

British American Presbyterian,

102 BAY STREET, TORONTO.

FOR TERMS, SEE FIRST PAGE.

C. BECKETT ROBINSON

Editor and Proprietor.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Letters and articles intended for the next issue should be in the hands of the Editor not later than Tuesday morning.

All communications must be accompanied by the writer's name, otherwise they will not be inserted.

Articles not accepted will be returned, if, at the time they are sent, a request is made to that effect, and sufficient postage stamps are enclosed. Manuscripts not so accompanied will not be preserved, and subsequent requests for their return cannot be complied with.

OUR GENERAL AGENTS.

MR. WM. SMITH, General Advertising and Subscription Agent will visit places East of Toronto in the course of this and following weeks.

MR. CHARLES NICOL, General Agent for the PRESBYTERIAN, is now in Western Ontario pushing the interests of this journal. We commend him to the best offices of ministers and people. Any assistance rendered him in his work will be taken by us as a personal kindness.

British American Presbyterian.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 31, 1877.

On Saturday, Aug. 11th, among the passengers which sailed from New York by the City of Berlin were the Rev. G. R. Ferguson, his wife and five children, from Torrington, and ten young ladies from various parts of New England, who have gone as teachers to the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa.

Two liquor bills were lately voted on in the English House of Commons. One provided for the closing of public houses in Ireland at 7 o'clock Saturday evenings; the other transferred the licensing power from the magistrates to boards elected by the rate-payers—a kind of "local option" principle. Both bills were lost.

Our pastors are dropping one by one into their pulpits. Some of them have been favoured in a remarkable degree by crossing the ocean, and taking part in the Edinburgh Council. Others have contented themselves with quiet resting places nearer home. We trust they are all entering upon a year of service in which their labours will be marvellously blessed in winning souls to Christ, and edifying the members of His body.

News from the seat of war are extremely meagre. The Turks are evidently well officered and they are drawing the attention of the world by their war tactics. Reports from Asia are unfavourable to the Russian Arms. The struggle will soon be over for the present season. The advent of winter will be welcomed by the opposing forces. Let us hope that something will transpire that may lead to the settlement of those grave matters which are causing the present fearful strife.

The London Advertiser, referring to the recent Dunkin campaign in this city says: "The agitation in Toronto has done good already, and is but a prelude to a campaign on a larger scale for a general prohibitory liquor law for the Province, if not for the Dominion. It is as well that those who have invested, or propose to invest, in the manufacture or sale of liquor should look the situation straight in the face. Prohibition in Ontario within a few years we regard as a certainty."

It is very interesting to watch the proceedings of the Sabbath School Parliament convened on the Thousand Isle park. We observe that several of our Toronto celebrities are spending their holidays at this great gathering. Distinguished clergymen and eminent lecturers are there, giving the enthusiastic audiences the benefit of their valuable instructions. Some of the prelections have been of rather an abstruse nature, but generally speaking the lectures are simple and deeply interesting, and such as to benefit those who are earnest and faithful teachers of God's Word. Rev. Joseph Cook has taken a prominent part in addressing these meetings. This parliament is now a recognized institution. It answers the important purpose of combining recreation with religious instruction.

DURING the past fortnight the weather has been most charming. Warm days are given to ripen the fruits and bring the root crops to maturity. The most delicious nights intervene with their refreshing breezes, and with the glorious panorama in the Heavens above which they open to view. So charming are the nights at present that it is not uncommon to see whole families with their friends sitting on their stoops and looking upwards with rapt and reverent gaze. Mars is an object of curiosity and attention. It is remarkably brilliant, and the recent discovery that this planet has another moon hitherto unobserved gives a fresh interest as we admire this sparkling gem of the skies. Astronomers are telling us that Mars is peopled by beings of superior intelligence. It is likely that it is so, and if it is what interesting problems arise to the mind as in these beautiful nights we lift up our eyes to the starry firmament.

THE BLESSING OF THE LORD.

This is an expression that occurs very frequently in Scripture. It is found in some form or other in nearly every book. In Genesis we read of the Lord blessing His servants and blessing His people. When Jacob wrestles with the mysterious visitant and takes Heaven by violence, we learn that the object of his importunity and his earnest desire is the blessing of the Lord. This blessing is esteemed by the patriarchs and all the Old Testament saints as the greatest good they can possibly receive. In the Book of Numbers we have the Divine direction given to Moses as to the manner in which the children of Israel would be blessed. Their leader was to say to them, "The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace." David, in a number of places, makes mention of the blessing of Jehovah. "Thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous." "The Lord will bless His people with peace." Solomon utters the significant sentence, "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich and addeth no sorrow with it." Ezekiel speaks of "showers of blessing." Malachi prays that God would open heaven, and pour upon the people a blessing. The Apostle Paul speaks of being blessed with all spiritual blessing in Christ.

These expressions are most instructive. They tell us to distinguish between the blessing of the Lord and temporal prosperity. Many regard the latter as of the same meaning with God's blessing. But by studying the Scripture we see they are not to be viewed in the same light. How many there are who are in the enjoyment of physical health, and yet are not thinking about the Lord's blessing. How many there are who are increased with goods and think they have need of nothing else, who are yet far from being happy in their souls. How many who succeed in gaining all that this earth can afford—its vegetable and mineral produce, its honors and rewards, power, rank and influence, who cannot be regarded as the children of God. There have been millionaires who cared not for God's honor, successful merchants who were thinking only of self, literary men who were leading the lives of the indifferent, artists, lawyers, physicians, eye, even ministers, who have thought only of the fame and reputation to be gained from their works. In seeking earthly things they may yet be forgetting the one thing needful. With all their successes and triumphs, their lives may yet be accounted failures.

The blessing of the Lord is something beyond and above what we call temporal or earthly blessings. What was it that Jacob so earnestly sought when he asked God to bless him? Not flocks, for he was sufficiently increased with these; not riches, for he was esteemed at this very time to be a man of wealth; not rank, for he was as a prince and ruler amongst his own followers. We believe he sought the favor of God—that he required the directions of the Divine wisdom—that he desiderated the strengthening grace of his Heavenly Father. In consequence of the triumphant success of that prayer, he was ever afterwards a different man from what he was before. He had obtained the blessing of Isaac by subterfuge. He had now learned it was the blessing of God he most required. When a son is leaving the home where he has been nurtured and brought up—where he has learned of the Saviour and been taught to value the Bible, what is it he asks when he implores his father's or mother's blessing? It is not goods, for there may be little or nothing of these for him to receive. It is not letters of commendation to the wealthy and influential, for his father or mother may not have such amongst their acquaintance. It is their prayers he desires. It is their approval he wants. It is the precious influence of their goodly example he wishes to carry with him. In the same way, the blessing of the Lord is something which, though not palpable, is yet real; which, though it cannot be touched and handled, is yet an actual and most blessed possession. It is a spiritual communication. It is something which will give light to the eye, and joy to the countenance, and buoyancy to the whole man. It is that which will make him brave when called to meet trials and afflictions. It is that which will make him strong in the midst of temptations. Joseph-like, he will be bright and happy whether in a prison or on a throne. Like Paul and Silas, it will make him sing when his feet are in the stocks. Oh! how precious, then, is this secret influence, this communication of a special grace, this glorious reservoir of strength and comfort.

But while the blessing of the Lord is not health of body, or earthly prosperity, or success in one's business or profession, it is that which leads to these and other results. "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow with it." With God's blessing we learn habits of industry, patience, zeal, economy, honesty, of skilful working, which crown our lives with the good things of this world. Occasionally there may be starving, suffering, poverty, in the lot of those whose steps are ordered

by the Lord. Times of famine, of pestilence, of war, of deluges of fire, may involve all alike—whether good or bad, just or unjust—in great loss. But he who has the blessing of God is rich with a corn of bread, a cup of cold water, or with a single garment. He does not repine or mourn. He has learned to say the will of my Father be done. But allowing for suffering and loss on the part of God's children, how few, indeed, there are who in the course of a long lifetime really suffer. How many, on the contrary, there are who are rich, who are continually adding to their possessions, and who, though they give lavishly to missionary and benevolent enterprises, are never the poorer, but seem to be attended with all the greater success. We maintain that the solidly comfortable, those who rise thoroughly above want, those who are permanently prosperous, are far more frequently the children of God, than the men of this world who make money and property the chief end of their existence—their grand aim in life. The farm that is cared for by the industrious Christian, will be found through a long course of years to be more productive than, generally speaking, that which is owned by a godless man. The business which is sound to the core, and which increases from year to year through thrift and integrity, will, for the most part be found in the hands of him who has the fear of the Lord before his eyes. Will not the home which has God's blessing upon it be the happiest in the long run? Will not the Church that is most earnest about the blessing of the Lord, be generally the most free of debt and other incongruous loads? And what of bodily health? There is indeed an intimate connection between the blessing of the Lord, and vigor of health, or soundness of mind. They are, therefore, wise who are ever most earnestly praying for the blessing of the Lord resting upon their own hearts and lives.

Thanks be to God that we can pray for His blessing to be poured out upon others, upon our dear friends and intimate companions, upon the inmates of our homes, upon our associates in business, upon our fellow-members in the Church, upon the Sabbath School, upon every good and noble cause. What a special reason of thanksgiving that we can entreat with God on behalf of others. This will be seen to be the advantage of having the blessing of the Lord in our life time. Having tasted and seen that God is good and gracious, we can pray that He may be seen and felt to be so by those who are near and dear to us. But what a great benefit when we come to die! In a new sense we shall feel that the blessing of the Lord maketh rich and addeth no sorrow with it. We must leave earthly wealth behind, but with the blessing of the Lord, we can go forward with calm confidence into the dark valley of the shadow of death, fearing no evil, but comforted with the assurance that we are going to a Kingdom where we shall possess infinite treasures of wisdom and goodness. Oh! let it be the prayer of all our readers for blessing and honor and strength from above.

PRESBYTERIANISM IN THE UNITED STATES.

THE REPORTS OF DR. PRIME AND REV. DR. MATHUEWS TO THE GENERAL PRESBYTERIAN COUNCIL, EDINBURGH.

Dr. Prime, editor of our contemporary, the New York Observer, read an elaborate, and very excellent paper on American Presbyterianism before the recent General Presbyterian Council, in Edinburgh. The paper is to be inserted, we believe, in the forth-coming volume containing a full report of the proceedings of the Council, and it well deserves a place there.

As Publishers of the "PRESBYTERIAN YEAR-BOOK for the Dominion of Canada" we cannot but feel pleased that Dr. Prime, who has his residence in the very centre of the group of Churches on which he reports, should do us the honor of coming to Canada for some portions of the statistical information in regard to the churches of his own country which he presented to the Council in such a lucid and accurate fashion.

In one point we regret that Dr. Prime followed the Canadian Year Book somewhat too closely. It so happens that the "Associate Reformed Synod of the South" meets not till September each year. The Minutes are not published till about the time our Year Book is going through the press, sometimes in November, so that the statistics of last year (1876) did not appear in the Year Book of 1877, but only the statistics of 1875. In the case of the Year Book there was no help for this; but surely Dr. Prime who must have written his reports after the Minutes were published in November last year, might have improved on the Year Book by quoting the Statistics of the Associate Reformed Church for 1876, as their Minutes could be had any time after November of that year. If this trouble had been taken the statistics of the Associate Reformed Church would, then, be exhibited for 1876 like all the other churches mentioned in the report.

We cannot understand how Dr. Prime fell into the mistake of giving the statistics of the Reformed Church (German) for the year 1863. On page 115 of the Year Book the statistics of that Church taken from the minutes of 1875, are given in five columns, beginning with 1868 and ending with 1875, for it is only triennially the General Synod of this Church meets. Instead of quoting, therefore, the last column of the five, which reports 1876, Dr. Prime quoted the first column, which reports 1863 with this difference, that the number of congregations should be reported as 1342 and not 1099 as Dr. Prime reported to the Council, the number of ministers 656 and not 447, the number of communicants 120,868 and not 87,871. The contributions of 1875 are, however, reported at \$398,117 quite correctly; but it is a strange oversight to give the membership of a church for 1863 and its contributors for 1875, in which time there was an increase of 40,000 in that membership.

We suppose it is not considered necessary in quoting statistics to be very particular in acknowledging the labours of those who do the mechanical, but still very toilsome work, of compiling the statistics from documents open to all. It is, we presume, for this reason or from oversight that Dr. Prime acknowledges no obligation to any source for his figures.

The Rev. G. D. Mathews, of New York, also furnishes an admirable report on American Presbyterianism to Dr. Blaikie, which is inserted in the sketch of the history, statistics, and work of the Presbyterian Churches throughout the world, compiled by desire of the committee of the General Presbyterian Council, and submitted, to the Council at its meeting at Edinburgh. We cannot be sure that Mr. Mathews has ever seen or heard of the existence of the Canadian Year Book; but if he quotes at all, it is from the issue of the year 1876. Our issue for 1877 gave, from the pen of Dr. William Roberts (the Moderator in 1876) a short sketch of this energetic and interesting Church, and a full statistical table of the Church's work and position for the year 1876. If Mr. Mathews had had that table before him when he penned his report he would not have returned the number of ministers in the Welsh Church as seventy-six when the number is 119, nor would he say that the number of communicants is 8696 when the number is 9189, nor that the number of children in the Sabbath Schools was 8696 when it is 10,785. The figures Mr. Mathews embodies in his report as the figures for 1876 are the figures that appear in the Canadian Year Book a year ago and constitute the report sent to our Editor by the Clerk of the Welsh Synod as the statistics for the year 1875.

It was surely an act of great remissness to embody in such an important document as is this report, (officially laid on the table of the General Council by its own Committee,) statistics imperfect and out of date, when perfect and recent statistics could be had for little trouble. But, if it be said in behalf of Mr. Mathews that he may not have been aware of the full and correct information contained in the Year Book on the subject of the Welsh Church through the kindness of Dr. Roberts, then we reply that he should have applied to the officials of the Welsh Church for that information, who would only be too glad to have their Church correctly reported before the Council.

We hope these mistakes will be corrected before the volume containing the proceedings of Council, now going through the press, is published. It is promised in the concluding paragraph of the report on American Presbyterianism that in the forth-coming volume the statistics for 1877 will be substituted for those of 1876. In that event, these blemishes will, we trust entirely disappear from a volume that will have a world wide circulation.

On the 19th inst. Rev. Mr. Beattie, of Campbellford, visited L'Amable, one of the fields in North Hastings, under the charge of the Students' Missionary Society of Montreal Presbyterian College, for the purpose of dispensing the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Thirty-nine communicants partook of the latter, seven joining on this occasion, three by profession and four by certificate. Faithful, loving sermons were preached morning and evening to large congregations, appreciating the speaker's earnest efforts. On the Wednesday previous, a very successful picnic was held under the auspices of the Sabbath school and Bible class of this station. The attendance was large, about 250 persons being on the grounds. Notwithstanding the cry of "hard times" which has prevailed in this region for some time, the table groaned beneath its load. A spread was there which would do credit to any of our towns in their most prosperous times. Mental refreshment was also provided, in the form of beautiful hymns and anthems rendered by the choir and others. Addresses were delivered by Messrs. Jno. Wilson and J. R. Tait, of L'Amable; Findlay, B.A., and Jamieson, of Knox College; Munro, B.A., and Donald, of Montreal Presbyterian College. People of different denominations, together with students of two colleges, and representing the missionary societies of these two, all joined together in spending a happy time.

Ministers and Churches.

We urgently solicit from Presbyterian Clerks and our readers generally, items for this department of our paper, so as to make it a general epitome of all local church news.

The new Presbyterian Church at Exeter is roofed in.

The Rev. Colin Fletcher, M.A., has declined the call to East Nisour.

The Rev. David Taylor, late of Spencerville, Ont., was on Tuesday last unanimously called by the Bass River congregation, N.B., to become their pastor.

The Lord's Supper was dispensed by the Rev. D. Wishart both in St. Paul's and in St. Columba's Churches on Sabbath the 29th July. "Revive thy work O Lord."

On Friday evening of last week Mr. Jas. Smith delivered his lecture on "Hindooism" in the Presbyterian Church, London East, before an appreciative audience. Mr. Warren Rock, Q.C. occupied the chair.

The Presbyterian Church of Belgrave have extended a call to the Rev. A. Beamer. The Rev. Mr. Beamer has but lately been received into the Presbytery, he having been formerly connected with the Episcopal Methodist Church.

On the 15th August the Rev. D. Wishart set out to dispense the Lord's Supper at Carlow on Sabbath the 19th, spending eight days on the way, travelling 150 miles, and preaching at the Jordan, Thanes, L'Amable Mayo, and Carlow, eight times in all. The visit was productive of much good in the several mission fields.

On Thursday evening, 28rd inst., the choir of Knox Church, Toronto, gave a complimentary concert to Mr. D. A. MacRae, their conductor, who is about to leave the city and take up his residence in Galt. A large and appreciative audience assembled in the lecture room. The choir is in excellent training, and executed the various pieces in a superior manner, while the solo singing of Professor Jones, Mrs. Morris, and several amateurs, added greatly to the enjoyment of the evening.

PROFESSOR MURRAY, of Montreal, preached in the Abbey Church, Paisley, on Sabbath, the 5th ult., to a large congregation. His discourse on the "Temptation of Christ" was a fine exposition of Gospel truth, and was listened to with much attention and interest. A correspondent in the Paisley Daily Express has since suggested that as there is a chance of a vacancy in the Abbey, that congregation might do worse than try and get the Professor, if he will come. The writer urges that he is a townsman, and that independently of his great gifts, his heart will naturally be warm to his native place, and the home of his father.

The Clinton New Era of the 26th of July contains lengthened notice of presentations to the Rev. F. McCuaig on his leaving that town to go to Kingston. First the Bible Class which he had taught for seven years presented him with an address and a purse of \$82. The address was a very complimentary one. Then the members of the Presbyterian Church of Brucefield, near Clinton, presented him with an address and twenty-one volumes of Lange's Commentary on the Bible, valued at \$105, as an expression of appreciation of Mr. McCuaig's services as Moderator of the Session of that Church. On the following Monday evening, the night before Mr. McCuaig left Clinton, a farewell meeting was held, at which he was presented with a purse of \$181, accompanied by an address. These things show how well Mr. McCuaig was appreciated by his people in the west, and we have no doubt he will be equally popular in Kingston.

"Semper Eadem."

Guibord, of Montreal, Canada, died under the ban of the Roman Church, and had to be buried in his own lot by the strong arm of the British Empire. Priests and people would have torn the polluting body from the "holy ground," and tossed it to the dogs, if they had dared to take their own way. "Of course," some of us thought "such a monstrous thing could never have occurred in the United States!" That is it. We will never give Rome credit for sincerity in her boast, "Always and everywhere the same." A Guibord case has just turned up at Vinland, New Jersey. The cadaver of Joseph Maggioli was so unfortunate (or shall we say fortunate?) as to get buried in consecrated ground without absolution before death, whereupon his widow's good pastor, Father Vivet, threatened to dig up the dead body unless the friends would save him that trouble. But the citizens of Vinland made rather a vigorous objection, and Father Vivet discreetly referred the matter to his bishop. Rome's semper eadem does have its inconveniences at times! Would it be amiss to suggest to our anxious Roman Catholic fellow-citizens that if they would hear the Master's Word, and follow Him in all loving, humble, gentle, and comforting offices to the living, and let alone these superstitions about the sepulchres of dead men, they would save their credit and their comfort at once? "Let the dead bury their dead." "Vivet"—he shall live—is a name that early Christians wrote above the graves of their dead in the Catacombs of Rome. But American Christians want no such "Vivet" as this Vinland priest guarding the gates of their sepulchres, and threatening their last sleep with an ignominious resurrection. Rome must modify this rule or bury it.—Philadelphia Presbyterian.