and lasting unions of the scattered members of the Presbyterian family that has yet been seen.

I am, my dear sir, Yours very truly, W. D. B. Whitby, Feb. 23th, 1872.