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FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 1874.

Parties to whom accounts are forwarded in this issue, will very much oblige by remitting WITHOUT DELAY. The subscription is a small matter to individual subscribers, but these small amounts aggregated form a large and important item to the publisher.

TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

The great occurrence of the past week has been the expulsion of Riel from the House of Commons. The vote was a very decided one, and as both the leader of the Liberals and the Conservatives voted for this expulsion, we can scarcely see how the

The controversy between the Evangelicals and Ritualists in the Church of England, Diocese of Toronto, goes on with unabated vigour. It is not pleasant to see members of the same Christian Church using such language toward each other as some are doing. The Romanizing tendencies of not a few of the clergy is beyond all doubt, while the way in which they lose their tempers and scold, is far from edifying.

LEGALITY OF MARRIAGE

In answer to a correspondent in reference to the legality of marriage, we believe that a minister living in the States cannot marry legally in Ontario, unless he have associated with him one who does belong to the Province, and can formally and legally register the marriage.

NOTES FROM THE MARITIME PROVINCES.

We call particular attention to the letter of a correspondent in the Maritime Provinces. It will repay perusal. We hope the writer will do us the pleasure and our readers the profit of letting us hear from him again at no distant day.

LIBERALISM AND THE CHURCH OF ROME.

There is not much more to be said on the Riel subject. A correspondent with a good deal of foolish excitement protests against our hinting that that question is far more a religious than a political one, and that but for the interests of the Church of Rome not a single word would have been said in opposition to Riel being put through the ordinary course like any other criminal. It is the fact, however, all the same, there is not a man who has any accurate knowledge of the conditions of the North-West, who does not know that but for the priests Riel could not have stood for a single day. Politicians of all parties, whether in Parliament, or out of Parliament, newspaper writers of the dullest Conservative learnings as well as of the most rabid clear Gritsism, acknowledge all this privately, but for political reasons they dare not avoid it. The Roman Catholic vote has to be cultivated, and because of that not a whisper is even to be heard about the wire pulling of Archbishop Taché, or the unconcealed ferocity of Father Richot. Sir John McDonald as well as Alexander MacKenzie, has declared that Riel is a murderer. Yet with what bated breath, and whispered humbleness does the one as well as the other speak on the subject. The French Canadians have taken it up as a question of race and religion, and why? Simply because their priests have told them so, and the question has therefore become no longer one of honesty and straightforward justice, but of how its settlement will effect the political chess-board at Ottawa. We can assure our correspondents that we have no controversy with Mr. W. R. Scott, or with Mr. C. F. Fraser as politicians, but it is not exclusively as politicians that these gentlemen stand before the country. The latter with more frankness and less discretion than might have been expected has avowed that he is where he is as the representative of a minority, and as a defender of its rights, while it would be too absurd to say that the former has ever been, or ever could be of any political importance whatever, but for his ecclesiastical connection, and his supposed great influence as a fanatical adherent of the Church of Rome.

The Rev. Robert Moodie was presented on Wednesday, the 16th inst., by the congregations of Stayner and Sunnidale with a handsome suite of drawing-room furniture. This is an expression of kindness the less to be looked for, as the members and friends have responded liberally to demands for the building of a manse. Two and a half acres of ground have been procured for a building site within the village, and when completed, will be commodious and tasteful. The plans were prepared by Mr. William Irving, Architect, Toronto.

CLERGY RESERVES.

While we have very great respect for "A Canadian Presbyterian," we must altogether put in a caveat against the strong things said by our friend in favour of the original grant of the Clergy Reserves, and in condemnation of their secularization. We hold most strongly that that grant, however well intended, was one of the most short sighted and injurious with which Canada was ever afflicted; that it retarded the settlement of the country, checked the religious activities of the people, introduced all the heart burnings and jealousies of a dominant Church, greatly contributed to the rebellion of '37, and instead of being Canada's salvation, would, if persisted in, have been her ruin. Instead of being a sacrilegious proceeding, we hold most strongly that the secularization of the Reserves was simply an act of the merest justice and of sound policy. "A Canadian Presbyterian" surely does not dream that these Reserves could have been maintained in perpetuity. If so, he has less knowledge of the state of things before '54, and since then we have been inclined to give him credit for. We do not at all touch upon the question of the honesty of the commuting ministers in giving their incomes as averaging £150. To their own masters they stand or fall. But the idea of any one at this time of day mourning over the secularization of the Canadian Clergy Reserves as a deed of sacrilege, is exceedingly refreshing. The next thing will be regrets over the upbreak of the Family Compact and the introduction of responsible Government.

Ministers and Churches.

A few days ago Messrs. Wm. Smith and Alexander Retchon, on behalf of the congregation of the Canada Presbyterian Church of Brooklin, Ont., waited upon Mr. John Burns, leader of the choir, and presented him with a purse containing fifty dollars, as a slight recognition of his very genial and excellent services, in conducting the psalmody of the Church.

The Presbyterian Church of Amherstburg held its annual meeting on the 6th instant. The Treasurer's report read to the meeting showed the sum of \$323.85 had been paid for strictly congregational purposes, and for the Scholastic of the Church the sum of \$48 75. Making a total payment of \$361.60 by a congregation of 21 members. This is at the rate of \$17.22 per member.

The annual meeting of the Philosophical and Literary Society of the Presbyterian College, Montreal, took place on Friday evening, 18th March. The following officers were elected for the ensuing year: President, Mr. W. J. Doy, D.D., re-elected; 1st Vice-President, Mr. D. McFar; 2nd Vice-President, Mr. W. M. MacKibbin; Recording Secretary, Mr. C. E. Amaron; Corresponding Secretary, M. H. Scott; Treasurer, Mr. John Allan. Committee—Messrs. J. R. MacLeod, John Matheson, James Anderson, M. Boudreau, and Cruchet.

The many friends of Rev. Mr. James will rejoice to learn his marked success in Albany as shown by the following extract from the Journal of that city: "Trinity Street Presbyterian Church. At the communion service yesterday morning, forty-nine persons were admitted to membership forty-three of whom were by profession, twenty of these receiving baptism at the hands of the pastor, Rev. John James. This is the largest number ever received at one time, during the history of the church, which was organized in 1862, with forty-two members. The additions since April 1, 1873, have been 109, of which number seventy-seven were by profession. The present active membership of the church is 505."

BEECHER AND INDEPENDENCY.

The celebrated "Beecher case" which has just been issued, presents to our views some aspects of practical congregationalism not to be met with every day, while the Congregationalists, as you are aware, boast that they have no distinctive creed, yet they have no excepted declaration to that effect, that an essential element of their doctrine is "that any community of christians have a right to the regulation of its own ecclesiastical discipline and form of worship independent of any community; but Mr. Beecher goes much farther and holds, that as far as he is concerned he is simply engaged by a number of persons to preach for them, that individuals may leave that number, of their own accord, when so inclined—that he has nothing to do with their character—and that, I suppose they have as little to do with his, acting on this principal originated the "case" which was this, some two years ago Theodore Tilton, a somewhat noted member of Mr. Beecher's Church had been guilty of circulating scandalous derogatory to him and his Church, and who thereupon ceased to attend upon the Church services, his name was struck from the roll, without any investigation into

the case, and without his being subject to discipline for the offence. Now while his brethren of the same denomination not only repudiate all such ideas of discipline, and many if not most of them regard him as unjustly, not unground on such doctrine as ever, but punishment—total deprivation—excommunication—regenerations and liberal inspiration, two of the neighbouring Churches, renounced with Mr. Beecher's Church for violating the disciplinary rules of the denomination in connection with Mr. Tilton, to this in the spirit of "independence" Mr. Beecher and his Church replied that they did not consider themselves subject to the interference of others on such matters. The other two Churches then invited representatives from Mr. Beecher's Church to a conference, but the invitation was declined. These two Churches then called a general council to consider the matter, to this call about 140 delegates responded, comprising the leading theologians, college professors, clergymen and editors belonging to the denomination. When this council met Mr. Beecher was invited to appear before it, but this invitation he also declined; Thus Mr. Beecher independently snapped his fingers in the face of this mighty ecclesiastical convocation, in some respect the most imposing ever held by the denomination in that country, and they acting independently of him come to the curiously cautious and wondrously harmless conclusion, which in substance is this—Approve of what we ourselves have done, but as there is reason to believe that he will never do the like again, we will say no more about it. Then ex-ent omnes. Glenmorris.

The Home Mission Fund.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN. DEAR SIR,—As Mr. McFavish has more than once taken occasion to refer to the Commutation Fund, and to bring in connexion therewith a charge of dishonesty against the commuting ministers, I desire to give a distinct statement of the origin and history of this Fund, with which many of your readers may be very imperfectly acquainted.

In the early days of Canada, when it was under French rule, it was the boast of its French Colonists that they took far more pains to secure the conversion and salvation of the Indian aborigines, than did the English and Dutch settlers of New England, who, as a modern historian tells us, were much more occupied with the profits they could make out of the peltry trade than with the eternal welfare of the Indians. Certainly, whatever we may think of the means adopted to convert these poor ignorant Indians, the French were at least most zealous propagandists; and the records of the Jesuit Missions in Canada contain most heroic instances of Christian self-devotion, and sacrifice, of suffering and martyrdom. The French Government, moreover, was exceedingly liberal in providing endowments and setting aside lands for the support of "the Holy Church." When, in 1783, the cessation of Canada to Great Britain took place, it was distinctly stipulated that these valuable endowments should remain untouched, giving the Catholics in Lower Canada an immense advantage as regarded to the liberal maintenance of religious privileges.

It was thought desirable, taking this circumstance into consideration, that Protestantism in Canada should be placed in as favourable a position as Roman Catholicism, as to pecuniary resources, which, as we all know, are of considerable use to a Church in a new country, where the people must generally for a long time be too poor to give an adequate support to a Gospel ministry. For this reason, it was provided, by an Imperial act, that one seventh part of all the Crown lands in Canada should be reserved for the benefit of a "Protestant Clergy." It was a noble thought, and a noble provision, probably suggested by the divinely appointed provision for the Levites in Canada. Could it have been rightly and harmoniously used for the extension of gospel privileges in Canada, there might have been a very different state of things to-day in many of the remote townships, which, but for the exertions of Methodist pioneers, would have been sunk in almost heathen darkness and utter earnestness, and even as it is their condition is sad enough.

But the divisions of the Protestant Church, among other evils in which they have been fruitful, frustrated the good which this noble provision might have accomplished. In the first place, the representatives of the Church of England in Canada, claimed the monopoly of the provision, on the ground that theirs was the established Church of England. The Presbyterians of Canada, all of whom at that time, of course belonged to the Established Church of Scotland directly, for there was no Canadian Synod till eleven years later, were naturally indignant at these exclusive and unjustifiable pretensions, and with Scottish staunchness, stood out manfully for their rights as a portion of the Scottish Establishment. Other denominations as naturally urged their claims, for the term "Protestant Clergy" included them all. Eventually this point too, was gained so that a share of the Fund was offered to other denominations and accepted by some. It was hoped that the matter would have rested here. The leaders of the disruption in Canada were no more opposed in principle to the endowment than were Dr. Chalmers and his friends, who were, as is well-known, strongly opposed to "voluntarism." Dr. Burns is stated in the memoir by his son, to have visited the Governor in order to ascertain whether, in case of the Canadian Church seceding from her connexion with the Church of Scotland, she would still retain her shares of the Clergy Reserves, and a resolution of Dr. Baynes

proposed to retain the words "in connexion with" simply in order to see this endowment. But times changed. The Free Church, as a body, eventually refused to receive Government aid, and then commenced a period of agitation in order to deprive the other bodies, who had no concessions subject to receiving it, of the provision which had been so secretly set apart for them. The agitators seemed to consider it a privilege, of which they desired to deprive their brethren, for they were wont to declare that they "desired a fair field and no favour." Yielding to the public pressure brought to bear upon them by the representations of the agitators, the Canadian Government at last applied to the British Parliament for power to deal with the reserves, which was reluctantly granted, and this magnificent provision set apart for the maintenance of Gospel privileges in a new poor country, was secularised, i.e., given to municipalities to build roads and bridges. Those who did not view the matter as the agitators had done, may be pardoned for regarding the "secularisation" as almost a sacrilege!

But the Imperial Parliament, in granting the permission desired, expressly stipulated, that all vested rights of individuals should be respected. In accordance with this stipulation, the Canadian Statute of 1874 enacted that commutation should take place with individual ministers, "at the rate of 8 per cent per annum upon the probable life of each individual, at the actual value of the said allowance received at the time of commutation." This "actual value" was "at the time of commutation £550 per annum. This was what the amount assigned to the Church by Government permitted each minister to receive, otherwise they could not have received it, and Government knew this quite well, or it would not have received this as the "actual value" of the said allowance.

But, two years before, ministers were receiving £112 per annum, and it is this circumstance of which Mr. McFavish takes advantage to give colour to his charge of "dishonesty," which he is apparently so anxious to maintain that he mutilates and alters the meaning of a quoted sentence of Mr. Macdonnell's by cutting it short in the middle. The reason why ministers had previously been receiving a smaller annual allowance was this. For a long time, owing to the irregularities of payments made by the Government, and to their delay to give the Commissioners a clear statement of the yearly amount at their command, the definite amount of the just annual allowance to ministers was not ascertained. Even after it had been ascertained to be £150 per annum, the ministers were content for a time, for reasons connected with the general good of the Church, to take a smaller allowance than was rightfully theirs. Part of the money thus saved was applied to the building of manses, throughout the country, a most desirable object. But when the ministers at last saw fit to receive,—and the Commissions assigned to them,—the full amount of annual allowance which had been their right all days there was no more "dishonesty" in their doing so, than in a man's withdrawing a subscription which he may have given for some years to a public fund. And when this amount was not only the "actual value" received at the commutation, but also, as Government knew the actual value of each minister's share of the fund, how could there be any dishonesty in making this amount the basis of Commutation? Would there have been any "dishonesty" in going back to the smaller amount received formerly and giving in that amount as the "actual value of the allowance received at the time of commutation? If the formerly received value had been larger instead of smaller, I do not think that Mr. McFavish could have discovered any "dishonesty" in the transaction. But the morality of it would have been the same in either case.

The conduct of the ministers was unselfish and magnanimous throughout, both before and after commutation, always placing the interest of the Church before their own. By the commutation, the sum of £127,448 in all, was placed at the credit of sixty-eight ministers. This money these ministers might have pocketed for their own use, it being legally theirs. But, instead of doing this, they agreed to invest it in a common Fund for the benefit of the Church in all time to come. "They did more than this." I quote from Mr. Crofts' Report: "Between the passing of the Imperial Act of 1853, and the Canadian Act of 1854, there had been added to the Roll of Synod eleven ministers; these were refused commutation by the Government, and it is evident that had the commuting ministers insisted on receiving each £150 annually from the Fund, these eleven could receive nothing from it. The Synod regarded their claim as valid for commutation, but as the Government did not, its members resolved to surrender £37 10s. per annum, accepting £122 10s. as their annual allowance, in order that the others might participate in the Fund to the extent of, at least, £100 per annum."

All this generous and unselfish conduct is, however, ignored by Mr. McFavish, who only takes advantage of a circumstance, the cause of which was, in itself, honourable to these ministers, to fix upon them the stigma of "dishonesty." Is this an example of the charity which, "hopeth all things, and believeth all things," or which is set in the fore-front of all Christian graces? This sum of £127,448, given to the Church by the commuting ministers, whose private property it was by the very terms of commutation, nucleus of the "Home Mission Fund" of our branch of the Church. Increased from time to time by the gifts of willing contributors, it has been, and still is, a great boon to that Church, in settling ministers over poor congregations, as well as to the ministers themselves whose often sadly insufficient incomes have been so far augmented by it as greatly to lessen the privations they must otherwise have endured. In some places ministers could hardly have remained, consistently with their duty to their families, but for the aid which this Fund has afforded them.

Now this Fund, the nucleus of which was a sacred trust and bequest from the most faithful ministers of our Church, many of whom have since gone to the service of