

Contributors and Correspondents.

LEAVES FROM THE NOTE-BOOK OF A CANADIAN ABROAD.

A REMARKABLE TRACT.

During the course of lectures upon the Pilgrim's Progress last winter in Edinburgh, by Rev. J. Wilson, of Barclay Church, that gentleman was in the habit of drawing upon his varied tours of experience, observation and reading, to explain and illustrate his subject. His audience was unusually large for a stated mid-day service. Among them were many intelligent active Christian workers, who duly appreciated the many valuable lessons and suggestions which fell from the lips of this "Prince of Home Missionaries," as Dr. Guthrie used to call him. One day he read to them the little tract "Admit the Bearer—a Sinner," of which I enclose a copy for the benefit of your readers. Immediately all the copies to be found in the city depots were bought up and orders left for many more. I afterwards came across the publisher, an Elder of one of the Free Churches in Glasgow, who had found himself gradually drawn, somewhat like Drummond, of Sterling, into the exclusive publication of Evangelistic Tracts. He told me that since Mr. Wilson's mention of this one, he had sold off all on hand, and been obliged to print a fresh supply of 15,000. All accustomed to deal with enquirers will see how admirably it is adapted to shut them up to a simple acceptance of the Gospel upon God's terms—not theirs. It has already been largely blessed, and I shall be glad if publication in your paper should give it still wider usefulness. It is as follows:—

"ADMIT THE BEARER—A SINNER."

BY THE REV. JAMES JOHNSTON, GLASGOW.

"So, John, you've got fairly into the kingdom, you tell me. You have been long seeking, how did you get in at last?"

"O man! it was the simplest thing in the world, it was just by presenting the right ticket. I held it out, the door was opened, and I was in. And the strange thing is, I found that the ticket of admission had been in my possession from childhood, and I had carried it in my breast pocket for the last twelve months, and never had the sense to use it."

"That is strange, for you were so anxious to get in. You were always a decent fellow, and for a year back have been taken up with nothing but your soul. What kind of a ticket was it, and what was written on it?"

"Why, it was as plain a ticket as you ever bought for a soiree or a public meeting in the City Hall and it had nothing written on it but the words:

ADMIT THE BEARER, A SINNER. (Luko xviii. 18, 14.)

"Was that all?" "Yes. And what kept me so long from getting in was, that I always added something to the words on the ticket, when I presented it. Whenever the Lord saw anything of my adding, it was refused. The first time I went, I wrote at the bottom in small hand, 'But not so great a sinner as many of my neighbours.' But that would not do, so I rubbed it out and put down, 'But is doing the best he can to improve.' That would not do either, so I became more anxious and prayed and wept awhile, and then under the words, 'Admit the bearer, a sinner,' I wrote, 'Who is praying and weeping for his sins.' Even that wouldn't do. All well enough, but even prayers and tears are not to be put as the warrant for going in. After that I began to despair, and wrote down, 'Too great a sinner to be saved.' That only made matters worse, and I had almost given up, when I looked at Christ and heard him say, 'I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved,' (John x. 1-9), and 'Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out,' (John vi. 37), 'And ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life,' (John v. 20), and those precious words, 'Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely,' (Rev. xxii. 17). I looked again at that parable of the Pharisee and Publican, and saw that it was simply as a sinner that he went and was justified. He did not make his sins too great to be forgiven, nor too little to need forgiveness. He did not stay away because he felt his sins great, nor delay until he felt them greater. He went just as he was, 'a sinner,' and trusting to the promised grace of God, he went down to his house 'justified.' I remembered that Jesus had said, 'I came to call sinners to repentance,' and pulled out the old ticket, and without adding a word, presented it. It was accepted and I entered."

Reader, this ticket of admission into the kingdom is lying within the boards of your Bible. It is written in the blood of Christ. It costs nothing. Add nothing to it. God has put it into your hands, if you find it in your heart to use it, hold it out with the hand of faith, and eternal Justice will own your right of entrance, and Mercy will welcome you to the kingdom of Peace. Use no other plea for admission but that all-prevailing cry "a sinner." Do not add

your righteousness nor your repentance, your prayers nor your piety, your feelings nor your faith. The publican said nothing but "God be merciful to me a sinner;" and Jesus Christ certifies, "This man went down to his house justified."

Reader! go thou and do likewise, and, as God is true, thou also art justified.

The Union Question.

Sir,—Your readers have had enough of the discussion between Mr. Middlemiss and your humble servant. I have no wish to protract it any further. The thing to me seems in a nutshell. The Headship of Christ, as at present discussed, is the right of Christ's Church to administer the affairs of Christ's Church without external intervention. Mr. Middlemiss would allow intervention only when under the "cloak" of such administration, a "crime" against the law of the land is committed. But what crime would be committed in the Supreme Court of the Presbyterian Church saying that there is no real difference between the Basis of '61 and that proposed for adoption in '73? Yet because Church property may be involved in the finding, Mr. Middlemiss would, according to his own showing, if left in a minority on the point, not bow to the decision and interpretation of the Church, but take the two bases to Court to see what interpretation he would give to a spiritual document, the meaning of one of which by the supreme spiritual court recognized, involved at the best but an error of judgment, and neither malice nor crime. I leave it to any one to-day if that is not a recognition of the right of the State to sit, by its judges, on documents prepared by Church rulers, to finally and authoritatively decide what is the sense of those documents, whether the Church repudiate such an interpretation or not. Thanking you, Sir, for your courtesy in printing my letters, and Mr. Middlemiss for his faithfulness in telling me so often what he thinks of my perversity and disingenuousness, I finally, and for the last time, sign myself

Yours faithfully, A PRESBYTERIAN.

Plain Speaking.

Sir,—Many parents who call themselves Protestants, but who are so only in name, send their children to Popish schools. They have received a promise from the teachers that their religion shall not be meddled with in the slightest degree. They cannot for a moment think that persons so polite—so full of "nods and bows and wreathed smiles" are only hoodwinking them when they make such promises. But Chiniquy—who speaks from experience—says that no sooner are they out of hearing than the teachers laugh at the promises which they have made, and say "Protestants have no more religion than a dog has. You cannot interfere with what has no existence." Accordingly they set to work by wiles to undermine the faith of these children, and, in many instances, succeed to their heart's content. But Protestants of the kind referred to may think that, as Chiniquy has left the Church of Rome, he wishes to inflame the minds of Protestants against it, and, therefore, does not scruple to tell his for that end. Well then, let us hear what one says about Protestantism who is still a Romanist priest. I refer to Father Brian, the priest whose sermon, a few years ago, on the occasion of what was called "the golden wedding" of Bishop Bourget, caused a great excitement throughout the Dominion. In 1866, he published a work entitled, "Instructions dogmatiques sur le mariage chretien." It received the approbation of the late Archbishop Baillargon of Quebec, and the late Bishop Cooke, of Three Rivers. On page 45 he thus speaks, "It is of the utmost importance to correct the utterly false notions which are entertained even by many Catholics. 'People are accustomed to look on Protestantism as a religion which has its rights. This is an error. Protestantism is not a religion—Protestantism has no right. It possesses (il a pour lui) strength and seduction. It is a religion which triumphs, it is an error which flatters nature. Error cannot have any rights; rebellion cannot have any rights. Neither error nor rebellion exempts from any duty. Rebellion has a strict duty to fulfil, that duty is repentance, it is return, it is submission to the Church. Error should cease to obstinate, and at least give place to truth."

There cannot possibly be any doubt regarding the meaning of the foregoing. Now, many of the standard writers of the Church of Rome teach that heretics have no right to property or even life. Romanists pretend that such doctrines are no longer held by their Church. But the doctrine of Father Brian that Protestantism has no right, is in perfect harmony with them. You will notice that it is not qualified in the slightest degree. I have no doubt whatever, that if Father Brian were to utter all his mind, he would speak as the writers to whom I refer do. But it would not be polite to do so in this part of the world. Rome shows her teeth and claws only in proportion as circumstances warrant.

Yours truly, F. FARWICK. Metis, Quebec.

OHINA.

LETTER FROM REV. G. L. MACKAY.

REV. WM. McLAREN—My Dear Bro.—I have just returned from a journey of fifteen days inland, during which time I travelled nearly 200 miles, and preached the gospel in many villages. I spent several days at the stations up this river, and found the cause prospering. Go-ko-kiu (the first chapel opened) stands at the base of the hills, and the terminus of a long valley which lies between them, and is no more than five minutes walk from the southern branch of the Tamsui river. From this point one of the richest plains in northern Formosa extends many miles in an easterly direction, and is fertilized by the annual overflow of the other two branches of the river which run through it. The second crop of rice is now ready for the sickle, and is equal to the best I have seen in Formosa. It also produces the indigo plant in great abundance. Equidistant from Go-ko-kiu and the middle branch of the river, is a large market village, called Chinnih. The other chapel stands there. You remember last spring I expected to find an open door at this place, but did not know what arrangement could be made about a place of worship. However, in June all obstacles were removed by a merchant giving a free house until the close of this year, and that, too, with considerable inconvenience to himself and family. About the coming year I have no fear, for the Lord will provide. The attendance has been large since the opening of the Chapel. Last Sabbath it was quite filled, and more than usual interest manifested during the services. The helper is a young man of this place—one of the number I baptised in February. He is a man of good ability, and it is remarkable how familiar he is with the Scriptures. He meets with those who can attend every morning and evening, and preaches twice on Sabbath. At Go-ko-kiu, from ten to fifteen old women attend every Lord's day, and, according to custom, sit behind a partition so as to be unobserved by men. They also meet every Wednesday for prayer and instruction. One of them sixty years of age (with little bandaged feet), is exceedingly zealous and devoted. With staff in hand, and little grand-child by her side, she goes throughout the neighbourhood, bidding those of her own sex to come and hear the "Glad tidings of salvation." She tells them her son was cruel, wicked, and in the habit of beating herself and his wife, but now he prays to the true God, and they never enjoyed such times of peace.

All the inhabitants of this region are Chinese, and I feel truly thankful to the Lord of the harvest for this beginning in their midst, as I have never changed my views regarding the empire of China. If the aborigines who speak the Chinese language are more willing to receive the truth, so should by all means put forth every effort to teach them the only way of salvation. In this way a good foundation can be laid for future labour; at the same time we should never lose sight of the great work which is awaiting the Christian world, viz.: the evangelization of China, of which this is an exceedingly important part. It is true, the gospel will give the aborigines a position which without they could not maintain; still they are the receding, and the Chinese the advancing race. The policy of the latter respecting Formosa, is all absorbing. Hundreds come yearly from the mainland; how important to meet idolaters with the offer of salvation, and Christians with the right hand of fellowship.

Northern Formosa is closely connected with the main land, and any influence brought to bear on the one, will be more or less felt in the other. Two instances which show this to have already passed under my notice. A young man came to Tamsui from Chinnih, and is bearing testimony to the truth. He tells the people how, around his home, men and women have turned "from idols to serve the living and true God." The other is the young man who felt unworthy to commemorate the dying love of Jesus last February in this place. He crossed the channel to see his parents, and while there his father died, and through his influence many idolatrous ceremonies were omitted at the funeral. Before leaving, he induced his mother to travel to the city to hear the gospel, and she returned greatly delighted. He came back mourning his father's death, still rejoicing in the hope of eternal life beyond this world of trials. With tears in his eyes, he asked me if his father was lost. I told him there is no hope for those who die out of Jesus. He replied, "I wish I had had knowledge of the way of life sooner." What of the millions who will meet us at the coming of our Lord, and remind us of our negligence? There are many here who pray daily for the Lord to send forth more laborers. Brethren in Canada and other Christian lands cannot hear their voice, nevertheless the cry is, "Come over and help us. Help us spread the name of Jesus far and wide, help us plant the Church of Jesus in this heathen isle; help us to save souls from the blackness of darkness forever."

Remember me kindly to Mrs. McLaren and family, to those associated with you in Knox College, and to those who are preparing to go forth and win souls for Jesus, and to all who love His ever blessed name.

I am over yours sincerely, G. L. MACKAY. Formosa, Tamsui, Oct. 28rd, 1873.

In an active life is sown the seed of wisdom; but he who reflects not, never reaps; has no harvest from it, but carries the burden of age, without the wages of experience; nor knows himself old, but from his infirmities, the parish register, and the contempt of mankind. And what has age, if it has not esteem? It has nothing.

Supply of Vacancies.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN

Sir, The following is the substance of a conversation which took place between two parties, one of whom was a member of a congregation over which a minister was about to be settled. This congregation had been vacant about two years. The salary offered was \$850.00 without a manse. Ques.—How is it that you have been so long in getting a minister settled over you? Ans.—We could not get a minister. We have been trying ever since we became vacant. Ques.—How many candidates have you had during the time you have been vacant? Ans.—Between forty and fifty. Ques.—Is the one you have now called the only one of that number who would suit you? Ans.—No. Any of them would have suited us,—the first was as good as the last. None of them was to be despised. Ques.—How is it that you have been so long in deciding when you had so many candidates who were all suitable? Ans.—We did call one, but after keeping us waiting a long time he declined. By this we lost between three and four months of time, and the opportunity of calling the others who were supplying us while we were waiting; and as a minister was only sent to us for two Sabbaths at a time, they followed each other in such rapid succession that it was difficult to get the people to fix their minds on any one, their attention was so much divided. I have frequently listened to their conversation when returning from church, and heard some of them saying,—"Now, I hope the next one they send us will be a bad one, so that the people may not get divided again, but all unite on this one." It appeared that the more ministers were sent to us the more divided we became. Ques.—How did you then get out of your difficulty and succeed in uniting on the one you have now called? Ans.—The greater part of the congregation had become so tired of those continued changes that we saw something must be done, and one of our members happened to see one of the Professors of Knox's College, and told him who had been preaching for us last. The Professor said he had been an excellent student when at College, and that we would do well to get him for our minister. This member wrote to us at once what the Professor had said, and we proceeded with the call.

This is a pretty fair specimen of the working of the probationers scheme. So many ministers are sent, i.e. if it is a congregation prepared to call a minister, that the people become divided or disgusted, or both. If they should decide to call any one, the probability is that their call is declined. Hence the congregation which gets settled in less than two years is more fortunate than the average.

When such a large number of candidates can be sent to a congregation which is not prepared to pay the average salary of the church, an unofficial observer might be led to suppose that the supply of ministers was greatly in excess of the demand, but a careful examination of the probationers lists published from time to time for the last two years shows that the number of ministers has been rather under than over one-third of the reported vacancies. Each congregation prepared to pay an average salary is entitled to one-third of a minister. How is it that such a congregation can have a choice of forty. Has the Home Mission committee the power of multiplying the ministers as Elisha multiplied the widow's oil. Such an anomaly as this in the administration of any of the departments of the civil government would not pass without criticism. Equal care and prudence is surely needed in administering the affairs of the church. Such anomalies should not be allowed to exist. If some of the advocates of this scheme would give some explanation it would be interesting. The system is delusive to congregations. In another letter I will endeavor to show that it is equally so to ministers.

D. McNAUGHTON. Kemble, Jan. 23, 1874.

"Philos" and Tetotalism.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN

MY DEAR SIR, I have read the communication of Philos in your paper of the 30th ult. He seems to be very much afraid that the C. P. Church will make tetotalism a term of communion. But he may feel quite easy on this score. Very few, if any, of the ministers of the C. P. Church advocate the necessity of making tetotalism a term of communion, so that "Philos" is trembling at a shadow that has no existence in any place excepting his own brain. He thinks he is all right on the drunk question, because he claims to have the sympathies and opinion of Professor McLaren to back him. For Professor McLaren, as a man, I have the greatest respect; but for his opinion on the Tetotal question (as commented upon in your paper from time to time), I have no respect whatever, because it is contrary to the requirements of the world at present, and contrary to the Word of God. "Look not thou upon wine when it is red, when it giveth his color in the cup, when it moveth aright. At last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." The arguments of "Philos" are weak and

childish. The only thing he can produce to support the position he has taken is the opinion of a "beloved official" of the U. P. Church on the use of wine and Sabbath driving in London." And this "beloved official" keeps wine in his house "for the accommodation of those accustomed to use it." Just so! The "beloved official" is a wine drinker himself, and when Philos visits him he takes a glass or more! Such "experience" has damned thousands of our young men, robbed the C. P. Church of many of its members, tarnished the reputation of several of its elders, and all the ministers have not escaped unscathed! Let "Philos" make tetotalism a term of daily life, and no minister in the C. P. Church will trouble him about making it a term of communion. He need not lose one hour's sleep for fear that the C. P. Church will "thrust" tetotalism upon her members as a term of communion. But at the same time, whenever we meet with characters of the same opinion as "Philos" and his "beloved official" of the U. P. Church we shall never cease to warn them that such opinions are sending hundreds in Ontario yearly to ruin. "Philos" comes before the public as a temperance man, while he holds the dagger of a Judea in his right hand behind his back, and is ever watching an opportunity to plunge it in the bosom of every temperance man he meets with. Hear him! His words are, We have seen tetotalism alienating the members of a family, we have known it separating the members of a Church, &c. Well, grant all this, what then? It is simply this, tetotalism in the family and in the Church separating themselves from those who tamper with strong drink! This is the blackest charge that the iniquity of Philos could manufacture against tetotalism! Well, I have seen strong drink separating families and Church members, and sending some of them to hell, while others went to heaven! There is no positive safety for a sinful man while he is satisfied with the moderate use of strong drink. Moderation was once the experience of every drunkard now upon earth, and in hell! "Abstain from every appearance of evil" is the only safe ground to stand upon. Both Church and State feel that strong drink—like a cancer—is preying upon the vitals of our country.

BLUENOSE. P.S.—The best Inebriate Asylum that the Ottawa government can give the Dominion is Prohibition. Enniskillen, Feb. 2, 1874.

Headship of Christ.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN

Sir,—In answer to Rev. Walter Inglis I beg leave to say, that he will find the Doctrine of the Headship of Christ fully discussed and applied in chapters viii. and ix. of the Scriptural Form of Church Government, an explanatory treatise on Presbyterianism by Rev. C. C. Stewart, M. A., of Owon Sound.

Yours respectfully, RULING ELDER.

Revival Preaching.

Our matured conviction is that the great thing needed at present is not so much revival sermons or revival prayer meetings as revival truth; and as the very essence of that truth is "the Gospel of God concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord" Rom. i. 1, 2,—or, in other words, the testimony of the Holy Ghost (externally in the preaching of the word, and internally in its spiritual application) to the all sufficient and infallible efficacy of "the precious blood of Christ," 1 Pet. i. 19,—that which is pre-eminently required in order to the general revival of religion is a full, clear, intelligent and earnest utterance of the grand leading doctrines of "the Gospel of the Grace of God," Acts xx. 24. True revival is not obtainable by merely preaching about revival, but by constant proclamation of that all important truth, which is employed by the Holy Ghost to produce it—that "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God," 1 Pet. iii. 18. He will prove the most effective preacher in bringing about a holy, deep, spiritual revival, who gives the greatest prominence to these three great facts: "That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures," Cor. xv. 3, 4, and I am convinced that the reason why so many ministers exhaust nearly all their converting power, (I mean instrumentally) during the first few years of their ministry, while some continue to possess it, and finish their course with joy, is greatly owing to the former leaving the simplicity that is in Christ, and betaking themselves to sermonizing about secondary matters, while the latter make "Christ Crucified" their "Alpha and Omega." On that all the ministers of Jesus Christ would return, for four months at least every year, to all the common texts from which they preached discourses which seemed to be so much blessed to awaken and save souls in the early days of their ministry! Were they to take a series of such texts as Matt. xi. 28; Jno. iii. 16; Rom. i. 16; 1 Cor. ii. 2; 1 Tim. i. 12-17; 1 Jno. i. 7; and, after re-studying them, and bringing all the light of their reading, spiritual insight and experience to bear upon the exposition and enforcement of them, to preach from them with the Holy Ghost, and with a lively faith that, by the grace of the Holy Spirit accompanying their preaching, the unconverted among their people would be immediately converted, there might be a great and general awakening, and tens of thousands might be added to the Lord.—Reid, in "The Blood of Jesus."