

British American Presbyterian.

VOL. I.

TORONTO, CANADA, FRIDAY, AUGUST 2, 1872.

No. 25

Contributors & Correspondents.

THE LOWER PROVINCES.

(From our own Correspondent.)

DR. FORRESTER.

I have been to Truro to-day and was present at the unrolling of a monument erected to the memory of the Rev. Alexander Forrester, D.D. Dr. Forrester was a native of Scotland, having been born in 1805. After passing through the usual course of training, he was licensed to preach and for some years was minister of a parish in connexion with the Church of Scotland. In 1848 he came out of the establishment, being the only one in his Presbytery that did so, and helped to form and build up the Free Church. In 1848, he was sent out as a deputation to Nova Scotia, when liking the country, and being liked in turn, he was induced to accept a call to a congregation in Halifax. Here he laboured until 1855, when he was appointed Superintendent of Education in the Province and Principal of the Normal School at Truro. He threw himself into the Education question with great force and enthusiasm, and accomplished wonders in the cause. In fact he shortened his days by the herculean labours which he undertook and carried out. In 1863 the two offices which he had held for eight years were separated and he remained at the head of the Normal School. In 1869 he died while still in the vigour of his strength to all appearance. He had gone to New York for a few weeks of leisure, and while there he left this scene, the end having come in the house of his beloved friend, Dr. John Thomson, the same who was a delegate to the Churches of this Province, a few weeks ago. There were no remarks made by the latter in his address to the Synod in Halifax, that made such an impression, in fact drew tears to many eyes, as the reference, to the last scenes of Dr. Forrester's life.

Shortly after his death the teachers of the Province conceived the idea of raising a monument to his memory. Many of them had been his own pupils and all of them had been associated with him in the good cause, and had caught some of his enthusiasm. To-day witnessed the inauguration of the work completed. A vast concourse had assembled to see the dedication, teachers being there from all parts of the Province. The oration was pronounced by the Rev. Dr. Robertson, an old and tried friend of the deceased and speeches were delivered by some others. The whole passed over in a pleasing and satisfactory manner.

There was one element of disagreeableness in the proceedings. The local Government which is all the Council of Education being applied to, granted at first that the monument should be erected on the grounds of the Normal School. After the grant was made a difficulty arose because the present Superintendent of Education thought his dignity was not sufficiently honoured in the arrangements, and the Government in a moment of weakness, as the members, I doubt not feel to-day, withdrew the permission given. The consequence was that the movement has been erected on Truro Common instead of on the school grounds. There is considerable feeling in the matter. It is strongly felt that the conduct of the authorities and of the superintendent in particular, is in the highest degree contemptible.

H.

July 23rd, 1872.

JOTTINGS FROM NEW YORK AND BROOKLYN.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

Sir,—I have just spent three Sundays in Brooklyn, L. J., U. S. I send you some of my impressions of that great and rapidly increasing city, in which there are many things, new and old—some to blame, some to praise which may be safely copied, and some to be carefully avoided. The profanity of the Americans is proverbial. Many seem to have lost all sense of shame and self-respect, all reverence for the Deity or day of rest; the name Jesus, the first, the highest, the best in earth or heaven, comes in for the largest share of contempt with the multitude, their new fangled oaths and horrid blasphemies (especially among the lower classes) in which the name of Jesus is plentifully interspersed, are startling, appalling—confounding! Because of swearing the cities New York and Brooklyn may mourn and be in bitter-

ness. Drinking and drunkenness seem to be making dreadful headway; the confectioners' shops and the saloons are all open on the Sabbath, and, in the evening of the blessed day are brilliantly illuminated with gas and crowded with customers. The lager beer business is very prosperous. Except in the more respectable business streets where rents and taxes are high, they are to be met everywhere—every fourth or fifth door you have lager beer! I find the Germans spell their favourite beverage in the same way as we spell the instrument by which we carry the dead to the grave. "The beer!" rather significant and indicative of the sad and future consequences of intemperance, which, though the gratification of the appetite may be pleasant and fascinating, yet in the end will "bite like an adder." It is true there are among the virtuous of these cities, multitudes "who sigh and cry for these abominations," and would gladly lend a hand for their removal, but they are outnumbered and overpowered by the thirsty myriads around them. The consequence is that fighting and drunken brawls, wife-beating, poisoning, shooting, stabbing, and murders of every degree are of every-day occurrence. The public press does indeed notice the sad consequences of such a state of things, but only as matter of news. Few of the public prints seem to make any effort to arrest the downward course to ruin. The Furies are let loose, and unless the municipal affairs of these cities are remodeled and the offices filled by different men, who will study the public good and resolutely carry out good and wholesome laws, they will surely be visited by some fearful tokens of the divine displeasure.

I am glad just here to notice the praiseworthy efforts of our old and faithful friend, Mr. Dougal, formerly of the Montreal Witness, in starting the New York Witness, a religious paper, in which he honestly and fearlessly frowns on all moral wrong, and pleads openly and avowedly for the promotion of all that is lovely, honest, and true. It must be pleasing to his old friends in the Dominion to know that after a prodigious outlay his subscription list is rapidly rising and that it will shortly be a paying concern. The better part of the American press speak very favorably of the enterprise, and cordially wish him success.

But I must say something of churches, ministers, sermons, hearers. The churches are really grand, finished in the first style, very commodious, no galleries, no pulpits, but a spacious platform, on the front of which is a small stand for the Bible. Every church has an organ, and a leader of the music. When the psalm is given out and read, and the organist has run over the tune, the precursor runs up on the platform, waves his hand and beats time all through the singing; this seemed to me rather predantio, but on a second thought, when the vast multitude to be guided as to time is considered, it may, after all, be necessary. No singing master could have better time in his class. If it were not for the mammoth instrument before you, you could hardly perceive the presence of an organ, so great is the volume of sound—for all the people sing; there is no praise by proxy in the churches I have visited. American clergymen have none of the stiffness or straitlacedness of the Presbyterian Church: 'tis all but inspiring to hear the Minister say as the people rise, "With heart and voice sing unto the Lord." The response is enthusiastic and cheering in the highest degree—indeed so animating and exhilarating, that you almost imagine you hear "the harpers harping with their harps!" Nothing but the most sullen and dogged prejudice against an organ would lead any to say that it was a hindrance to congregational singing; whatever it may among Scotchmen in their native land, in the United States it is a help and a great one. I found it so in three of the largest congregations in Brooklyn—Henry Ward Beecher's, Mr. Talmage's, and in Dr. Scudder's. The mere performance of an organ, or a choir in which the people take no part is alike objectionable. Ministers wear no gown, no bands, nothing to distinguish them from their hearers. You seldom see a white cravat, but very often a white vest, which, after all, is more like the joyful sound of the Gospel than gloomy black. If I wanted to give a true picture of the "roaring lion," I am sure I would dress him in black. His den, his wretched abode, is emphatically the "blackness of darkness;" while the attire of angels and the spirits of just men, made perfect, is always white! White is therefore more

like the Saviour, more like heaven, than black. Light, gladness, joy, and heaven were never represented by blackness, and never will; white robes will be before the Throne of the Highest, and therefore cannot be objectionable in the pulpit.

When the minister rises to give out his text, there is usually placed beside him a large and beautiful bouquet of flowers, a little out of place, but doubtless intended to remind one of Him who is "the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley," and of his delightful and striking reference to the loveliness of the latter as far exceeding the glory of Solomon.

The sermon is more or less expository, but not strictly so. The American preacher gives full scope to fanciful imagination, and is bound by no law of sermonizing; he shakes himself thoroughly free from every incumbrance; his object seems to be to get and keep the attention of his hearers, by striking imagery, apt illustration, and happy similitude, together with all the graces of the most finished rhetoric! Words and phrases suggestive of excellent thoughts are often overlooked, yet he keeps the attention of his hearers, there is no weariness nor languor in listening to him. He sets the people thinking—the most likely method of leading them to read and pray. Though there are a great many excellencies in the American system, there is a sad defect in doctrinal truth, there is more to please the fancy than enlighten the understanding, more to tickle the ear than convince the judgment, more to excite wonder than to furnish the information of important Scriptural truth, upon which Christian faith and practice are founded, and by which they become influential and abiding.

If my object in going to a place of worship was recreation, to enjoy an intellectual feast and spend a pleasant hour, I would prefer the American orator; but if to gain a knowledge of my sinful state, and a just apprehension of my danger—if my grand desire was to obtain a knowledge of Jesus the Saviour, of the Spirit of God and the salvation of the Gospel, and a meetness for heaven, I must say I would prefer the plain, Scriptural, and homely dealing of a Canadian ministry. From all I have seen or heard of the American hearers of religious truth, I fear, very much I fear, their object is mental gratification, intellectual pleasure, but not to receive what God wants to bestow! I do not mean to insinuate that there is no practical application of the truth, for that would be a grievous injustice. It is often plainly and pointedly done, they have no difficulty in affirming that their object is to be the means of saving sinners by bringing them to Jesus, but the force and power of these applications are greatly weakened by the absence of a thorough knowledge of Scripture and doctrinal truth.

These remarks are not to be applied indiscriminately to the ministers of this place, but only to the clergymen I have named, who very seldom quote Scripture.

Hearers. The churches I have named are large and excessively crowded. H. W. Beecher's church has two galleries, and would contain, at a rough guess, 4,000 hearers; the other two about 2,000 or 3,000. They are beautifully amphitheatred, and every one has a full view of the speaker. When they rise, as in Beecher's, tier above tier, you are forcibly reminded of the great day when the dead, small and great, shall stand before God. "The righteous saved, the wicked damned, and God's eternal government approved."

The ministers I have named are men of great power, and deservedly popular. I wish them every success in their great work; their congregations are as zealous as themselves; they "let their light shine, and are careful to maintain good works;" they have all intimate connection with colleges, homes for orphans, &c., on which vast sums are annually expended; there seems to be no end to their wealth; they are truly liberal souls, "they scatter, yet increase." They all leave the city during the months of July and August, and return on the first of September.

Yours in the best of bonds,

ALPHA.

South Grenville, July 16, 1872.

The readiest and best way to find out what future duty will be to do present duty.

The bread of life is love; the salt of life is work; the sweetness of life, poetry; the water of life, faith.

PRUDENCE IN THE PULPIT.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

Sir,—In the brief paper of P. Q. there is a little mistake of the printer. Instead of "trunk," it ought to have been "monk." Protestants have left monks, friars, &c., the question is, What then?

I would not have troubled you with this small matter, had not your last paper contained an article that seemed to me well fitted to bring to a practical issue what I endeavored to state in the abstract. "There is one Rab and his friends," characters, says truly, "There is one gude dune, John, till ye get to close groups." Aye, that's it. Close groups. Your correspondent presses rightly the importance of the C. P. church occupying the important points along Lake Superior, and calls the attention of our young men to the propriety of giving themselves to such Mission work. I take for granted such labor is one of self-denial. Why should young men do such a thing? Where is self-denial in the Church? Suppose they are our best young men, with popular talents and spirit. Why should they throw themselves away when so many vacancies of large, comfortable churches are open to them? Why, sir, the very name of missionary is enough to blast a young man's reputation. I speak what I do know. A preacher goes to the front to gather the scattered ones into Church fellowship. He toils. What kind of characters is he in the habit of meeting? "Weel, John, what do you think o' the young minister?" Oo, aye, he's a nice sort o' a lud, but waiik. *You think he had never had come here, could he have done a better.* If that is not the belief and word of a majority, at least, of a very numerous class of the Presbyterian Church, I am most sadly mistaken. Pray why should it be otherwise? Where is or ever was the name of a man that denied himself the honour, the comfort of laboring in a large church to go and gather the outcasts—gather the scattered emigrants? You have many examples of men going to the front with this belief, and advice from prudent, far-seeing fathers that 10 years hence there will be a capital church. Your correspondent wisely is silent on this point. Think of the following: A minister was going to the backwoods to a new charge. A city clergyman, now a D.D., asked him, "What are you going to do? Are you going to farm?" This pious man felt, "Ha, umph, very foolish."

The days of self-sacrifice are past; the Church has reached the age of prudence. That is a state of wise forethought. Yes, Mr. Editor, "Prudence," as the late Lord Brougham said, in his defence of the martyred missionary, Smith, "prudence, that aldermanlike quality, rarely found among heroes and martyrs." I do not say, Young men, don't go. Far, far would I stand from such a thought or word. Only, I say, and say it fearlessly, Young men, count the cost. Why, sir, just think of the fact that the great and zealous Free Church and U. P. in Scotland have some hundreds of preachers not really required to carry on the work of God in highly favoured Scotland. I ask with solemn gravity, is there such lack of enterprise in the British Islands? English farm laborers are awakening to the call of enterprise. Protestantism has committed one great error in becoming the slave and police man of the kings of the earth. She must fight the battles of the Lord by some other means than proud, high-towering castles of learning and apologetic defence. Self-sacrifice must be the watchword along the whole line. The thunders of high eloquence has been found to be nothing but harmless sheet lightning.

What a refreshing sight it would be to see a first-class minister wearied of his bonds, preaching to a mass of admiring, selfish money-hunters, determined never to do anything for the cause of the Lord, but in the form of a miserable subscription, and leaving for a backwoods charge! Ten thousands of dollars are thrown into the Lord's chest, neither wet with a tear, nor hallowed with a prayer. I believe the meanest men in this world are found in the Christian Church. And some of the very worst samples in the Canada Presbyterian Church.

Yours truly again,

P. Q.

It is an error to imagine that women talk more than men. They're listened to more—that's all.

Success don't consist in never making blunders, but in never making the same one the second time.—*Billings.*

PERTINENT QUESTIONS.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN:

Sir,—I see from the minutes of the assembly published in the Record, that the Foreign Mission Committee was empowered to send a deputy to visit the Prince Albert Mission. It is also intimated that Mr. Moore, of Ottawa, has been requested to go. Not being a member of Assembly, and not being in the inner circle of Church Managers, there may be reasons for such an appointment of which I am ignorant. If the appointment has been occasioned by the rumours which were floating about sometime ago; then the Assembly must have attached weight to them. In such case, the deputy is sent to investigate into the state of the mission. As only one-third of the ministers of the church are members of the Assembly, and as the Foreign Mission Committee is a small body, it may possibly be found that there is not unanimity of sentiment regarding either the Assembly, action, or the action of the Committee. I would like to know:—

1st. When the appointment was made? and how many members of the Committee were present?

2nd. If it is considered respectful to the Church to send one of so little experience as Mr. Moore on so important a business?

3rd. If it is proposed to defray the expense from the Foreign Mission Fund?

4th. If Mr. Nesbit has been consulted in the matter? and if the whole proceedings in connection with this appointment do not seem to reflect on his integrity?

5th. If the Presbytery of Manitoba has been recognized in the matter? and if no member of it was deemed qualified to make any enquires which it might be thought proper to make?

When an answer is given to these inquires, I may possibly have something more to say in connection with the matter.

Yours truly,

ONE OF THE OUTSIDERS.

July 22nd, 1872.

Theodore Cuyler visited Dr. John Brown, Scotland. Of the visit he says:

"On Monday I passed a most delightful hour with that most brilliant man of the Edinburgh literary circle, the world-known Dr. John Brown. Who has not read "Rab and his Friends?" And who ever read it with a dry eye? Yet it was written at a single sitting, between midnight and morning! Wonderful as is this immortal biography, I verily believe that Dr. Brown's monograph upon his own father is the finest gem of its kind in the English language. I found the Doctor looking but little older than when I saw him last—in 1862. His health is restored, and he was sunshiny as the weather. He spoke with much enthusiasm of my Quakeress friend, Miss Smiley, and also of our Dr. William Adams, the echoes of whose eloquent address before the General Assembly, (last year) seem to be ringing in Edinboro' yet. While Dr. Brown sat chatting about Ruskin and other friends, I was watching a picture of the redoubtable Rab, on the wall. The invincible dog is trotting alongside of his poor master, who is carrying the burden of his dead wife, *Allie*, out of the cart. There are several other canine pictures on the walls, besides some living specimens of "black and tan" in the house. Dr. Brown is of moderate height, with fair complexion, and is quite bald. He is a handsome likeness of the late President Van Buren."

No man can see Christ except as Christ is in him, because none can discern spiritual quality but they who have it. Only the pure in heart can see God. Christ is light, can darkness see light? Christ is holiness; can impurity see holiness? Christ is love, meekness, and lowliness; and such qualities are forever invisible to the self-seeking and ambitious. It is only as the Christ-nature is formed and grows within man that he can behold the glory of the Redeemer; and when so formed he will be able to see Christ in any man in whom the Christian character is perfected. That even the most sinful can in some feeble and remote degree appreciate a virtuous action, is because the germ of the Divine nature is in every man, though more or less buried in the corrupt deathly nature.—*Farquhar.*