

## British American Presbyterian.

PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY AT  
TORONTO, CANADA.

TERMS: \$2 a year, in advance.

Carriage, by mail, 30 cents per year, payable at the  
office of delivery.Active Canvasers and Local Agents wanted, to  
whom liberal commissions will be paid.

Rates of Advertising made known on application.

Cheques and Post Office Orders should be drawn  
in favour of the Publisher.

Address

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON,

Publisher and Proprietor.

TORONTO, P. O. Box 650.

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should be in the hands of the Editor not later  
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Missions and Presbyterian news suitable for our  
columns.

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Space.	3 Mo's.	6 Mo's.	1 Year.
One column.....	\$50 00	\$90 00	\$160 00
Half column.....	30 00	50 00	90 00
Quarter column.....	15 00	25 00	45 00
One-sixteenth column.....	10 00	16 00	30 00
One-eighth.....	20 00	35 00	65 00
One-thirtieth column.....	7 50	12 00	20 00
12 lines or 1 inch.....	5 00	10 00	18 00
6 to 8 lines.....	4 00	7 50	14 00
4 to 6 lines.....	3 50	6 00	10 00
4 lines and under.....	3 00	4 00	6 00

No double columns; cuts 25 percent extra; spe-  
cial in reading matter 15 cents per line each inser-  
tion.

## British American Presbyterian.

TORONTO, FRIDAY, MAY 3, 1872.

## TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

The Canadian Parliament did not do much during the earlier part of the week. Whoever may be at fault, it is still unquestionable that for a week or two after the opening of each Session of our Legislatures very little real work is done. The measures to be proposed are not ready, and the members consequently have a very easy time of it at first, while afterwards they scarcely know how to do justice to each measure that presses for consideration; and the result, too often, is hasty and imperfect legislation, with the regular slaughter of innocents towards the close of the Session.

The Ministerial measure about the Pacific Railway was brought forward toward the end of the week, and passed through a preliminary discussion. It proposes to grant an enormous subsidy to the Company who shall construct and work the line, and unless great care is taken in framing the Act we fear that the way will be left open for a very large amount of jobbery and corruption in connection with this trans-continental road; which, however, all acknowledge to be a necessity, if our Canadian Confederation is to be a reality and not a mere thing on paper.

It would be exceedingly desirable in the interests of morality and decency that the electoral law adopted in Ontario, both with reference to the mode of holding elections and trying controverted returns, should be adopted by the Dominion Parliament for the whole country. Both in England and in this Province the change has wrought excellently, and we can see no reason why, either political party should have the slightest objection to its being universally adopted. It would be a heavy blow to the bribery and intimidation that are only too frequent at elections, while it would greatly lessen if not entirely put an end to those scenes of drunkenness and debauch which have been so long the standing disgrace of political contests, both in the old country and the new.

An effort has been made to induce the Dominion authorities so far to interfere in the local affairs of New Brunswick as to set aside the school law lately enacted in that Province. The Roman Catholics there feel aggrieved because in the Act in question there is no provision made for separate schools, and thus argue that such a law is in direct violation of the Confederation Act. Both Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir George B. Cartier, however, have altogether repudiated the idea. They

say that the New Brunswick Legislature did not, in passing such a law, exceed its legitimate powers, and that the only way for the complainants to find redress is through the same body that committed the alleged wrong.

The Presidential contest, and the Washington Treaty absorb entirely the public attention in the States. The Convention at Cincinnati of Republicans opposed to the renomination of Grant is now in session, and will very likely have made its nominations before this number of THE PRESBYTERIAN reach most of its readers. The gentleman who seems to have the fairest chance of being fixed upon is Charles Francis Adams, the son of John Quincy Adams, and Ambassador of the States in England during the late civil war.

Spain is in a very disturbed condition. A Carlist rising has taken place, and many feel that the Government is representing it as much more insignificant than it is. At the same time, the common danger is causing the Republicans to make common cause with the supporters of Amadeus.

In England as well as in Germany "strikes" are the order of the day, and generally they have been successful, especially in Britain. As we mentioned last week, the most significant of all the attempts of labour to better its condition is that of the farm hands in Warwickshire and other places. These poor fellows need very much to be placed in a better position, for they have been as hopeless and apparently as helpless as could be well imagined. The strike among them has already been so far successful. The "strikers" have been drafted away to districts where labour is more in demand and is better paid, while a good many have had free passages secured for themselves and their families to New Zealand, where labour is at present very much sought for. The consequence has been that farmers and landlords, in order to prevent a famine of labour, have been obliged to acquiesce in demands which at first they denounced as "rebellion." The movement, however, is not to be looked upon simply as one for more wages. It intimates the final upbreak of the last remnant of feudalism. The labourers of England have been treated too much like people in modified serfdom. They have had a good many little privileges of one kind or another accorded them to supplement the starvation wages they received. They protest now against all that. They don't want charity doles but fair wages for their work. And who can blame them? If farmers cannot pay their present rents and give higher wages, the remedy is manifest. The rents must come down. There is a necessity for labour being fairly remunerated. There is no necessity for rents continuing as at present. The landlords in that case must be content with less.

The same Church questions are still being agitated in Britain and on the European continent as we have referred to in former issues. Everywhere, over England, Church Defence Societies are being formed, while in Scotland such men as Dr. Guthrie are coming out as avowed voluntaries, and declaring that if it is thought becoming or dutiful to make the notion of Church Establishments a term of communion in the Free Church then they will leave it. From a speech lately delivered in Edinburgh by the eloquent Editor of the *Sunday Magazine*, which we in part reprint in another column, it will be seen how things are moving.

The question of Presbyterian Union among ourselves is not exciting much attention or remark, but the growing feeling in all the Churches concerned, is, we are in favour of such a movement. In order to keep it forward nothing is more needed than increased intercourse between the ministers and members of the different Churches. The fact is we know too little of each other. Interchange of pulpits is still exceedingly rare. Ministers assisting one another at communions is all but unknown, and even social intercourse among the members of the different Churches is far from common. In such circumstances, while moving in almost perfectly different circles, it is scarcely to be expected that the work of Union or the desire for it should be greatly helped forward. In view of the immense advance in population which we believe Canada is destined to make within the

next few years, it is peculiarly desirable that the Presbyterians of the Dominion should be able to utilize and expend their resources and efforts in the best possible way, and no way is better suited to accomplish this than a real hearty union of the different sections, while none is more fitted to hinder than a merely nominal union where most are indifferent and some positively hostile.

We must not forget to notice the organization at Ottawa of an Institution for the Higher Education of Women. Protestants have been culpably remiss in this matter, and we are glad to see the different Protestant denominations at the Capital prosecuting such a work unitedly, and with vigour. We sincerely hope it will be successful. Apparently it will be working order in a short time.

## WORK FOR PRESBYTERIANS IN CANADA.

Presbyterians have no reason to be ashamed of their past history or present position in Canada. Their work in the service of the Master speaks for itself. It has not been what it might have been, and certainly not what it ought to have been, but viewed in any possible light, it may be truthfully affirmed, that without it Canada would have been to-day materially, mentally, morally and religiously, in a far different position from what it is, and in one much worse. Their "gloomy" Calvinism which stilted literatures are so fond of denouncing in their own shallow, supercilious fashion, has so far done its work in Canada as well as in other lands, and in many cases has done it well. It has produced a goodly company of manly, thoughtful, and energetic citizens, who have had and have a great deal of resoluteness of purpose, firmness of principle, genuine love of liberty, and, let men say what they like to the contrary, enlightened devotion to truth and duty. Their Calvinism, which many foolish talkers have so often denounced without taking the trouble either to study or understand, has of course always been the secret of their strength, and when it comes to be eliminated from among them, their peculiarity and power will be gone. As yet, however, we see no appearance of this taking place, and therefore we anticipate for the Presbyterianism of Canada a long career of work and usefulness. The more the work which is needed is looked narrowly into the more it will appear, both in its character and extent, to be such as may well tax the energies of any church and every church to the utmost. There are being now laid in this Canada of ours the foundations what may in due time become a mighty empire, and an empire which shall occupy a prominent place and exert a corresponding influence among the nations of the world. We have no desire to under rate the value and importance of the other agencies for good that may be at present in operation, and which may be contributing to that foundation being laid firmly and securely, but there can be no doubt that if our country is to realize the hopes of her friends and be all that her most enthusiastic sons dream she ever will become, it must be through her people being generally under the influence of that religion which alone is compatible with, and conduces to the freest enquiry, combined with the humblest and most unquestioning faith. To this grand all important work, of forming a nation's character, different churches of Canada are, with greater or less energy, addressing themselves, and there is not one of these that is more favourably situated for doing this work successfully, and for exerting a wide and most beneficial influence upon our rising country than the Presbyterian. Its doctrine, its church polity, its traditions even, and the character of many of those who, coming to the country as Presbyterians, form the first of its congregations in new localities, are all very much in its favor. It is a fact which is undeniable that the Presbyterian element in Canada, as in Britain, has always been among the most zealous in struggling for even-handed justice, free institutions, untrammelled discussion, universal education, an open Bible, and an intelligent faith. To talk as one has done of the presence of Presbyterians in Canada being merely "a question of physical geography," meaning, we suppose by this, that they have no intelligent examination and reception of their opinions,

but have them as a matter of course along with their father's property, is simply absurd. The expression has no meaning in itself, and the only possible meaning it can bear is notoriously wide of the mark. We do not deny that there are those among Presbyterians who have received the religion they profess simply by tradition from their fathers. But there are not more of that class than among the adherents of any other section of Christians, that has existed so long as to become historical; and we venture to affirm that there are as many Presbyterians in Canada whose fathers were of some other persuasion or none as any denomination that could be mentioned.

But even though the spread of Presbyterianism were a question of physical geography, which it is not, the work appointed to the Presbyterian Church in Canada, in supplying the ordinances of the Gospel to its widely scattered and continually advancing tide of members and adherents, would be a very great and important one among the sturdy pioneers on our frontier settlements. Presbyterians are always found bearing no secondary part, but doing their full share for the good of the land they have adopted as their own. The Presbyterian Church has endeavored to supply these and others with the religious services they love, with the preaching of the truths which they believe, and which have made them very much what they are. That this has been done as fully and energetically as it ought to have been, cannot be said. From the want of men and means, there is no doubt the Presbyterian Church has too often lost ground which it might have been occupying to-day with efficiency and profit. Every one feels and deplores this. The only thing to be done, however, is to guard against a repetition of the mistake or rather of the neglect. Far greater demands upon the most earnest efforts of the Church, will have to be made in coming years, than ever has been in the past. The tide of population, we believe, will soon flow into Canada as it has never done before, and if the Church in all its branches is to be true to its mission, and carry in its purity and power, the message it has received to those who are filling and will continue to fill up the waste places of the land, it must display an amount of earnest, self-sacrifice and devotion it is not now, in any part of this continent, exhibiting. In the States, gigantic as are the exertions of the different denominations, the Church is not keeping up with the never-ceasing westward flow of population. It now comes to be Canada's turn. Our prairies are open for the settler, the finest, and the largest still unoccupied on the continent. As yet it is but the faint gentle ripple of the human tide that can be heard. But every thoughtful person can see what is coming. Are the Churches alive to it? And are they preparing to do their work when it comes? We hope so. Most certainly it will tax all their strength, but in their doing their appropriate work earnestly and successfully, lie, we are persuaded, the only rational prospect of Canada realizing the destiny which many say is so "manifest." In that mighty and most noble work we hope Presbyterians will fully do their part. They can do it, and by the blessing and guidance of God we believe they will. Away in our new settlements many devoted young men are so far doing that work now. The number of these is every year increasing. Their zeal, devotedness and ability are becoming always more conspicuous. Everything gives token of brighter and better days for our Church as at hand. The work increases and will increase. But the workers are also every year more numerous. Not yet are they what they might be, nor what they ought to be, nor what they will be, but sufficient to tell that there is yet a large amount of spiritual power in the Church to which they belong, and that the spiritual power is continually gathering force, as the spiritual need of the country increases. And as everything goes more fully to show that if Canada is to flourish, in the best sense of the term, it will be by the universal and successful preaching of the Word.

ERRATA.—The cost of Father Cheniquy's Church, at St. Anne, was incorrectly stated in our issue of two weeks ago to be \$600, it should have been \$6,000. At the request of the Minister of the C. P. Church, we gladly make this correction.

The Technological College, Toronto, about which there has been so much discussion, is now about to get into working operation. It has been resolved to have an experimental session during the next two months with classes for Architectural Drawing, Natural Philosophy, and Chemistry. All who like to attend are admitted without charge, and we understand that already more than a hundred have enrolled themselves as students.

## MARVELLOUS CAREER OF A HALF-DEAD MAN.

The death of a deeply afflicted yet withal a successful man is recorded in the American papers. William H. Hawthorne, Esq., died at his residence in Millsboro, Washington county, Pennsylvania, on the 18th ult., and his life is, or ought to be, a lesson to all who are apt to feel discouraged under difficulties and give way to despair. The *Bronswille (Tipp.)* gives an interesting memoir of the deceased gentleman, from which it appears that at the age of thirteen he was so afflicted with rheumatism that he lost the use of both legs and also of his right arm. His feet were drawn up against the thighs and his right hand and arm were horribly contorted. The flesh on these limbs gradually withered away, his head and body alone continuing to grow. For the purpose of locomotion he was placed in a box, in which he passed his life, constantly lying on his back, and attending to all kinds of business for the last sixty years. He acquired a good English education and taught a school for a number of years, and at the time of his death was serving his seventh term as justice of the peace, having acted in that capacity for nearly thirty-five years. He used to pen with his left hand, and wrote a very accurate and legible hand. In 1858 he was awarded a contract for carrying the United States mail on the route between Pittsburg and Waynesburg, and at the expiration of the first term he was allowed to renew the contract. He kept a number of horses and employes, but he superintended the whole business himself. At the age of twenty-three he eloped in his box with a Miss Wilson, and was married to her without the consent of her friends. The marriage turned out happily, and was blessed with thirteen children. He is described as a man of iron will and almost iron constitution. Compelled as he was to recumbent position, he wrote with the paper on a small board before him, and from constantly keeping his head raised upward and forward the muscles of his neck became so preternaturally strong that he could hold his head in that situation for hours without fatigue.

## DRUNKARDS.

"It would be interesting," says the *Pall Mall Gazette*, "to try a few experiments in the way of punishment with drunkards. It is evident that fines have no effect on the intemperate and that a few hours' imprisonment until they are sober is rather a convenience to them than not. Our ingenuity in discovering pleasant little variations in punishments for offenders has not yet extended beyond the revival of the cat-o-nine-tails, which, although it might be laid with advantage on the backs of some drunken ruffians, is almost too decisive in its action for the harmless sot who becomes 'incapable' without being violent. There is, however, a punishment which was applied by the ancient law of France and also in Scotland to debtors who obtained the benefit of *cessio bonorum*, that seems admirably adapted for modern drunkards. It consisted in sentencing the debtor to wear in public a distinctive garment under pain of imprisonment if he was found without it. In France a green bonnet (*bonnet vert*) was furnished by creditors for the purpose, as explained by Pothier, of warning all citizens to conduct their affairs with prudence, so as to avoid the risk of exposing themselves to such ignominy. In Scotland every debtor under similar circumstances was appointed to wear 'the dyvour's habit,' which was a coat or upper garment, half yellow and half brown, with a cap of the same colors. By a statute of William IV. 'the dyvour's habit' was dispensed with; but if again adopted for drunkards it might not only promote temperance, but could not fail to give a great impetus to the trade of clothiers, about Easter time, and on the occasion of all holy fairs and feasts. The 'dyvour's habit' would also be a most admirable garment of daily wear for tradesmen convicted of using false weights and measures, and in the case of ladies found guilty of a like offence, the *bonnet vert* might be worn either for the promenade or behind the counter, and would produce a most pleasing effect."

The New York *Ob.* says:—The congregation of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, (Rev. Dr. John Hall's,) at a parish meeting on Monday evening last, voted to sell their church building and lot on the corner of Nineteenth street; and to purchase eight lots on which to build at the north-west corner of 27th Avenue and Fifty-fifth street, for which they are to pay \$350,000. We learn that they have an offer of \$450,000 for their present site.