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FOR TERMS, ETC., SEE EIGHTH PAGE.

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON Editor and Proprietor

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Letters and articles intended for the next issue should be in the hands of the Editor not later than Tuesday morning.

All communications must be accompanied by the writer's name, otherwise they will not be inserted. Articles not accepted will be returned, if at the time they are sent, a request is made to that effect, to sufficient postage stamps are enclosed. Manuscripts not so accompanied will not be preserved and subsequent requests for their return cannot be complied with.

OUR GENERAL AGENT.

Mr. CHARLES NICOL, General Agent for the PRESBYTERIAN, is now in Western Ontario pushing the interests of this journal. We commend him to the best offices of ministers and people. Any assistance rendered him in his work will be taken by us as a personal kindness.

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British American Presbyterian. FRIDAY, MARCH 9, 1877.

The Presbyterian Church of England has opened a Union Thanksgiving Fund for building purposes. \$860,000 has been already subscribed.

It has been resolved to hold the next International Convention of Young Men's Christian Associations at Louisville, Ky., on Wednesday, 6th June.

JOHN B. GOUGH said at St. Louis that he had spoken 5,650 times on the subject of Temperance. He also referred to this as his last appearance in that city.

THE PENNSYLVANIA Supreme Court has decided that St. Mark's Church, Philadelphia, must not ring its bells "so as to cause nuisance, or annoyance by sound or noise, to the complainants or any of them within their respective houses."

LETTERS have been received from the Rev. Professor Schaff, intimating that the doctor and his wife are about to enter the promised land. This eminent scholar, finding it necessary to relax his laborious studies, has undertaken a tour through the Holy Land, which will undoubtedly yield a valuable return to himself and the many admirers of his writings. It is the intention of Professor Schaff to be present at the Confederation of Presbyterians to be held in July in Edinburgh, and after a brief sojourn in the mother land to return in time for the opening of his classes in the Union Theological Seminary, New York, in the fall.

DR. CUYLER in the last number of the Evangelist writes about "Boy Christians." It is an article of great practical interest to parents, ministers, and Sabbath school teachers. The writer remarks that boyhood is a far better time than manhood to begin a Christian life; that it is preposterous to assert that religion is too intricate and difficult a subject for a boy's mind; that no limitations of age seem to be recognized in the gracious work of the Holy Spirit; that the objection is without foundation that the conversion of children cannot always be trusted, childhood being impulsive and volatile. The Dr. remarks that childish "volatility" does not disturb him half so much as the selfishness, ambitions, greed and skeptical hardness of adult years.

The will of Miss Dancer is exciting public attention. Her father was a well-known gambler. He died some months ago leaving somewhere about \$800,000 to his wife. Mrs. Dancer had no sooner taken possession than she was called away. Their only child in consequence became the heiress. But being in ill-health and having long been a true disciple of Jesus Christ, Miss Dancer bequeathed her colossal fortune to a large number of Church and benevolent objects. Her death took place recently, and now the large sum accumulated in gambling will prove a lastingowment for charitable purposes. No credit is of course due to the gambler, though probably his natural affection led him to leave his money as he did. How wonderful it is that the conversion of his daughter should have led to the consecration of this wealth.

CONFEDERATION OF PRESBYTERIANS.

As the year advances towards its spring, we are reminded that the time will soon come for holding the first great Council of the Presbyterian Churches. The original intention of the promoters of this council was, it should have been held in the Centennial year. Indeed, the Australian delegates had already left home in the Pacific to have been present at the Protestant ecumenical convention previously announced for last summer. However, for reasons deemed satisfactory and pressing, the convention was ultimately delayed until next July. The council will certainly be held this year. We venture to say that it will prove an event of much interest not merely to the denomination in whose name it is got up, but also to all other Christian bodies throughout the world.

It is already within our power to give the names of a large number of the distinguished men who will be delegates. We need not mention those of Great Britain and Ireland, as on account of the first council being held at Edinburgh, they will be legion. It is gratifying to observe the efforts which Dr. Blaikie and others are putting forth to secure a large and worthy representation. Dr. Blaikie is the secretary of the Edinburgh General Committee, and in order thoroughly to discharge the duties of this office, he has actually resigned the editorship of the Sunday Magazine, a position of commanding influence. This gentleman during last summer visited many of the leading ministers of the churches in France, Switzerland, and Holland, and obtained nothing but hearty responses to the invitation sent to such to attend the council. There will thus be brought together many of the most eminent European theologians, pastors and elders, and these gentlemen will give a certain eclat to the proceedings. Delegates will also be sent ones more from Australia, while the cape of Good Hope, India, Japan, China, Syria, and many other lands, on which the Presbyterian Church has obtained a footing, will not likely be without representation.

Coming nearer home we are glad to learn that the churches in the United States have heartily responded to the invitation. Drs. Stuart Robinson, of Louisville, J. R. Wilson of Wilmington, J. B. Adger of Pendleton, Moses D. Hodge of Richmond, and others, are promised from the Southern Presbyterian Church. New York will send Drs. Adams, S. T. Prime, Schaff, Crosby, and Dickson, worthy representatives respectively of theology, literature, scholarship, Biblical learning, and Home Missions. Brooklyn will be represented by Dr. Van Dyke, the moderator of the General Assembly. Dr. McCosh, who is credited with the authorship of the Presbyterian Catechism, and Dr. Atwater, will go from Princeton. Dr. Roberts will attend to the interests of Elizabeth, N.J., while Drs. Beadle and Blackwood will do justice to the Quaker City of Centennial renown. A real live "Marquis" goes from Baltimore, Dr. Beattie, well known as a benevolent contributor to the Western Seminary, will show what Stenbenville can do. Columbus, St. Louis, and Rochester will be nobly represented by Drs. Moore, Nicolls and Campbell. Dr. Patten of Chicago, a theologian of Canadian birth, and for his years an intellectual giant, will teach the old country folks that a man needs not to have gray hairs, or five or six decades of years passed over his head before he can worthily occupy a professor's chair. Dr. Eels, from California, will tell the marvels that have been accomplished by Presbyterians on the Pacific slope. It remains for us to make mention of another eminent American, who has intimated his intention to be present, the Rev. William H. Thomson, D.D., of Beirut, the distinguished author of the "Land and the Book." From the eldership of the American Church, men of such calibre as William E. Dodge, Hon. S. A. May, Judge Ours of Columbus, J. S. Farrand of Detroit, and others, will give weight and dignity to the conference. The Reformed Presbyterians will be represented by Dr. Sloane of Allegheny; the United Presbyterians by Dr. Kerr of Pittsburgh; the Reformed Dutch Church by Rev. Drs. McHolmes, Ormiston, Inglis, and Souder.

Nor is the Dominion of Canada to be without a noble representation in the persons of Dr. Topp of Toronto, moderator of the General Assembly of our Church, the Rev. Principal Oaten of Knox College, Dr. Snodgrass, Principal of Queen's College, Kingston, and many other distinguished professors and ministers from the maritime provinces. We look forward with much interest to the proceedings of this august body. It will be a noble spectacle in itself. On the floor of such an assembly all sectarian differences will be forgotten. Ministers of the Established, the Free, and United Presbyterian Churches of Scotland will meet on a common platform. It will then be seen and felt "how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in union." The blessing of the Lord will be there, for this is the divine promise, and

we know the Spirit cannot dwell amongst those who are quarrelling over and contending for non-essential distinctions. The men themselves will be a subject for the artist as well as the physiognomist. The most reverent heads in the world will be presented in one group. The old country will illustrate the principle of how theology and culture are favourable to the development of physical weight. The round, broad, benevolent-looking divines of the old country will be none the worse of being sandwiched by the beardless faces and slender forms, of the best known New England type; while our Canadian clergymen will illustrate the happy medium between the corporation of the old and the new world. But if the spectacle of the Protestant Council be interesting from a physical point of view, how much more so from the side of culture, of learning, of education. What giants of intellect will be seen on that floor. The discussions will necessarily be of the very highest order, uniting courtesy and brotherly kindness and consideration with the greatest amount of mental acumen and scholarly eloquence.

It is difficult to foreshadow the nature of proceedings of which the programme is not yet published. But it is obvious that all papers and discussions will require to steer clear of the scylla of Presbyterian Church Courts, and the Charybdis of the Evangelical Alliance. The questions will necessarily be general, but still they must needs be Presbyterian. Such matters as Presbyterian polity, correspondence, ministerial changes, church services, will no doubt receive ample attention. But we expect the greatest interest to gather around the great questions of Home and Foreign Missions, of Sunday-schools, and Presbyterian literature.

We look to the Council as commencing a new era for the Presbyterian cause. We therefore hail the approaching Conference with delight. It is our prayer that it may be visibly baptised with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

ESTIMATES NEEDED.

It is of importance, not only that all our congregations should contribute to the various schemes of the Church, but that they should contribute to them proportionately according to their wants and necessities. If it be desirable that private individuals should exercise discrimination in apportioning their wealth it is surely none the less desirable that congregations should discriminate between the several schemes in appropriating their contributions, and assign to each a proportionate amount according to their wants.

To enable them to do so, the wants of the several schemes must be known, and for lack of this knowledge, it is frequently the case that one scheme gains at the expense of the others. A perusal of the tables, presented by the statistical committee to the Assembly last year, shows that many of our congregations, contributed either nothing or a very small amount, to one or other of the more necessitous schemes, while the same congregations gave large sums to schemes less needy. On the other hand, some congregations are reported as having given about ten times as much to one of the schemes as they gave to another, although the former only required double that of the latter. It is true that some of our ministers as well as many of our people, have "pot" schemes, that is, schemes in which for certain reasons they feel more warmly interested than in others, and naturally their influence is exercised to obtain the "lion's share" for these. Still we believe it very desirable that as a general rule, our congregations should appropriate their missionary contributions in accordance with the wants of the respective schemes, and to enable them to do so, we would suggest the propriety of all the committees and Boards of the Church, preparing as an appendix to their annual reports to the Assembly, an estimate of the amount required for the following year. We would then not only be able to determine the average contribution per member required for each scheme, but also—what we believe to be of much greater importance—the proportion of the entire contributions of a congregation required for each of the several departments of the church work. In other words when a congregation met to appropriate their missionary contributions for the year, they would know, that for every dollar required for Home Missions, so much was needed for Foreign, so much for French, so much for the Colleges, etc., and thus be able intelligently to appropriate their money according to the wants of the several schemes.

We find in the appendices to the Home Mission report for the western section of the Church a carefully prepared estimate by the secretary of the expenditure for the current year, and in the report of the committee on the Foreign Mission Reports, the probable amount required this year is given. Convinced that it would tend to more intelligent giving on the part of our congregations, were all our Committees and Boards to report to the Assembly the estimated amounts required for the following year, we commend this suggestion to their favorable consideration in the hope that they may adopt it this year.

THE ANNUAL STATISTICS.

The interesting report of the Committee on Statistics for last year occupies eighty pages of the appendix to the printed minutes of Assembly. When the report was before the Assembly it was agreed to direct the attention of the Committee to the desirability of reducing the size in future years by lessening the number of details, the general opinion being that while an extended and minute report might be serviceable every fifth year, it was not desirable annually. To accomplish this, we think that the statistical and financial tables might be continued, and that with decided advantage.

As the "names of ministers" and "dates of ordination" appear in the rolls of Presbyteries, which are published in the Assembly minutes, these two columns as well as a number of others which are of little practical use might be omitted entirely. The present sized page of the Assembly minutes would admit columns for the following:—

- 1. Name of congregation.
2. Number of stations supplied.
3. Number of families.
4. Number of communicants.
5. Additions by certificate.
6. Additions by profession of faith.
7. Attendance at Sabbath School.
8. Attendance at Bible class.
9. Is there a manse?
10. Stipend promised from all sources.
11. Arrears actually due.
12. Contributions for strictly congregational purposes in addition to stipend.

13 to 21. Each scheme of the church, including Sabbath School contributions, College Building and College Endowment funds.

22. Total contributions for all purposes. These, together with a column for the names of ministers, if thought desirable, could all go upon one page without enlarging the size of the paper now used for the report nearly one half, and that without injury to the interests involved, as we believe that the information obtained by means of these columns would serve all practical purposes. We venture respectfully to suggest such a change as the above to the Statistical Committee. We do not know whether the suggestion is made too late for the present year; if so, it may be of service in future.

Among the recommendations made by the Committee last year and adopted by the Assembly, were the two following, to which we invite special attention:—

"That Presbyteries be required to procure the returns from congregations in good time—as soon as possible after the close of the year—examine them themselves, and forward them to the convener of the committee on statistics."

"That mission stations be required to report, as well as organized congregations, so that there may be a full exhibit of the strength and numbers, and of the Christian effort of the entire Church."

As to the first of these resolutions, it may be difficult to give effect to it fully till the ecclesiastical year be made to correspond with the calendar year, yet there is no excuse for those congregations who do not forward their returns to the clerk of their presbytery within the specified time. Last year, besides some seventy-five individual congregations, which are not reported at all, there are two whole presbyteries from whom no returns were obtained, thus rendering the statistics of the church as a whole incomplete, and defeating in some respects the purposes intended to be served by the appointment of a statistical committee. The omission last year was doubtless owing to some extent to the union having so recently been effected. We trust that this year there will be returns not only from every presbytery, but from every congregation of the church, and that these will be forwarded in good time, so that the convener of the committee may be put to no disadvantage in preparing his report for the Assembly. While the remedy largely lies with Presbytery clerks, on the other hand ministers and moderators of vacant sessions should see to it that the schedules are filled up, and forwarded to the clerk of their respective Presbyteries within the specified time.

In several instances last year the names of congregations are incorrectly printed. In a church extending over so large a territory, and embracing so many congregations, and comprising several branches so recently united, it is not to be expected that the Convener of the Statistical Committee, or any one person is familiar with the name of every congregation, so that it is necessary, in order to have them correctly printed, that Presbytery clerks should write as legibly as possible in making up their returns.

Concerning the other resolution above given, any one can see by glancing at the statistical report of last year, that it is necessary. The large majority of the vacant congregations furnish no statistics at all, while in many Presbytery returns not even the names of mission stations are given, much less full statistics of these. Indeed, the only Presbyteries in the

western section of the Church, from whom anything like full returns of vacancies and mission stations are given are those of Peterboro', Owen Sound, Guelph, Onatam, Bruce and Huron. It may be said that the statistics of mission stations are found in the appendix to the Home Mission report, but it must be remembered that the statistics required by the Home Mission Committee do not by any means embrace the information required by the committee on statistics, and apart from this it is important that the Statistical Committee should be able to present at a glance full returns from all the congregations, whether settled or vacant, and all the mission fields in every one of the Presbyteries of the Church. In former years resolutions have been adopted by the Assembly with a view to getting full returns from mission fields as well as pastoral charges, but these resolutions have not generally been acted upon. We trust that Presbyteries, and especially Presbytery clerks, in whose hands the matter largely lies, will see to it that this year full authoritative returns are forthcoming from every station and congregation in their respective bounds, so that we may have reliable information as to the real numerical and financial strength of the Church. The Presbyterial returns should all be forwarded so as to reach the Convener of the Assembly's Committee by the 1st of May at the latest.

REVIVAL SERVICES.

ST. JAMES' CATHEDRAL.

People are in the habit of using up their strong words on very ordinary occasions, so that when something happens that is really extraordinary, they have not got a word left strong enough to describe it. The word "crowded" has been a good deal spoiled in this way. To say that the Cathedral was crowded last Sabbath evening would convey to the minds of our readers but a very faint idea of the actual state of the case. People who got there half-an-hour before the time announced for the commencement of the service, thought it was crowded then, but they afterwards had an opportunity of witnessing with feelings of wonder what a number of people can be packed into a place after it is crowded. Though the ordinary sitting accommodation had long given out, the stream of people still kept pouring in, accompanied by a number of active attendants carrying chairs which they placed in a double row as close to each other as possible down the centre of the aisle. All the available space behind the pews was also filled with chairs; and still vast numbers were on their feet. Urged on by the pressure from behind they moved forward and completely blocked the two narrow passages that had been left on each side of the chairs in the aisle. They looked up to the gallery, only to assure themselves that the gallery was densely packed. When the time came for the service to begin the vestibules were crowded. Those who were out could not get in, and those who were in could not easily get out; and the current stopped. The vast audience seemed to be composed almost entirely of well-dressed (or what are commonly called respectable) people. But though there seemed to be a similarity in worldly position, there also seemed to be a great diversity in character. On such an occasion it does not require any great degree of sharpness to detect the man or woman of the world, who seldom or never enters a place of worship. Many such were present; and in this fact we can discover the use and perhaps the only use of having these revival services on Sabbath—perhaps some people would say—"or at any other time." But we do not go so far. We do not object to people who are Christians already, going to such services when their doing so will not call them away from the stated ministrations of their own pastor. Their attendance encourages the workers and strengthens their hands. But last Sabbath evening, too many church-going people—Episcopalians and others—left their own churches for the sake of attending the revival meeting. True, if so many Episcopalians had not been there the responses would not have come so freely from all parts of the building. True also, if so many Episcopalians and Presbyterians and Methodists had not been there, Old Hundred would not have been thundered out with such volume of sound as to render it difficult to distinguish the tones of the organ. But it is also true that if so many church-going people had not been there, the other class, spoken of already, would have had more room, and so many of them would not have been compelled to turn away—whither?

Regarding Mr. Rainford we have only space enough left to say that his address was just what an address to such an audience ought to be, plain, pointed and practical. We have called it an address—we could not call it a sermon; he himself did not call it that. But he knows human nature, and he knows the gospel; and with intense earnestness and in the plainest possible speech, he describes the one, and preaches, proclaims, fills, the other. With considerable skill for so young a man, he hunts the slinger out of his varied digresses and many strongholds, and then brings him face to face with the Bible, and lets him know what God thinks of him.