

# British American Presbyterian

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## Contributors and Correspondents.

### MINISTERS' LIBRARIES.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—It is evident that with the stipends which a good number of our ministers are receiving, it is quite impossible for them to make any additions to their libraries, and this inability will soon tell upon their pulpit ministrations and general intellectual activity. Indeed, it is doing so, in very many cases, and to a very distressing extent. Those who were very promising students, and very popular preachers, are not at all making good the promise of their earlier years, and friends are disappointed because they are not. They need not. The thing is as natural as anything well could be. Indeed, had it not been as it is, there would have been sufficient room for astonishment. They have been for years on the receipt of stipends which will not permit the purchase of a single additional volume, and disgusted with the weary struggle, they have allowed their minds to go to rust. Can nothing be done to remedy this? In some congregations in the old country, ministers' libraries as part of the Church's property have been tried with very marked success. A yearly collection is made, and books purchased with the proceeds which, while put in the minister's library, are labelled as church property, and are left to succeeding ministers. In this way, in some instances, libraries of from six hundred to a thousand volumes have been accumulated, and these mostly of works of reference which a young man in the ordinary circumstances of our ministers could never purchase. Could such a plan not be tried in Canada? It may not be the best plan, but almost any one is better than nothing.

I am, Yours, etc., A PRESBYTERIAN.

### Theatres.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—A good many of your readers, especially in Toronto, would like a little change from the everlasting discussion of "Psalms vs. Hymns." That matter has been worn thread-bare to the last degree, and it is not disrespectful to your worthy correspondents, at least it is not contrary to fact, to say that a large amount of wearisome proving could not well be imagined as expended upon any one subject. I shall not say that a larger amount never has been, but I can most certainly affirm, that in the course of a now tolerably long life, I never knew of more. Besides, there are other and more practical questions that need a turn over very badly, to which some of your ready writers might as fully direct their attention. There, for instance, is the theatre, which in Toronto at present, is doing as much harm to the morals and manners of our population as are our dram shops, if not more. Why don't the religious community say something about it? I shall not ask them to consider whether or not the theatre can be made a school of virtue. I shall not ask whether it ever has been in fact found to conduce to either the deconecies or refinements of life. Let them simply say, whether or not something like outward decorum should be maintained in those places of amusement, which even at the best, are found to be frivolous and degrade both the mind and heart of their regular frequenters; and let them ask what has been the character of a good many of the theatrical exhibitions in Toronto during the last five months. I make bold to say that members of almost every church, certainly of every denomination of professed Christians in the city, have, under the poor affectation of "culture," and "fondness for refinement," and a sort of "Brimmagem" show of "gentility," been crowding to witness exhibitions which no simply decent man would allow his wife or daughters to know anything about. In the gross ignorance of many in what are called the "higher walks" of Toronto society, there may be found some excuse, when, for "the beautiful music, you know," they went to see and hear what they did not understand; and we were led into agonies over the doings of a prostitute and her parasites, and the special career of one of these favourites of fortune. But that excuse, all unworthy and ludicrous as it is, does not hold good when the language employed has been English, and when the immorality and indecency have been altogether undisguised. Surely churches ought to have something to say about what their members so largely patronize. I what shall we say about all the gossip and scandal that has been floating about Toronto for months past in connection with these theatrical proceedings?—the foul stories that "society" has been discussing with so much relish?—the authoritative air and prudish affectation with which fashionable matrons and pretty misses have been giving the "correct versions," etc., etc. We have had the "Black Crook," and the "Grand Duchess," and I suppose to stimulate jaded palates, we shall have the "Can-Can" next, or something even more exciting and sensational. Is all this not in your line? Well, perhaps not, but "religious people" in the "best circles," are patronizing them all the same. Let us by all means, have a few letters on theatrical matters, were it only for a change.

Yours,  
AN OLD MAN.

## Theological Education in Canada and in the United States.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—It is a fact pretty generally known, that for several years past, numbers of young men belonging to Canada, in preparing for the sacred work of the ministry, have preferred studying at Theological Institutions in the United States to remaining in our own colleges. We have been frequently asked by the parents of such young men, and others interested in the cause of education, what are the advantages enjoyed at these institutions? are they vastly superior to our own? or is their superiority enough to compensate for leaving their own country, and the land where they hope to labor, to be educated in another? To such questions we have been obliged, hitherto in candor, to reply we cannot tell, as we have not been in a position to judge. Having lately visited Princeton, and Union Seminary, New York, and made pretty full enquiry and observation as to the workings of both, we venture now to refer to that point, and to give an emphatic negative to the question. That is, to express a very decided conviction that the advantages to be gained there are not sufficient to warrant those who intend to become ministers in Canada, going to the United States to study—that so far as ministerial efficiency is concerned, they are, to put it in the mildest form, likely to be no gainers by the change. And, in frankly stating this conviction, we would have it understood that it is intended to imply no reflection on the judgment or position of the students who have been, or are studying in these seminaries. We can testify to the very honourable and highly praiseworthy place they occupy; while we remember with gratitude, the very hearty kindness and respect shown by them during our visit. Nor do we wish in the least, to detract from the reputation or confessed efficiency of these schools. The institutions which can boast of a Hodge, a Green, a McGill, on the one hand; or an Adams, a Shedd, a Hitchcock on the other, requires no recommendation, and need fear no detractor. But the point we wish to look at is this. Taking the course of instruction, as we find it in the respective institutions, and the question of training men for the work of the ministry in Canada, is there sufficient ground to give a preference to other seminaries, over those which our own church has so equipped, and is endeavouring to maintain? The supposed inducements to prefer the States, so far as we could gather, are chiefly the following: The all but unlimited scope for engaging in Sabbath School or city mission work. The advantages of hearing eminent lectures on popular or scientific subjects. The advantages of hearing such models of pulpit eloquence and popular preaching, as are to be found in New York. And above all, the more numerous and more experienced staff of Professors in these seminaries. As to the first three of these reasons, which will apply only to New York, may it not be asked, "is there not in the cities of Montreal and Toronto, scope enough to employ the utmost efforts of those who wish to engage in Sabbath School or city mission work?" And are there not in these cities such courses of lectures and literary entertainments as may be found in New York? Do not lecturers sometimes go from Canada to the States, and *vice versa*? As to hearing great models of preaching on Sabbaths, while ready to concede the eminence of such preachers as Dr. J. Hall or Dr. H. Crosby, of the Presbyterian; Dr. Storrs or Dr. W. Taylor, of the Congregational Churches—whom our students often hear—we think there are in the cities of Canada, both in our own and other churches, ministers to whom they might listen with scarcely less profit. But the most important point seems to be the fuller equipment of the professional staff, and larger experience of those employed in this work. Now, while these may seem to be very great advantages, we are not sure that they are not of a kind more spacious than real. Might not a smaller staff of professors, with a more distinct and definite course marked out to each, communicate to the student more real instruction than a larger number, on a less distinct plan? Is there not sometimes great loss of power in having too much effort expended on one point? or in the forces applied coming in contact one with another? For example, in the month of January, we entered Union Seminary on two consecutive days, and heard excellent lectures by the Professor of Systematic Theology, on the person and work of Christ, under the two heads of Christology and Soteriology. A few days after, we heard the very same ground gone over by the Professor of Church History, under the head of the Christology of the Ant. New-Testament period. The next day we heard the same subject discussed by the Professor of Sacred Literature, under the head of Symbols; treating of the ancient creeds and the errors they were intended to counteract. And soon after we heard *virtually*, the same subject discussed by the Professor of Sacred Rhetoric, while treating of Messianic Scripture. There can be no doubt of

this doctrine of Christ's person and work being a cardinal one in a system of theology; but we could not help saying to the young men, whether you understand the heresies of the *Docetæ Apollinaris Nestoriani et hoc genus omne*, or no, you have at least, got line upon line, nor as to the manner of teaching, does there appear to be the superiority which might be supposed. While not disposed to find fault, or institute invidious comparisons, we hesitate not to express the opinion, that for familiarity with the subject taught, conciseness and clearness of thought, aptness in communicating instruction, or in other words, for real teaching power, we found nothing to surpass, hardly to equal, what we have heard in the class-room of Principal Caven. And we mention him rather than our other Professors, as wishing to speak only of what we have seen and heard. Nor are the examinations and recitations of a superior kind. The first five or ten minutes of every hour, are usually spent in putting a few leading questions on the lecture before. The only written examination at Princeton is at the close of the session, which from the sample of the papers we examined, appeared to be a fair test of what might be expected to be learned from the course. At Union there is no written examination, but only an oral rehearsal for an hour or two in each class; at the close of the session, of leading points in the course, which as we heard them, appeared to be very perfunctory, as compared with our closing examination papers. There may be other inducements to enter the Seminaries in the States, not often mentioned, such as the almost entire absence of entrance examinations, or the pecuniary assistance offered, neither of which we think ought to count for very much with our Canadian students. But, putting all advantages together, are they sufficient, in ordinary circumstances, to justify those who intend to be ministers of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, in preferring other institutions to our own? We think not, especially, since by the liberality of our church, these are now provided with buildings hardly surpassed on the continent; and the period of change in the Professors, which some have feared, may be regarded for a good while to come, as past. While we have taken the liberty of thus directing attention to the comparative advantages of the two courses that may be followed by our students, and we are permitted to say, that the opinion expressed is in harmony with the conclusions of ministers from Canada, now settled in the United States, we would not be understood as seeking to circumscribe the liberty of any, or discouraging, in every case, the desire to obtain the advantages of other schools of theology. While we could not altogether approve of what we observed, a correspondent lately recommending in your columns, viz., two sessions at Knox College, and then one at some other, perhaps Germany, or elsewhere, for there is surely great advantage in having a complete course; not breaking off with two sessions, and perhaps going over the same ground at some other school. Yet, we think many of our students might, with great advantage, complete their course in our own colleges, and then take an additional session in the United States, Germany, or wherever they might find most in harmony with their ulterior purposes.

—A CANADIAN MINISTER IN THE UNITED STATES.

### THE SCHOOL QUESTION.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—It appears by your last issue the Synod of the Canada Presbyterian Church has resolved to memorialize the Legislature to have the Bible made one of the authorized books to be read in the Public Schools. You concur with the memorial, and have stated very fully the reasons as they appear from your point of view. There are others that might be given, and will, no doubt, be forthcoming, as you have invited discussion on the question. One has just occurred to me, and as it is one not likely to suggest itself to many correspondents, lay or clerical, I beg the privilege of stating it. It was suggested by the reply of a young lady, to the question, "Would you approve of the use of the Bible as a school book?" She said, "No." "And why?" "Because it was so used in a school that I attended, and it seemed to have the effect of destroying our reverence for it. We just treated it like any other book." Now this appears to me an excellent reason, not for rejecting, but for admitting it. It has been the subject of a good deal of superstitious veneration. There are men whose reverence for it amounts to idolatry. They worship it as God, at all events they see Him in it, and nowhere else. and hold it so sacred, that although only an imperfect translation, they would neither criticize nor change a word of it. The Presbyterian Church itself, with its theory of plenary inspiration, has done much to foster this irrational feeling. But let us get it into the schools. let its special study be no longer confined to ministers and Bible class readers—who are really so tied down by ordination vows, and by subscription to articles, creeds, and confessions, that they cannot themselves move in this matter—but extended to the intelligent men and women engaged as teachers, whose duty it will be to examine critically, not only the meaning of the words and expressions, but into the sources of the book, in short, as the young lady said, to "treat it like any other school book, and it will soon get freed from the trammels of a veneration so irrational. Of course there are a great many passages that criticism must quietly pass by, and some so indicate that would scarcely do even to read them in a mixed school of boys and girls, and such less of young men and women; but a teacher of any tact would contrive some way of passing them altogether. Yours truly, LAYMAN.

### Missions.

The following letter from the wife of the Rev. H. S. Mackenzie, of the English Presbyterian Mission at Swatow, to Mrs. Gillies of West Taieri, will be read with much interest:—

"My DEAR MRS. GILLIES,—Many months ago our brother Mr. Smith asked one of us to write to you and give you some account of our Girls' school here, in which he said you took a very kindly interest, and I have many times intended to do so, but till now have always been prevented. We all feel very much indebted to the friends in New Zealand and Australia who have taken such a deep practical interest in the work which is being done here, and we hope that interest may continue, and that the sister Churches in those places may not only give of their means, but also send men out to this large mission field, where there are such multitudes who have never yet heard of the grace and love of God to men. We find our school work very interesting, and I shall try to give you a short sketch of it from the beginning till now. A kind lady in Edinburgh furnished us with funds to build the school, and also undertook its support for five years, so that we have been free from any financial difficulty. The house is inside the walls of our mission compound, and is entirely shut off from the public road. It has a good large enclosure behind, chiefly in grass, where the girls have many good romps during play hours. The school contains on the ground floor a large school-room, with smaller dining-room behind, and also a kitchen and washing room. Up stairs there is one large bedroom where all the girls and the matron sleep, and behind it a smaller room, at present unoccupied, which can be used if we require more space, or if any of the girls should be ill. They sleep two and two in a bed; said bed consists of a wooden frame with a straw mat laid over it, and bamboo pillows. Bedding in summer, *nothing*; in winter, a large wadded quilt. The girls cook their own food, with the matron's help, make and wash their own clothes, and do all the housework. At this they take turns, relieving one another every month—one-half resting while the others work. In September, 1873, we began the school with twelve girls, all being daughters or grand-daughters of Church members, and about one-half having been baptized. We were most fortunate in our matron, a Christian woman, who, because of her husband's persecution, dare not go near her own house. She is a wonderful type of what the spirit of God can do in the hearts of these poor heathens. She meditates on God's laws days and nights, and we are more thankful for the help she is to us in everything that concerns the girls' best interests than I can tell you. The girls rise in the morning soon after daylight, and while some are preparing breakfast (consisting of rice and salted vegetables, or fresh), the others make the beds and clean the rooms. At 9 a.m. they all meet, along with our house servants, for worship, conducted by one or other of the missionaries, when they read and are questioned on "the doctrine." Immediately afterwards begins their reading lesson with a Chinese teacher, who, I am thankful to say, is also a Christian. Your children may be interested to know how they read. They all sit at a long table, each one with her book before her, and they all read aloud at the very pitch of their voices; thus, as you may imagine, makes a very great noise, but I believe it is necessary on account of the different tones; and I have never ceased to wonder how in all this Bible, when most of the readings is from different parts of the book, the teacher will detect and correct a wrong one. The only class books used are a small primer, compiled on Christian principles, the hymn book, and the New Testament. Several of the other girls have finished Matthew's gospel, and are now reading John's. At 11.30 they begin to write, and that continues till noon, when they sing a hymn and dismiss. Then comes dinner, and at one they are ready to begin work; at this time one of us is always with them, and we find it extremely pleasant work. At three, the teacher comes again, when they read and write till five, when the work of the day is over. Soon after comes the evening meal, after which they play for some time. The matron conducts worship with them in the evening, and they all go early to bed. As you, perhaps, know there are three ladies of us in the mission, and we all have an equal interest in the school, and give it equal attention. Two of us take it by turns, arranging so that every third month is free for any other duties we may have. Just now Mrs. Guild and I have it, and we divide the work thus. She (Mrs. G.) takes the general superintendence, looks after the reading, &c., and sees that all household work is thoroughly done. I superintend and arrange the work, next month Mrs. G. will be free—I shall take her place, and Mrs. Duffus name, and so on. We give the girls holidays during August and September, but all the rest of the year they are with us. This year we have three more, making our number fifteen. Their ages vary from nine to fourteen. Five of the bigger ones have, during these past weeks, applied for admission into the Church, and we are very hopeful of all. We know we of ourselves can do nothing beyond preparing the soil and sowing the seed, but we look to Him who has promised that His word shall accomplish that which He pleases, to water the seed and cause it to spring up and bring forth fruit. We find the girls extremely teachable and obedient, and also very pleased to be taught; but they have many faults, faults common to our fallen nature, and also peculiar to heathens. I hope that you and those about you who are interested in the coming of Christ's Kingdom may remember to pray for these

girls and for us, that we alike may be taught of God, and that we may be helpers to them while they continue under our care. I fear lest my letter may be uninteresting to you, but perhaps it is well you should know these details of our work; and, should you care to hear from me again, I shall be very happy to answer any questions you may put, as far as I am able. Also if there is anything your children, who sent us the contents of their Mission box, would like to know, I shall be very glad to tell them. My husband is writing to Mr. Gillies, and, I doubt not, giving him the other news of the mission, so I shall bring my letter to a close. Mrs. Guild and Mrs. Duffus unite with me in kind Christian regards, and I remain always, my dear Mrs. Gillies, Yours most sincerely,  
MARY MACKENZIE.

### ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH, LONDON.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—In your issue of the 14th inst., I observe a letter signed "A. B." in reference to matters pertaining to St. Andrew's Church, London. Evidently the author thinks a great deal of me, and it is but natural, that out of the many who hold me in "very high esteem," in that congregation, I should strongly desire to know who this particular friend is.

There is a great resemblance in the style of "A. B.'s" production, to a most remarkable letter addressed some eighteen months ago, to the late pastor of St. Andrew's Church,—a letter remarkable for nothing but unblushing impudence and bad spelling.

Mr. Editor, "A. B.'s" communication to your paper is, from beginning to end, a tissue of reckless assertions. To these assertions, I give the following flat contradictions:

1. I neither wrote, nor dictated, nor inspired a sentence or a syllable either for the *Home Journal*, or any other paper except the *Record*, in the matter of St. Andrew's Church, London.

2. My amendment was not confined to the mover and seconder.

3. It is usual to publish—and that too in the *Record*,—both the motion and amendments in any important case as e.g.,—the question of sending Rev. N. McKinnon to the Foreign Field,—see *Record* of September, 1866; the question of Presbyterian Evangelical Works; overtures on "Examining Students," and on "Calls;" the question of "Instrumental Music," see *Record*, of March, 1868; the question of "Union;" the case of this very same St. Andrew's Church a year ago; and now, this so-called offensively exceptional "instance."

4. The Amendment is not an "amusing" but a *terribly necessary* one—not "an exhibition of canting hypocrisy," but an expression of earnest conviction, couched in terms that formed the only competent motion submitted in the case, and that, "A. B." and the majority of St. Andrew's congregation know right well.

5. The impression left by the letter of "A. B." is that the motions were made in the afternoon, and that in the evening I had ferreted out a seconder. The truth is, that the hour of adjournment disturbed the submitting of the motions—Mr. Duncan's amendment not being read at all till the evening session.

6. My motion was not in the hands of the printer two hours nor one hour "before a seconder could be found for it." "A. B." knows that Dr. Proudfoot voluntarily testified, on the floor of the Presbytery, that the Rev. Mr. Hay, in his presence, offered to be the seconder of my motion, *not three minutes* after the adjournment.

7. I did not send my motion to be printed. The reporter of the *Press*, at the table, asked to copy it, and I granted him the privilege, as I did in reference to all the other documents in the case.

8. I did not hurry off the motions to the *Record* to aim a blow at St. Andrew's congregation, and bring them into undue prominence before the Church and the world, but, in response to a request from the Editor of the *Record*, furnished him with a copy of the proceedings of that meeting of Presbytery, and signed it "of course, George Cuthbertson, Clerk, and not 'A. J. G. H.' 'X. Y. Z.,' nor 'A. B.'"

9. The unworthy and untruthful sneer at the deputation appointed by the Presbytery, that they "did not want to hear anything from those who differed in opinion from the pastor," is sufficiently answered by the terms of their appointment, and the character of the gentlemen composing said deputation. Their names are John Thompson, J. B. Duncan, N. McKinnon and P. McDermid, ministers, and Thomas Gordon, elder; and more, one of "A. B.'s" party is the seconder of the resolution, promising Mr. Scott a retiring allowance, *unanimously adopted* at the congregational meeting, at which said deputation were present.

10. That the article in the St. Thomas *Home Journal*, is neither a "foul slander" nor "deberately untrue" is emphatically demonstrated by the sad picture drawn in the closing sentences of "A. B.'s" contradictory effusion.

Mr. Editor,—"A. B." is evidently "spoiling" for a fight. He is miserable, having no minister of his own to torment, he assails me. With my compliments, tell him that he is a coward; and, if only they will append their own signature, I will discuss with him or any other man, or with all the other men in St. Andrew's congregation, and successfully defend my course throughout the whole procedure in this painful and disastrous case.

GEORGE CUTHBERTSON.

St. Thomas, 25th May, 1875.