

British American Presbyterian.

VOL 1.

TORONTO, CANADA, FRIDAY, JANUARY 31, 1873.

No. 51.

Contributors and Correspondents.

FOR THE TWENTY-FIFTH OF DECEMBER.

Written for the B. A. PRESBYTERIAN.

I.

Merry faces! happy voices!
Is it just a common gladness,
Fills the air with all this madness,
Banishes all looks of sadness,
Till the sternest heart rejoices?

II.

Can a spirit merely mortal,
Reign with such a potent power,
Sovereign of a joyous hour,
Pouring free a golden dower,
Boldly entering each portal?

III.

Or shall we hold an influence higher
Touched unseen those chords resounding;
Voice to echo softly sounding,
Of the song of graces abounding—
Chanted by a Heavenly choir?

CHARLOTTE.

Keyboard.

NEW BRUNSWICK.

THE WEEK OF PRAYER—RIGHT PRINCIPLE OF CHURCH FINANCE—WEEKLY OFFERINGS—INCREASED LIBERALITY.

The Week of Prayer has come and gone in this city as well as with you. If the attendance given be any index to the benefit derived from such opportunities, then there is much to be thankful for on the part of the city of St. John. Large numbers came to the meetings, except one day when the weather was very disagreeable. That this is an encouraging feature, none will refuse to grant. It would be unwise, however, to infer that all that came did so in a purely devotional spirit. It is somewhat amazing, and yet it is true, that the fashion of the thing will induce many to go to a prayer-meeting, and so the place is crowded when, on the part of very few, perhaps, will there be real spiritual worship, or even any aim at worship in sincerity and truth. We have a course of lectures in the Mechanics' Institute here, for example, for many winters past; I do not know how many; it has been the custom to go there on Monday nights, and so it is just the thing to attend there. No matter what the character of the lecture is, if the evening be agreeable, there will be a good audience. The reason is, the vast majority of those that crowd the hall do not go to hear a lecture; they go, to show themselves and look at one another through their opera-glasses. It may seem an extreme statement to make, and yet it is my deliberate conviction, that about as much useful information is diffused by these lectures as is diffused on the other evenings of the week in the skating rink, and with the exception of a very few, it would be the same were Froude, or Tyndall to appear on the platform. Is the same trait of character absent in motives that induce people to go to the prayer-meetings? I doubt it very much. That they do attend is not to be regretted, however. It is said of those that came to hear Whitefield and Wesley preach, that some of them came to mock that remained to pray. The annual Bible meeting was held as usual during the Week of Prayer, and it too was much more successful than it has been for many years past. Formerly the crowds that came were embarrassing, so much so that it was discussed in the Committee whether a small entrance fee should not be demanded; then there came a falling away, but this year the attendance was very good. Statements, however, were made at the meeting to show that so far as returns yet, proved the contributions from the city would be less this year than last. The reason of this falling away is very plain to me, and some of the office-bearers know it as well. It is altogether owing to the mode of collecting subscriptions. A paid collector is appointed, and much depends on the efficiency of the man. Then the rule is to call on those whose names appear on last year's list, and as is inevitably the case more or less die or leave the place, and little or no effort is made to get new ones. The Committee know what is a remedy for this, that is nothing more or less than the carrying into practice one of the constitutional rules that provides for the subscriptions being taken up by themselves, going two by two, and not by a paid official. It is perfectly true that the people ought to give what they intend to give whether they are asked for it or not, but yet are our people educated to that point. Whether the Committee will do their duty even in the circumstances manifest this year is very doubtful. I have hardly any expectation of it.

charging that duty, reminds me that the right principle, as I take it, of Church Finance is growing in our church in these Provinces. The system of payments has proved to be unsuccessful, and it is therefore being abandoned slowly but gradually by our congregations. The one that first adopted the weekly offering system, so far as I know, in the synod, and that was many years ago, is a model to all the rest to-day; not only in the measure of its liberality, but also in all other graces. During the last two or three years the question has been agitated a good deal, especially by a Committee of Synod, and the result has been that quite a number of congregations have adopted that Scriptural mode. In every case in which it has been tried, the success has been marked. A week ago one of the congregations in this city had a meeting to consider the matter, and the resolution was passed unanimously and heartily that after the first of February the givings, to all purposes should be by weekly offerings. The pastor was requested by the managers and others to preach on the subject before the congregational meeting was called, which he did. He tried to show that a fixed proportion of income should be devoted to the Lord, in no case less than a tenth, but more than that in proportion as the income was large; that giving is an act of worship, and therefore it should be done on the first day of the week, and in the house of God, bringing to the Lord, and not waiting to be dunned by bills and collectors, or even asked, being the rule that the believer is to set before himself. It was stated at the congregational meeting that two members had pledged themselves not to give less each than two and a-half dollars a week. There are no wealthy men strictly so-called in that congregation.

There must be some connection between the growth of Scriptural principles of giving and the announcements that I notice in the press to the effect that pastors' salaries are being very materially increased. Within the week I have seen three announcements made, and I heard of a fourth, of that kind. In two of the cases \$100 each was added, and in the other two double that. In one of the latter two, the increase was made to date from the first of 1872. In former letters I have complained that the standard with us was lower than in the Upper Provinces, but if this sort of thing of which I have given some examples goes on for a time, let Ontario look to its laurels. I shall be happy to chronicle many more examples of the same kind, perhaps our growth may provoke our brethren up there. Whether my happiness in the matter will induce some exceedingly pious friends, that is to say, those that are too pious to hear of money, or to handle money in the Lord's house and on the Lord's day, to set me down worldly, I don't know, nor am I concerned much.

St. John, 21st January, 1873.

RELIGION AND TEMPERANCE.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—I was rejoiced in heart to read the able article in last week's BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN in which you pointedly and justly rebuked some of our legislators for their "champagne debauch." I think, however, that our leading religious journals should more frequently raise their warning voice against the drunken usages of the country. I would be pleased, indeed, to have you write your opinion as to the duty of the legislature in regard to the numerous petitions before them praying for the entire prohibition of the sale of intoxicating drinks. The moral influence of the different religious newspapers, representing the different branches of the Christian church, would, I think, have a most wholesome effect at this particular juncture. In my opinion there is no cause, second only to religion, that could better engage the attention of every Christian, and none in which a professedly Christian statesman could more worthily distinguish himself.

It has been argued that prohibition is unconstitutional, and an interference with the privileges of a British subject, &c. Now I contend that it is the liquor traffic which is unconstitutional. What is the end and object of law, but to do right and prevent wrong; to punish the evil and protect the good? As Blackstone says, "Law must command what is right and prohibit what is wrong." Now is it true or not that alcohol is a deadly poison in itself? If it is, then is it right to place over its open, indiscriminate sale the protection of law? And this deadly poison has been established on reliable authority. Indeed, if we had not that authority, we have the most practical reason for believing so, as every day's experience tells us that it kills more men and women in Christian countries, at least, than all other poisons put together. Therefore I submit the conclusion is inevitable, that it is the duty of legislators to prohibit it, and limit its sale to the apothecary shop. But I must not trespass on your space.

Yours,
THOMAS McNAUGHTON.
Cobourg, Jan. 25th, 1873.

"NEW THEORIES IN THEOLOGY."

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—The above is the heading of an article in your last issue, which I read with great surprise till I saw the source whence it came, namely "Chambers' Journal." The article has not one reference to any change in Theology; it deals exclusively with those changes and uncertainties peculiar to the crude and as yet unsettled state of the Natural Sciences, such as Geology and Chemistry, the only branches named in it, and yet the article is headed "New Theories in Theology." I would not notice such a misnomer, if it were not now the usual semi-infidel way of insinuating that Theology proper is dependent upon, and affected or changed by "new theories" in the disordered brains of a few semi-educated men. Christian Theology proper deals exclusively with Sin and Salvation from it, with the sinner and his Saviour, and has nothing to say about the discovery that "gold can exist in sea-water;" and those who think it has must be as ignorant of their Bible as the editor of Chambers' Journal is. It is high time that the miserable "rant" and jabbering "cant" of infidels should be boldly met and manfully exposed. Although the editor of Chambers' Journal is too ignorant to know it, the teaching of Moses, in Theology proper, is identical with that of Malachi, and the teaching of Malachi is identical with that of Hill and Hodge.

Yours truly,

A. C. GILLIES.

Lyn, Ont., Jan. 27, 1873.

THE PAPIST AND THE PROTESTANT.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—I am inclined to think that "A Poor Papist" may have had more reason to smile over the letter of "A Rich Protestant," than the latter had over his. Although I know nothing whatever concerning the authorship of "A Papist's" letter, I think it bears internal evidence of not having been written by "A Papist" at all, but by a Protestant endeavouring to put himself for the time being in the place of "A Poor Papist;" not altogether successfully, as the apparently-sarcastic remark about the "somewhat wider resource to draw upon" would seem to indicate. If written by a Romanist, it must have been by a very enlightened one, quite as familiar with Protestant as with Roman Catholic ideas.

But, whether written by Papist or Protestant, the letter was certainly not one to be dismissed with a laugh, since it contained much truth which might profitably be made the subject of serious reflection. The writer has often listened with pain, at meetings held professedly for the advancement of Missions to Roman Catholics, to speech after speech filled with little else than wholesale denunciations of the Church of Rome, a somewhat stale, and not altogether edifying theme for Protestant audiences. But, the writer has often thought, had a Roman Catholic been in the audience, would such language have had the effect of either enlightening or winning to the truth? Must it not almost inevitably have irritated and hardened him against Protestants and their religion? It has been a matter of personal experience, in dealing with Romanists and seeking to impart some knowledge of the truth, that the knowledge of such harsh speaking has interposed to close their minds and hearts against receiving either the words or the tracts of the visitor. Nay more, as an unlooked for result, perhaps by many unsuspected, the children of Protestants themselves have, in cases coming within the knowledge of the writer, been seriously injured by listening to such extreme denunciations, for, finding, as they grow up, that there was after all some good in some knowledge of the Gospel in the Romish Church, they have felt themselves shaken from their moorings, and have been very nearly made a prey to the more wary and prudent emissaries of Rome.

We know very well that none of us would feel much disposed to listen to the teaching of anyone who began by attacking, or by harshly denouncing the Church to which we are attached. How much more strongly must this cause operate with Roman Catholics, who love and revere their church to an extent which Protestants, not believing in "Infallibility," can scarcely realize. And, if we wish to gain a certain end, is it the part of wise men to begin by using means which must assuredly defeat it?

It is true that our Saviour did, on rare occasions, use the language of stern rebuke. But while it may well be doubted whether such language may come as fitly from sinful lips as from sinless lips, it should further be remembered that when our Saviour thus spoke, He was addressing the hypocritical leaders, who should have known better, the "blind guides" themselves, who led the multitude. The ignorant and erring he won, as He would have His people win them, by kindness and love.

Let it be remembered, too, that the "raking up of the ashes of past centuries"

may reveal facts painful to Protestants as well as Romanists. The Church of Rome was not the only Church that persecuted. Let the ashes of Socinus—the sufferings of massed Covenanters and persecuted Puritans attest the sad fact. Yet, while we have to admit that Protestants, too, did persecute, we maintain that they did so as individuals, in spite of their principles, led astray by the spirit of the age, a spirit which the Church of Rome had herself evoked. But while Protestants repudiate such acts with sorrow, the Church of Rome has never openly condemned her persecutions, but by virtue of her boasted infallibility, is precluded from doing so. It may be necessary sometimes therefore, in reply to assumptions of infallibility, to remind Romanists what the practice of their infallible Church has been that they may judge whether or not it accords with the character of a Church of Christ. Only, while we speak the truth when it is necessary, let us do so "in love and in the spirit of meekness," with the most tender consideration for the feelings which should be respected even when they must be wounded. Let there be less denunciation and more affectionate showing of a better way!

Let the aim be rather to make Romanists Christians, than to make them Protestants. Let the Truth once take possession of the heart, and it may be trusted to hold its own against error. And while we bravely do the battle of religious liberty, let it be, on the whole, less by words than by *our* deeds, by setting the example, like them, of noble Christian lives. Let us be "living epistles known and read of all men." The most legible and most irrefutable testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus! Let not the average Romanist observe that the average Protestant is more careless and indifferent in attending church, more lukewarm, more self-indulgent, less devout, less charitable to the poor, less earnest in practicing that which he professes to believe! With our open Bibles and our greater privileges, let us show, by our greater zeal, greater devotion, greater earnestness, more liberal charity, above all by our great Christian love, the better spirit of our purer faith, remembering who has said "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Otherwise, many "poor Papists" may "rise up in judgment" with Protestants, and may "condemn them."

A LOVER OF TRUTH.

PRESBYTERIAN WRONGS.

No. 5.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—My last letter was intended to show how inadequate the equipment of Knox College is for the work which the Church demands of it. If we expect it to serve us any better in the future, a real effort must be made, and that at once, to set it on a solid, substantial footing. People continually ask why there are two colleges belonging to our Church, when one could do the work. And it is a question to which no person has ever given a reasonably satisfactory answer. How ever any Church Court, representing the small amount of wealth which our General Assembly represents, could have been induced to entertain so foolish a project, it is hard to see. Certainly no committee of practical, business men would ever have done so.

But that is not the question now. We actually have two colleges upon our hands. The Montreal people are going ahead like earnest men, building their new college, fully determined, apparently, to let nothing cast even a doubt upon the future success of their institution. And, surely, if four Presbyteries can do what they are doing in the east, we in the west, comprising the whole of the rest of the church, need not be behind. Is time-honoured Knox College to lose its prestige and dwindle into a second-rate institution? It has an honourable record. That record should not be disgraced by the carelessness or niggardliness of those into whose hands such an inheritance has come.

We have never had our vacant congregations and mission stations anything like fully supplied with preachers. We can not get students enough. Princeton has always drained off a considerable proportion of the few we have; and we seldom see them again. It will, most assuredly, take activity, on our part, to prevent her from taking more. We must have preachers, and therefore we must have a college that will keep our students at home. Knox must receive a full staff of Professors.

I can feel a stirring among our people now, which I hope will develop into vigorous action. But then they do not know what the college authorities want or what they propose to do. And as a natural consequence, being quite in the dark about the whole matter, they feel no particular obligation to exert themselves.

Not long ago a gentleman asked me, how many Professors are needed. He was surprised when I said, four. I told him that we must set to work, at once, and erect a new building, (there do appear to be hopes of that now), and furnish it with four Professors of the very best stamp that we can possibly find.

There is a department of Exegetics and Biblical Criticism, which must have a Professor. We have now, in connection with this chair, the right man in the right place, a man, nevertheless, to whom the church has done great injustice, by leaving him so long unassisted.

There is the vacant chair of Systematic Theology, which should not be left vacant any longer than the Assembly can possibly help.

Apologetics and Church History might be put together, under the care of our present able Professor of Apologetics.

Then Homiletics and Pastoral Theology with Church Government might form a department for a fourth Professor, although there would be work enough for two. We have had a lecturer in this chair, appointed now and then for three months at a time. A Professor must be permanently, appointed to this chair at once. If the present lecturer had been appointed permanently years ago, there would have been less grumbling among the students, according to their own report.

If we could support five Professors, we would do wisely to appoint a fifth to lecture on *Evangelistic Work*. That will do for want of a better name. I mean, that directly practical side of Christian work, which Pastoral Theology, in the ordinary treatment of it, does not cover. It should treat of faults into which men commonly run in preaching, in their prayers, and in their conversational treatment of cases of conscience and the difficulties of experimental religion. It would really be "the art of preaching and working." There is a great need for careful training of the clergy in this sphere. But, however desirable it would be to establish such a department, it will probably have to fall in with the general Department of Pastoral Theology.

But whether we have one Professor or five, we must have a Teacher of Elocution, constantly employed, or, at all events, for three months every session. Students should have the advantages of a regular and thorough drilling in Elocution from the very beginning of their course. As long as this is not attended to, we need not wonder if our students flock to Princeton.

There is another hint. Throughout the length and breadth of the Church, there is one loud wail of lamentation about "poor congregational singing." Well may we lament. The singing, in most congregations of which I know anything, could only be called a *ridiculous farce*, were it not that being enacted under the name of "God's praise," it becomes too mournful a thing to be thought of without pain. But what is to be done? Could not this be done? Establish a training-school for preceptors at the college. Let the best teachers in the country be engaged, and let the class be free to all comers. It would not cost much, and it would be well deserving of a trial.—INDEX.

AN EXPLANATION.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—In answer to "A. B. C." who asks, "On what principle the Presbytery of Manitoba proceeded when they lately inducted the Rev. Mr. Black to the charge over which he had been settled for many years," I have to reply, first, that inasmuch as Mr. Black had never been, according to the usual form of Presbyterian procedure, there was nothing unconstitutional in the act. The Presbytery thought fit to gratify the people, and granted their request to have, in full Presbyterian form, what they had so long enjoyed in reality.

2. The Presbytery being desirous of leading the people of this new province to bear their full share in support of the ministry labouring among them, and believing that the regular settlement of ministers over charges would conduce to this end, as well as the more successful prosecution of the work, thought it best that there should be no exceptions, and began with Kildonan, the oldest and at that time, the only self-sustaining congregation, within the Province. The town-congregation of Winnipeg has since declared itself self-sustaining and we hope soon to settle a minister over them, with more to follow.

Trusting that this explanation will satisfy your correspondent, and any others who may have thought the proceeding of our new Presbytery strange,

I remain, Mr. Editor,

Yours respectfully,

ALEX. FRAZER,

Clerk of Manitoba Presbytery

There are 6,486 churches in the State of Ohio, including 295 Roman Catholic, capable of seating, in all, 2,064,866 people.