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Contributors & Correspondents.

NEW BRUNSWICK.

Slightly Mistaken—Personal—Synod of the Lower Provinces—An Interesting Meeting.

(From our own Correspondent.)

Looking into the *Scottish American* yesterday I was amused, and I was going to say, instructed by a paragraph that I saw in it. It is one of the many examples that we have of the knowledge which those living abroad shew of us and our affairs. Our friends of the father land make very absurd blunders, but it seems that our Scottish friends of New York are just as ignorant. The readers of the paper above named are ignorant that Dr. Thomson was then about to set out as a delegate to "the Presbyterian Synod of Nova Scotia." If the writer of the paragraph had but taken the trouble to turn to the *Assembly Journal* or any of the religious weeklies that report the General Assembly that met in Detroit a few weeks ago, he would have been saved from such a blunder. What we have queried, however bad it is, is not the worst. The writer goes on to say that the Dr. is commissioned to attend, the Synod of the Established Church of Prince Edward Island! Supposing some of the Province papers had spoken of the Assembly at Detroit as a meeting of the Presbyterian Synod of Michigan, or were next year to announce that delegates were going to attend the Synod of the Established Church of Maryland, what a fund of merriment there would be furnished to our exceedingly smart newspaper men across the border. The best informed of us don't know everything.

The American deputies spent last Sabbath in St. John. They are Dr. John Thomson, of Thirty-Fourth Street, New York; Dr. Mogie, of Dover, New Jersey; and the Hon. John Hill, of Boonton, New Jersey. The two clergymen occupied several of the city pulpits with the utmost acceptance. All enjoyed the ministrations very much. In addition to two services each, Dr. Thomson preached a special sermon in the afternoon, on behalf of the building fund of Calvin Church, the congregation to which I referred on a former occasion as having got their edifice burned down in the early part of last year. A handsome sum was realised. What added to the interest of Dr. Thomson's visit was the memory of his former pastorate in St. John, he having come from England to be the first pastor of St. David's Free Church in 1848. The elder who accompanies the ministers is a vice-president of the International Convention of Young Men's Christian Association, and takes a deep interest in the welfare of young men. On Sabbath night he attended the prayer meeting held in the Young Men's rooms and gave a most fervent and telling address to a crowded audience. The words he spoke will not soon be forgotten.

Your correspondent is now in Halifax attending the Synod, not of Nova Scotia but of the Lower Provinces. The first meeting was held last night in Poplar Grove Church. The outgoing Moderator, the Rev. Wm. Duff, of Lunenburg, preached the sermon, after which the Rev. George Patterson was elected to fill the chair for the year. Mr. Pasterson is grandson of Dr. James McGregor, who was the most prominent of the Pioneers of Presbyterianism in these Provinces. Mr. Patterson has written a biography of his grandfather, a very interesting volume. He has lately issued a volume on the Trinity, a work which is spoken very highly of by many, among others, Professor Macgregor, of New College, Edinburgh, passes a high eulogium on it. He has been over twenty years in the pastorate, and a close student, and a man more devoted to the interests of the Church, in every way, is not found in the Synod. The Committees of Bills and Overtures read their report last night, and if all then announced is to come up at this Session, an unusual amount of business has to be done this

year. It hardly seems possible to get through all that was mentioned. A goodly number of the members answered to their names, but all will not be forward before to-night. There will not be less than 150 present.

Halifax, 26th June, 1872.

II.

QUEBEC.

"The Heated Term"—Instrumental Music and the Union Question at the last Assembly—The Montreal College.

One of the most eminent of modern scientists has written much of heat considered as a mode of motion; I feel much more disposed to view it as an incentive to repose. Certainly the temperature of the last few days has been fitted to cool the zeal (if we may speak of its cooling anything,) of the most enthusiastic epistolizer. Nevertheless, I crave the indulgence of your readers for a short letter, trusting that in the fervency of the atmosphere, they will find an excuse for languor of style.

The main topic of interest in Presbyterian circles at present is of course the recent meeting of the General Assembly held in Hamilton. My opinion is that there is a general feeling of satisfaction with the decisions arrived at by our supreme court. Notably is this the case with reference to the deliverance, destined let us trust to be historic and final, on the much-vexed and long-pending question of instrumental music. We would not wish to fail in respect for the feelings and charity to the prejudices of the staunch lovers of the old paths, but surely the number must now be small of those who still think that this question should continue to divide the church. Surely in an age like this when the spirit of evil is abroad in so many distinct and threatening forms, it is a waste of time and power to stand listening with bated breath and appalled heart, lest perchance the echo of his voice should mingle with the "solemn sound and grave sweet melody" of the organ.

There is, too, if we mistake not, a sense of relief at the turn which the Union negotiations have taken. Even if union is a good thing in the abstract, there are certain very concrete considerations that may well reconcile us to the Assembly's adoption of the motto "make haste slowly," at this juncture. Some will doubtless be surprised at the point which the discussion hinged, and would have looked in another direction for the crucial question. It is, however, a matter for sincere thankfulness that an extension of time has been granted to the Church for the consideration of this momentous subject. Opposing views can thus be exchanged, modified, perhaps even harmonized—the practical or theoretical difficulties that lie in the way may be softened or removed, and when union comes, as come it probably will, the foundations of the edifice will be laid more broad and strong than they now could be, and the builders will not have cause to reproach themselves with unsound props and unsightly appendages. Many, we fancy, will be inclined to think that some part of the surplus energy which has been put forth so lavishly on behalf of Union might have been diverted with advantage to other objects and run in other channels. Knights many and valorous have mounted this particular hobby in hot haste, and have displayed their powers in the lists so conveniently furnished for them in the columns of the *BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN*—lists, which we venture to predict will ring for many months to come with the din of the same conflict. To us in Montreal the position and needs of our college afford scope and verge enough for the expression of opinion and expenditure of effort. Much has already been done on behalf of this institution—much that deserves consideration, sympathy, perhaps even imitation, at the hands of our Western brethren. Surely it cannot be a matter for doubt or debate, that a sure basis and a complete equipment for the Montreal college are ob-

jects which yield to none in interest or importance. As this letter will barely catch the Western mail, I am compelled to close abruptly.

Yours truly,
"DIGAMMA."

Montreal, June 24th 1872.

THE LATE DR. NORMAN McLEOD.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

Sir,—I was a good deal surprised at the glowing eulogy passed by the *Globe* on the late Dr. McLeod and the stock from which he sprung. It states:—"Dr. McLeod belonged to a family that for some generations has supplied a succession of excellent and in a few instances distinguished clergymen to the Church of Scotland." The fact is, Mr. Editor, the McLeods were more noted for policy and politeness than for piety, and as Celts than as Christians. You will not find much evidence of Godliness in the "Reminiscences of a Highland Parish." The ministry of the other McLeods was as barren of spiritual results as that of other moderates, and, as might be expected, the parish of Morven—the parish of the reminiscences, and of which the grandfather and uncle of the chronicler were successively ministers—continued till the eve of the disruption one of the very darkest in the Highlands of Scotland; and the reader of the reminiscences cannot fail to see that the writer did not feel deeply the lack of religious life in the picture which he drew. His love to the Church of Scotland was not of the most intense kind. His own preference was "for prelacy rather than for presbytery;" but, as he expressed it, he thought "presbytery better suited for the genius of the Scottish people," and therefore he supported it. That his utterances on the fourth commandment were in opposition to the professed standard of his Church, no one can doubt who really knows both. His last utterances are said to have been very characteristic. They were so certainly of a Church which pleads charity, which it shows not. At the disruption every missionary (to Jews and Heathens,) sent out by the Church of Scotland joined the Free Church, and Dr. McLeod and his friends took from their mission premises, libraries, and apparatus, and set up in the great cities of India a specimen of the division which in his last speech he professed to deplore. Well, perhaps he began to relent, and to see the evil of the course which his Church pursued so long, in siding with Cæsar against her brethren, and giving him, for filthy lucre, the things which are God's, while, as the result, Missionaries were robbed, another scandal added to the divisions of Protestants, and many of the best of Scotland's sons driven to worship on the high roads, the morass, or the seashore.

I regret Dr. McLeod's death, and I feel deeply that injudicious panegyric should demand my saying anything that has an unfriendly aspect of one who had many estimable qualities, but who cannot be said, while seeking to benefit his fellows, to have done much to promote vital Godliness.

ONE WHO KNOWS.

UPPER OTTAWA.

TO THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF THE KNOX COLLEGE STUDENTS MISSION SOCIETY.—According to arrangements I left the Des Joachims rapids on the 28th of May, and arrived at Mattawa village on the 31st. This village, built at the junction of the Mattawa River with that of the Ottawa, is the next place of any importance. The number of actual settlers are about 12 or 15, the half of which are Roman Catholics. It is about 200 miles from Ottawa, 50 from Des Joachims, and about the same distance from Lake Nipissangué. All the traffic from Lakes Tallou and Nipissangué pass this point down the Mattawa, and also that from Temistamangué down the Ottawa—its position with regard to Lake Ontario is about due north from Port Hope. The passage to Mattawa proved exceedingly difficult in account of the water being high and the current swift.

Often we were obliged to pull the boat against the current by the overhanging branches, so that on the average we only rowed about 17 miles a day for three days. The rafts are now passing down from the smaller streams and lakes, and they present a beautiful sight when shooting over the many rapids of this noble river. Unfortunately for me the raftsmen are almost entirely French Canadians, and unfortunately for themselves they are Roman Catholics. They have a neat church erected here with stated service by one or two priests.

On the first Sabbath of this month they proved to be far from a Sabbath-keeping people. At about 12 o'clock they marched in procession to the evergreen arches erected that morning, and fired a number of salutes whilst the bell kept tolling incessantly. Formerly they used both horns and bells as accompaniments, but this time they were wisely omitted. Such conduct would not be tolerated where the law is enforced, but here its arm is feeble and the breakers of it go unpunished. Here, and in fact over all this district the population is fluctuating. Our services held morning and evening vary in numbers from 15 to 30, and the Sabbath school about 12. Mr. Oliver, Methodist missionary, has labored here for some months, but is at present attending the Conference at Montreal, so that I succeed him in his work. The people are exceedingly kind and receive us favorably, making our visit a pleasant one amongst them. I leave next week (D. V.) for Lake Tallou, about 26 miles up the Mattawa river, having left the Ottawa for the more direct route to Lake Nipissangué. On Lake Tallou there are more Protestants residing than there are here, and what is better still there are very few Roman Catholics amongst them. The same might be said about the settlement at South River on Lake Nipissangué. My next letter will be possibly from South River, and I hope that my co-workers in the mission field—especially those employed in the more distant parts of the Dominion—will give the public such information as will make them bestir themselves to aid us in so great a work. Wishing your society all success,

I am, etc.

THOMAS T. JOHNSTON.

This letter should have appeared two weeks ago.—Ed. B. A. P.

THE "YELLOW FIN" CASE.

This case, which has been postponed from time to time, was again before the Sheriff at the Dunblane Court on Monday and following days. The case, which has created a great deal of interest in Scotland, has been preferred at the instance of the Forth Fishery Board against the Rev. George Renton, for having in his possession six smolts, or salmon fry, contrary to the salmon act of 1868. The defence set up by the defendant was that the fish in question were not young salmon. A number of scientific and other witnesses have been summoned to give evidence; among those examined on the opening days were Mr. Napier, Superintendent of the Forth Salmon Fisheries, who said he had examined the six fish in question. Yellow fins had a peculiarity about the pectoral fin, which was of a light orange colour. The tail of the pure salmon smolt is more indented. When going down to the sea, yellow fins have a silvery coat on, which was called their migratory coat. He had previously had prosecutions for killing yellow fins at Dunblane, Stirling, and Alloa. John Brisbane, Bannockburn, deposed that he had been seventeen years a salmon fisher. He had seen the six fish, and formed the opinion that they were the young of the sea-trout. John Halliday, hotel keeper, Bridge of Allan, and Donald Macdonald, Donne Castle, gave corroborative evidence. Robert Temple, water-bailiff, Tweedmouth, had been a water-bailiff on the Tweed for thirty-eight years. He had seen the smolts. The same kind of fish were known on the Tweed as salmon trout smolts, or "orange fins." In the Tweed parties had been prosecuted for a great many years for killing these fish, because they were the young of the sea-trout. George Young, Berwick, who had been a lessee of fishings on the Tweed since 1842, and was also a Fishery Commissioner on the Tweed, identified the fish known on the Forth as "Yellow fins," as what were known on the Tweed as "orange fin," which were the parent young of the sea-trout. These fish on

the Tweed had been traced in all stages from the egg to the full-grown bull trout. Those marked never came back as anything else than whittings. They never came back as yellow trout or any other fish. William Brown, Perth, said that for a long time he had studied the natural history of salmon, and had written several works on the subject. The six "yellow fins" produced belonged to the migratory species of fish. The progress of development in sea-trout was the same as salmon. They would not go to sea without the migratory dress. He had marked young sea-trout and had got them back as whittings. Dr. Gunter, of the British Museum, said he had seen and examined a great many salmon from the Scotch rivers, and he had no doubt that the specimens shown him were the young of one of the sea-going trout. There could be no doubt of that, except in one instance. The young of the sea-trout would go down to the sea with the young of the salmon, and it was possible for the young sea-trout to be larger than the young salmon. The appearance was so decided, that any person could see at once, on taking them out of the water, that they were sea-going fish. The case has not yet been decided.

THE ANTS ON THE ISLE OF MAY.

A number of gentlemen visited the Isle of May on Saturday, in consequence of the report which had been received that the island was swarming with ants. The company had the steamer *Pharos*, belonging to the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses, placed at their disposal. They proceeded to the island in the morning, and returned about eight o'clock in the evening. The day was fine and very suitable for their purpose, and they saw the industrious little creatures in immense quantities. The professional gentlemen attached to the party were Sir Robert Christison, Professor MacLagan, and Dr. Stevenson Macadam. From inquiries made, we have been able to obtain the following additional particulars regarding this most curious phenomenon. The company on Saturday landed on the east side of the island, and their attention was at once directed to the large number of small mounds which appeared studding the ground in every direction. They ranged from one to four feet in diameter, and from a few inches to more than a foot in height. They were circular, with somewhat flattened tops. On removing the crust from any of the mounds, an immense colony of ants was found. They were of two kinds—yellow and black. At this season of the year they are busy constructing galleries and increasing the size of the mounds. Consequently, they are near the surface, thus greatly facilitating observation. In summer they are always near the surface, and chiefly on the sunny side; but in winter they go down about one foot, into the lower galleries. The manner in which a new colony of ants sets about forming a mound is, that, having taken possession of a piece of ground, they commence working beneath, and throw up earth somewhat in the same way as moles do. As the colony increases in size, additional galleries are constructed, and the mounds become larger. Till about three years ago the ants were located on the west side of the island only, but now they have spread themselves pretty well over the whole surface. The damage done appears to consist chiefly in the destruction of the herbage, partly due to the ants feeding upon the vegetable matter, and partly to their workings below, leading to an undue amount of surface drainage, which in summer leaves the ground so dry that the vegetation is scorched by the heat of the sun. The cows, sheep, and human beings on the island do not seem to have suffered any inconvenience further than the destruction of the herbage implies, excepting once or twice during the months of August and September, when the ants take wing in large numbers and fly about, forming a kind of thin cloud, and sometimes alighting on the lanterns of the lighthouse in such large numbers as to necessitate the keepers removing them in handfuls. We believe this case is quite an exceptional one. The ants have been prolific to an extent never known before, probably in consequence of the mildness of the winter on the island. Of course there is many substances that would destroy them. We should imagine that the attention of professional gentlemen will be turned to the practical consideration, how the insects can be effectively removed at a moderate cost and without destroying the vegetation.—*Edinburgh*