

ECCLESIASTICAL AND MISSIONARY RECORD.



Presbyterian Church of Canada.

"Wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and the strength of salvation."

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CONTENTS.

Page

Mr. George Muir, student, obituary notice of	113
Church History, Lecture by Dr Burns.....	113
Missionary Notices, Goderich, Ekfrid and Kincardine.....	115
Sabbath Defence Association.....	115
Poison of the Press.....	116
Intoxicating Drinks at Deaths and Funerals.	117
Bible Classes, by an Observer.....	118
Sabbath Observance.....	118
Visitation—Approaching Synod.....	119
Ireland—Jerusalem.....	120
Missionary Travel, Notes of—Canada East	120
Scotland—Life Insurance—Marriage Act....	122
Clergy Reserves and Rectories.....	123
Italy and Scotland contrasted.....	123
Revivals—Popery unchanged.....	125
Great Changes.....	124
Miscellaneous.....	125

☞ A Committee of the Congregation of Knox's Church, Toronto, are making arrangements for the accommodation of members of Synod during the sittings. Information will be given by Walter Macfarlane, John Laidlaw, or Hugh Miller, Esqrs., King Street.

We could wish that some plan were devised to aid in paying travelling expenses of members coming from a distance and not otherwise provided for. A full attendance is highly desirable, to give weight to the deliberations and decisions of our supreme Court.

☞ It is arranged that ministers coming to Synod, will be charged half-fare in the mail steamers.

To the Editor of the Record.

FERRIS, May 21, 1850.

DEAR SIR,—

I beg leave through your paper to communicate to the Professors of Knox's College, and to the Students now scattered over the country, the mournful intelligence of the sudden demise of Mr. George Muir, who, during last session and previous winters, was prosecuting his studies at Toronto.

On Monday, the 22nd ult., Mr. Muir arrived here, on his way home, bearing a letter from the Rev. Ralph Robb, of Hamilton, which stated that the examination Committee had authorized him to act as Catechist, and that he had been allotted to our Presbytery. As both Mr. M. and the Mission field North from this, were better known to me than to Mr. Robb, I was requested to assign him a sphere of labour; and as there was a prospect of other catechists coming forward to occupy the Owen Sound settlement, I agreed with him that he should go into Peel, for a week or two at least, until arrangements for the season could be

definitely made. He embraced the idea with ardour, and left this in the afternoon, with the view of spending the remainder of that week at home. I proceeding on his mission the following week. On Sabbath he attended church, apparently in good health, though somewhat paler and thinner than usual, as if from close application to study. The two succeeding Sabbaths I missed him, and as he lived nearly five miles from this, I thought that he had entered upon his public duties, and in alluding in prayer to Christ's servants in remote and destitute places, my mind pictured to itself the young labourer making his first essays in a work to which he had devoted his life. But on Monday week his sister called to inform me that he was in bad health, thought to be labouring under an attack of Bilious Fever, and that he was anxious on account of his services being deferred. I was sorry to hear of his indisposition, and requested her to tell him not to allow himself to be uneasy on the ground of his intended services, as there is no contending against Providence. On Wednesday I went to see him. He appeared weak and had some cough, and I was told that at times his mind wandered a little. He, however, spoke rationally to me. As he seemed unable to converse much, I proposed that I should offer up a short prayer; to which he answered that he did feel weak, but should be most happy if I should engage with him in that exercise. After a short time I came away, not apprehensive of any danger, and hoping that in a few days he would be restored to his wonted health. His medical attendant, Dr. Mutch, also thought that although his disease assumed something of a Typhoid form, there was no cause of alarm, and that he would soon get over it. Dr. Mutch had, however, been unfortunately summoned to attend the Circuit Court, at Guelph, to give evidence in a criminal case, and consequently, did not get to see him again, till last Sabbath. In the evening he called here and informed us that he had found his patient much worse, that inflammation of the lungs had supervened, and that he was now very doubtful about his recovery, unless there were a speedy improvement. Yesterday, exactly four weeks from the time that Mr. M. had returned home from College, his brother came and told us, to our sad astonishment, that George had that morning gone to his rest, that the Doctor had called and was with him at the time of his death, but that since Sabbath evening he had spoken little. We had remembered him in our morning supplications, and it must have been very shortly after that he expired.

This is one of the mysterious and sovereign acts of God, which will ever appear strange to mortals, and confounding even to his own people. One taken away, not only in the midst of

days, but, one in a land of spiritual destitution, who had given himself to the work of the ministry, after several years of preparation, cut off without even being permitted to enter upon its duties. But it becomes us to be silent, to adore and to learn wisdom. "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice." This reminds me of another similar case. Little more than two years ago, a young man of high promises, who was studying in one of our Scottish Universities, but whose friends live in this neighbourhood, and who had the Jewish Mission especially in view, had returned to Canada, to visit his friends during the summer recess, and on his way back to Britain, was lost at sea. Are these God's favoured ones, who are called to their reward, without bearing the heat and burden of the day. At the same time, do not such dispensations call upon the church to pray to her Great Head to have mercy upon her, and if it be His will to spare those who are ready to spend and be spent in His service.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours respectfully,

G. SKELLIN.

CHURCH HISTORY.

Concluding Address by Dr. Burns, 17th April, 1850.

GENTLEMEN,—

In the Providence of Almighty God, we now close our prelections on Church History for the season. We return our hearty thanks to the great Father of all, for the measure of health we have all enjoyed, and the opportunity He has been pleased to give, of prosecuting our labours, with so very few interruptions. May I indulge the hope, that the course has been, on the whole, an interesting one to your minds, and that you have engaged in the exercises of the class, with some relish. I am inclined to believe that it has been so, from the regularity of your attendance, and the spirit of elasticity and ardour which has marked your appearance in the class-room, and your researches amid the valuable treasures of the Library.

It never has been my endeavour, on this or any preceding occasion, to submit to you a mere chronicle of events, or an epitome of the works of ecclesiastical annalists. My wish has been, rather to teach the study of Church History than Church History itself. With this view, we have endeavoured to examine the progress of events in connexion with the exhibition of principles and their application. Beginning at the Pentecostal era, we have brought you down through the Apostolic age—the age of Constantine—and the medieval period, to the dawn of the Reformation. Want of time has put it out of my power to do