

to us that the use of national funds for any object within the province of the Civil Magistrate, can involve no injustice in any case." But further on, it is said, "we are of opinion that the existing establishments in this empire ought to be removed, that it is wholly inexpedient in present circumstances to call upon the Government of Britain to grant religious endowments—and that if such endowments were offered to us as a Church, it would be our bounden duty to refuse them." We fancy it would not be easy properly to reconcile these two passages. But one thing seems plain enough, that an endowment would be taken, if it could be had on approved terms. It is only existing establishments that are ineligible; an endowment is only inexpedient in present circumstances—implying that were circumstances to become different, there would be no objection, but an eager readiness to hasten back to the old alliance with the State. It remains, however, a mere question of expediency (the most shifting thing that can be, as it is too generally understood and acted upon) what this change of circumstances might be. Prædication is occasionally floats in some fond dreaming about the return once more of palmy ecclesiastical times, which, however, minds awake regard as among joys departed never to return. And here again we are prompted to point out a striking contrast between the plain, simple statement given by all voluntary Churches, and—may we say so—the misty views we have just quoted. We will also venture to say that, in the printed pamphlet of Minutes which has been referred to, there are, on the side of the United Presbyterian Church, articles stating fully, with great force of clear, strictly logical, and scriptural reasoning, the views held by that body on the important points that were discussed. It is well known that these able articles were chiefly drawn up by Mr. Proudfoot's deceased father, then Professor of Theology to the United Presbyterian Church—a man, admitted by all who know him, to have been highly distinguished for strength of intellect, luminousness of thought and expression, and thorough straight-forwardness of principle. These articles never were attempted to be answered, and we believe are unanswerable.

5. Once more we crave permission to say that, notwithstanding the foregoing sentiments which have been quoted, it comes out from time to time, in published documents of our Legislature, that applications are now and then made by congregations in the Presbyterian Church of Canada, for government grants of land, as sites to churches and other congregational purposes. And they succeed; for our government is wonderfully accommodating in ecclesiastical matters, to all and sundry who petition them. Now, we hold that all such doings, between the secular powers and ecclesiastical communities, are part and parcel of the system of endowment. Whatever may be the amount, and whether it be in money or lands, the principle is the same. It is going to the door of the State, and supplicating, give us of the things which are at your disposal, to save our pockets. And if one party go, all may go—Episcopalians, Roman Catholics, every one who chooses to ask what they desire, or think they may obtain; and none who have received have any right to find fault. There has been a great deal of loud and long talking about a Church having spiritual independence, and at the same time being sustained by the State. The thing is an impossibility, at any rate, it never yet has been realised. In our humble judgment, the Church's true independence is to ask no State favours, and so come under no political obligations; meet her own requirements as to temporalities, and where help is needed by the weak let it be given by the strong, prompted by christian kindness. This is our voice on the subject, though the reviewer may call it "the rabid cry of voluntarism." No matter; it is Scriptural truth, and that is quite enough. We are of one mind, on this point, with the inspired writers of the New Testament, and we could desire nothing better and more honourable.

It is hoped, sir, that enough has been said to vindicate the Rev. John A. Proudfoot from the charge of having aspersed your Church, in having said that her position and principles are undefinable in the aspect he spoke of. He had no such intention. No feelings of ill-will are entertained by him, or any of his brethren, towards your Church. We would all have rejoiced, and would still rejoice, in union with her upon enlightened and fairly workable principles, in accordance with the New Testament—such union as was happily experienced, thirty-three years ago, between the two branches of the Secession; and such union as took place, a few years past, with the United Secession and Relief Churches. These unions have wrought admirably, because they were gone into upon a basis formed under the influence of a christian spirit, and directed by the Scriptures. One precious result, out of many, is, that now our principles stand forth to public view more truly scriptural and simplified than ever they were before. We would gladly hail such union in Canada. How much is it needed! For here, while there is a variety of classifications among evangelical christians, they are all small, and right union would be strength; and we are surrounded by masses of spiritual darkness and indifference, and of earthly mindedness; to operate against which all the combined energy and zeal which can be concentrated, are demanded. May the Lord more and more pour out on us all his Holy Spirit; working in a spirit of love, and of a sound mind—making our only contention to be for the Faith once delivered unto the saints—that it may flourish, extend on the right hand and on the left, and transform, with renewing of mind, the people of our country, and of the whole world.

PHILEATHES.

April, 1853.

Miscellaneous.

CHRISTIANITY AS A PHENOMENON.

Outspread before us we have a scene of deep and painful interest to all who believe in the spiritual nature, capabilities, and destiny of man. The soul of humanity paralyzed—dim, uncertain, confused in its apprehensions—impotent in conscience—with scarcely as much pulsation at the heart as to give assurance that the spark of life has not gone out—the whole world of mankind, Jew and Gentile, learned and unlearned, civilized and barbarous, alike unconscious of, or indifferent to, its relationship to the Father of Spirits, and the duties and pleasures identified with a recognition and appreciation of his glorious character and perfect will. The worst symptom of the sad case is, a total lack of spiritual energy—a seeming absence of all motive power adequate to insure a healthy discharge of the functions of the inner man, and still less to resist the steady encroachments of disuse. The general tendency of things is from bad to worse; and the moral malady, even in the view of its mourning and helpless victim, is becoming desperate. Just at this gloomy crisis of man's history, when religious faith, hope, and love, are prostrate—wasted by an apparently incurable atrophy—Jesus Christ, assuming to be commissioned thereto by God himself, spends some three years in Galilee and Judea, in founding a new dispensation, and is then put to death as a blasphemer and a malefactor. What he did, what he taught, and what he suffered during those three brief years, became instantly a spring of spiritual life to the world. Dreamy, distorted, grotesque notions of God and his purposes, of man and his destiny, give place to clearer, nobler, more consistent, more exalted views. Conscience recovers its sensitiveness, and exerts its all-conquering power.—Society feels its heart throb with new life. There has evidently been infused into it an element of nervous vitality, to which it has been long a stranger. The spiritual in man's nature, obedient to some invisible law, struggles with the material, and proves its title to supremacy, and its competence to maintain it. Life gains upon death. Sensibility, power, enjoyment, in respect to divine things, to truth, to righteousness, to communion with the Highest, widen their domains, and the limits within which healthy action goes on are rapidly enlarged. There is resistance—but to no purpose. A religious life has been evoked, and cannot be stifled by coarse and violent methods. Nor scoffs, nor threats, nor sword, nor sin, nor learning, nor philosophy, can put out that which, but a few years before, it seemed impossible to kindle. Rome smiles incredulously at first—then feels in its own veins the tingle of spiritual vitality—struggles to expel the strange invasion—and is itself subdued. Much, perhaps, of what meets the eye is symptomatic only; but beneath it, and perceptible to unprejudiced observation, there is a substantial reality—a faith that can remove mountains—a full assurance of hope—the hope of immortality—a constraining and victorious love. As we watch the marvellous progress of this novel religious movement, and mark on every hand the indications of its power and depth, we naturally ask by what means and influence it is promoted. Averting our attention from everything claiming to be regarded as miraculous, we have nothing left but the earnest proclamation of simple-minded men of certain facts and doctrines of which the departed Jesus was the centre—no power of law, no influence of rank and station, no worldly wealth, no flattering bait to the sensual passions, no political acts or promises embodying the vain wishes of the vulgar. A few men agree in testifying to certain marvels which they cannot but have themselves believed, and give such additional force to their testimony as sanctity of life can impart. That is all—literally all. But the spiritual life which they generated by this seemingly inadequate instrumentality, rapidly increases in volume, passes to all the principal seats of cultured intelligence, possesses, pervades, assimilates them, and establishes itself in the world as a permanent power. Gradually, the reaction of Paganism oppresses it, and a long and dreary winter of priestcraft drives that life beneath the surface of human affairs, to manifest itself only here and there, at infrequent intervals. But scarcely does mind awaken from the slumber and incoherent dreams of centuries, than this same life, nurtured by the same truths, and marked by the same power as of old, bursts forth again. It remains, to this day, the strongest moral element of which we have any knowledge. Numberless are the instances in which it grapples with human selfishness, and subdues it, as no other known agency does or can. Countless are the disquieted and trembling souls which it soothes to peace, and into the darkness of which it radiates a "blessed hope." It is modifying for good the spirit of the times—developing to an extent surpassing all former precedent, man's interest in, and care for, his fellow-man—tempering modern civilization with a genial glow—and bringing into more healthful and active play the heart's purest and most disinterested affections. And all present probabilities point to a future, in which its sway shall be much more extensive—in which it shall possess the larger part of the world's population, and by the intelligence, enterprise, and influence with which it has become associated, undermine and overthrow all less vital systems of religious faith and worship.—*Basie of Belief, by Edward Miall, M. P., London, 1853.*

"I am rich enough," says Pope to Swift, "and can afford to give away a hundred pounds a year. I will enjoy the pleasure of what I give by giving it alive, and seeing another enjoying it. When I die, I should be ashamed to leave enough for a monument, if there were a wanting friend above ground."