

The Presbyterian Review.

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Presbyterian News Co.

TORONTO.

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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 28TH, 1886

OUR STORY.

We need scarcely inform our readers that the delightful serial story "Barbara Street," which has been running through the pages of the REVIEW for some months, comes to an end with this issue. In a week or two we shall announce the title of the New Serial, which we trust will be as acceptable to young and old as "Barbara Street" has proved to be.

THE GEORGIA EVANGELISTS.

WHEN the proposal to bring the Georgia Evangelists to Toronto first took shape, we called attention to what we might expect if the so-called "gems from Sam Jones" going the rounds of the papers were to be taken as a sample of their sermons, and to protest against the irreverence and vulgarity manifested in those utterances. From the full reports of the sermons in the daily press, our readers will have discovered that in the case of Sam Jones (we use the popular title without meaning any discourtesy), there is no need for us to withdraw the grave charge of constant offences against propriety in speech and sentiment then made; and if they are so minded they can readily make a collection of new "gems" of rarer quality besides which any then quoted would pale their feeble light. It would be possible to make from his public utterances since he came to this city, such a collection of low vulgarity and daring irreverence as would fail to find a place in any decent family.

But while we would emphasise our stern disapproval of crimes against the purity of the English tongue and departures from the canons of good taste as seen in Sam Jones' sermons, we do not hesitate to declare our conviction, from our increased knowledge of the man, that these so-called "gems" are not the best parts of his addresses, but the fantastic excrescences which hide from those who have not had the opportunity of hearing him, the real power and pathos which thrill his audiences and put them in such thorough sympathy with the speaker that they find it impossible to be offended with him. Upon reflection the charitably disposed, however much offended for the moment, will probably admit that Sam Jones is no mountebank necessarily obliged to resort to vulgar stories and coarse jokes to tickle the ears of the groundlings, but an honest man who is in deep earnest in his work of winning souls, and who is used in the conversion of many.

How far his work for good will prove lasting it would be idle to speculate, but we may venture to utter a caveat against any imitations of his eccentricities. We have some reason to fear that some weak brethren who have nothing of Sam Jones' genius—for he is a genius in his way—or his spiritual power—and he has undoubted spiritual power, will strive to imitate his foibles and end by degrading their pulpits and driving people out of the church. And we fear also that the rein that Sam Jones gives to his buffoonery will ultimately have a disastrous effect upon his own mind. It is undeniable that no man will ever greatly move his fellows who is

destitute of humour. It is equally true that the fountains of tears and laughter lie very near each other. Of all men who have these gifts, the occupant of the sacred desk should be on his guard as to how he uses them. We are sure that no man will do lasting work for God who allows his sense of humour to master him and says funny, startling or grotesque things simply for the sake of being funny, startling or grotesque. Into this error Sam Jones, we fear, frequently falls. His address on the Parable of the Prodigal Son, amply illustrates this unfortunate tendency and alone would furnish justification for the strictures we felt compelled to pass upon him some months ago, and which in certain quarters provoked no little resentful opposition. There were doubtless elements of power in the discourse, many pungent, pithy utterances calculated, if apprehended, to do good, but they were quite lost amid the jokes and witticisms which were so distributed as to make the audience endure the serious reflections for the sake of the fun that was sure to follow. It is not uncharitable to think that the jokes and the stories are the only parts of the discourse which the majority of the vast audience carried away. At any rate, the behaviour of the medical students who were present in large numbers, and whose appreciation of the jokes was as demonstrative as it was intelligent, after their escape in a rush out of the building before the after-meeting, left no doubt that the service had failed to impress a portion of the audience with much solemnity. They at least seemed to regard an evening with Sam Jones as entertaining as anything to be found at "The Grand."

To all who gave Mr. Jones a fair hearing it is evident that he has no need to seek for power in the pulpit from such sources. He may be attractive and powerful without offences against good taste and without appeals to methods to attract men to the sound of the gospel unworthy of the Christian pulpit. And we venture to hope that his friends will seek to advise him with regard to those blemishes which scandalize many of God's people and repel those who would otherwise gladly take him by the hand and co-operate with him in every good work.

Of his colleague, Sam Small, we are glad to speak in terms of unqualified approval, as a man not only thoroughly devoted to his great work but also of very remarkable ability as a preacher, a man of culture and refinement. Sam Jones can hardly be said to preach in the ordinary sense of the term, so entirely independent is he of his text and so supremely unconcerned as to the logical connection of his utterances. Sam Small, however, is a born preacher, and he handles his subjects with consummate skill as well as scriptural soundness. He seeks, if we judge correctly, to win his hearers simply by the force of the truth. Though his popularity is not as great as that of his colleague, we do not doubt that if his life be spared he will prove the more successful evangelist.

As to the doctrinal teachings of Sam Jones in general or his views of Presbyterianism, it is almost unnecessary to speak. They are like those of many of his class, the product of emotion and not of reason or revelation, and it would be a useless task to combat his vagaries here. If we have failed to enlighten the editor of the *Christian Guardian* as to his misconceptions of Calvinism, it would be a hopeless task to attempt to set right the Southern evangelist. Sam Jones "is glad," for instance, "that Presbyterians have renounced the doctrine of infant damnation." It would, we suppose, be a waste of words to ask him to produce anything in the Standards of our Church to show that such a dogma has ever been held amongst us. It would be just as idle to invite our Methodist friends to formulate out of the same addresses a creed that would prove acceptable to their own body. It would puzzle even Sam Jones' most ardent admirers to find any satisfactory orderly statement of gospel truth in the whole range of his addresses. And we are quite sure that many of his propositions are self-contradictory. But this aside. We must commend him for stumbling on one correct doctrine well known to Presbyterians, but not often heard in Methodist pulpits—the final perseverance of the saints. If this doctrine be accepted cordially by our Methodist brethren here, they will perhaps not find it necessary to bring Sam Jones back to Toronto for many years to come. If all who are professing conversion just now remain steadfast there will be a great company to spread the good tidings without the necessity of calling for help from without.

We earnestly trust that our Methodist friends have reason to be satisfied with the results of these meetings, and that a great impetus may be given through the movement to the spiritual life of the Christian people of this city and country.

CHRISTIAN UNION.

IT is certainly a pleasing indication of steady advance in Christian sentiment that our secular journals are giving a place for the discussion of Christian unity and ecclesiastical union. The position of the *Globe* in advocating union of Protestants and Roman Catholics is simply absurd, for Popery can become one with evangelical Christians only by the abject submission of the latter to the Pope of Rome. Not so, however, is the proposition for union among Protestants. Writers belonging to the Anglican Church are at present very earnest in seeking to find common ground on which Presbyterians, Methodists and Baptists can unite with them. The proposals made by these writers, certainly afford ground for encouragement, and as the result of that prayerful spirit and effort which they desiderate, it is reasonable to expect that

God in His Providence will lead the Anglican Church nearer still to the other Churches, so that in His own good time there may come a manifestation of that spiritual unity which does exist between all the Churches, in a manner not now conceivable. It may be taken for granted that the Presbyterian Church is ready to do all that can be done consistently with scripture truth towards united action in the visible Church, and the formation of a grand whole which will contain particular churches of all denominations, with variety of ritual and freedom of action, so far as God's word permits and provides therefor. We therefore hail with joy the advance made by our Anglican brethren, and, as we recently said, heartily reciprocate the kindly feelings which they show.

The *Mail* in a recent issue contains a long letter from Rev. Dr. Roy, of Cobourg, setting forth from his point of view what the Church of England has done in government, doctrine, ritual and life to promote and maintain Christian union. A similar manifesto regarding the Presbyterian Church would perhaps surprise Anglicans; for it can easily be shown that the Presbyterian Church maintains the catholicity of the Church invisible and visible as strenuously as either Romanist or Anglican, and has at all times shown by its doctrine and discipline and the Christian life of its members, as zealous a desire as ever the Church of England had for Christian unity. There is good hope, therefore, that if neither of the Churches is disposed to say what the other has done in times past to promote union, good feeling may yet arise between them. The development of such a feeling between Presbyterians, Methodists, Congregationalists and Baptists has been going on rapidly since the Evangelical Alliance, Bible Society, Young Men's Christian Associations, and such like institutions have brought them together. It is only to be regretted that the same unifying agencies have not brought us into closer contact with Anglicans. Perhaps co-operation is nearer at hand than we suspect. When it comes the desire for union will be developed also.

But in Dr. Roy's letters there are some points to which we venture particularly again to refer, as indicating the quarters from which disturbing elements may arise. That Dr. Roy and other Anglicans do not see points as they appear to Presbyterians is not to be wondered at. Nevertheless an appreciation of the Presbyterian position and the concession of an intelligent and conscientious holding of certain views on our part are absolutely necessary if there is to be any attempt at unity:

1. It must not be assumed that Presbyterians are not as conscientious in regarding prelaty non-scriptural as Anglicans are in contending for it, or that they hold their opinion because they are more ignorant than Anglicans.
2. It must not be assumed that Presbyterians are ignorant of the nature of Christ's Church because they insist upon salvation and sanctification through faith alone 'distinguishing' between the visible and invisible Church of God and refusing to accept a church-theory which ignores natural depravity and supernatural renewing graces and makes it possible for men who deny the deity of Christ and the personality of the Holy Ghost and generally the supernatural in Christianity to feel that they properly are of the Church of Christ.
3. It must not be assumed that Presbyterians are opposed to the use of a liturgy because they resist as unscriptural the imposition of a liturgy by the authority of the Church. A little enquiry will disabuse the mind of any one on this point; and yet it is always coming up as if there could be no unity or union without a fixed liturgy.
4. It must not be assumed that the Reformation was a mistake made by good but ignorant men in their revolt from Roman error, and that now Christians should return to practices and doctrines held by the Church of the 4th century before its division because *quod semper ubique et ab omnibus* is equally binding on the conscience with the written Word of God.

Whether the Presbyterian Church in these matters is right or wrong may fairly be discussed, but it will be impossible to hold conference with men who do not admit that they may be mistaken as well as Presbyterians may be mistaken. With infallible men discussion is respectfully declined. The conference must be between equals, and no assumed superiority of learning or piety can be permitted on either side. This offensive assumption appears in Dr. Roy's letter. It doubtless inadvertently found expression and he will be surprised to have his language called in question. He describes in glowing terms what the Church of England does, and finds in it an "ideal" which recognises "God's hand in raising up and authorising others to do what she herself has often failed to do and of welcoming them without humiliating them into fellowship with her."

Now we do not admit that the Anglican Church is older than the Presbyterian; or that the latter was raised up to supplement the former; nor do we desire to be welcomed into her fellowship. We might as well propose to admit Anglicans to our fellowship and assure them patronizingly that in joining us they are not humiliated. Humiliated! What can it mean? That we must come down and become Anglicans and and not feel it? Rather let them come up to the Presbyterian level and we shall rejoice in their elevation. Such language must be eschewed if union is ever to come.

In another issue we shall show how Christian Union was practically regarded at the recent Episcopal Convention in Chicago when the resolution to send fraternal greetings to the National Council of the Congregational churches convened in the same city came up for discussion.

NOVA SCOTIA, has lately celebrated some centenaries of a character peculiarly interesting to our Church throughout the Dominion, and not devoid of interest, we would hope to all the numerous branches of the great Presbyterian Church, wherever found. There is perhaps some danger that the centennial business may be overdone, but even the *London Spectator*, which is growing weary of reviving the past, would admit that the planting of Presbyterianism in Pictou, Nova Scotia, a hundred years ago, September 17th, was an event of first-rate importance to that Province, and through it to all Canada, and as such deserved to be heartily commemorated. And we are glad to know that it was heartily and worthily commemorated. The *Witness* gives a full account of the proceedings from which we make a few extracts: "The celebration of the Centenary of James church, New Glasgow, took place on Friday, the 17th inst., and was in all respects most gratifying. The arrangements reflected the highest credit on the good taste, good feeling, and sagacity of the gentlemen in charge. George W. Underwood, Esq., an elder of James church, presided. Devotional exercises were conducted by Rev. T. Sedgwick, (Moderator of Synod) Rev. A. P. Miller, and Rev. D. B. Blair, fathers of the Presbytery. Rev. E. A. McCurdy, the devoted and talented successor of Drs. MacGregor and Roy in the pastorate of James church, gave a realistic account of the civil and ecclesiastical condition of this province, a hundred years ago. Dr. McCurdy read a most interesting paper on the planting of Presbyterianism in Pictou. James W. Carmichael, Esq., gave a thoughtful and suggestive address on the political and educational influence of Pictou Presbyterianism. Rev. E. Ross, gave the more recent history of Presbyterianism—its divisions and reunions.—The evening services were hardly less interesting or appropriate than those of the afternoon. Devotional exercises were conducted by the pastors of the other two congregations, Rev. E. Scott and Rev. George Murray. D. C. Fraser Esq., gave an admirable narrative of the work and progress of James congregation under Rev. Dr. MacGregor, Dr. Roy, and E. A. McCurdy. The congregation is indeed a "mother church," five others having sprung from it; and it may safely be said that it was never doing a better work, giving more liberally or living more worthily of the Christian name than it is now. And this, indeed, is as it ought to be! Two tablets were unveiled, one to the memory of Dr. MacGregor and one to the memory of Dr. Roy. James D. MacGregor gave an account of the progress of New Glasgow during the century. James Carmichael (father of J. W. Carmichael, Esq.) was the virtual founder of New Glasgow. Other good and true men were his fellow-labourers. The Carmichaels, the MacGregors, the Frasers, Captain MacKenzie, John Cameron, John MacKay and others may well be mentioned with honour when the up-building of New Glasgow is the theme. John S. MacLean, Esq., Halifax, gave an earnest address in which, after referring to the proceedings of the evening, he presented briefly an account of the progress of Presbyterianism in Halifax during the past thirty years. The proceedings were brought to an appropriate close with an address by Rev. J. D. MacGillivray. The proceedings during the whole day were most interesting, appropriate, and impressive. Not a jarring note was heard. All was harmony and happiness, as was fit. A very pleasant feature of the celebration was a 'banquet' at 6 p.m., of which some three hundred partook. A bountiful feast was provided, and was duly appreciated."

We understand that all the papers and addresses are to be published in a pamphlet, which will be a valuable contribution to the local history of New Glasgow and Pictou, and will be of great interest to Presbyterians in general.

We give in other columns extended notes of an address on "The Recognition of Christianity in our Educational System," by Principal MacVicar, before the annual convention of Protestant teachers of the Province of Quebec, on the 15th inst., in the David Morrice Hall, Presbyterian College, Montreal. Sir William Dawson, President of the Association, occupied the chair, and on the platform were the leading educationists of the Province, prominent citizens, and invited guests from a distance, such as Dr. Buckham, President of the University of Vermont; Miss Freeman, President of Wellesley Ladies' College, and others. The Hall was densely crowded, and the views expressed met with the heartiest response from all. The address is eminently timely and suggestive, and deserves the careful consideration of all concerned directly in education, and in a no less degree of all solicitous for the true welfare and progress of Canada.

At a special meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, convened on the 8th inst., Rev. Archibald Robinson, of Broughshane, was appointed successor to the late Dr. Rogers, in the Chair of Sacred Rhetoric, and Catechetics in the Assembly's College Belfast, and Rev. Dr. Petticrew, successor to the late Dr. Crokery, in the Chair of Systematic Theology in Magee College, Derry. Both are very prominent and able men, and their election to such important posts, is regarded with much satisfaction throughout the Church. Being both "anti-organ men," their election is also accepted as "security given for the permanent burying of the unfortunate subject, which too long distracted the peace of the Church."

We would again call attention to the fact that this year a special edition of the Foreign Mission Report was published at a very low rate for gen-