

covered. The *Review* deprecates revolutionary measures and emphasizes the power of the presbytery. It is asked, "Have we not in our presbyteries all the power we need to enable us to put an end to inefficient pastorates, if presbyteries would discharge their functions, and take the real oversight of congregations? The presbytery should demand efficiency in the pastor as well as liberality and unanimity in the congregation." As things are, the presbytery hears of trouble when it is too late to mend matters, and interference only aggravates and irritates the people. Should not the presbytery call regularly for reports from each minister and elder as to the condition of the congregation, appoint visiting deputies, and make itself acquainted with the existing state of each congregation?

At a conference held recently in New York City to discuss the question of religion in its relations to public education, the following propositions were unanimously agreed to as furnishing a suitable basis for wider and more public agitation of the matter: (1) The permanence of the state is conditioned by its morality. (2) The only guarantee of morality is religion. (3) Self-preservation is the state's first law. (4) Therefore it is competent to, and incumbent upon, the state to see that provision is made for popular religious instruction. These questions will receive wide and careful consideration during the next few months.

ARKOROS of the coming of Sam Jones, or Mr. Sam Jones, or Rev. Sam Jones, or whatever other name he calls himself or is called by his admirers, we are given to understand that the Ministerial Association of this city refused to take the onus of inviting him, and that the invitation was secured by the convening of a special meeting of ministers in their private capacity, amongst whom Presbyterians were conspicuous by their absence. The attempt to create the impression that Mr. Jones has been invited by the Ministerial Association of Toronto is calculated to give an entirely false idea of the matter.

We have very much pleasure in drawing the attention of our readers to the Report of the Confederation Life Association as given in our advertising columns last week. The business of this well-known company is under the guidance of an able Board of Directors, with Mr. J. K. Macdonald as Manager. The Confederation Life is an excellent company and well deserves the success it has attained.

## Literary Notices.

"The Trinity of Evil," by the Rev. Canon Wilberforce, M.A.; Toronto: S. R. Briggs, Willard Tract Depository.

This is an admirable book, which we trust may find its way into the hands of thousands of our young people, and which, we are sure, neither young nor old can read without profit. It consists of three lectures on what the author calls the trinity of evil: Infidelity, Impurity and Intemperance, and speaks out with a boldness and power which compels attention. We hope to return to this book again, but, in the meantime, we most earnestly recommend it to our ministers, and all who are interested in warning our people against these great evils of our time. The price is only 90 cents.

THE *Edict* for April (E. R. Pelton, New York) opens with Huxley's and Drummond's papers on "Mr. Gladstone and Genesis," which are sufficient attraction for intelligent readers. Amongst other very inviting articles we may mention, "A Pelagian Nuisance," "The Great Gladstone Myth," and "The Babylonian at Home." The *Edict* and the *Review* one year for \$5.

PAPERS of possible interest to Canadian readers, in the April *Fortnightly Review*, (Leonard Scott, Pub. Co.'s reprint) are "The Welfare of the Blind," "Society in Paris," "Rest and Repair in London Life," "Emigration and the Friendly Societies." The April *Contemporary* contains, in addition to its excellent "Contemporary Records, Fiction, Poetry and General Literature," "The Quarterly Review and the Old Testament Revision," by the Dean of Peterborough.

THE *Pulpit Treasury* for April: "The Lutheran Church" is accorded the first place in this number, and has a fine portrait of Dr. Senn, of Philadelphia, one of his capital sermons, a beautiful view of his church, and an excellent sketch of his life. Other sermons deserving of special mention are, "Fratily Invested with Divinity," by Rev. J. Wesley Johnston; "A Memorial Tribute to Rev. Dr. Rice," by Theodorick Pryor, D.D.; and an "Easter Service," by Canon H. P. Liddon; "Leading Thoughts of Sermons" are by Drs. Gordon Fraser, etc. "Notable Articles" are by Bishop Baldwin, Dr. John Hall, T. L. Cuyler, Revs. C. H. Spurgeon, A. H. Moment and S. W. Advance. In the editorial department, "The Resources of the Church," "The Sabbath Rest," "Search the Conscience," "Aim at a Mark," "A Spiritual Boarding-house," are timely, useful, and pertinent topics treated with skill and vigor. Yearly, \$2.50; to clergymen, \$3.00; single copies, 25 cents. E. B. Treat, publisher, 777 Broadway, New York.

## SYNOD OF TORONTO AND KINGSTON.

The Synod met in Knox church, Galt, Tuesday, 4th inst., at 7.30 p.m.

The Moderator, Rev. D. J. Macdonnell, D.D., opened the proceedings with prayer.

### THE MODERATOR'S SERMON.

After prayer and singing, Mr. Macdonnell gave out as his text, Hebrews xii, 27. "And this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, which are not shaken may remain." After an introduction, in which the words of the text were shown to apply to the passing away of Judaism in order that the kingdom of heaven might be set up, three applications of the principle contained in the text were noted, the last being especially dwelt on: 1. *Modes of worship* must sometimes be changed that spiritual worship may remain. 2. *Forms of Church organization* must pass away that the Church may live and grow. 3. *Human opinions* concerning the things revealed in God's Word must be shaken in order that the truth may remain. We live in a restless age. Traditional beliefs are questioned: the spirit of the age is one of "free thought" on all matters that can occupy the human mind. This tendency has manifested dangers; but it is not necessarily evil. It arises partly, at least, from the deterioration to have a solid foundation for faith—to have realties, or nothing. Reference was made to an article in a recent number of the *Fortnightly*

*Review*, in which a Roman Catholic writer impeaches Protestantism as a "dissolving principle," the tendency of which is to destroy Christianity, encouraging free thought instead of faith, and submission to all experimentally proved facts instead of submission to a divinely taught creed. Free thought, however, when rightly defined, does not mean thinking what we please, regardless of what the good and wise have taught or of what the God of truth has said, but thought free from all trammels of tradition or prejudice that it may rise to Him who is the Source of truth, and find free play under His authority. It is not to be regretted that apologetics should be more and more devoted to the elucidation of the moral significance of the doctrines of the Bible and to the proving of the truth of Christianity by showing not simply that its credentials are well warranted, but that it meets human needs at every point. "By the manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God," was the principle on which Paul's ministry was conducted. He expected men to receive his message because it was true and because they could see it to be true. We as ministers are to claim the same authority—not the authority of a clerical order, but the authority of the truth which we utter. We have this advantage over the first preachers of the Gospel, that we have the witness of history to Christ—the "experimentally proved facts" of the spiritual experience of men during 1,800 years, on which to rest the claims of Jesus.

How are we to determine what is "the truth"? We have set aside the infallible Church claiming to speak through an infallible Man, who will tell us exactly what to believe. We turn to the Book which God has given us, and we say, "This is an infallible guide." Yet we see that the most diverse systems of doctrine have been drawn from the Bible, partly because of apparently conflicting statements contained in it about very grave matters. We find that we need an infallible Interpreter. We turn to the Book and read, "The Spirit of truth shall guide you unto all the truth," and we say, "Here is the infallible Interpreter." And then we are staggered by the phenomenon of men equally earnest, seeking alike the guidance of this Interpreter, and yet walking in divergent paths. Manifestly the Spirit will lead us by no short cut to the knowledge of the truth. He will not save us the trouble of thought, study, and investigation. He will not prevent us making mistakes. This great thing, however, He will do for us. He will bring us into fellowship with a living Person who is "the Truth," so that we shall "learn Christ" and "be taught in Him even as truth is in Jesus." One result of all the shaking of opinions in theology is to make the Person of Christ stand out more clearly as the centre of revelation and the strength of Christianity. "Let us who are called to teach and rule in the Church press on to fuller knowledge of Him and of truth as it is in Him. Let us not be disquieted because there is so much questioning of traditional opinions. We shall do a good service for many an earnest, inquiring spirit if we can disentangle the essential from the accidental in current beliefs—if we can show how some things for which good men have fought valiantly belong rather to the husk than to the kernel of truth, and that the removal of what is thus shaken is the condition of the abiding of the truth which shall never pass away.

After singing the 63rd psalm the synod was constituted by prayer. The roll was called by the clerk, Rev. John Gray, D.D., Orillia, and the changes that had taken place in the synod during the year were taken as read, to be engrossed in the minutes.

### THE NEW MODERATOR.

Dr. Torrance moved, seconded by Rev. R. Wallace, "That Wm. Bennett, of Springfield, be elected Moderator of the Synod for 1886-7."—Carried unanimously.

Rev. Mr. Bennett thanked the synod for the honour conferred upon him so unanimously.

The thanks of the synod were given to the retiring moderator for his able discourse and the manner in which he had presided during the year.

### COMMITTEE ON BILLS AND OVERTURES.

The Committee on Bills and Overtures was nominated as follows:—Rev. Mr. McQuig, Prof. Fowler, F. W. Eastman, S. Ball, D. L. McKee, Rev. Mr. Craigie, Rev. Mr. Ross, W. Burns, G. M. Milligan, J. R. S. Burnett, Mr. Little, Jas. F. Buchanan, D. Marshall, Rev. Crozier, J. Davidson, C. Davidson; Convener, D. J. Macdonnell.

### WEDNESDAY.

The report of the Committee on Bills and Overtures was presented and adopted. The names of the theological students of the different colleges seeking to be taken on probationary trials for license were read, whose names have already appeared in the reports of presbyteries, and leave was granted to the presbyteries within whose bounds they were.

### MR. BEATTIE'S CASE.

A complaint was read by the clerk of Mr. D. Beattie against the treatment he had received at the hands of the presbytery, asking for an investigation into the matter referred to. A minute of the Presbytery of Kingston on this matter was also read.

Mr. Beattie addressed the synod. The case was continued by the clerk of the presbytery and other members. On motion of Rev. D. D. McLeod, seconded by Rev. J. K. Smith, M.A., it was resolved that the synod find it unnecessary to make further investigation in the case, and without sustaining the presbytery expresses its sympathy with Mr. Beattie, who has for a long period laboured faithfully in the service of the Church. Mr. Beattie acquiesced in the finding of the court.

It was decided to meet next year in Brampton on the second Monday of May, at 7.30 p.m.

### MOUNT FOREST APPEAL CASE.

The next order of business was the Mount Forest appeal case. As this case has been reported in our "Meetings of Presbyteries," we need not enter into particulars here.

### Evening Session.

### THE STATE OF RELIGION.

Rev. E. D. McLaren, D.D. of Brampton, read the report on the "State of Religion within the bounds of the synod." While it had features that were cheering, yet there were lines not so hopeful as they might be, and perhaps this arises out of the fact that the returns were imperfect, not only from many congregations but also from some presbyteries. The report showed that there is a reverent and regular attendance on the services of the sanctuary, and that the attendance at weekly prayer meetings is on the whole encouraging. Some helpful methods were suggested for the improvement of the prayer meetings, such as having a monthly missionary concert, the consideration of a set portion of Scripture, etc. The sacraments are being largely attended. Religion in the home is spoken of in the returns vaguely, and fear is expressed that in a great number of families it is sadly neglected. Work among the young is not in many cases so close and direct as it ought to be. Contributions range from fair to liberal. Special services have been held in a goodly number of presbyteries. On the whole the returns made call for thankful praise to God for all that has been done for the Church and through it.

Dr. McLaren moved, seconded by Rev. J. R. S. Barnett, the reception of the report, and that its recommendations be considered *seriatim*.

It was agreed that the question should be prepared by the Assembly by the end of September, and that in the event of the Assembly's committee not doing this, the synod's committee do it.

### REPORT ON SUNDAY SCHOOL WORK.

Rev. G. M. Milligan, B.A., read the report on Sunday Schools, which yielded the following interesting facts out of exceedingly imperfect returns:—217 schools reported 24,512 teachers and officers, and 23,495 scholars. The money raised amounted to \$4,632. There were 516 communicants during the year, out of the schools. The number of communicants added to the Church during the year from the Sunday Schools is about two per cent. The report contained the following recommendations: 1. That ministers and superintendents fill up the S. S. reports as soon as the papers calling for the same come

into their hands. 2. That the class books and registers prepared by the General Assembly's Sabbath School committee be used in the S. S. Schools. 3. That Sabbath Schools form a prominent feature in presbyterial visitations conducted under the auspices of the Committee on the State of Religion. 4. That special care be taken by presbyteries to ascertain the number of schools within their bounds, and the number of those who do not report their work to presbyteries. 5. That careful inquiry be made regarding the condition of Sabbath Schools in vacant congregations and mission stations.

The report was adopted.

It was moved by Rev. J. K. Smith, M.A., seconded by Dr. Cavan, that the reports of the convener be printed, and that they be placed in the hands of members at the beginning of the meeting of synod.

### THURSDAY.

Thursday morning. A resolution moved by Rev. J. K. Smith, seconded by Professor McLaren, congratulating Dr. Smellie, of Fergus, on his attaining his jubilee, in the service of the church, having been in his present charge for forty-three years was passed, with acclamation.

### A NEW PRESBYTERY.

On motion of Rev. D. Macdonnell, seconded by Rev. W. A. Hunter, it was resolved to form a new presbytery—that of Orangeville, which is to meet on the third Tuesday of July, Rev. A. McFaul to be first Moderator.

### STANDING COMMITTEES.

1. State of Religion: J. K. Smith (convener), R. F. Beattie, E. D. McLaren, J. B. Mullen, ministers; S. Hodgskin, elder. 2. Sabbath Schools: A. H. Scott (convener), J. Somerville, G. M. Milligan, J. B. Fraser, ministers; K. Malcolm, elder. 3. Temperance: John Smith (convener), R. Wallace, E. Cockburn, ministers; Saml. Houston (convener), M. W. McLean, Principal Cavan, ministers; Professor Fowler, John Duff, elders.

### COMPLAINT AND PROTEST.

The complaint and protest of Rev. John McMillan and others, of Mount Forest, against the actions of the presbytery of Sauguenay were, on motion of Principal Cavan, remitted to a committee of synod, to meet at Hamilton, to issue the case before the meeting of the General Assembly in June next.

### CONGREGATIONAL SINGING.

In response to an overture by Rev. W. Fitzrell and others, a committee on the improvement of congregational singing, consisting of Rev. Messrs. Fitzrell, P. McF. Macleod, and John M. Cameron, was appointed.

### TO RESTORE AN OLD CHURCH.

Rev. Mr. Cumberland spoke in support of an overture from the Presbytery of Kingston, proposing the restoration of the old church at Fredericksburg, where Rev. Mr. McDowell, a pioneer U. E. Loyalist Presbyterian minister, preached nearly a century ago. Dr. Reid speaking in support of the overture gave several interesting reminiscences of his early labours in Mr. McDowell's time. On motion by Principal Cavan, a committee to co-operate with the Kingston committee was appointed.

### TEMPERANCE.

Rev. E. Cockburn presented the report of the Temperance Committee, from which it appeared that though the reports received were incomplete, the action of the Canada Temperance Act had on the whole been beneficial, while for various causes it has had hardly a fair trial; provision should be made for its vigorous enforcement by the synod. On motion of Rev. John Smith was adopted a strong resolution favouring prohibition.

### SABBATH OBSERVANCE.

Principal Cavan submitted the report of the Committee on Sabbath Observance, recommending that the General Assembly through its committee should enter into correspondence with other branches of the Church in Canada and the United States, with a view of bringing combined Christian public opinion to bear on the question, and to devise measures by which the inheritance of the Sabbath be restored to large and important classes of the community. Report adopted.

### THE COLLEGE QUESTION.

An overture from the Presbytery of Barrie asked that the General Assembly remit to Presbyteries the consideration of the question, "How many colleges does the church require and where should they be located?" In explanation Mr. D. D. McLeod stated that it was the object of the overture to bring about harmonious action in relation to the colleges. It was agreed to transmit the overture.

### SUPPLY OF VACANCIES.

Regarding the proposed scheme for the supply of vacancies, the synod appointed a committee to confer with similar committees appointed by other synods, that a scheme may, if possible, be submitted to the General Assembly.

### STANDING OF MINISTERS.

An overture on the standing of ministers without charge was received, and its transmission to the General Assembly assented to.

After the usual vote of thanks, the synod adjourned.

## Communications.

### SUPPLY OF VACANCIES.

[To the Editor of the PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.]

Sir,—There is one aspect of this subject I have not yet seen touched upon. There seems great difficulty in bringing probationers and vacancies together for even a couple of Sabbaths. With a fair measure of diligence your correspondent has succeeded in getting a fraction above one Sabbath per month in actual vacancies. If this is a fair sample, no wonder probationers are dissatisfied. Doubtless there are several reasons for the existing state of matters. I wish to mention only one at present, and I state it briefly and bluntly. There is too much monopoly. I believe it will be found by any who care to look into it that to an extent perfectly astonishing the vacancies are occupied by settled ministers. No reference is here made to those going by invitation of the vacant congregations, but only to those who directly or indirectly invite themselves to preach in the vacancies. Practically they hold two pulpits on these days: they hold their own and at the same time fill the vacancies. Of course the probationer may have a chance to preach in their pulpits, but certainly not with a view to settlement. Now it strikes me that: either the settled ministers are in the place where God would have them work for Him, or they are not. If they are, let them give diligence to their work, and not stand in the way of settlement of probationers. If they are not, let them resign that their pulpits may be thrown open to probationers. Suppose the case changed a little. Suppose that, instead of the settled ministers going off self invited to preach in the vacancies and thus throwing probationers out of chances of settlement, the congregations should take the initiative and say to their ministers: "We want to hear Mr. So and So for a Sabbath or two; possibly we may prefer him to you for our minister." How long would it take to devise a scheme if this were the thing to be dealt with? Much attention is being given to drawing up some scheme: what seems to be most needed is more (conscience, shall I call it? or more) faith among the ministers of the Church. I am afraid no new scheme or new machinery will be found satisfactory unless it deals decisively with this unjust monopoly. And if it does deal with this, it may be harsh in its working. Mere machinery cannot reach the root of the trouble. If there is great restlessness and yet many fear to resign, a deeper remedy is needed. More willingness to wait till God opens the way; more confidence that He will guide aright if they simply follow. . . . But enough. I notice only one aspect of the subject at present. The state of matters has surprised me, and I sign myself,

Yours, etc.,

SURPRISE.

## "IS IT PRESBYTERIAN?"

[To the Editor of THE PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.]

Sir,—A letter under the above heading from the pen of "Lequiter" appeared in your issue of March 25th, in which the writer asks some long-stant questions regarding the relative positions of those whom we call ministers and elders. I, too, would like to ask some questions upon that subject.

What right has the Presbyterian Church to make the distinction which it now does between the so-called ministers and elders? Is it not the theory of our Church, that there are but two permanent offices in the Church, the presbyters or elders and the deacons? Do we not hold it to be founded upon the word of God that all presbyteries hold the one office, although they may exercise different gifts and functions? Where then is the ground of our calling some of our presbyteries clergymen and others laymen? Why is it that, in some cases, we ordain by the imposition of hands, and in other cases, by prayer only? Why is it that the vast majority of our presbyteries are debarred from the privilege of presiding at a meeting of Kirk Session, and of ministering in the word and ordinances? Were not all the presbyteries of the early Church upon the same footing, and is it not a recognized historical fact that the function of *presiding* was at first exercised in rotation, or, perhaps, in some cases, by the most venerable elder? I am aware of the text which speaks about the "double honour" of those who "labour in the word and doctrine;" but is this text, even though the translation be acknowledged to be correct, sufficient to rear out the great practical distinction which we now lay upon it? In the history of the Church, when was it that any of the presbyteries ceased to be *clerical* and become *laical*? Is it not true that all presbyteries came to be called *priests*, and has it not always been the function of the priest both to rule and to minister in the word and sacraments of the Church? Where then do we get our authority for degrading a large class of the presbyteries of the Church from the position accorded to their office in the primitive Church, and reducing them to the position of a mere advisory board of laymen? These are important questions, and I am very anxious to have them answered.

Yours, etc.,

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