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Contributors & Correspondents.

NEW BRUNSWICK.

(From our New Brunswick Correspondent.)

It is somewhat instructive to watch the tendencies of opinion with reference to the attachment which members have to the Church to which they belong and the basis on which that attachment rests. In every case the complaint comes up that very many lack an intelligent acquaintance with the Church of their adoption, being ignorant alike of her history and her principles. They therefore are connected and continue that connexion on the basis of tradition only; simply because they were born within her pale, and their ancestors for some generations were identified with her. Their form and order are in any way more agreeable to the Word of God than other forms and orders that are in existence is a thought that never was taken into account at all. That her distinctive doctrines are based on the Bible does not seem to be a matter of much consequence, and attempts have been made to push matters in that direction. That being the case, there need be no surprise if, if denominational connexions are changed slightly and finally the reason for the change being such as will not be held to be reprehensible by intelligent men, a quarrel arises in a congregation, the contestants have their respective followings, the origin of the dispute is not only contemptible, it is beneath contempt; but aggravations given on both sides caused the wound which was a mere scratch at first to fester and it becomes a running sore, which goes no better but rather worse. It does not matter whether it is between the members themselves or between a few of the members and the pastor. Then it is perhaps carried into the Church Courts, which in the nature of things cannot please both sides, and hence the offended section turn and leave. If the men that take offence be wealthy and the intelligence be in an inverse ratio to the wealth, as is often the case, the difference is all the more irreconcilable. That an outsider sees faults on both sides, does not tend to lessen the sense of wrong that is felt on the part of either. I have heard rumours of doings and their results in some places where thoughtless persons abandoned our Church with disgust and went over to another denomination in just such circumstances. It would be waste of time to show the absurdity of such a course, the foolish pettiness of such a spite. The Church they left, so they imagined, would not survive such a blow as their loss inflicted. Others however would say that their departure was a relief to those that remain, even a benefit to the cause of religion. Such men have made no change in their faith and their practice, for they had no deep intelligent convictions to overturn. The result shows that they had no principle in the matter.

Our Church suffers loss in various ways besides that of jars and contentions and personal spleens. In some places we cannot present such fashionable society, we have not so many that drive in their carriages and give such gay entertainments and dancing parties. And our discipline, though it is not now, and especially in the colonies, what it once was in the old land, is somewhat strict and rigid, and consequently, to the worldly and the fashionable, is vulgar and connected with bad breeding. The social status goes far with certain professors. What is to be done in such cases? How are we to arrest the depleting process, that is if there really be any depleting process? If we preach the truth with the rugged and earnest and stern faithfulness with which the old prophets and John the Baptist and the Apostle Paul and even the gentle Jesus preached, we drive away the fastidious and the simpering and the silly and the proud and the fashionable. It we do not preach in an outspoken manner, we incur the penalty of having such charges laid at our door in a wholesale manner, as were put by a writer in *Scribner* some time ago, charges of dishonesty in stating the truth and others of a kindred nature. If we dwell much on the divine right of Presbytery, on the distinctive

principles of our Calvinistic doctrines, we are set down as the narrowest bigots, as far behind the age, as mere slaves to tradition, as dwelling in a little world of our own, outside of which we know nothing, the great world of thought and of activity being a blank so far as we are concerned. On the other hand if we only preach what is common to all Evangelical Protestants we make the people latitudinarian, we leave them ignorant of the reasons why we occupy a distinct position side by side with other Churches, and so they pass from faith out any difficulty, the fences being levelled down so much. In that case, the success of a pastor depends not on the principles that are set forth and the ability with which he sets them forth, and far less on the faithfulness with which the gospel is preached, but largely if not solely on the personal magnetism which he possesses. Hence when the successful pastor dies or removes to another sphere the loose iron filings fall away and are picked up by other magnets. In avoiding Scylla we fall into Charybdis. Is there a middle course possible? It appears to me that many have been carried away too far in these days with the idea that bigotry was to be avoided. It does not follow that because a man has a strong grasp of the peculiarities of his own Church and Creed and sets them forth with due prominence he must necessarily be uncharitable to his neighbors who are of another Church. At this day such a delusion as that might have been dispelled. The bigotry of ignorance is comprehensible; the bigotry of intelligence is a contradiction. To follow the path of duty conscientiously, regardless of the charges that may be brought on either hand is at once the safest and the most successful mode. It will result in happiness to the man that does so, and it will in most cases be followed sooner or later by results that are satisfactory. There are times of course when the truth pressed home honestly and faithfully will cause more to wince, will evoke the rage even of men that think themselves good Christians, but the truth is none the less salutary on that account; nay, it would not be the truth and it would effect nothing at all some such results as these were not to follow. There is nothing to be ashamed of in teaching our forms and our creeds, and it will be all the better for us when we have more of such teaching; always of course in the spirit of charity to all men.

St John, 22nd May, 1872.

PRESBYTERIAN UNION IN CANADA.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.
Sir:—The contemplated Union of Presbyterians doubtless engages the earnest and anxious attention of all who are interested in the maintenance of the Presbyterian banner, and the dissemination of pure religion and correct morals throughout our wide Dominion. To secure a sound, honorable and harmonious union should be the anxious desire of every member of our respective churches. Notwithstanding alleged minor differences there has always been such unanimity in all points of essential importance during the period of their separation, as that the presiding care of the great Head of the Church over the respective Churches, should be most gratefully acknowledged. No other churches can be found within the bounds of Christendom that have adhered so long and so clearly to the same teachings, the same discipline and the same form of church government, as that of the Presbyterian Churches of Britain and those of the same family abroad. In this, there is surely much cause for thankfulness, and much that should restrain the tendency of some to depreciate the sisters, bearing so manifest a resemblance. This continuous family likeness ought surely to be regarded as the doing of God rather than man. In the midst of so much strife and contention among other churches about mere forms as well as vital matters, how visible is the constant presence of God to be seen with us, in that, the old standards of three hundred years can be subscribed by all Presbyterians everywhere. Let us not lose sight of this. There is surely abundant reason

why we should hasten to unite to praise God for His goodness.

We are pleased to find that your paper is most conciliating in its tone and effects. May it obtain a wide circulation and be productive of much good. As contributors to its pages appear to be chiefly of one branch of the Presbyterian family, you may probably allow some thoughts from one who has been accustomed to view points of issue from an opposite point of view, though suggested by utterances that have appeared on this important subject. Points have been raised during the discussion that might better have been allowed to slumber, but which, when raised, must be ventilated, if we would have an intelligent, cordial and lasting union.

First, with regard to the Divinity Halls and College question. The recent communication of "Aiquis" contained, in our opinion, sound and wise counsel, which should serve to smooth down and remove supposed difficulties. That three Theological Halls should meet immediate wants must appear very reasonable. To maintain three efficiently would be a sufficient tax on the resources of the United Church; and to undertake more, must either leave one or more very inadequately equipped, or greatly encumber the church, so as to prevent her giving her strength and resources to the wide mission field before us; and at the same time render attendance at some of the Halls, very small and thus lessen the stimulus so necessary to inspire and sustain the energies both of Professors and students. And to maintain empty Halls in close proximity would be as great an evil after union as to maintain empty Churches similarly situated. They would be a fruitful source of jealousies and strifes. If one Hall may serve the four maritime provinces, two may serve the necessities of the two Upper Provinces of the Dominion. And whether it should be considered conducive to the general welfare of the United Church to remove the Hall at Quebec, Montreal, Kingston or Toronto, and unite two together, should be no obstacle in the way of union. While the interests of the Professors ought to be strictly secured, we think this union of Halls ought to be regarded with peculiar favor by the Professors, seeing that they might thus cherish the prospect of presiding over and instructing double and three times the number of students and thus increasing their opportunity of usefulness. But to insist that any of the literary institutions, which are doing good work for the church and country, should be closed, is certainly very blind policy and very different from the spirit that should prevail among Presbyterians. And why should the institution at Kingston be singled out for this destructive policy? Is it because it is under the control of the old Kirk? Since in the event of union, it must have the same relation to the United Church, this ought not to be any objection. Or is it to assert and maintain the principle, that the church should exercise no control whatever over a literary institution? To be consistent, those who hold this view should direct their attention and destructive efforts to another College within the Dominion, that is doing similar good work for the Church and country. The College at Halifax, N. S. would not be in existence were it not for the efforts and support of the churches there. The only reason we have seen clearly stated for closing Queen's College is that the church should not be burdened with the literary education of the youth of the country. Surely Queen's College is the last against which this objection should be urged. Our strong fear is that those alarmists are opposing this institution not merely because they would not have it under the control of the old Kirk, but because they would establish the principle that the church should have no control whatever of the literary institutions of the country. We do not wonder to find such sentiments uttered by interested politicians; but we are grieved to hear the educators of religion re-echo and assert such sentiments. It rather behooves individual ministers and the corporate body to use all the influence they can legitimately secure to disseminate sound philosophy, which is so closely allied to sound religion. But to reject the limited power enjoyed in this important matter, and to give it over to the entire control of politicians is most unaccountable. And it becomes surpassingly strange when we find some of those who have most strenuously

urged this course have in the strongest manner stated repeatedly, that the politicians of recent date (if not of the present), were utterly unworthy to be entrusted with the most ordinary secular affairs. And yet without any assurance that politicians may not become much more corrupt at no distant day, they would have the churches committed to the principle of having nothing to do with the control of the literary education of the youth of this vast Dominion. Truly this is asking too much. It is fondly hoped that few will be found in any Presbyterian Church, who would be committed to such a principle. It is difficult to perceive by what course of logic those who in principle refuse to receive aid from the state for the maintenance of religious teaching, can hand over the educational interest to such politicians. But the continent of Europe and the neighbouring republics afford more than ample warning against entrusting the sole control of the literary education to interested politicians. Besides it is quite adrift from the expressed sentiments of Knox, Calvin, Luther, and all the leading Reformers. The literary institutions in the Dominion may be safe under the control of the state while it may be known that men of sound views on education are within their walls; but who knows how long this may continue. There are several instances of Professors during the past century, who adopted heretical views in the Scottish universities, but who were called to account and rejected by the Church of Scotland, who had the right and authority to do so. It is a delusion to suppose that errors of faith can only be unbid with dissent. In the lay churs, students are not less liable to have their religious principles corrupted. There is not a branch of literature, philosophy or science, that may not have poison infused to the serious perversion of the youthful mind. The Humanity and Greek classes may not afford the same opportunity to ridicule scripture, as criticism on texts of scripture and in ecclesiastical history. But in any church a heterodox professor may disseminate the most pernicious fallacies, leading the unwary pupil onward from doubt to confirmed unbelief in everything sacred. Indeed the worldly wisdom and religious policy of that other church which excludes the word of God from its teachings as an insufficient rule of faith, but which holds entire control of the education of its youth through every advancing stage, most assuredly adopt a broader and more stable basis. It is much to be feared that secular education is now adays deified to the exclusion and neglect of religious education. And this becomes exceedingly dangerous when entertained by the proper guardians of truth and morals. Secular education without religion is at best to throw the momentum of a giant into the arms of an idiot—to build up what may help to move a world, and leave out the spring that alone insures its moving towards God. To take another view of this subject it appears very ungenerous treatment of the "old Kirk" to make so much ado about the maintenance of the institution under its special care considering the liberal and generous way it proposes to place the large sum at its disposal to the interest of the United Church.

Another side issue that has been introduced into the arena of contention is the old subject regarding the Headship of Christ over His church. Certainly no member of the old Kirk can object to this *per se*, but the way it is introduced cannot be regarded otherwise than an insinuation that the old Kirk is not so sound on this as the sister church. To pursue such a course must retard union. It has never been shown that any one of said Kirk denied this article as part of his creed. Too many bold assertions have been made on this point, but these have been more than refuted. And seeing that union was inaugurated by some of those who had made this serious charge, we might reasonably infer that they had resiled from their past allegations, that time and facts had led them to think differently. We cannot conceive how they could honestly initiate union unless their sentiments in this respect were changed towards us. And certainly this charitable view of those who were approaching the old Kirk was the only argument that could be used to restrain those of us, who felt that there should be a formal withdrawal of the "protest," before union could be considered. It appears the more extraordinary that members who sat in committee considering the basis of union should join in this side issue. If this is now brought forward because of our nominal connection with the Church of Scotland, it might easily be

shown that another Presbyterian Church in Scotland suffered more civil danger from the civil court within the last quarter of a century, than the old Kirk. And moreover, we find it strongly alleged against the seceding church there by her own ministers, that the majority of that body, is already departing from the position they once held in maintaining the crown right of Christ's Headship. This charge coming from such a source ought surely to modify such imputations against our church in all time to come. We think this doctrinal truth is stated with sufficient precision in our confession. If not why not add another article. But it is our matured conviction that the old Kirk receives this article in a fuller and broader sense than some members of the sister church. Our position has always been, that Christ Jesus should be acknowledged not only as Head of the Church but of the state—Lord over all, by whom kings reign and princes decree justice. We have always asserted that His laws should be taught and enforced in schools, academies and universities. And if this is the new article of faith, as a condition of union, if all the members of the sister church are prepared to adopt it in this broad and liberal sense, and promise that they shall insist that His laws shall be taught in every educational institution where their influence can legitimately prevail, then we shall heartily concur in this double article being inserted in the basis. Unwilling to encroach on your space, meantime.

I remain, your very truly,

ALEXANDER McKAY.

Alexandria,

22nd May, 1872.

FARMERS' BOYS.

Farmers who regard the future well-being of their children, especially those who desire to have their sons remain at home, and adopt their profession, and become intelligent and enterprising cultivators and managers of landed estates, thus securing competence, if not wealth and honorable positions, have much to do, by both precept and example, to accomplish the desired result. Home and its surroundings must be made pleasant rather than forbidding. Regard should be had to the arrangement and pleasantness as well as convenience and utility of the homestead building and its surroundings—including those inexpensive adornments which good sense, taste and attention easily secure; yes, easily, for those who think a home cannot be rendered beautiful and attractive with out a large outlay of time or money are mistaken.

It is not expensive to have a neat flower garden, and such trees and shrubs as delight the eye and make home attractive far more than costly objects.—Nor is it prodigality, but rather economy, to have neat and durable out-buildings, fences, gates, and other farm appurtenances and conveniences, including the best labor-saving implements and tools to facilitate and lessen both farm and domestic operations. And, by the way, it is never wise to give the boys the poorest rakes, hoes, etc., and then complain because they do not accomplish as much as full-grown, able-bodied men. It is only just that they, being weaker, should be accorded the best tools and be favoured and encouraged in other respects.

Some farmers—we trust their number is increasing—wisely encourage their sons by giving them plots of ground to cultivate for their own benefit; or animals, the increase or product of which is to be their own. In this, and the like manner, many a young boy has been encouraged, given lessons in management, and acquired means which not only produced contentment, but led to success in after life. The hint, though not new or patentable, may prove suggestive to those parsimonious farmers who force their sons to remain at home, laboring almost unceasingly, with rare holidays or opportunities for amusement or improvement.

All farmers who desire to imbue their sons with manliness and independence, and teach them to manage for themselves—to produce and save or invest judiciously—may safely act upon this suggestion. Let the boys have something which is their own, and thus not only encourage a just pride and ambition, but test and develop their industry, economy, and management. If you can do no more, give your boy or girl, or a boy's plot of ground for flowers. It will pay you as well as them, both now and in the future.