

The Canadian Independent.

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TORONTO, MAY 12, 1881.

NOTICE!

Mr. Wm. Revell has kindly undertaken the business management of the INDEPENDENT. In the future, therefore, all remittances and letters about the subscription, or complaints, should be addressed to him, Box 2018, P. O., Toronto, and all articles for insertion, news of churches, &c., to Managing Editor, same address.

Mr. A. Christie, 9 Wilton Avenue, will continue to attend to the business of the Congregational Publishing Company, including orders for the INDEPENDENT and the Year Book.

We want as many items of news of the churches as possible, but will our correspondents be brief; our space is limited, and we dislike to cut down.

TO SUBSCRIBERS.

We are compelled to call the attention of subscribers to the label on their papers. A large number of subscriptions due on January 1st have not yet been paid, and not a few due 1st July last. Beyond paper and print no expenses are incurred. The editor, manager and contributors alike, work without a cent of cost to the paper, so that we think we can, with very good cause, ask all our subscribers whose payments are overdue to REMIT WITHOUT DELAY.

EDWARD MIALI.

The cable last week flashed the sad news of the death of another of the noble men of our denomination in England. That it was unexpected is proved by the fact the *Non-conformist* of April 28th contained the following paragraph:—

"We greatly regret to announce, and are sure many of our readers will share our concern, that Mr. Edward Miall is very seriously unwell, but we trust it may be in our power to announce next week that he has rallied from his present state of prostration. His illness dates from the day before Good Friday."

Three days later he passed away to rejoin his fellow-laborers, some of whom had so lately preceded him, and "to be with Christ."

We have not the materials at hand for an extended notice of the life of Edward Miall; we shall have full particulars in a mail or two, and will speak more in detail. Suffice it now to say that for more than thirty years he has been the undaunted, the unswerving advocate of the separation of Church and State. Almost alone, and when such opinions were counted extreme by the large majority of his brethren, he established the *Non-conformist* newspaper to do battle for that truth, and through long years of bitter opposition on the one hand, and but feeble support on the other, he held on his way. The Anti-State Church Association came into existence mainly by the power of his advocacy, and its successor, the Liberation Society, is to-day doing the same work, stronger and more confident of success than ever. In addition to his work on the paper he sat in the Imperial Parliament for some years, and no question affecting religious liberty or social advancement found him silent. He has not lived to see the

fruition of his labors, but he has long been convinced that it was only a question of time, and a comparatively short time. The tenor of his writings has largely leavened the Nonconformist body of England, doubt and lukewarmness have given place to conviction and zeal. Thirty years ago it would almost have been that his death would have proved the extinction of the Anti-State Church movement—to-day there are scores of willing hearts and eloquent tongues to carry on the work, a work that will not be completed until the last vestige of a State-Church in Great and the Greater Britain has disappeared for ever.

THE SCOTTISH CONGREGATIONAL UNION.

The above Union met at Aberdeen, during the week ending April 9th. From the *Peoples' Journal* we gather that a large number of clerical and lay delegates were present, representing nearly all the congregations in the county. The various societies in connection with the Union appear to be in a healthy condition. The Widows' Fund, Ministers' Provident Fund, Total Abstinence Society, the report of which stated that nearly 70 per cent. of the ministers were abstainers, and not more than 50 per cent. were members of the Society. The Theological Hall, the attendance at which during the year had been twelve students, and the income rather more than \$6,000. The resignation of Dr. Alexander, one of the Professors, was a source of much regret. The churches there have, what we are talking about, a chapel building fund, also a minister's supplementary fund. The departure of the Rev. Mr. Beaton from Coatbridge to St. Johns, Newfoundland, was noticed. Our brethren in Scotland, although, as here, far from numerous, are doing a good work.

THE third and concluding letter of "A Practical Man" has a place in our issue of this week. Nothing has appeared in the INDEPENDENT since it has been in our charge so important and demanding such calm and unbiassed attention as these letters. We do not intend to offer any remarks upon them this week, we would rather leave them as they are for the quiet consideration of the brethren. We trust that they will prove the seed-thoughts out of which will come a change in our body—wiser counsels, larger views, wider sympathies, more active efforts, and, as a result under God, such a growth as we have never yet witnessed in this country.

Contributed Articles

CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF ONTARIO AND QUEBEC.

The annual meeting will be held in Zion Church, Toronto, commencing June 8th at 7.30, when the Annual Sermon will be preached by the Rev. J. L. Foster, of Montreal.

The earnest attention of pastors and deacons is again called to the 12th Standing Rule of the Union (*Year Book* for 1880-81, page 59), which requires annually from "each church" in connection with it, a collection for its funds. Last year only forty-six out of seventy-eight churches on its roll of membership

conformed to this requirement, and \$4 in consequence had to be deducted from the claim of each minister and delegate present. Such a deficit, if repeated, will seriously interfere with the success of the Union, and of all the societies which annually meet along with it, and it is earnestly hoped that every church connected with it will take up a collection on its behalf, on or before June 5th, and forward it to the Secretary-Treasurer at the meeting in Toronto.

Reduced Fares.—The Grand Trunk and Great Western Railway Co.'s will grant return tickets to those attending the meeting, on presentation of certificates signed by myself, at a fare and a third. The Richelieu and Ontario Navigation Co. will give return tickets at the following rates, which include meals and berths:—Port Hope, \$3; Cobourg, \$3.50; Kingston, \$7.50; Brockville, \$9.75; Prescott, \$10.25; Cornwall, \$12; Montreal, \$15; Quebec to Montreal and return \$3, (meals extra); Hamilton to Toronto and return, \$1, (meals extra); Bowmanville, do., \$2.

The Ogdensburg Line will carry at the following rates, including meals and stateroom:—Prescott or Brockville to Toronto and return, \$7.20; Kingston do., \$5.85. Tickets by this line at the reduced rates named, can be procured only by remitting the amount to me. Boats leave Prescott Tuesday, Thursdays, and Saturdays at 1.30 p.m.; Kingston, about 9 p.m.

When sending for certificates please say by what route you will travel.

JOHN WOOD,
Sec. C. U. of O. and Q.
Ottawa.

STATISTICS.

To the Editor Canadian Independent.

SIR,—Kindly allow me through your columns to remind the pastors and secretaries of churches to send in the statistical returns as early as possible, and to let me know if any have failed to receive the blanks.

Yours truly,
W. H. WARRINER,
Statistical Sec.

Yorkville, May 6, 1881.

RECEPTION COMMITTEE.

The Reception Committee will be glad to hear from any persons willing to receive and lodge one or more of the ministers and delegates coming to the Union Meeting.

W. FREELAND,
71 Bay Street,
Secretary Reception Committee.

DR WILKES.

To the Editor of the Canadian Independent:

SIR,—Your readers will no doubt be surprised to hear what I have but recently learned, that the Rev. Dr. Wilkes, the venerable Principal of the Congregational College of British North America, has resigned his position in the College, and is about to proceed to England on a lengthened visit. His loss will be severely felt, and it behoves those who have the interests of the College at heart to bestir themselves in the selection of a successor, one, if possible, who will command equal influence and favor. A good choice is more particularly desirable now in view of the immense strides of the Presbyterians and Baptists, if Congregationalists wish to retain their position in the country.

Perhaps Dr. Wilkes could make inquiries in England, if no one equal to the emergency is forthcoming in Canada. My object is merely to draw attention to a matter of vital importance to Congregationalism in Canada.

Allow me to subscribe myself
AN OBSERVER.

THE POSITION AND PROSPECT OF OUR CHURCHES.

To the Editor Canadian Independent.

SIR,—It would probably be seemly for this, my last communication, to be preceded by a statement from the Editor that the INDEPENDENT, while opening its columns for discussion, is not responsible for the opinions of correspondents. I am aware that those I am about to express may run counter to some received ideas. They may also arouse a certain amount of antagonism, and possibly give pain to individuals. They are, however, the opinions of one who has thought much and seen much of the workings of our church life, and who, during an unbroken connection with it extending over forty years, has had opportunities of comparing it with other forms of church organization. They may be taken, therefore, as the matured judgment of a friend, and not as the carping criticisms of a foe.

Referring then to the contents of my previous letters, and to the contrast between the growth of the first quarter of a century, when we were contending against odds, and of the second, when on a footing of absolute equality, let me make the following suggestions:—

1. It is doubtful if we have, as a body, realized the fact that we have an obligation to discharge to the whole people of Canada. We have been wanting, apparently, in that divine ambition which never rests until every quarter of the land is occupied, and every soul brought under the truth. There has been amongst us a remnant of the Calvinistic and Plymouth Brethren idea that Christ's people are a little flock, and of great complacency in the fact. The Scottish idea of Independent churches, viz., that their chief function is to bear witness for principles, has probably prevented the development of the sacred ambition of possessing the whole land. The fundamental defect of this theory is, that when the witness-bearing has borne fruit in the reformation of errors, and the adoption of sound principles by the larger bodies surrounding it, the work of a mere witness-bearing body is done. When the Corn Laws of England were abolished there was no longer a necessity for an Anti-Corn-Law League. When slavery ceased the Anti-Slavery Society disbanded. If our position is that of mere contention for principles, the triumph of these principles will put an end to the reason for our existence.

Some of these have prevailed already. There is no longer a dominant State church in Canada. There is perfect religious equality. The principles of congregational freedom are rapidly gaining ground in the great religious organizations. For these we have always contended. But have we not been mistaken in putting forward so prominently this witnessing for principles instead of representing our churches as the embodiment of a scriptural and apostolical church polity? On the latter ground we can stand, and from it spread ourselves until we cover the land. On the other we may stand indeed for a time, but the more successfully we witness, the sooner will the necessity for our existence disappear.

2. I have already referred to the foundation of our Collegiate Institute, and to the defective appliances of early years. The men who carried on the institution amidst difficulties and defects have always been held in honor amongst us. But it is a question whether a misconception did not pervade the operations of those early times. The country, it must be confessed, was in a raw and inchoate condition. There seemed but little congruity between backwoods clearings and academic culture. In fact, it would seem as if academic culture, in any thorough sense, would have been an utter exotic in such a climate. The