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Contributors and Correspondents.

SCOTLAND.

IMPROVEMENTS—THE EDINBURGH PRESS—AGGRESSIVE EVANGELISM—SPURGEON AND GUTHRIE—PERSONAL—MISSIONS AND RUM.

Returning here, after an absence of seven months, I find improvements are the order of the day, as in other parts of the Kingdom, in this time of general prosperity. In these matters the public press, as usual, is not behind. The Review has escaped from its dungeoned cells in High Street, into an imposing edifice adjoining the Bank of Scotland, near the head of the mound. The *Courant* follows suit. The *Scotsman*, which has led the way, is now surpassed: in most other matters of journalistic enterprise, however, it is still *facile princeps*. Would that as much could be said for the principles of its brilliant editorials. Edinburgh is at present strangely deficient in the matter of a religious newspaper. There is, perhaps, no city in the world so much engrossed in religious and ecclesiastical questions—"literally crawling with Presbyteries," as the *Scotsman* the other day irreverently put it—not far behind some of the cities of America in this respect. However, there is abroad a powerful spirit of earnest, aggressive evangelism, not confined to any single section of the Church. There is no lack of workers; men and women of true spirit, and often with means, as well as time, to spare, abound. What are equally important, but seldom met with, are leaders, endowed with the gift of organization and management. How the influence of one such may tell on future ages is seen in the case of him whose life and its fruits are so prominently before his country at present. The tor-contemporary of his death seems likely to be followed by the addition of another to the noble monuments, which adorn this beautiful city. Its form is not yet decided. The need of such work is abundantly evident. Such an occasion as the present New Year festivities bring to light how much of heathen profligacy still exists among the masses. One wonders if the Saturnalia of pagan Rome could be much worse than the obscene debaucheries of modern lower class Britons. While we can but trust the Lord of the Harvest to raise up more laborers, it is with distress that one sees such a man as Spurgeon in England falling under an overload of work and an increase of bodily infirmity; and here, in Scotland, a Guthrie brought very near to the grave by heart disease.

To-day the genial Catholic-spirited Dean Ramsay was followed to the grave by a crowd of mourners of all denominations.

Dr. Candlish has returned to his pulpit, but much of his power is gone. From loss of teeth his enunciation is very indistinct. Having lost much of his hair, and grown a full gray beard, his personal appearance is greatly altered.

The recent observance of a day of intercession for missions, which was very generally observed both North and South, has brought the subject of missions, their management and mismanagement, very prominently before the public, and some very plain and faithful suggestions have been addressed, especially to the Church of England, in the pages of the *Times* and elsewhere. However, it is easy to find fault. How much blame often lies elsewhere than in the missionaries, is suggested by a statement made to me the other day by a trader from the west coast of Africa. Speaking of the degradation of the natives, he said missions did little good: what was wanted was civilization. "Now," said I, "you have had many years of observation, I would like to know your candid opinion." His answer was: "I have just seen a missionary returning to America after twenty-three years of labour, which, he says, have been fruitless. But—he blames me and such as I, who deal largely in ardent spirits with the natives." The evil was freely confessed, but the practice deliberately defended by one who should have strengthened the hands of the missionary instead of neutralizing his toil by so sad a display of unchristian selfishness and want of humanity.

CANADIAN ABROAD.

Edinburgh, Jan. 2, 1873.

Another Episcopal minister of "High Church" proclivities has "gone over to Rome." Rev. Mr. Bliss, of Port Lawrence, N.S., near Amherst, preached his last Protestant Sermon a few weeks ago. We believe he is a native of New Brunswick.

An encouraging Temperance reformation is in progress among the British Catholics. Archbishop Manning on a recent Sunday attended a temperance meeting on Clerkenwell Green, where five several hundred thousand persons were present. Workingmen and women took the pledge, kneeling from the hands of the archbishop.

ENGLAND.

MR. KNIGHT AND BROAD CHURCHISM—PRESBYTERIAN UNION IN ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND—DR. BEGG—MODERN INNOVATION IN WORSHIP—SERMON READING, &c.

On arriving at Glasgow I found the clergy and others interested in church matters in a ferment. Mr. Knight, of Dundee, had preached in a Unitarian Church in London and patronized with the minister and his Presbytery, had cited him to account for his misconduct. The self-willed son of the church became restive, and defended his conduct as just and right, notwithstanding the opinion of fathers and brethren to the contrary. The matter has produced considerable discussion in the public papers and in private society. Many blame Mr. Knight, and consider the Presbytery right, while members are bold enough to defend Mr. Knight in all he has said and done. The discussion has brought to the surface what was whispered pretty freely among privileged parties for some time past. There have been plain hints given that a sort of broad churchism was spreading among some of the younger ministers of the Free Church. The strong sympathy appearing in favour of Mr. Knight is pointed to as evidence sufficient of the report. The matter is not likely to be settled before the Assembly meets in May; and should it come up there for discussion, then will appear what ground there is footstep passing that a number of the younger brethren entertain broad and loose opinions on some of the doctrines of Revelation. The opinion prevails among parties, that instead of calling upon Mr. Knight to answer for preaching in a Unitarian Church, they might reasonably have asked him for a reason for the doctrine he preached; for the reading of his sermon will make it evident that the hearers could not learn from anything he said, either that they were guilty sinners, or how guilty sinners could find salvation through the merits of Jesus. Surely the minister of a Dundee Free Church has few sympathizers in the church of the disruption. Time, however, will tell what grounds there are for such hints as are given.

The Union question is the great question in Scotland, and among Presbyterians in England. In England the prospect is of an early Union of Presbyterian churches. The Presbyterians have fair prospects before them in England when united. They should have been united long since. The progress of Ritualism is so rapid that Christian men in the Episcopal Church know not where to look for safety. The only hope lies in the Conservatism of the Presbyterian Church. The Presbyterian Church with a little yielding to English feelings and habits, and united, has the prospect of reaping a rich harvest—ready to be gathered in. May they soon be all one grand English Presbyterian Church, winning the lapsed masses back to the Lord Jesus.

In Scotland there is no prospect of an early union. The opposition of Dr. Begg and his party, and the spirit of the discussion shown by both parties put the hopes of union far into the future. Report has it freely stated that when Disruption was proposed at first in 1843, Dr. Begg proposed delay, or some middle course by which he could please both parties and still keep hold of Government money. What a pity he had not then taken the other side of the fence and remained inside the Established Church. The Free Church would have been saved from a heavy drag on her wheels ever since, for the fighting Dr. is one of those of whom the people of the Free Church have reason to pray, "Save me from my friends."

The Free Church has suffered and is suffering from the spirit in which the discussion has been conducted. Both parties have gone into bitter personal attacks. The sooner the matter is laid on the shelf for a time and allowed to sleep, the better for all parties, and specially for the Free Church. In time God will make the way clear of opposing forces, and the Union will become a glorious reality in Scotland, as in Ireland and Canada, and the other colonies. Which may God hasten in his own time.

Persons visiting Scotland, after a lapse of twenty years, will witness a change in the mode of conducting the service of the sanctuary in many places. The design is to produce in some cases greater variety. They sing and pray oftener than formerly. There seems a desire to imitate or introduce a form of Ritualism. Supposing thereby the worship will be made more attractive and more in harmony with the present times. They stand while praising—which is all very well—but in prayer they go beyond the mark. In all the congregations where these novelties are introduced, the worshippers put sitting for kneeling, and keep firmly seated during the whole time of prayer. The changes do not seem improvements taken as a whole, but rather a kind of aping episcopal forms to please those who are given to change.

Another change which meets you, especially among young ministers in the Free Church, is the general reading of sermons. This habit, persons say, has become nearly universal. The sentences are better sounded, and the language more ornate, and the preacher better pleased with his own production; but the effect produced on the worshippers is rather soporific and soothing than awakening and arousing. There is much of the fire of disruption wanting in this reading of sermons, and the feeling prevails among many Christian people that this reading of elaborate compositions will never reach and win the world to the Lord Jesus Christ. Many of these who sit under

the present style of pulpit service do feel and confess that burying the face almost among the leaves of the paper, deprives the worshipper of the power of the eye, and countenance of the speaker when lighted up with the fire of truth, and robs the truth of much of its power in preaching, and melting the heart of the hearer. This advantage gained by the preacher in the beauty of his composition is far more than balanced by the effect produced upon the hearers in moving them to sleep.

This habit, however, though general, has not become universal; for in one village where I spent some time, there are three congregations: an Established, a Free, and U. P. Church. There is no reading in any of these pulpits, and the congregations are all in a friendly state. A stranger coming to the village could not easily decide with which congregation he would connect himself. They are all prosperous and so much alike that Englishmen coming and worshipping in all the churches cannot understand how these three ministers belong to three different denominations, for in everything they seem to be all one. The stranger visiting such places in Scotland cannot understand why these ministers should not be all members of the same church and all meeting in the same Presbytery. As they are all working for the same Master and in the very same form and manner also. What a pity that Christian men and Christian churches, so much alike, cannot be brought to see alike, and all become united into one glorious Church of Scotland once again, and fill the whole land with the blessing of united work for the Lord Jesus. This should be the prayer, especially of the Presbyterian people of Canada for their Mother churches in Scotland. While we enjoy the blessing of a union of part of the church, and the prospect of soon having the whole Presbyterian family all in one General Assembly, should we not pray that our Mother church should be brought into a similar happy union with ourselves and thereby have their power for good greatly increased.

This state of union is especially necessary in the present state of the Episcopal Church of England. Many Christian people tremble for the sake of truth since the decisions of the Privy Council in the Bonnet and other cases. There are many looking toward the Presbyterian Church as the safeguard for the truth. There are openings in England for the Presbyterian Church, in consequence of these decisions. How desirable that all Scotland should be united that she might be able to help those to the bread of life, who are being fed on the husks of Ritualism.

PRESBYTERIAN WRONGS.

No. 4.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—I have some more remarks to make about the course of study in Knox College. But, in regard to the things I am going to mention, the burden of care lies with the Church and not with the College authorities.

For some years back there has been a regular yearly exodus of students from Toronto to Princeton. It was, not long ago, referred to in the General Assembly under the name of the "Princeton Nuisance." It is a "nuisance." It is something that no one who has any patriotism likes to hear about. Nevertheless it exists. It was fondly hoped, a year ago, that it had forever ceased; but, this year, it is worse than ever. Now this nuisance has a cause; and we must know the cause, before we can legislate in reference to it. Common people in the Church think there must be something wrong about the College, and they have suspected that the Professors have not the confidence of the students. And I fear that the Professors have been caused much unnecessary pain.

I have made a pretty careful investigation of the whole matter; and I am prepared to state, authoritatively, that, as regards this year's exodus at least, its causes have had no connection whatever with the Professors now in the College. Whatever suspicions may have arisen as to their trustworthiness, are entirely unfounded. By their conduct, the students who have gone seem to incense the Professors; but, by their words, they entirely exonerate them. And, if they did give expression to any want of confidence in men of such well known ability, no one who knows the latter could entertain the slightest respect for the judgments of the former.

It is time that the Church know that the whole cause lies with itself and not with the College. We appoint two Professors, and then patch up a Lecturership or two, and call that a College. Even the Lecturership is sometimes allowed to fall through, owing, it is said, to personal jealousy in the General Assembly. We put no books into the Library. We stubbornly refuse to appoint a teacher of elocution until it is too late, and then, only for ten days. We send our young men to this place to pursue their studies. We send for them to preach to us. But we have no money upon them when they have not much to tell us; and less still when they cannot tell us what they do know in a graceful manner, as a trained elocutionist would do.

Our young men feel that when they go out to make their way in the world, where

a man counts for what he appears to be, no allowances will be made for their having been drilled in a half-equipped College. It is little wonder that their patriotism gives way. They cast their eyes around. There in Princeton, with a regular staff of six Professors, besides a teacher of elocution constantly employed, together with a good Library and other advantages. There is Union College with as large a staff, and giving an opportunity of listening on Sabbath to the preaching of that brilliant galaxy of orators who have made the pulpits of New York famous. Our students see all these things. You cannot prevent them from drawing comparisons. And who can blame them for going?

This is the whole secret of all that question of the "Princeton nuisance;" and the sooner the Church learns to know that itself, and not the College, is the cause of all the trouble, the better.

It has often been said that our students go to Princeton in order to escape the severe examinations of Knox. It is not true, and, indeed, if that were so, they must needs be easily frightened. It has often been said that it is the poorer class of students who go. If this were so we would probably have more reason for thankfulness than for regret; but, that is not true either. Some have gone whose patriotism inclined them to stay; but their patriotisms was taxed too greatly, and it gave way. Many others remain, and possibly will suffer all their lives for their patriotism.

For ever the Church has met with serious misfortunes in its late attempt to galvanize the College into life. But why did it not begin long ago? We must begin again, and until we have succeeded in establishing a College which will command the respect of our students, it will be very wholesome for us to remember that the whole blame lies upon our own shoulders.

Our College is not only good but of a very high order so far as it goes. Nevertheless it is only half a College.

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KNOX COLLEGE

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—Some of your readers are aware that a sub-committee of the Board of Knox College have been charged with the duty of making preliminary inquiries concerning the erecting of new buildings for the college. It is not from any distrust of the competency, or the zeal of the gentlemen on whom this labor has been devolved that I trouble you at the present time with a few sentences respecting the matter referred to.

Enough, I dare say, has already appeared in your paper, to satisfy all who take an interest in the work of the college, that the present building is inadequate, and, in some respects, quite unsuitable to its purpose. No good end could be served by exaggerating its defects; and it were something almost like ingratitude to forget that it has rendered valuable service to the church in the past. The exertions of our church at an early period in her history, in providing for the training of a ministry, were, in all respects, highly liberal and praiseworthy; and perhaps few churches could be named, which, in proportion to their resources, have expended more upon this necessary object. This word of justice is due, when seeking to press upon the attention of the church the necessities which have arisen from a new situation,—from the rapid growth and development of everything around us. College buildings which at one time were a credit to the church, cannot be spoken of in the same terms now, and we shall certainly fail of our duty, if a state of things believed to be seriously injurious to the interests of theological education among us, is much longer permitted to remain.

Let no member of the church imagine that the question as to college buildings is chiefly one of taste; and that this discussion is maintained by persons whose denominational pride is hurt by comparing our own modest establishment with the splendid educational edifices of other bodies of Christians. No doubt, such comparisons will sometimes be made; but the important matter is that the building is too small in every department, and in several other respects, really and extremely unsuitable. The lecture-rooms are quite too small, and admit of no proper arrangement for their purpose; the dormitory accommodation is inadequate and very uninviting; there is insufficient room for the library, even at its present dimensions; and as many besides professors and students can testify, the college has no hall suitable for public occasions.

Nothing can well be said in opposition to the church's undertaking what she is here invited to do, if the means of accomplishing it are her disposal; and to begin to prove that she has the means, were almost to insult so wealthy a community. As little is it requisite to chide that no arrangements which may be necessary—should the union

of the Presbyterian Church be effected—no redistribution of forces—can, in the smallest degree, affect the argument for proceeding at once with the erection of college buildings in Toronto. We are quite aware that denominational feeling and local feeling may easily warp the judgment in a case of this kind; but there are probably few of the members of either of the negotiating churches, who would say that the strong, dense Presbyterianism of Western Ontario, does not require a theological school in its centre. The colleges, no doubt, exist for the church, and not the church for the colleges; and how much sower pleasing associations may be impeded, every part of the church's machinery must hold itself ready to be remodelled, or even cancelled, should the interests of Christ's cause so require. But fully recognizing the truth and importance of all this, it yet seems superfluous to argue in support of the claims which the present location of Knox College would have in any event. It is unnecessary to fortify a position which no one purposes to assail.

Among the members of our Church in Toronto, and it is believed in other places, there is a disposition to entertain favourably the proposal of building a new College. The writer of this communication may be pardoned for saying that he is frequently spoken to on the subject by members of the Toronto Congregations; and one generous friend of the College has voluntarily signified the intention of contributing most handsomely, should the work proceed at once. This would not be a solitary instance of munificent liberality. But the less wealthy members of our church would be happy to aid in this matter; nor would their contributions be less valued. I am here anxious to say this distinctly, because a correspondent of the BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN who had heard some remarks of mine at the opening of the present College Session, (imperfectly expressed I am sure) understood me to propose a plan for building a College according to which only the wealthier members of the church should be asked to contribute. The two notes of the poor widow will never, I trust, be forgotten by the Canada Presbyterian Church, and on economic as well as on higher grounds to forget this case were a signal mistake.

The plan for endowing our Theological Colleges appears to be dead. There is little probability of its being in the mean time, resuscitated. From the first, doubts were entertained by some as to the possibility of carrying it in its original form, successfully through. This subject is here adverted to, only for the purpose of saying that whatever opinion persons might have as to the church's ability to accomplish the larger scheme, no shadow of doubt can exist as to the ability of the constituency of Knox College to erect a building suitable for the purposes of its Theological Institution.

Will the church not take this matter earnestly up. If the work of the church, in an important department is being really hindered, as all witnesses seem to testify—is not this a thing seriously to be considered? If we present the prayer that "the Lord of the harvest would send forth labourers into His harvest," let us not fail to give proof that this prayer proceeds from the heart. If the church is here asked to do a thing impossible of accomplishment—an unnecessary thing—a foolish thing, let what is now said be disregarded; but if the representation made commends itself to the church's judgment and conscience let her decline nor defer to do what seems her duty in the case.

Yours truly,

Wm. CAVEN,

Knox College, 21st January, 1873.

A QUESTION OF FACT.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—There is a statement in the last issue of my learned friend, the Solicitor, which I cannot allow to pass uncorrected. It is this: "The Presbyterian Church as a whole, embracing as it does in its communion, the largest number of Protestant worshippers in the world, has organs in very general use, and appreciates the aid and assistance thus given in the matter of congregational singing." This, to say the least of it, is certainly a most incorrect statement, calculated to mislead, and to produce an effect upon those who are not better informed. It is in keeping with other positive, sweeping and dogmatic statements made by this writer. Has the Free Church of Scotland any organs in use? Has the Presbyterian Church in Ireland any in use, save two, which have almost threatened the disruption of the Church? Has the United Presbyterian Church of North America—a body composed of 56 Presbyteries, 8 Synods, 500 ministers, 756 congregations, with 5 Theological Seminaries, 106 students, 2 Colleges with University powers, and missions in Syria, Lydia, Egypt and China—a single instrument of music in use? Or, and smaller bodies might be mentioned, both on this Continent and that of Europe, that neither "use" nor "appreciate" an instrument of music in God's worship. But, then, I have mentioned enough to show how unwarranted is the statement of this Solicitor, and to put the readers of his letters on their guard as to what credit should be given to them.

Yours truly,

J. S.

Jan. 16, 1873.

Persia, 760 miles wide from north to south, and 850 long from east to west, or about equal in size to Great Britain and France, has a population of five millions, or that of Ireland, and a revenue of ten millions, with very small prospect of progress in any way. It is a very sick nation, under the eye of Russia, the most robust power of the old world.