

British American Presbyterian,

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FOR TERMS, ETC., SEE FRONT PAGE.

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON
Editor and Proprietor

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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

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

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

OUR GENERAL AGENT.

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

British American Presbyterian.

FRIDAY, MARCH 28, 1877.

CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, HAMILTON.

The Anniversary Services of this Church were held this year on Sabbath, 11th, and Monday, 12th March. In regard to these it is with pleasure we insert the following from the Hamilton Evening Times:—

"According to the usual custom the authorities of the Central Church invited a clergyman from a distance to conduct the anniversary services. Usually a gentleman has been invited from New York or Brooklyn, and the services of Dr. Taylor, Daryea, James, Ormiston and others have been secured and enjoyed on similar occasions. This year, however, the committee of arrangements invited the Rev. David Mitchell, of the Central Presbyterian Church, Toronto, to occupy the pulpit on last Sabbath, which he did with marked ability and great satisfaction to the congregation assembled at each diet of worship. A mere outline of the sermon would not do them justice. They were powerful and eloquent, abounding in choice illustrations and passages of deep pathos; the applications were practical, altogether stamping Mr. Mitchell as a preacher of the first rank."

In the afternoon of Sabbath the anniversary services of the Central Church Sabbath school, and of the Pearl street Mission school, were held in the Church. The children were seated in front of the pulpit, and notwithstanding the severe weather they almost filled the floor. There was also a large number of parents and friends present, besides the teachers. Rev. David Mitchell preached to the children on the words, "Be ye followers of God, as dear children." He showed himself a master in the difficult art of addressing children. The attention was breathless, and though the reverend gentleman spoke forty-five minutes, it was sustained to the close.

On Monday evening the usual anniversary services were held in the Central Church. The attendance was very large, the spacious building being almost full. Mr. John Bell presided. A rare treat was given in the shape of an organ voluntary and anthems by the choir. Rev. David Mitchell was the first speaker, who said that in view of the warm affection expressed towards the late excellent pastor of the Church, Rev. Mr. MacCall, he had learned the full meaning of the words, "The memory of the just is blessed." He spoke of the social enjoyment of the evening, and expressed his conviction the day was coming when the Church itself would supply proper entertainment for the people, and no longer leave this important matter in the hands of strangers. He then spoke with force and eloquence upon the great work which the congregation had done during the last year, and warmly commended the various Church and benevolent schemes to which they were called to contribute. Rev. Dr. James, of Knox Church, Hamilton, delivered a very chaste, logical, and practically powerful address upon the Church as an organization, showing that it is spiritual in its nature, objects, ends and work. It was also a workshop in which living stones were prepared for the spiritual temple in heaven. The remarks of Dr. James were highly appreciated, and specially because he was an ardent friend of Mr. MacCall, and had long been known and admired as a preacher by the congregation. The chairman expressed the feeling of the meeting when he congratulated the people of Hamilton upon the recent settlement of Dr. James over one of its churches.

On the evening of Tuesday, the 13th inst., the Rev. Mr. Mitchell lectured in the Knox Church under the auspices of the St. Andrew's Society. The *Globe* correspondent remarks that the lecturer "gave a rapid and succinct biographical sketch of Sir Walter Scott, full of piquant anecdote; and then launched on an excellent critique on the wonderful and multifarious literary productions of the once 'Great Unknown.' The lecture abounded in information, just and original criticisms, and was listened to with great interest by an intelligent and appreciative audience."

THE British section of Good Templars having broken their connection with those of the United States on account of the "solar line," half resolved to send a missionary to the Southern States with the object of organizing Good Templar lodges among the colored people.

MR. BRAY'S LECTURE ON POPEY.

We often find public speakers who are thoroughly conversant with history—that is with the record of the past—but who know little or nothing of the state of affairs around them in the present day. They live in the past, and their minds are almost entirely occupied with it. On the other hand we quite as often meet with prominent men, leaders of public opinion, who attempt to grapple with the moral, social, and political questions of the day, while they are at the same time without a competent knowledge of history. We venture to say that the first mentioned character—the more man of history—would understand his special department fully better if he looked around him a little and studied humanity without the intervention of books; and we are just as well—perhaps better—prepared to affirm that an intimate knowledge of what has been done in the past would materially assist the more man of day—the politician and social reformer—in telling people what they ought to do in the present. In Mr. Bray we find these two requisites combined. His knowledge of history—medieval and recent—is both profound and minute, while at the same time he grasps the present situation with the mind of a master, and understands the world in which he lives. His lecture in Zion Church in this city on Monday evening, 12th inst., was a masterpiece in depth and comprehensiveness of thought and choice of language, and was very well delivered, although a word was occasionally lost, rather we think, owing to an unfortunate echo that has taken up its quarters somewhere in the building, than to any defect in the speaker's enunciation. A tough-looking, wiry, square-shouldered man, with a shock head of black hair, every fibre of which seems determined to assert its own individuality—a characteristic, by the way, of a good many men of genius of our day—his very appearance arouses in his audience the expectation of hearing something worth listening to, and before he sits down the most sanguine of his hearers will be fully satisfied. Beginning with the reign of Constantine the great, he sketched the decline and fall of the Roman empire, and told his audience that he had not a tear to shed over it. It was pagan, and it was despotic; and he prayed for the hastening of the time when neither paganism nor despotism can find a place on the surface of God's fair earth. He then described the rearing of the Ecclesiastical Roman Empire on the ruins of the pagan, and showed how, for the sake of popularity, some of the institutions of the old organization were taken and adapted to the new. Following it in its prosperous course to what he considers the acme of its power in the time of Hildebrand, who asserted the supremacy of the Church over the State, and made the tiara of the pope more mighty than the crown of the king, he afterwards rapidly sketched its downward course through worldliness and corruption, until at last the vicious Theodora, raised from the street to an imperial throne, sold the papal chair for two hundred pounds of gold. After contrasting the political position of the Church of Rome in the days of Hildebrand (Gregory II.) with its political position in the present day, the lecturer went on to trace the rise and progress of the "Temporal Power" which had its beginning in the time of Papin le Bref of France, and electrified his audience with a withering torrent of eloquence in condemnation of every sort of connection between Church and State, whether the church should be Roman Catholic or not. The next important stage was the Reformation—Luther, Melancthon, Wycliffe, etc.—and regarding this part of the lecture, we must simply admit that we cannot describe it. All we can say is that the speaker could only edge in a sentence now and again between the rapturous cheers with which his utterances were greeted. To this succeeded a most successful defence of the policy of Bismarck in Germany; and then came the head of the hammer—all that went before was only the long handle of it—the present condition of the Province of Quebec under the heel of the Romish hierarchy. At this stage, no longer trammelled by his manuscript, the orator's eloquence had full scope, and those who heard him will not wonder that the papists of Montreal organized a band of three hundred men to take his life, when they consider how much damage such words uttered in that city would do to the papal cause.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL PRESBYTERIAN for April is out already, and presents a bright and beautiful appearance. It contains three illustrations, a piece of music, and a quantity of choice reading. In the enlarged form, and printed on fine white paper, this periodical compares favourably both in price and style with imported publications; and should be heartily sustained by every Presbyterian Sabbath School in the Dominion. Price, in quantities of over 20, 15 cents. Sample copies mailed on application.

THERE are 815 religious and charitable societies in the city of New York.

HARD TIMES.

The year 1870 will long be remembered as one of peculiar financial difficulty not only in the Dominion of Canada but throughout the world. The depression of trade in the United States commencing with the failure of Jay Cooke in 1873, and continuing as marked as ever until the present moment, began to be felt in this country about a year and a half ago, and doubtless was the cause of much stagnation during the past year. To add to the general dulness, we had to report a widespread failure of the wheat crop, which of course upset all calculations founded upon the promising appearance of the spring and early summer, and which prevented many farmers from turning their money into the channels of commerce. During the present winter, trade in most all departments has been remarkably dull, and so far as we can discern the signs of the times, there is not much prospect of a change for the better taking place. Wholesale merchants are exercising a wholesome caution in their sales, and retailers with few exceptions are making loud and deep complaints as to the condition of things.

Still we would fain believe that we have touched bottom, and there is reason for expecting a slow but gradual improvement. With such a severe and protracted winter drawing to a close, we may safely say that in many respects the worst is over. With the lengthening days, we are beginning to feel that spring will soon be upon us, and then we shall gain by the increased activity and necessary outlay of money which pertain to that season of the year. Everything belonging to agriculture and gardening will be in demand. New buildings that have been projected will be commenced, giving work at least, if not enlarged wages, to the host of tradesmen employed in such undertakings. The prognostications of an early spring are many and striking. If then we should be ushered from the rigors of the frigid zones, not we hope into the horrors of the torrid zone, but into the genial and balmy warmth of summer, a demand for all kinds of light clothing will spring up, yielding perhaps not heavy returns but still more profitable ones for our retail merchants. With the coming of spring the great highway of the lakes and rivers is opened to trade and commerce, and we should trust to its being sufficiently hot in the United States to send many of her well-to-do citizens to admire the beautiful scenery and to experience the cool breezes of Canada. Let us meanwhile indulge the hope that a change for the better will soon manifest itself, and that instructed by the experience through which we have passed, business will be conducted on a sound and healthful basis.

It should not be forgotten that there is much reason for thankfulness even for hard times. Great prosperity is attended by many dangers both for the individual and the community. People are carried away into wasteful habits and too great indulgence, and it is too common for them to live far above their income. Hard times are the protest of Providence against periods of license and extravagance. Much of our present suffering is doubtless connected with lavish expenditures in dress and other luxuries; but we are learning what in fact we can be without these things. Many a family who thought their happiness would be gone were they compelled to leave their grand houses and their pictures and wines and sumptuous dinners, and their horses and carriages, have learned that they can be happy and prosperous without them; and that there is far more true and genuine enjoyment to be found in a simple manner of living. And then in this way, too, we learn the value of money. We may be poor with millions of dollars when we think of riches only as connected with self-gratification; while we may be "passing rich" on a few dollars when we have learned how much of the necessities of life they can purchase, or how much good we can accomplish by their proper expenditure. These hard times are also valuable for calling into exercise the principle of Christian charity. We are compelled to know and realize what human suffering is, when the scarcity of money forces it upon our view. Those would be hard-hearted indeed who would not save their money from indulgence, in order to help the poor and sick. It has been gratifying to us to see how much has been done to relieve the distressed, and we rejoice in the kindly feelings which have been established between the various classes of society, and in the wealth of benevolence which the wide-spread suffering has evoked.

Surely it is not wise to overlook, in connection with these hard times, the spiritual life and activity which have been showing themselves during the past and present years. We believe that commercial depression is often favorable to spiritual work. Men are no longer borne along on the tide of worldly prosperity to forgetfulness of their true interests. They have time to think. They are led to appreciate the Sabbath as a day they can call their own, and when for the time at least they are freed from the pressure of worldly cares. There is a yearning felt after words

of counsel and comfort, and hence they go in larger numbers and from better motives to the house of God. Their attention is not distracted from the sermon by their gains and speculations. They begin to realize that there is something worth living for that is higher and better than riches and earthly possessions. The Bible comes thus to be better read. The prayer meeting which in times of great business prosperity is forgotten and ignored, is now felt to be a pleasant meeting of friends and a profitable occupation of time. We are speaking just now of well-to-do people who become somewhat reduced in their resources and crippled in their means. But what of the large class of poor and starving in such times. It is far from our purpose to say that hard times will convert them. But we do say there is then a condition of things which is favorable to making deep and abiding impressions as to the awful concerns of eternity. The Fulton street prayer meeting grew out of the panic of 1857. Men rushed to the old church for rest and comfort. It is now said that the meetings in Fulton street were never better attended than during the present and past seasons. And we question whether Moody and Sankey with all the advantages of their world-wide fame, and with all the attractions of preaching and singing which they possess, would have commanded the wonderful success which has followed them in America, had we not been living in times that were peculiarly favorable to the carrying on of their daily work. Certainly it is felt by us all that whether it is connected with these hard times or not, there is a quickening influence going on in our churches, and there is delightful news of refreshing seasons from many portions of the Lord's vineyard.

The only sad reflection connected with the present depression in trade, is that which arises from the paralyzed condition of the schemes of the Church. The congregations have been called to liquidate the debt on the Home Mission, but we fear the effort may lead to the income of this year being smaller in proportion. The outlook of the Foreign Mission work is not encouraging; while we are sorry to hear of the territorial plan for the colleges not turning out so well as was anticipated. The close of the financial year may show that these fears are groundless. We trust it may. There is reason, however, to expect a large falling off in the contributions of congregations to the various schemes. If so, there is all the more reason for saving our money from luxuries and self-indulgence as much as possible, to allow us to give to the grand enterprises in which our Church is engaged. There is the more reason for being thoroughly systematic in our giving, as with system we often do far more in dull times than we do without system in periods of prosperity. And there is also all the more need for wealthy members of the congregations denying themselves, and contributing more largely than they feel called to do in ordinary circumstances, in order that the Church treasury may not be empty, and the terrible consequences ensue of stopping the supplies of the men who in the Home and Foreign fields are doing the work of pioneers and planters in the cause of Christ.

FRENCH EVANGELIZATION.

We direct special attention to the letter of Principal Macvicar, to be found in another column. Its brief statement affords ample evidence of the success of the work of French Evangelization in the city of Montreal. In our English speaking congregations there are few stronger indications of prosperity than the attendance at the weekly prayer-meeting. To learn that one of the stormiest and most disagreeable evenings of a Montreal winter, upwards of fifty persons attended the regular prayer meeting service in one of our French churches, and fully two hundred in the other, speaks volumes, and is surely a strong inducement to our people liberally to support this department of the Church's work. The large expenditure consequent upon the building of the new church recently erected for Mr. Chiniquy, has, we understand, considerably embarrassed the Board in the prosecution of its work, and upon the result of Principal Macvicar's appeal depend the occupying of certain fields this summer. We trust that there will be a generous response to it, and that without delay, upon the part of ministers and congregations throughout the Church. We are confident that if the opportunity were presented to our people by means of a special collection at the ordinary Sabbath services, or at the Sabbath school or week-evening meeting, within the next fortnight, the sum required would be forthcoming. Apart from such special collections, how many of our people could forward to the treasurer individual contributions from \$100 downwards, and thus help to meet this note for \$5,000 due at the bank on the 12th of April. We hope that many will thus respond to the urgent appeal.

THE Baptist missionaries who sailed from the United States for Burmah in October last, reached Rangoon on the 27th of December.

Book Reviews.

WIDE AWAKE. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co.

This popular magazine for the young fully maintains its well-known character for combining instruction with amusement. The general style of the articles are lively, and suited to the capacity of the young; the illustrations are, as usual, numerous, instructive and tastefully executed; and a wholesome moral tone is preserved throughout.

PETER THE APOSTLE. By the Rev. William M. Taylor, D.D. New York: Harper and Brothers. Toronto: Willing & Williamson.

Dr. Taylor is already well known as the author of "David, King of Israel," and "Elijah the Prophet;" and the present volume will very much contribute to his fame. Among Old Testament worthies, David and Elijah are two of the most prominent; and with one exception perhaps Peter is the most noteworthy merely human character in the New Testament. Many treatises on the life of Paul have been written: not so many on that of Peter; hence our author's choice. With admirable skill he brings before his readers, with life-like vividness, the warm-hearted, impulsive, and often blundering apostle, and describes the incalculable service rendered by him to the church and to the world. He regards him as a brother man, having the same infirmities as the rest of us; and he seeks to bring from his errors as well as from his excellencies, lessons that may be helpful to Christians generally, amidst the trials and temptations of modern life. As a literary production, the polish and elegance of the work are worthy of special notice; and still the author speaks out plainly, gives no uncertain sound, does not mince matters, and makes no compromise with evil. With very little modification it might be said of him as he himself says of John the Baptist, "He knows nothing of that simpering propriety, all begloved and sleek, which has chloroformed so many modern preachers; but he exposes, in words as unadorned as his own camel robe, the iniquities of his hearers, and calls on them, there and then, to repent."

THE ART OF TEACHING. By Frederick C. Emerson, M.A. Montreal: Dawson Brothers. 1877.

The author of this useful little book is a "scholar and Greek exhibitioner of Wadham College, Oxford," and was lately employed as commissioner to inspect the model and high schools of the Province of Quebec. These facts furnish a sufficient guarantee for his learning and general knowledge of the principles of education. Besides these qualifications, we find out by reading his book, although he does not tell us, that he is a thorough, practical teacher; that he has been for some considerable time engaged in teaching, primary, elementary, or what we call common or public schools, as well as schools of a higher grade; and that he has taught successfully. The book makes no pretensions to excellence as a literary production. There is scarcely any attempt at polish or elegance. The phraseology is homely and familiar, but at the same time terse and concise. Almost on every page, and sometimes still more frequently, the teacher will meet with some axiom or some aphorism, or some other sort of short original sentence which he (by the way our author always calls the teacher "She.") How is that? would do well to add to his stock of proverbs. Of course we do not mean to say that the thought is always original: there is very little original thinking to be done on the subject now; but we often meet with an old thought expressed in a new and neat form; and that is pretty much all the originality we expect to meet with.

"Teach little and teach it well." "Be aware of the habit of scolding." "Let your very 'pointer' be neat and made for its purpose." "The stupid and dull claim your special attention. The clever ones will get along fast enough without it." "The self-denial required (if any) to become a teacher will be repaid at least five hundred fold." "The 'knack of teaching' is to use the known to explain the unknown." "Prepare your lessons and the questions you mean to ask, thoroughly." "Do not pretend to knowledge you do not possess." "To teach efficiently be thorough; to teach with ease be calm, self-possessed, never in a hurry, never over-anxious, but earnest, punctual, and well prepared with your day's work."

These few fragmentary quotations are taken from the introductory part chiefly on account of their pithiness. They are by no means the best of the book. We could not do justice to it in that respect without long quotations for which we have not space. The author enters with great minuteness into every branch and every department connected with organization, discipline, teaching and training—physical, mental, and moral—of a public school. And although the book has been written entirely without reference to our Ontario Programme, we would recommend it to the perusal of every teacher, not with the view of following it slavishly in practice, but rather with the view of assimilating the good that is in it, making it his own and adapting it to his own system; for every teacher of any standing, has his own system in spite of programmes.