

Psalms and Hymns.

EDITOR BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—Many of your readers would be glad to see a little moderation on the part of your correspondents who are filling your columns with irrelevant arguments, not so much in favour of the use of hymns, as against the Psalms in public worship. I do not object to hymns, but I am sorry to find some of our friends affirming that the Psalms are "unsuitable," and ought "to be abandoned." Even the caption of these letters is offensive, "Psalms, versus Hymns." Two men contending at law against one another, would be plaintiff versus defendant, but why Psalms should be versus Hymns I cannot understand. It is that were true it would drive us all into the ranks of "versus Hymns." The Psalms must be right, "for the Scripture cannot be broken."

Our friend R. W. of St. Stephen, says some of the Psalms are appropriate only for "persons who were inspired, and consequently cannot be used without presumption by private Christians." He gives as an instance, Psalm lxxv. 1., because no man lives to sing "to all generations." Had R. W. lived in the days of the inspired author of that sacred song, he should have whispered in his ear "That is unfit." Asaph with his great choir will be guilty of presumption to say they will sing "to all generations." Did the Psalmist provide an inspired hymn that nobody, in any age, could sing but himself? Or could he sing "to all generations." I had thought the saints would sing an "everlasting song." R. W. tells me that to propose such a thing is "presumptuous and ridiculous." So it seems the whole Church, ancient and modern, has been guilty of this presumption!

Again he says, "There are others of the Psalms, which are suitable only for Jesus, and why Christians should be called upon to sing like Jesus has always appeared to me very unaccountable. But such must have been as unfit for ancient Israel as for modern Christians to sing. I suppose the xxii. is of the kind he refers to, yet it is addressed "to the chief musician," and sung by the saints from the time of David till now, that R. W. has made such a discovery.

Again it is objected that we cannot sing about sitting at Babel's streams when "we never were there in our lives." So also of Egypt. Did it not occur to R. W. that the same might be said of those who first sang such Psalms. There is a true sense in which we were there. It will be well if R. W. is quite out of Egypt yet; there is reason to fear that some of the mists of the Egyptian darkness linger about us. In the Psalms, Egypt, Babylon, Moab, etc., have a figurative and typical meaning. The whole book of Psalms is full of such poetical phrases which are not understood, because not well studied; hence, the difficulty. But that is a poor reason for setting them aside as "unsuitable." Better confess our ignorance and say, "surely the Lord is in this place and I know it not."

Your correspondent "Aleph," says there is no provision made in the Psalms to praise God for the atonement of Christ "as actually accomplished." He allows it is there, "but as still in the future." Let him put on his spectacles—for evidently his eyes are dim—and read.

Or let him raise his voice in Psalms, xix. 14, xxi. 5, cvii. 2, lxxiv. 2.

"My lips shall much rejoice in Thee  
When I Thy praises sound.  
My soul which Thou redeemed hast  
In joy shall much abound."

"Or praise God for His good; for still  
His mercies lasteth long.  
Let God's redeemed say so, whom he  
From the enemy's hand did free."

Again he adds: "The resurrection of Christ is an event for which we should praise God, and no provision is made for it in the psalms." I wonder how he reads or understands such as Ps. lxxviii. 18, "Thou hast, O Lord, most glorious, ascended upon high, or "The Lord did say unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand," and many others of which these are but a sample. But "Aleph" makes a more sweeping charge against the sweet singer of Israel. He says: "In fact the whole gospel is left out of them. The 'promises' of the gospel times and of the gospel blessings are there, but the gospel itself we do not find." I wonder if he would find water in the sea? What did our Lord mean when he quoted from the Psalms more than any other book, and directed the people to them saying, "They are they which testify of me." If the gospel is not in the Psalms, it is not in the Old Testament at all. Yet, these are the oracles of God, which both our Lord and His Apostles adduced as revealing the gospel. And such are the terms in which the gospel is couched in the Psalms, that a thousand years prior or posterior to the incarnation, would call for no change in the mode of expression. David could sing of his redeemer as we do, "Thou hast received gifts from men." "In thy salvation we will joy." It would seem that the Holy Spirit in dictating the Psalms, clothed the glorious truth in such language that it is never out of season; "for a thousand years are as one day." But in all this, Mr. Editor, you will observe I have not advanced a word against the use of hymns any more than against sermons. I like to sing "There is a fountain filled with blood," "Rock of ages cleft for me," and many such. But when I do so, I never imagine I am thereby declaring with "Aleph," that the Psalms must be abandoned, or that the gospel is not in them, or like "R. W." that they are unsuitable. Such a line of argument can scarcely fail to confirm those who are averse to hymns in their prejudice, and drive others to their side. If it must be "Psalms versus Hymns," I cannot but decide for the former; but if "Psalms etiam Hymns," that I prefer. It is quite unnecessary, and I think an inexcusable dogma, to affirm that the Psalms are unfit or without gospel, in order to establish the conclusion that hymns are profitable and desirable in divine worship.

Yours, etc.,  
LUNATAS.

Home Missions.

EDITOR BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—In your issue of the 23rd inst., I noticed in the minutes of the Home Mission Committee meeting held in Toronto, that a resolution was passed authorizing the convener to issue circular letters to each session, appealing for a special collection to make up a deficiency of \$10,000. A letter of this kind was circulated last year, to which the congregation with which I am connected, heartily responded, and no doubt many others did the same, but notwithstanding this, the debt this year seems to be exactly the same amount; nor can we wonder at this, when we notice in the minutes of the same meeting that the Home Mission Committee has continued to give a grant of \$150, to supplement a congregation which, in your issue of 25th December, boasted of having placed an organ in their church. I have no objections to their having an organ, but I do object to the funds of the Home Mission being given for that purpose. I hold that the very fact of a congregation being able to purchase an organ and place it in their church, is a sufficiently strong reason for the committee withdrawing supplement. Besides I cannot see how ministers can consistently come before their congregations appealing for increased liberality towards the Home Mission Fund, when part of it is distributed to such congregations, who apparently love the sound of the organ more than the souls of the destitute, who are unable to support the means of grace, much less the praises of God by an instrument. I think the convener would confer a great favor, if he would explain why such is done, or state the conditions upon which a grant may be obtained.

Instrumental Music a Circumstantial?

EDITOR BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—May not a very obvious distinction remove from some minds the difficulty which is felt on this question? Music as such introduced for the sake of the sweet sound, and offered to God as praise, would certainly be an addition to commend worship. In this use of it, it corresponds to the temple service, and is incongruous with New Testament singing of psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs. In this sense, objection may be taken to overtures, solos, voluntaries, etc., used without intelligent praise.

But as helping to sing, the objection is not valid against musical instruments. Some use a tuning-fork, others a pitch-pipe to help in singing. If it is not wrong to use one note so as to aid the preceptor in getting the proper pitch, can it be wrong in principle to use fifty notes to aid a whole congregation in getting and keeping the proper pitch and time of singing? A musical instrument may aid vocal praise, and accompany heart devotion, and be no addition to worship, but a mere circumstance attending vocal and heart praise; while, to introduce musical performances to gratify the taste of the audience is not to worship at all, and to have them as though they were pleasing to God, is to depart from the New Testament idea of acceptable worship in "spirit and truth."

Yours, etc.,  
QUERIST.

May 1, 1875.

Ministers and Churches.

At the annual meeting of Chalmers' Church, Guelph, Mr. D. Guthrie was appointed Chairman, and Mr. R. Melvin, Secretary. From the reports of the Managers and Treasurers of Ordinary and Building Funds, it appeared that the Sustentation Fund, which is collected in the place of seat rents, yielded in 1874 \$1,510.87, being an increase of \$174.05 over the previous year. The Sabbath collections were \$1,181.25, of which \$380.25 came from the monthly collections in aid of Building Fund. The subscriptions paid to Building Fund were \$597. The total floating debt of the congregation, which two years ago was \$2,865, is now reduced to \$727.20. This includes expense of recent improvements to the manse property. It was resolved by the meeting that the Managers should take up a cash subscription during the present year to pay off the floating debt. The membership of the Church is now 303, as against 183 when the Rev. Mr. Wardrop was inducted pastor. The meeting passed a resolution to increase the minister's stipend by \$200; increase to commence from 1st January last, thus making it \$1,400 per annum, with manse. The following gentlemen were elected Managers for the current year:—Messrs. Gideon Hood, R. Melvin (Mayor), D. Stirton, M.P., Evan Macdonald, John Thompson, Robert Forbes, Alex. Mackenzie, George Hadden, Geo. Bruce, G. B. Hood, William Stewart, Jas. Innes, James Laidlaw (Warden), John Inglis, D. Guthrie and R. Emshe. A subsequent meeting of the Managers, Mr. D. Guthrie was appointed Chairman, and Mr. R. Melvin, Secretary. Mr. Melvin is Treasurer of the Ordinary, and Mr. G. Hadden, of Building Funds.

The annual meeting of Canada Presbyterian congregation, Collingwood, was held on Monday evening, April 26. The chair was occupied by the pastor, the Rev. R. Rogers. The reports of the past year were highly satisfactory. The number of members on the roll is twenty-three over last year. The amount collected for ordinary purposes has been \$1,107.46; and for the Home Mission

Fund, and other schemes of the Church, \$88 has been given, which, although not a large sum, is greatly in advance of last year. The Sabbath School is in a prosperous condition. For books, papers, etc., there has been collected and expended the sum of \$91.17. The average attendance is 130. The call for more room in this department, which was made last year, is more urgent than ever. A proposal to proceed with the erection of a new church was the subject of long and earnest deliberation, and although no definite action is yet taken, the trustees are instructed to consider the matter, secure a suitable site, ascertain the probable cost, and do what they can to secure the necessary means for carrying this proposal to a successful issue. May the great King and Head of the Church open up the way; may He give His people true faith, holy courage, and Christian liberality, and then we shall have good success. A cordial vote of thanks was tendered to Mr. E. Thomson for his valuable and unwearied services in conducting the service of praise in the sanctuary.—CON.

The Toronto correspondent of the *Stratford Beacon* refers in the following complimentary terms to the new church in course of erection by the St. Andrew's congregation: "The new St. Andrew's is situated on the corner of King and Simcoe-streets, opposite the Lieutenant-Governor's residence, and has one of the finest sites in the city. Recently there has been quite a rivalry among the different denominations in putting up beautiful churches. For a while the Metropolitan was the handsomest, then the Baptist, on the corner of Gerrard and Jarvis streets, but now they have all to give way to the surpassing attractions of the new St. Andrew's. It will differ from all the other churches in the city except the Baptist alluded to, inasmuch as it will be of stone."

The young people of the St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Kincardine, are to meet for music practice every Wednesday evening during the summer months, under the efficient leadership of Mr. Anderson, who now leads the choir of that church.

The congregation of Stanley Street Presbyterian Church, Ayr, have purchased land on which to erect a comfortable and substantial manse for their minister. The work will be proceeded with at once.

The Rev. Gavin Lang, of Montreal, was the recipient of a purse containing \$1,600, along with a kindly-worded address, on the eve of his departure to Scotland on four months' leave of absence.

The pulpit of St. Andrew's Church, North Street, London, was occupied last Sabbath morning and evening by the Rev. R. H. Warden, of Toronto.

We learn from the *Barrie papers* that the Rev. J. G. Robb, B.A., has been preaching with much acceptance in the Presbyterian Church of that thriving town.

A new Presbyterian Church has just been completed at Ripley, at a cost of nearly \$2,000; and a thousand dollar manse is in course of erection.

At the first seditant of the Synod of Montreal, the Rev. John Crombie, M.A., of Smith's Falls, was unanimously chosen Moderator.

We are rejoiced to learn that the rumor which appeared in the daily papers of Montreal, of the death of the Rev. C. Chiquay, is unfounded.

We are glad to know that the Rev. W. Inglis, of Ayr, has almost entirely recovered from his late severe illness.

Interim Draft

Of a Constitution for the proposed Confederation of Presbyterian Churches, to be amended before being submitted to the Conference in London, July 21st, 1874.

PREAMBLE.

"Whereas, the Church of God, though composed of many members, is one body in Christ; and whereas, the Reformed Churches holding by Presbyterian principles, are substantially one in doctrine, government, and discipline; it is therefore agreed to form a Presbyterian Alliance, to meet in General Council from time to time, in order to manifest the oneness of these Churches, and to combine them in furthering the great ends for which they have been instituted by their Head; it being understood that it thus uniting, the Presbyterian Churches do not mean to separate from other Churches which hold by Christ, but will be ready to join such in Christian fellowship, and in promoting the cause of the Redeemer.

ARTICLES.

"1. DESIGNATION.—This Alliance shall be called 'The Confederation of the Reformed Churches, holding the Presbyterian System.'

"2. BOND OF UNION.—The Bond of Union is Christ, and the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament.

"3. MEMBERSHIP.—Any Church, whose creed is in accordance with the consensus of the Reformed Churches—such only being admissible, may, on expressing by its Supreme Court, a wish to join the Confederation, be admitted into membership therein, by a vote of the General Council.

"4. THE COUNCIL.—1. Its Constitution.—The Council shall consist of Delegates appointed by the Churches forming the Confederation; the number from each Church being regulated by a plan sanctioned by the Council, and proceeding on the principle of

the number of congregations: in the Churches, the Delegates, moreover, from each Church always consisting of an equal number of ministers and elders. The Council may, on the recommendation of a Committee on Overtures, choose Associated not Delegates, and invite them to sit and to deliberate, to offer suggestions, to deliver addresses, and to read papers.

"2. Its Powers.—The Council, while it has the power to determine what Presbyterian Churches shall be allowed to join the Confederation, shall not interfere with the internal order or discipline of any Church. It shall take up only such evangelistic subjects as have been committed to the Church by her great Head. Topics may be brought before it by any Church which is a member of the Confederation, or by members of the Council, on being transmitted by the Committee on Overtures. The decisions and recommendations of the Council shall be transmitted to the Supreme Courts of the several Churches, and be entitled to receive from these a respectful and prayerful consideration.

"3. Its Objects.—The Council shall seek to help all weak and struggling Churches, to promote freedom of Church action, to gather and disseminate information concerning the Church at large, to commend the Presbyterian system as combining simplicity, efficiency, and adaptation to all times and conditions, and shall exert all subjects that are directly concerned with the work of evangelization, as the following:—The peace of the Churches; the distribution of Mission work; the combination of Church energies—especially in reference to our great cities and destitute districts; the religious instruction of the young; the sanctification of the Sabbath, the suppression of intemperance, and other great prevailing vices; Systematic Benevolence; and the overthrow of Infidelity and Romanism.

"4. Its Methods.—The Council shall seek to guide and stimulate public sentiment by papers read, by addresses delivered, by publishing and circulating information about the state of the Churches and of Missions, and by the exposition of sound Scriptural principles and defences of the truth.

"5. CHANGE OF CONSTITUTION.—This Constitution shall not be changed, except on a motion made at one meeting of Council, and carried by a two-thirds vote at the next meeting."

Presbytery of Guelph.

The Presbytery of Guelph in connection with the C. P. Church, met in Chalmers' Church, on Tuesday the 18th inst. There was a good attendance of both ministers and Ruling Elders, and a large amount of business transacted. The following are the most important and most generally interesting matters which engaged the attention of the Court. Session Records were called for, and those produced were referred to committees for examination. A Conference on the State of Religion was next held, suitable and excellent addresses being delivered on given subjects by members of the Presbytery previously appointed for the purpose. A call to Mr. James Little of Nassagaweya and Campbellville, from the congregation of St. John's Church, Hamilton, was taken up. Mr. Little signified his acceptance thereof, which was concurred in. Mr. David Smith, a minister of the late New Connection Methodist Church, appeared, requesting to be admitted as a minister of the Canada Presbyterian Church, and handed in documents certifying to his ministerial standing and acceptableness as a preacher. A committee afterwards reported that they were unanimous in recommending that his application be received, and brought before the General Assembly at their first meeting. A report was read of the proceedings of the S. S. Conference held by the Presbytery in January last, and the Clerk was instructed to send a copy of the same to the convener of the General Assembly's Committee on Sabbath Schools. Replies were read to the notice sent out by the Presbytery, as to the proposal to separate the congregation of Mimosa from that of Everton, and connect it with St. John's Church, Guelph. Only one congregation objected to the change. It was carried, on a vote, that the matter be delayed till the first meeting of Presbytery after the General Assembly. It was unanimously agreed that Principal Cayon be nominated for the Moderatorship of the ensuing General Assembly. Mr. Middleton and Mr. Loghrin were appointed members of the General Assembly Committee on Bills and Overtures. Other general business was transacted, after which the next ordinary meeting was appointed to be held in Chalmers' Church, Guelph, on the second Tuesday in July, at 9 o'clock, forenoon, and an adjourned meeting in Chalmers' Church, Elora, on Tuesday, 4th of May, at half past one o'clock in the afternoon.

The Presbytery of Hamilton, in Connection with the Church of Scotland.

The regular meeting of said Presbytery met in the basement of St. Andrew's Church, Hamilton, on the 21st ult. There was a good attendance. The proceedings were opened with prayer by the Moderator, Seabright—the Revs. Geo. A. Yeomans, B.A., Moderator, Robert Burnet, Charles Campbell, Dr. Hogg, Robert Dobie, E. Wallace Wats, James Herald, ministers, and Messrs. J. Trunk, Thos. Little, James Hutchison, James Inch, Archibald McArthur, elders. The minutes of last regular meeting, and six *pro re nata* meetings, were read and sustained. The Rev. Robert Dobie thought that monthly meetings should be held, and not six special meetings thrown upon a Presbytery in such a short time. No doubt the Moderator thought he had done his duty, but an important Presbytery like that of Hamilton should have more than three regular meetings a year. He did not wish to blame the Moderator, but thought he ought not to have allowed these numerous meetings. The Rev. Charles Campbell did not think the Moderator could well have helped calling the meeting, and thought they had arisen from circumstances over which the Presbytery had no control. The Rev. Robt. Burnet did not think that it was

the time to make any remarks concerning the conduct of the Moderator, but objected strongly to the action he had taken in calling important meetings for business on special occasions, which necessarily exposed the business of the Presbytery, and of a sadly unimpaired minister's character before they were brought before the proper tribunal. The Moderator thought that it was hardly right for him to speak from the chair, but thought after the amount of condemnation that had been passed on him, he would say that not a single Presbytery had as many *pro re nata* meetings as this Presbytery had. He was unable to attend all of them, and would be willing to see more regular meetings. Mr. Burnet read a letter from the Secretary of the Coloured Committee in Edinburgh regarding the salary of the Rev. Mr. Moffatt, one of the Presbytery's missionaries, who has been doing missionary labour at Saltfleet and Binbrook. A long discussion ensued regarding a claim which the Rev. G. W. Waits had on the Presbytery for stipend due for missionary labour in the township of Blenheim. It was agreed to admit the validity of Mr. Waits' claim, and the Clerk was advised to write to all the congregations within the bounds, asking them to subscribe severally their quota towards the same. The credentials and papers of the Rev. Mr. Clarke, who made application to be admitted into the Church, were referred to a Committee composed of the Revs. Dr. Hogg, Campbell and Dobie. The Committee after meeting returned, and recommended that the Rev. Mr. Clarke be admitted into the Church without the usual year's probation, and that the Presbytery recommend the same to the Synod. This was moved by Mr. Burnet, and seconded by Mr. Herald. Archibald McArthur, Esq., informed the Presbytery that the congregation of Richmond and Shower's Corners, had received the sum of £80 sterling from the Church of Scotland Colonial Fund, which had placed their Church out of debt. The Clerk, Mr. Burnet, reported that all the vacant pulpits had been filled during the past four months with one or two exceptions. A communication was read from the Presbytery of Toronto, announcing the resignation by Rev. John A. Fraser, of the charge of the Church at Whitby, and the Presbyterial Certificate was received. A call was read from the congregation of the Church at Clifton, in favour of the Rev. Mr. Fraser. It was moved by Dr. Hogg, seconded by Mr. Waits, that the call lie on the table till a representative of the Clifton congregation come before the Presbytery with the necessary guarantee.—Carried. Certificates were read from the Presbytery of Kingston, admitting Messrs. James McCormick, A. Ross, and D. McEachern, on public probationary trials. An extract from the minutes of the Kirk Session Records of the congregation of Nelson and Waterdown recommended leave of absence to the Rev. E. W. Waits for ten weeks, for the purpose of going to Britain on urgent family business. This was approved of. The Presbytery then adjourned till 2.30 p.m. After the adjournment the Presbytery met again at 2.30 p.m., and was called to order. The first matter brought up was a resolution by the elders of the Church at Saltfleet and Binbrook, and was read by the Rev. Mr. Burnet, who said that the Rev. Mr. Moffatt had received bad news from Scotland, and had to go home in consequence, and thought that they could not take leave of their brother without an expression of their appreciation of his zeal, as he had laboured almost without fee or remuneration.—We the undersigned Elders of the Scotch Kirk, Binbrook, certify that the Rev. John Moffatt has faithfully discharged his ministerial duty at Binbrook and Saltfleet since the time of his appointment by the Presbytery, and that he has preached regularly in the Church at Binbrook every Sabbath, except on those Sabbaths when he was away preaching in other places, as appointed. PETER DICKSON, JOHN THOMPSON, Elders, Binbrook, April 20th, 1875. Mr. Burnet moved, seconded by Mr. Herald, that an application should be made to the Sustentation Fund in Mr. Moffatt's case.—Carried unanimously. Mr. Burnet was appointed as representative to the Committee of the said fund for the ensuing year. Mr. Burnet said he would like to move a resolution "expressing the regret of the Presbytery at the illness of the Rev. J. C. Smith, M.A., the pastor of St. Paul's Church in this city." The resolution was carried unanimously. The Records of the different Kirk Sessions within the bounds were examined and found to be correct. The next thing brought before the Presbytery was to consider and report to the next meeting of Synod, on the overture anent the formation of a Central Home Mission Board. The Clerk thought that this overture was out of place, as the Church was in a transition state, and in about six weeks the Church to which they at present belonged might be swept away. There has been established "The Presbyterian Church in Canada," and the whole educational system would be changed. He thought that, therefore, the overture was inappropriate. The Presbytery objected to sending any report to the Synod on the overture relating to the Home Mission Board. A memorial was presented by the congregation of St. Andrew's Church, Hamilton. The Rev. Robt. Burnet objected to the memorial being read on legal grounds. The Rev. C. Campbell said that the members of the Presbytery should undoubtedly decide whether the language in the memorial was of the kind that could be read before the Presbytery. It was moved by Rev. James Herald and seconded by the Rev. R. Dobie, that the memorial be referred to a Committee. This was agreed to. The Moderator nominated the Revs. Dr. Hogg and Mr. Dobie a Committee to examine the memorial. The Committee after deliberation reported that the memorial contained expressions that could not be received by the Presbytery. Mr. Inch moved that the memorial be read. There was no second. Dr. Hogg said that the Presbytery requested to receive the memorial of the members of St. Andrew's congregation on account of the language employed. The Presbytery adjourned to meet in St. Paul's Church, Hamilton, at 10 o'clock a.m., on the 3rd Wednesday of August. The Boudoir was pronounced and the meeting dispersed. R. W. W.