

British American Presbyterian

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British American Presbyterian.

FRIDAY, NOV. 18, 1874.

TWO MONTHS FREE!

In order to secure large additions to our subscription list before the 1st of January next, we have determined to offer the paper for FOURTEEN MONTHS at the regular yearly subscription price of \$2, payable in advance. May we ask our friends to aid us in this connection! There is not a reader of the BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN but could place the paper in the hands of a neighbour. Indeed, many could secure several new subscribers, if they but made the effort. But even supposing each of our subscribers forwarded ONLY ONE NEW NAME, our list would at once be doubled, and THE PRESBYTERIAN, for a long time struggling for a mere existence, at once bound would take a proud position among the journals of the Dominion.

The object is well worth the effort; and we ask the hearty co-operation of ministers, elders and others, in the work of extending the circulation of THE PRESBYTERIAN in every congregation throughout the country. Don't puff off the work. Begin as soon as possible, and continue until every family has been approached.

THE COMING UNION.

We have at last reached an all but unanimous conclusion to the union negotiations, and the hopes and prayers of the vast majority of Presbyterians in the Dominion seem about to receive a gracious answer in the formation of one church. True, there is a minority in one of the bodies which does not as yet see its way to come in, but without doubt some means of satisfying their demands will be found, and now if a few remain behind, the union will go on. The members of the union Committee who have conducted the negotiations, have good cause gratefully to rejoice in what God has enabled them to accomplish. From the first they had the support of the great majority of the church. And the difficulties which once and again presented themselves, were owing to that cause as much as to anything, that is, to the want of a sufficiently strong opposition, which might have delayed matters at the first stages, but would ultimately have proved beneficial. The opposition encountered in the C. P. Church, with two or three exceptions, was solely as to the manner in which the matter was being conducted and the terms proposed, not to union in itself. In the Kirk Synod, on the other hand, the difficulty is attributed to the quasi connection, and relations of that church to the Established Church of Scotland. We are confidently told that the parent church is heartily in favour of the union. This being the case, there can be little doubt that the assembly in May next will help forward the union by removing all difficulties felt by the protestors, so that in June we may find possible a union which will embrace all the Presbyterians of the Dominion, except the small number who are connected with churches in the United States. In looking back over the discussion we recall strong words and lengthy arguments, metaphysical discussions, hair-splitting distinctions, indeed all the features characteristic of a controversy conducted by men bold, thoughtful, earnest, keen, far-seeing, cautious, and progressive. Yet we rejoice to say if we find also a spirit of forbearance, mutual consideration, candour and withal love, so overshadowing all, that when the erstwhile foemen meet in the same arena as brethren, they will love one another and heartily join hand in hand for the Lord's work. Difference of opinion does and will continue to exist as to the manner in which the negotiations have been conducted, but all rejoice in the issue, and thanking God for it, no one will withhold the due and honorable meed from the brethren through whom that issue has mainly been brought about.

The phrase "Primitive Church" is very often used. Some of our readers may be interested to know that the word "Primitive" in this connection, was by statute, I Edward VI. Ch. 1, sec 7, defined to mean "the space of 500 years and more after Christ's ascension."

THE PROGRESS AND PROSPECTS OF UNION.

When people complain that the progress of churches is slow when negotiating for union, they forget the true character of the problem to be solved in forming these unions. To warrant our Parliaments to take action on most of the questions that come before them, it is enough that a majority sanctions the course to be taken. It was at the bidding of a majority of representatives in its respective Provinces, that British America formed its present Confederate Union. The question was not even submitted to the people to obtain the sanction of their votes; but the important business was issued to its present standing on a bare majority of members of Parliament. Did the four Presbyterian Churches negotiating for union take this course, the union that is not only in progress might have been an accomplished fact years ago. It is not union on the strength of mere majorities that is wanted, but union that is so complete that not a hoof is left behind. Supposing such a condition was demanded, i.e. entire parliamentary and popular unanimity, one Confederation could have taken place, when, would such an event become a fact in history? Not during this century. But such is the condition generally demanded, and often obtained, in Presbyterian ecclesiastical unions. The union that took place in Nova Scotia lately, between the Free Church, and the United Presbyterian Church, was thus unanimous, and so was a similar union in our own Province a few years later. In these unions not one minister, not one congregation was left behind; and the reason why the Free and the United Presbyterian Churches of Scotland broke off the recent negotiations without coming the length of an incorporating union, was just because they could not arrive in the meantime at the desired condition of unanimity, or at a fair approach to it.

The truth is, if we consider calmly how next to impossible it is to get large bodies of men, who meet in open court and there freely debate their differences, to think alike, then does it seem to us that some of the Protestant unions that have been witnessed this century, are standing or striking miracles, attesting both the truth of Christianity, and the presence of the Holy Spirit in the church courts. If the history of the Christian church has been disgraced by scenes of bitterness, strife and separation, it has surely given to the world instances unparalleled of charity, brotherly love, mutual forbearance, and willingness to bury the dead past.

Taking therefore, a broad view of the business, the four Presbyterian churches of this Dominion, undertook when they offered to gather under one General Assembly, congregations separated by miles upon miles of territory, and ministers separated by years and pages of controversy, they undertook a problem that could and did dismay stout hearts. In the hour of haste to see the Presbyterian army go forth a united host to the work of the Lord, we may feel that the union negotiations are tedious; but in the hour of calm judgment that estimates at their weight the difficulties to be overcome, we cannot but feel that the union negotiations have prospered beyond what the most sanguine expected.

Last week we told our readers the position of union in the Maritime Provinces; one Synod quite unanimous, and the other within a few votes of unanimity. This week, and in other columns, we show our readers the position of union in the Upper Provinces,—the General Assembly votes within two of being unanimous, but the Synod of the sister church at some distance yet from that consummation. And even though we should admit that the opposition to union in the Synod is strong in talent and influence, which many would not admit, and though we should admit that they are strong in language and threats, which most of people will admit, still it is not an opposition that need cause discouragement, though it may cause trouble and delay. The existence of that opposition and its unreasonableness, has already served a good purpose; it has raised in the breasts of many ministers of the Canada Presbyterian Church, who heard the able debate on Thursday night, feelings of admiration and love towards the men in the Synod, who, without one selfish object in view, battled so well for a united church for our Dominion.

A NATIVE Greenland, Tobias Morch, has been ordained at Copenhagen, to work as a missionary among his countrymen. This will be the first native missionary in Greenland. It is over 150 years since Hans Egede began to labour among the Esquimaux of Greenland, and now this Danish mission has eight stations, besides which the Maravian Church have five smaller stations. Two teachers' seminaries have also been established.

The Pope, in receiving the Bishop of Verdun, the other day, said that he trembled concerning the dangers menacing France. He added that it was necessary for the Catholics to unite their forces to meet the threatened evils, and to oppose the enemies of the Church and of society.

NEW BUSINESS AT AN ADJOURNED MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

The question of new business at an adjourned meeting raised in our columns, has been decided at the late meeting of our Assembly; and yet it is undecided. The decision was, that no decision as to the competency of doing this should be given, but the thing was done. Of the prudence and policy of this action there cannot be a doubt. To have brought up the question at the time would have provoked much discussion, might have prevented harmony, and even given rise to difficulties. The matter, however, cannot rest here, and there is little doubt that every one, no matter what his views may be, will endeavour to have the question settled for the future. It is meanwhile matter for thankfulness that, owing to the unanimity of the Church on the particular business in hand, no attempt will be made to open the question at this time.

Let us now shortly look at the subject in the light of the action of the Supreme Court of the C. P. Church, which, be it noted, is a representative body, and so responsible to its constituents, viz: Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions. Is it competent for a General Assembly to adjourn, and at the adjourned meeting to take up business which was not before its Committee of Bills at the original meeting? In answer, let us note that we do not call in question the power of the Supreme Court, for it is supreme, and, except in matters of property, no appeal can be taken from it. At the adjourned meeting in 1871, by the ruling of the Moderator, it was decided that it is not competent to take up new business. At the adjourned meeting in 1874, it seems to have been admitted on all hands, that the consideration of the returns to the remit on union was new business, yet it was taken up without a dissentient voice. The thing was done; and a proposal to have the Moderator rule on the question as a point of order was of purpose avoided, on the ground that "the matter was too important to ask the Moderator to rule." The matter in hand was indeed of all but supreme importance, and required skilful conduct, but it does seem to us that this consideration only made it the more imperative that every thing should be done in an orderly manner. To avoid saying that the thing was in order, and yet do it, admitting the order to be doubtful, might be prudent and politic; it was, we submit, hardly consistent with the highest wisdom.

The remarks of Principal Cavan, we presume, indicate the precise position of the question, and the Clerk's rejoinder shows the danger for time to come, for a precedent has been established which nullifies the mere ruling of 1871. No longer now is it doubtful, for the thing has been done. There is wont and use—consuetudinary law—in favour of taking up new business at an adjourned meeting.

Rev. Principal Cavan said it was too important a matter to ask the Moderator to rule on. There was nothing touching the matter in the Constitution, and no ruling of a Moderator or of an Assembly became part of the Constitution or bound a subsequent Assembly.

The Clerk considered that it would be dangerous to introduce a precedent of taking up new business at an adjourned meeting. It must be admitted that the Principal is correct in both his assertions. No ruling can bind any other Assembly than that in which the ruling has been given. Neither is there anything in the letter of the Constitution of the Assembly which prevents new business being taken up. It is by no means beyond question, however, whether by its action the Assembly has not violated the spirit of the Constitution of a representative body. Let us look at this.

The letter of the Constitution does not require an annual meeting of the General Assembly, and does not prevent an adjournment of an Assembly when once duly constituted. Now, if to this be added that an Assembly may adjourn as often as it sees fit, and at each adjourned meeting take up any new business it sees fit, then it follows that any Assembly which has been duly constituted, and does not choose to dissolve itself, may adjourn, with a view to carrying to completion some important work, an indefinite number of times, and continue any number of years to conduct the business of the Church, with the Moderator as permanent head. We do not say that this could be done. An attempt to do so would lead to action on the part of Presbyteries; but such action of Presbyteries would not be constitutional, but revolutionary. Nevertheless, if the Principal is right, the Constitution provides no check, and the Assembly may make itself permanent without violating the letter of the Constitution. Surely, however, all will admit that the spirit and design of the Constitution of the Assembly as a representative body, would by such action be grossly violated. The same act would be *summum jus* and *summa injuria*. It must further be borne in mind, that it may happen that the smaller Presbyteries may, by the operation of the Barrier Act, give a majority of Presbyteries in favour of a measure which the majority of the Church disapprove; and when these returns come

before the same Assembly that has already approved the measure, it may be found that the majority of that Assembly does not represent the views of the majority of the Church either. So that by allowing new business to come before an adjourned Assembly, there is a danger of a minority legislating in opposition to the wish of a majority. A new Assembly is the constitutional check.

After the Union, when a new Constitution is being formed for the Supreme Court, these matters will not fail to be considered. And although we hope the time will never come when the Church will suffer herself to be fettered by a written Constitution, apart from other considerations, we contend that the most perfect freedom is consistent with the observance of regulations, and particularly in a representative body, that it is of the last importance that its power be under constitutional restrictions.

MINISTERIAL DUTY AND RESPONSIBILITY.

Amid the many hopeful settlements that have lately taken place in our Church, and others that speedily will take place, it is well for all to get wisdom, and with all our getting to get understanding, from whatsoever source we can. With this view permit me to lay before the readers of the *British American Presbyterian* the outline of an address delivered by the Rev. Dr. Lord of Buffalo, a Christian veteran of no little renown, who has long borne the heat and burden of the day, and who through the many ministerial changes on the other side as in our own, has, amid not a few attempts to remove him, continued all his ministerial life, amounting to well nigh forty years, to minister to the one congregation, to which he delivered the following address in connection with the ordination of his young brother and successor:—

"I suppose I have been assigned to this duty because for nearly forty years I was the pastor of this congregation, and it was thought that in the light of my own experience I might be able to point out their duties to their young minister. The Union to be consummated to-night is one likely to be enduring. It has been formed with great deliberation under remarkable Providential leadings and with absolute unanimity. And why may we not anticipate that half a century hence he may stand here, an aged man, his head as white and his brow as furrowed as mine, to deliver a charge to the people concerning a new pastor who in the freshness and beauty of his youth stands here to receive the spiritual leadership of this congregation. God grant that his ministry may be larger than mine, that he may win more souls to Christ, and that a greater number may rise up to call him blessed in the last day.

Brethren of the Central Congregation, I charge you in the first place, let no man despise his youth. Years are not always the proof of wisdom. It has pleased God in all ages of the world to bestow extraordinary gifts upon very young men. Apollus, the most gifted preacher recorded in the New Testament exercised his gifts in the morning of life. Timothy was Bishop of Ephesus at an early age. Whitfield and Chalmers in the Old World and many in the new have furnished similar examples. The younger Pitt was prime minister of Great Britain, in one of the most exciting periods of her history at about the age of your pastor. Thank God for his youth, and that he has so long a time to spend in your service, and so many years in which to garner up souls for our blessed Redeemer. I charge you always to remember that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel. Paul quotes an example of Divine humanity to the inferior creation from the Old Testament in confirmation of this: "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn." While I do not believe in these extravagant salaries which set out the Gospel ministry as a prize for avarice and ambition, while I maintain that when the ministry of Christ ceases to be a self-denying office, it ceases to be of any value to the Church, yet, a competent and sufficient support, according to the ability of the congregation, is what is due to the pastor. Pay him liberally. Pay him promptly. Let him not have a cloud of embarrassments about his pecuniary affairs to distract his ministry, to distract his mind, and to weary his rest. Let him see that you do not support him grudgingly or of necessity. I charge you to wait upon his ministry, not by fits or starts, not by spasmodic exhibitions of piety, not alone on the Sabbath, but always let him be strengthened and encouraged by your presence at every meeting through the week, and when he assigns you to some special work consider it a call from God to do it. Hold up his hands in every way. A minister who has to work without his congregation is a Samson shorn of his strength. I charge you to aid him in building up the congregation. Your pastor will have certain duties to perform outside of his own charge, but they are delicate and difficult. He cannot easily invite people to attend his own church. You can. You have seats to which to invite them. He cannot point out his own excellencies. You can. I do not mean that you should assail now comers here before they have unloaded their baggage, as the manner of some is, but by a decent attention to strangers, and by soliciting their attendance at church, seek to win them to the Gospel and the Central Church. One of the greatest discomforts of my ministry has been your indifference to the upbuilding of this church. "Does Dr. Lord know that such a Presbyterian stranger has come to town?" "Has he been to see them?" "Will he get them into our church?" As though I had all the work to do, when, in fact, it was no proper work for me to do. And I did none of it, and brother Wood will do none of it; and if you do not do it, it will not be done, and rival churches will steal people out of your congregation every day." I charge you to

sustain him by your prayers and sympathies. A great many trials has a gospel minister, his mind will often flag, there are many discouragements in his way, cold hearts, dull sensibilities, ungrateful returns for his kindness, a tedious hearing of the word, a slim attendance when he has brought the finest beaten oil into the sanctuary, beside the general cares of life, wife and children, which in the order of nature and providence, I hope he may have, which are cares as well as joys. His imprudence will be betrayed, as they have me; he needs your sympathy and will always need it; he needs your prayers. Let him find a friendly refuge in your heart. Let his name be uttered with affection before the presence of the Divine Judge in your daily devotions. So may you meet at last in the presence of your Saviour in that better world where there is no more sighing, or sorrow, or tears, or death, to which rest we all hope to attain through Jesus Christ, our Lord, to whom be all glory and power, world without end. Amen."

Amid much that is weighty and worthy of all acceptance in the above address Dr. Lord's ideas of ministerial duty especially, will doubtless with many, meet with but little sympathy and far less support. While his views on that subject are at least peculiar if not extreme, yet, it cannot be denied, that they contain a strong seasoning of salutary truth, for how would it make many a member stagger, and many an elder's tongue stammer, if conscientiously and before God they were called upon to answer the question—what have you done to increase the membership of the congregation to which you belong? While ministers may be more or less justly accused of inefficiency or neglect, let those who would bring the accusation first ask if they themselves are not equally guilty, and thus let him that is without sin cast the first stone.

GLENMORRIS. D.

Ministers and Churches.

Rev. R. THYNNE has declined the call from the congregations of St. Ann's and Wellandport, in the Hamilton Presbytery.

The Rev. Thos. Alexander was inducted to the pastoral charge of Mount Pleasant and Burford congregations on Monday afternoon last.

The ordination of the Rev. John Anderson to the pastorate of Rivor Street Church, Paris, is fixed to take place on Wednesday, 25th November, at 2 p.m.

VERY interesting meetings were held in the Vaughan church on Tuesday, the 27th October, in connection with the ordination of the Rev. Peter Nicol, of Knox College, and his settlement over the congregations of Vaughan and Albion. In the forenoon, Mr. Nicol underwent a very searching examination by the Presbytery in a most satisfactory manner, acquitting himself admirably in the various branches. In the afternoon Dr. Topp preached an excellent sermon from 2 Cor. iii, 3, put the questions, and offered the ordination prayer, after which Mr. Dick, in particularly impressive and appropriate terms, addressed the minister. The people were addressed by Mr. Pettigrew in a manner that will not soon be forgotten for its earnestness, simplicity and point. The young minister was heartily welcomed by the congregation, and a day's services were brought to a close that we have never seen surpassed for solemnity, good feeling and impressiveness. Mr. Nicol enters upon his sphere of labour with great encouragement and every prospect of good success. If Mr. Dick would allow his address to the minister to be printed in the PRESBYTERIAN, it would be a boon to the whole church.

Testimonial to the "Father of the Press"

We take pleasure in giving place to the following, which we copy from a city contemporary of the 24th ult.:

"In one of the windows of Mr. Glover Harrison's store, King street, we notice a very handsome French china pitcher in tended as a gift to Mr. D. Wylie, of the Brockville Recorder. On one side is an excellent likeness in colors of the genial face of that gentleman—the 'Father of the Canadian Press'—as he is called; on the opposite side is a representation of Niagara Falls. The painting and decorations of the pitcher were done by the gentleman by whom it is being presented to Mr. Wylie, Mr. E. Tatler, now of Trenton, N. J., but formerly of the establishment of Messrs. Hurst and Leigh, in this city. The character of the work shows Mr. Tatler to be possessed of no little artistic ability.

A COMMENTARY on the book of Job has been published by Hertzog. The Professor has often lectured on the poem, and thrown out many ingenious suggestions as to the text. His special talent does not lie in the interpretation of the poetical books of the Old Testament, though nothing he writes can be safely neglected by the critical student of the Bible.

The American Presbyterian Board sustains the only existing mission in Brazil. In a territory nearly as large as Europe, and a population of 10,000,000, there are only thirteen Protestant ministers preaching in the native language.

Mr. Dawson, the distinguished English lecturer, gets off sharp and witty things. Speaking of Mr. Disraeli, the British Premier, he says:—"His politics are romantic, and his romances are political, and he is himself a fiction founded upon fact."