

British American Presbyterian,

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FOR TERMS, ETC., SEE FRONT 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.

Articles not accepted will be returned, if, at the time they are sent, a request is made to that effect, and 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.

Presbyterian Year Book OUT FOR 1877.

THIRD YEAR OF PUBLICATION.

The London Advertiser says:—"We have to acknowledge receipt of THE PRESBYTERIAN YEAR BOOK FOR THE DOMINION OF CANADA AND NEWFOUNDLAND, published by Mr. C. Blackett Robinson, 102 Bay Street, Toronto, and edited by Rev. James Cameron, Chatsworth. The Year Book is ably compiled and handsomely printed. It contains a large fund of information interesting to every Presbyterian, including the rules, forms of procedure, and provisional enactments adopted by the last General Assembly."

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C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, Toronto, Ont.

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British American Presbyterian.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1877.

PRAYERS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Our respected townsman, Mr. John Macdonald, has distinguished himself by a speech lately given in the House in support of his motion to the effect that the Sessions of Parliament should be opened by prayer. The address is interesting, as showing that it is the practice in many other similarly constituted bodies to have their proceedings begun with devotional exercises. It is just a man of Mr. Macdonald's pronounced religious character, that we may expect to come to the front on such a question. The honourable gentleman has done credit to himself and the city which he represents by the motion and the address. It is well when a layman of such commanding influence speaks out boldly upon a matter of this kind. The clergyman doing so is instantly criticised as being professionally interested, but such a man in making this motion, stands out clearly as doing so from disinterested and therefore from the best of motives.

There can be no reasonable objection to the proposal of the honourable member. The Houses of Parliament of Great Britain, the corresponding assemblies of the United States, the Senate of the Dominion, have their proceedings opened with prayers. Why should the House of Commons be an exception to an almost universal practice? In itself it is proper and becoming that those who are invested with such powers and responsibilities should invoke the Divine aid and blessing upon their counsels. As the legislative body of a Christian nation, it is surely right that they should address themselves to the God of the people whom they represent.

But many objections will be urged. It will be said that few members will be present during prayers, and that their devotions will thus be rendered cold and formal. And again, it is urged that with the friction and conflicting interests between Protestants and Catholics, the attempt to introduce prayers would only prove the occasion of exciting sectarian feeling. This is of course to be avoided. But if similar bodies, that are likewise composed of Catholics and Protestants, can have prayers, the question presses itself, why cannot our own House of Commons?

The Committee, to which this matter of prayer was referred, are prepared to recommend a form which includes prayers for the Queen, for the Senate and the House of Commons, and the Lord's Prayer. They also agreed to recommend that this form be read by the Speaker. There can be little doubt as to this report meeting with the approval of the House.

ONE THOUSAND A YEAR.

A young pastor enquires of us what proportion of a stipend of \$1,000 he should give towards schemes of the Church, congregational funds, and charitable purposes. We would say in general that the tenth of such a salary might fairly be given to the objects named. But every one must judge for himself. In the case of a young pastor, such as we presume our correspondent to be, without wife and children, or other private calls upon his purse, it might be easy for him to give more. But a minister with a family to be supported from the salary named, could hardly be expected to give so much as a tenth. It is then a question whether the stipend is adequate or not. If inadequate, the family might suffer by attempting so great a sacrifice. In the case of large incomes, such as three thousand dollars up to the ten or fifteen or twenty thousand that is so common in the States, it is easy to give a tenth or even more to the Lord. When, however, we come down to what is just barely sufficient for the comfortable maintenance of a family, it may be a minister's duty to withhold from contributing to anything beyond the schemes of the Church, and the ordinary cases of charity that will press themselves upon his attention.

The misfortune with pastors is that they have to preach the duty of giving, without being in a position to illustrate it fully themselves. We contend for adequate salaries being given to pastors, and thus enabling them to take part in the work of benevolence of the Church. In the case of a congregation which manifestly ought to give a salary of \$2,000, only giving \$1,000, the pastor is deliberately strip of the power he ought to have of doing good, and of enforcing his preaching by example. But then it may be fairly debated whether it is a minister's duty to contribute to the funds of the Church. The practice of pastors is very various in this connection. Some say that to give to these is to contribute so much to their own salary, while others recognize the expenses of the Church as one of the channels in which they may render their offerings to the Lord. For our part where the envelope system is adopted, we do not like to see the plate passing away from the minister's family pew. To our mind it does not look well, and may be misunderstood by many on-lookers.

This we must say before closing, that ministers in general contribute a very large portion of their salaries to the service of the Lord. There is no class who more notably illustrate the golden precept, "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." We feel that ministers need restraint put upon them in this regard, and that if the pews were generally as liberal as the pulpits, the revenues of the schemes, of the colleges, and of congregations, would be greatly improved.

In the death of Dr. H. B. Smith, of Union Theological Seminary, the Presbyterian Church in the United States loses one of its strongest pillars. At the time of his death he was associate editor of the Presbyterian Quarterly and Princeton Review.

A LARGE and enthusiastic meeting was held in St. Andrew's Church, St. John, N. B., on Friday evening 2nd inst., for the purpose of giving a cordial welcome to the new pastor, Rev. Wm. Mitchell, B.A., formerly of Montreal. Tea was served in the school-room, but so large was the gathering that a second table was found necessary, so that the intellectual part of the programme was not entered upon until nine o'clock. The chair was occupied by Dr. Bennet, who called upon Rev. Dr. Maclellan to open the proceedings with devotional exercises. The chairman then read an address of welcome to Mr. Mitchell, signed by a committee representing the Board of Trustees, the Kirk Session, and the congregation. From Mr. Mitchell's reply we quote the following short paragraph as being of permanent value and interest:—"I come to you, brethren, with no new or startling doctrines. I bring with me no trick of the pantomimist. I would rather see you take a torch and burn this structure to the ground, and sit amid its ashes, than by any trick of mine seek to draw the multitude. I come with 'the old, old story,' for I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. I am here as an advocate of that religion which at once redeems the soul, ennobles the mind, and purifies the affections. I am here to speak what I know of the counsel of God. I am here to speak words that strengthen the weak, comfort the sorrowful, and win sinners to the cross of Christ. I am here to brighten the evening of life by telling the aged of a nightless Heaven in a sinless world. I am here to help the strong to bear the heat and burden of the day, and to guide the young and erring feet into that path which leads to honor, glory, and a blessed immortality." The meeting was afterwards addressed by Rev. Messrs. Bennet, Sprague and Carey, and Messrs. Elder, Girvan and Lindsay; and the new pastor made a few closing remarks.

ASYLUMS AND PRISONS.

From the report of the Inspector of Asylums, Prisons, etc., we gather with much satisfaction, that the time seems to be at hand when the very broad distinction between these two classes of institutions will be fully carried out in practice; and when the unfortunate victim of mental disease shall no longer be treated as if he were a criminal, and penned up in the same common goal with the hardened, strong-minded evil-doer. It was perhaps from dire necessity that such a thing ever was done, but we repeat that we are very glad that the necessity for such injudicious treatment is now, or shortly will be, removed. The edifice at Hamilton originally intended for an Inebriate Asylum, has been converted into an Asylum for the Insane, and the buildings at Orillia are now used as an Asylum for Idiots. The Hamilton Asylum with accommodation for 200 patients, is used entirely for the reception of chronic cases of a mild character from the other three—Toronto, Kingston and London—which are thus much relieved, and have their receiving capacity enlarged. The Orillia Asylum will accommodate 150. With these additions, the total asylum accommodation has been increased to 2,009; and as the whole number of lunatics, idiots, and persons of unsound mind, which had come under the cognizance of the authorities up to the date referred to in the report, was only 1,977 (including thirty-five apparently still in gaol) there appears no reason why any at all of the insane, not charged with any crime, should remain in gaol. In fact the Inspector, Mr. J. W. Langmuir, states in his Introductory Report, that the goals have been entirely relieved; and it is probable that the thirty-five appearing in the table were only in course of transit; but we hope such arrangements will be made that the insane will not even call at the gaol on their way to their own proper place of refuge. Mr. Langmuir, however, does not consider the margin left between the actual number of patients and the accommodation provided, to be sufficient. He says, "I wish that I were able to believe that this relief is more than temporary, but careful consideration of all statistics upon the subject, that I have been able to procure, has convinced me that it will not be safe to consider that sufficient accommodation has been provided until at least 2,800 beds are at the disposal of the province for persons of unsound mind. He therefore recommends that the capacity of the Hamilton Asylum be increased to 482 by the addition of two wings to the building; that the London "branch building" be enlarged, and two additional groups of cottages built, so as to increase the accommodation to 880; that the Rockwood Asylum be acquired from the Dominion Government, and another wing added to it, so as to raise the accommodation at Kingston to 500; and that a Training School for juvenile idiots be erected close to the present building at Orillia. With these changes and additions the aggregate capacity would be raised to 2850. Appended to the Inspector's report there is a well digested and admirably written report from Dr. Clark, Medical Superintendent of the Toronto Asylum for the Insane. He also strongly condemns the old method of sending patients first to gaol and then to the asylum, stating that it is very injurious to those who are really insane, and that it has also been the cause of sending many persons to the asylum whose minds were quite sound.

From the Report of the superintendent, Mr. John Black, we gather that the Barrie Sabbath school is in a prosperous condition. The increase in the attendance of children is not very large. One reason for this is that several classes have suffered (temporarily) from a change of teachers, no fewer than seven teachers including the pastor having removed; their places being supplied by others. The other reason is that a new school having been organized in connection with the Reformed Episcopal Church, parents belonging to that body very properly removed their children to their own Sabbath school. Under such circumstances we should expect a decrease, but when we find that after all a small addition has been made to the roll it is very apparent that abundant progress has been made. Two hundred and sixty names appear on the roll—twenty more than in the previous year—yielding an average attendance of 165; and there are twenty-four teachers with an average attendance of twenty-two. The missionary contributions of the children, amounting to \$108.06, were appropriated as follows—the allotment having been made in anticipation, at the Annual S. S. Missionary Meeting in January, 1876:—the contributions for the first quarter, to China, \$28.37; those of the second quarter, to the French Mission, \$26.14; those of the third quarter, to India, \$28.10; and those of the fourth quarter, to Maskoke, \$30.45. The school continues as formerly to be supplied every month with 100 copies of the SABBATH SCHOOL PRESBYTERIAN, published at this office; and the report speaks favourably of the improvements recently effected in its appearance.

Ministers and Churches.

We urgently solicit from Presbytery Clerks and our readers generally, items for this department of our paper, so as to make it a general epitome of all local church news.

Rev. D. Stewart of Enniskillen has received a call from the congregation of Arthur.

We are requested to state that the P. O. address of the Rev. Wm. MacWilliam, M.A., will now be Harwood, instead of B. W. Mansel, as formerly.

The annual meeting of the Bowmanville congregation was held lately, and the financial report showed a very flourishing state of affairs. The contributions of the congregation exceeded those of former years by \$500. They have a good Church and a good manse, all which property is entirely free from debt.

On Friday evening, 9th inst., Rev. A. McKay of Eldon was agreeably "surprised" by a visit from a goodly number of the members of his congregation headed by Captain Sinclair. They presented him with a purse containing \$80, accompanied by an address expressing their great esteem for him as their pastor, and their appreciation of his labors among them.

The Association of Chalmers' Church, Guelph, held a social entertainment on Tuesday evening, 18th inst. The chair was occupied by Mr. Rogers, president of the Association, and Rev. Thomas Wardrope, pastor of the congregation, occupied a seat beside him on the platform. The exercises of the evening consisted of music, recitations, and an address from Mr. Wardrope. The proceeds are to be devoted to the organ fund.

On the 5th inst., the Lansdowne congregation held a very successful tea meeting. The weather was favorable, and the Church was filled to its utmost capacity. The chair was occupied by Mr. Robert Latimer. After tea the meeting enjoyed a variety of interesting and instructive addresses from Rev. Messrs. Trembel, Houston, Coulthard and Smith, and Mr. Cook, teacher; and the pauses between the speeches were filled in with excellent music.

The congregation of St. Andrew's Church, Belleville, held their annual soiree on Thursday evening, 8th inst.—Mr. Alex. Robertson, Barrister, in the chair. The attendance was so large that it was found necessary to furnish a second table for those who could not find room at the first. The intellectual part of the programme included music and recitations, and very interesting and instructive addresses were delivered by Rev. Mr. Smith of Kingston, and Rev. Messrs. Turnbull and Burton of Belleville.

At the Sabbath School Convention of the Whitey Presbytery, held at Oshawa on the 30th and 31st ult., a very able and impressive address was delivered by the President, Mr. John Ratcliff, Columbus, and the following subjects were well discussed:—"Order in the Sabbath School," by Mr. George Laing and Rev. W. M. Rogers; "Difficulties of S. S. Superintendents," by Mr. Parker, Mr. Glen, Rev. Mr. Drummond and Mr. Fairbairn; "How can we best secure attention in our classes," by Mr. J. O. Smith and the President. Addresses were afterwards given by Rev. Messrs. Douglas, Drummond and Ross.

On the evening of Wednesday, 7th inst., a social meeting was held under the auspices of the young men of the Iroquois congregation. A large company assembled and enjoyed a superior programme of speeches, music, and readings. On the evening of the following Saturday (10th) a similar meeting was held for the children. On the latter occasion, the pastor of the congregation, Rev. W. M. McKibbin, was presented with the sum of \$32, and an address, to which he made a suitable reply.

At St. Andrew's Church, Goderich, on the afternoon of Saturday, the 10th inst., forty-three destitute boys and girls between the ages of five and fourteen, were supplied with various articles of clothing of a comfortable and substantial kind which had been prepared and contributed by the members of Knox Church. The poor children listened very attentively to addresses from Rev. Dr. Ure and Mr. James Buchanan, and promised to attend the Sabbath school regularly.

A LARGE number of the young people connected with the Sonya congregation paid a visit to the manse on the evening of Friday, the 2nd inst., and presented the pastor, Rev. Arch. Currie, with a purse containing a handsome sum of money, and an address expressive of very kind feelings towards himself, his partner in life, and all the members of their family. Mr. Currie made a suitable reply. This is the third presentation made by the people of this congregation to their minister within six months. The first was a handsome set of harness formerly noticed, and the second was a large quantity of oats. The annual meeting passed off agreeably and satisfactorily on the 7th inst.

On the evening of Friday last the Charles Street Mission Band gave their first musi-

cal and literary entertainment at the residence of Jas. S. Playfair, Esq., Bloor Street. It proved a complete success, and realized \$11. Two large rooms were well filled by a most respectable and appreciative audience. The entertainment consisted of an address by the pastor, Rev. R. D. Fraser, M.A., a number of piano duets and solos, a chorus and trio by the choir, readings and songs, all of which were so well rendered that comparison would be invidious. The interest was kept up to a late hour, and at the close the announcement was made of a similar treat a few weeks hence.

Rev. R. McLennan, M.A., late of Peterborough, was on Wednesday, 31st ult., duly inducted into the pastoral charge of St. James' Church, Charlottetown, P. E. I. Rev. John McKinnon of Georgetown preached; Rev. Dr. Murray, Moderator of the Presbytery, addressed the minister; and Rev. A. McLean of Belfast the people. The Church was densely crowded. Mr. McLennan received a very warm welcome from the congregation over which he has been placed, and from the Presbytery with which he has become associated; and he enters upon his new charge with every prospect of success. His stipend is \$1,600 per annum, payable quarterly in advance, commencing from 1st December last.

At the annual meeting of the congregation of Fort Massie Church, Halifax, N. S., the managing committee presented a very encouraging report. For the past year the collections averaged \$89.77 per Sabbath; and the total givings of the congregation amounted to an average of \$110 for every family. The total received was \$4787.80, and the expenditure was \$4,956.85, an excess over income of \$199.05—but unforeseen items alone account for this deficiency. One of these unforeseen items was the expenses, legal and otherwise, connected with the "Chiniquy Riot," amounting to about \$200. The committee bore testimony to the faithful pastorate of Rev. Dr. Burns, and in accordance with the wishes of the congregation, raised his stipend to \$3,000.

The annual meeting of the River Street Church, Paris, was held on Wednesday evening last, the pastor, the Rev. John Anderson, occupying the chair. The meeting was well attended by the members and adherents of the congregation, the ladies having provided an excellent tea, which was served up in the lecture room. The statistical and financial statements were read, which showed the congregation to be in a satisfactory and flourishing condition. Notwithstanding the general depression of the past year the ordinary income was in advance of that of the previous year. Besides this about \$300 has been expended on improvements in the Church and lecture room, that added much to the comfort and accommodation of the people. After the election of a committee of management for the coming year, and the transaction of other business, the meeting separated, all highly satisfied with the evening's proceedings.

We are indebted to our esteemed contemporary, the Beacon, for the following:—"The annual congregational meeting of Knox Church, Stratford, was held in the basement of the Church, on Monday evening of last week. There was a larger attendance than usual of members and adherents. The report of the managers congratulated the congregation on their continued prosperity, which was not affected by the hard times. The ordinary revenue of the year was made up of pew rents, \$1,652.47; Sabbath collections, \$1,478.34; proceeds of soiree, \$111; total, \$3,241.81. The ordinary expenditure, including the interest for the year on the mortgage debt, amounted to \$2,640.60, leaving a surplus of over \$600, which was expended partly in introducing gas into the Church, and partly in reducing the congregational debt. For the mission schemes \$825 were raised during the year. Fifty-five new members were added to the roll. The Sabbath school, under the superintendence of Mr. James Henderson, is in a flourishing condition. Much praise is due to the venerable pastor, Rev. Mr. Macpherson, who has for over twenty-seven years been minister of the congregation. He was in it at its formation, and has ever since labored earnestly and diligently in the ministerial field. Mr. Macpherson is greatly beloved by his flock, and in view of his resignation, which was some time ago placed in the hands of the Presbytery, the congregation by a unanimous vote affirmed the resolution adopted at a previous meeting, granting him a yearly retiring allowance of \$500. It must be a source of gratification to the worthy pastor to look back on the past history of the congregation and see the progress that has been made under his charge, and we are pleased to see that his people propose to make so handsome a provision for him in his declining years. The following constitute the board of management for the ensuing year:—Messrs. W. W. Fortune (chairman), Thomas Miller, Alex. Grant, A. Macnair, A. Stevenson, John Ross, Andrew M'Intosh, James Collins, and A. G. McLeay. Mr. Henry Gibson is treasurer of the congregation."