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## The Presbyterian Review.

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4TH, 1886.

### PUBLIC NOTICE.

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that a general meeting of the stockholders of the PRESBYTERIAN NEWS CO., Toronto, will be held in the Offices of the Company, 31 York Chambers, 9 Toronto Street, Toronto, on the 11th February, 1886, at 10 a.m., for the election of Directors and the transaction of general business.

By order,

Geo. H. Robinson,  
Toronto, Jan. 21st 1886. Manager.

PRESBYTERIANISM is eminently practical. Its numerous divisions in the last century and the earlier part of the present century were upon vital points. Seceders and Free Church men "went out" because they thought themselves less at liberty than they ought to be for aggressive Christian effort. The same willingness to change the outward form, if only thereby the great object for which churches exist shall be forwarded, is seen in recent unions. The Presbyterians have led the way in the great union movement for which the latter part of this century will be held in remembrance. If there is a united Methodism in Canada, it has been very much because there was first a united Presbyterianism.

We have upon our table a gradually increasing number of letters and other contributions to our columns for which we regret we cannot find room. Correspondents will kindly note that a short letter, other things being equal, is more sure of insertion than a long one.

One of these letters, four pages of closely written foolscap, is headed "Baptism: a Symposium on First Corinthians, Chapter Ten," in which the writer finds the key-note of the chapter in "baptized unto Moses," and strives to show that much of the misery that is in the world is owing to people slighting their baptismal obligations, although the rite does not give the "spirit of duty." He argues correctly, that children are included in the covenant, and that a careful examination of the chapter affords no support for the close communion views of the Baptists.

At the missionary meetings now being held in the Presbytery of Brockville, eastern district, under the charge of the Rev. G. D. Bayne, M.A., convener, we notice a significant feature as well as an element of power in the fact that the missionary deputation is composed of an equal number of ministers and elders. The latter take part in all meetings. Mr. John C. Munro, an elder, champions the cause of Augmentation, and does so with great fitness and success. Mr. Edward Marshall, another elder, and for many years resident in the Province of Quebec, represents the cause of French evangelization, and his thrilling anecdotes illustrative of the eagerness of that benighted people to know the truth as well as of the determined hostility of the hierarchy to the diffusion of the gospel light, win their way to every heart. Mr. Wm. Deeks, another elder, a successful farmer and man of business, discusses the finances of missions. How appropriate that these departments, especially Augmentation and Finance, should thus be committed to laymen! What vast powers are lying dormant in the laity of our Church simply for the lack of a reasonable arrangement to call them into exercise!

THE question of Sabbath desecration came prominently before the Toronto Presbytery at its last meeting on the pressing enquiry of some pastors what they are to do in the case of men either church members or seeking to become such, who are by the force of circumstances compelled, it is alleged, to work on the railways on the Sabbath day. It came out in the course of the discussion that there are many men in good standing in the Church, who by the exigencies of their position and the necessity of providing for their families, have seldom an opportunity to attend church, and are for years absent from communion services. These labouring men feel their position keenly; but finding themselves unable to cope single-handed with great corporations through their ministers ask the Church to take up their cause and exert itself to impress upon the railway authorities the propriety and extreme desirability of reducing Sunday traffic to mere work of absolute necessity. The whole question of Sabbath desecration was referred to a committee to bring in a report at the next meeting. As the matter is one of great public moment we trust the committee will grapple vigorously with it and suggest such measures as will afford relief to men's consciences, and assist in putting down what is confessedly the occasion of great hardship and of great sin. Perhaps it may be found that the powerful corporations which are mainly responsible for Sabbath desecration are not utterly soulless, but only require their attention to be drawn pointedly to the matter to afford a large measure of relief. Much good for the time being was done some years ago by the clergy of Toronto taking up the question of Sabbath desecration by the railways, and there is no doubt that some good can be effected now. In the matter of preserving the sanctity of the Sabbath, as in every other good thing, it is well to remember that eternal vigilance is the price of safety.

We observe with great pleasure that the Presbyterian Council is bearing fruit in an earnest effort to unify Presbyterian missions in foreign countries. An important meeting of the representatives of the chief Mission Boards of the presbyterially-governed churches of the United States and Canada was held in New York the other day for the purpose of forwarding this good object. No plan was matured, but there was a unanimous feeling in favour of the organization of Presbyterian missions in each country, after some such model as that of the "United Church of Christ in Japan," or the "Missionary Synods of the New Hebrides," of which the missionaries of our own Church form a part. Dr. Chamberlain, of India, gave the committee a sketch of a plan by which Presbyterianism in India might be made one. It is, at present, represented there by missionaries and native ministers of no less than 13 different European and American churches holding to the Presbyterian polity. It holds strategic points throughout all India, from Ceylon, at the southern extremity, to the borders of Cashmere and Thibet in the north, and from furthest east to furthest west; but its influence is weakened by lack of union, and in some (though happily few) cases by unseemly rivalry. Dr. Chamberlain would form the various missions into the Synods of Bombay, Bengal, Madras and North India; these to constitute "the General Assembly of India," which would be an autonomous body, the home churches loosening their hold on the mission churches in things ecclesiastical while retaining that control in matters financial. The united missions already referred to, as well as those at Amoy, China, are examples of success on these lines. As Dr.

Chamberlain pointed out, the preservation of India to Christian England at the time of the dreadful mutiny of 1857, was owing mainly to the disunion of the native mutinous population, and to the union, on the other hand, of the few British and loyal native soldiers. Only by the heavy blows that, thus united, these were able to strike at central points, was India saved. Let Presbyterians lead the way in the uniting into one solid host of the half million of native Christians who are standing face to face with the 200,000,000 unconverted heathen of that magnificent empire. United in India, why not everywhere?

### PRESBYTERIANISM IN SCOTLAND

WE have been favoured with an early copy of the following Bill prepared by Mr. Finlay, Q.C., M.P. for the Inverness Burghs, in relation to the constitution of the Church of Scotland. It will be read with interest. The text is as follows:—

"Whereas it is desirable to remove obstacles to the reunion of the Presbyterians of Scotland, and to the constitution of the Church of Scotland, as by law established, on the basis of the Confession of Faith and the Presbyterian Church government and discipline, the courts of the said Church have the sole and exclusive right to regulate, determine, and decide all matters spiritual within the said Church, and their procedure therein, and regulations and decisions thereon, are hereby declared to be not subject to interdict, reduction, suspension, or any manner of review by any court of civil jurisdiction.

"1. It is hereby declared that, by the constitution of the Church of Scotland as by law established, on the basis of the Confession of Faith and the Presbyterian Church government and discipline, the courts of the said Church have the sole and exclusive right to regulate, determine, and decide all matters spiritual within the said Church, and their procedure therein, and regulations and decisions thereon, are hereby declared to be not subject to interdict, reduction, suspension, or any manner of review by any court of civil jurisdiction.

"2. The expression 'matters spiritual' shall include all matters relating to the worship, discipline, and government of the said Church of Scotland, and in particular, all matters relating to the preaching of the Word of God, the administration of sacraments, the election, appointment, and admission of the ministers of the said Church to the pastoral office, and of the other office-bearers of the said Church to their offices, and their suspension and deprivation therefrom, the constitution of the courts of the said Church, and the admission of ministers and office-bearers to sit therein, the infliction and removal of Church censures, and generally all other spiritual matters.

"3. No court of civil jurisdiction shall interfere by interdict or otherwise with the procedure of the congregation, or of any committee thereof, in the naming, proposal, election, or appointment of a minister.

"4. From and after the passing of this Act, all powers vested in and exercised by the Lords of Council and Session acting as Commissioners for the plantation of kirk and valuation of tithes, to disjoin and erect parishes *quoad sacra*, or to erect parishes without territorial districts, shall cease and determine; and it is hereby declared that the power to disjoin and erect parishes *quoad sacra*, or to erect parishes without territorial districts, belongs to and is exclusively vested in the courts of the Church of Scotland.

"5. Nothing contained in this Act shall abridge or prejudice the jurisdiction of the civil courts in relation to any matters whatsoever of a civil nature, or to all or any of the temporalities conferred, or to be conferred, on the said Church, or to the civil consequences attached by law to the decisions in matters spiritual of the courts of the said Church.

"6. Nothing contained in this Act shall abridge or prejudice any power, right, or jurisdiction now possessed by or competent to the courts of the Church of Scotland.

"7. All laws, statutes, and usages inconsistent with this Act are hereby repealed.

The Duke of Argyll, a well-known supporter of the Establishment, thus expresses himself regarding this Bill:—"Having seen the draft Bill for declaring the constitution of the Church of Scotland, and which has been prepared by the member for Inverness, I think it my duty to say at once that this Bill, or indeed any other Bill drawn substantially on the same lines, would have my cordial and earnest support. It is quite true that I do not share in the doubts which are felt by many as to the full vitality and force of the old Constitutional Statutes which were summed up at the Revolution, and again at the Union. I am still of opinion that the abolition of the Act of Patronage had, as a necessary result, the abolition of everything that had impeded the operation of these great fundamental laws, or had limited the significance and the sweep of their noble declarations. But on the other hand, I know that many Presbyterians are under a different impression. Most heartily do I wish to see them satisfied upon a point on which their jealousy is not only natural, but laudable, inasmuch as it is the homage of earnest men to the great principles on which the Presbyterian Church was founded, and which constitute its special glory in the history of Christendom. The declaratory part of the Bill will thus be of a high value in the removing of doubts and the satisfying of many minds; whilst the provisions which are more in the nature of new enactments are obviously but the consistent application of the same principles to a matter of detail, but which is also a matter of considerable practical importance. I venture to add that, in my opinion, the support of this Bill by the laity of all the Presbyterian Churches, who desire to see as much reunion as can be obtained, ought not to be made dependent on preliminary negotiations of any kind. If we are satisfied that on its own merits it is right and just—if we are sure, as we may well be, that it is a many and straightforward re-assertion of the old constitution of the Presbyterian Church, as the living and working

constitution which the ancestors of all its branches fought for in common, we may well leave to time and to reflection the effect which it may produce on the divisions which we deplore."

The action which will be taken on this measure by the Free Church and other Presbyterian Churches, will be anxiously looked for.

### MISCONCEPTIONS OF CALVINISM.

BY THE REV. JAMES MINDELMIST, F.R.S.

#### CLOSING WORDS.

In concluding these additional explanations, occasioned by the *Christian Guardian's* notice of our endeavour to obviate prevailing misconceptions of Calvinism, we would express the hope that we may be excused if we have failed, in any measure, in our effort to refrain from everything that might savour of controversy. Though we have found it hardly possible to avoid occasionally making statements of a controversial character, it is in no controversial spirit that we have been at pains to present a just view of the belief of Calvinists. We have been deeply grieved, from time to time, by coming in contact with the most unwarrantable statements respecting our views, and we have been induced to give our thoughts to the public, only because we would like to be of some use, however little, in abating what has of late become, in many quarters, a prevailing folly. While many are no doubt sincere in their opposition to Calvinism and in their dread of it, as they apprehend it, we can fully endorse the statements of a letter received from a friend. "I have no desire," he says, "for doctrinal controversy as such; but I have often been astonished, till familiarity dispelled astonishment, at the prevalence of misconception on this subject. And not only among the more ignorant, for many teachers, preachers, and writers of note take occasion to make a thrust at Calvinism, some of them assuming that it is a dying creed of the past, so severe and harsh as to be out of sympathy with the warm living Christianity of this more free and enlightened dispensation." And he adds: "Many of our people, not able to answer the sneers or plausible attacks and distorted representations, remain silent, with some uncertainty as to the actual facts of the creed which they profess to hold."

Fully justified as our imperfect endeavour is by the existence of such a state of things, we feel somewhat confident that no one who has perused with care and in a spirit of candour what we have advanced on the subject, will be disposed to ascribe it to any narrowness of mind or want of Christian charity that we frankly indicate our conviction, that some of our Christian brethren are guilty of a breach of the law of Christ, in the way in which they deal with our acceptance of certain views of divine truth in addition to those important views which they and we hold in common. They cannot but see that we hold as firmly as they do, and value as highly, and teach as distinctly and fully, all the truths respecting God and man, which they hold and prize or regard as important. At the same time we believe that, *besides the truths* which they and we hold in common, there are certain other views which our own religious experience especially forces upon our attention and conviction; and we cannot help feeling that a *wrong* is done to us, when we are set upon and baited, in the way of being incessantly challenged to give a solution of difficulties which we clearly see, lie in a region so far above us that our inability to solve them is, we insist, not to be regarded as a reason for rejecting truths which compel our regard, to say nothing more about our views being presented in terms which display, to say the least, a great want of discrimination.

We feel that we can, with all safety, assure those who are continually proclaiming the decadence of Calvinism and predicting its speedy downfall, that their valuations will surely fall, so long as there are (we shall not say men of high intellect, but) humble and intelligent Christian believers, capable of reflecting on their own religious experience in the light of reason and Scripture. There will always be found among such, those who feel shut up to the acceptance of the views of truth, in relation to which many are hopelessly perplexed, because they approach them, in some instances, not by a right method, and in other instances, not in a right spirit. Those who do intelligently accept them feel that they cannot reject them on account of the difficulties connected with them, especially when they see that the sacred writers never hesitate in relation to either aspect of divine truth, but even put the two in close juxtaposition, without the least suspicion of their inconsistency. Take, for example, the words of Peter: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things which God hath before showed by the mouth of all His prophets, that Christ should suffer, He hath so fulfilled." And take further the words of the brethren, after the liberation of Peter and John: "Of a truth against Thy holy child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever Thy hand and counsel determined before to be done." I presume these will be regarded as the words of inspiration. And do they not suggest the very difficulty on which the charge of inconsistency is based? Were our design a controversial one, we might multiply quotations and references. We might even appeal to the prophetic word at large and its fulfilment. But I submit that more than enough has been said to show how untenable and unsafe is the assumption that God cannot so order things, that His determination, or certain foreknowledge, of the future shall not invade the free agency of His intelligent creatures, or affect their responsibility.

Our design, as announced at the outset, has been to give such a representation of Calvinism as might help to free candid minds from perplexities occasioned by prevailing misconceptions. We have some reason to believe that we have not been employed in a vain attempt. However little hope we have of converting to our views those whose opposition to Calvinism is of a very pronounced kind, we are not altogether without hope that what we have written may lead some Christian brethren to be somewhat more cautious and less positive in their utterances in relation to views which they cannot yet see their way to the acceptance of. It is especially to be deprecated that brethren should make common cause