

British American Presbyterian.

Contributors and Correspondents.

Causes of Vacancies.

DEAR SIR,—The remarks of "Another Elder," given in your last issue, on the above subject, I note, and beg room for a concluding word of explanation. This I deem necessary, as the position in which I am placed, and determines to leave me, as intimated in his last communication, is not altogether favorable to the maintenance of that mutual respect which he deems may subsist between us.

In answer to my challenge, and as proof that in a previous statement I charged country ministers with love of gain, he says:—"Did you not introduce, to quote your own words, a wily proselytizer, and make him, so to speak, in many instances not unsuccessfully, to persuade vacant congregations that the ministers of their communion were only hiring shepherds, who embraced every favorable opportunity of change for purposes of gain?" Most certainly I did, and in the statement I made I only spoke of what I have personal knowledge of, that such representations are used, and used successfully, in drawing away members from the Presbyterian communion. For proof of the existence of such proselytizers, and the character of their work, here and elsewhere, I refer my brother elder to the Report of the Committee on the State of Religion, given in the Appendix to the Acts and Proceedings of the 24th General Assembly of the C. P. Church. If he is not satisfied with this, he can obtain my address from the Editor of this paper, when, on application, I shall be glad to furnish him with further particulars, and also with references, in order that he may judge for himself whether the representations I make are worthy of credence or not.

Long, however, in so far as personal experience is concerned, may such characters be "mythical" to my brother, but let him cease throwing bricks at his neighbor who finds them *bona fide* adversaries; nor even seem to extenuate a state of matters which has already sufficiently disgraced the Presbyterian Church, and furnished the enemy with a most effective weapon of attack.

So far as I can understand the metaphorical allusions employed by my brother, he believes that, in my haste to attach blame to ministers, I have wilfully overlooked the true cause of vacancies, and travelled out of my way in order to accomplish a malicious, one-sided purpose.

I beg to assure my friend that I have no sympathy with those who delight to feast on the shortcomings of ministers, but I have equally little with men who make a business of trafficking in the sins of members. The interests of ministers and members are one and the same, the obligations they owe to each other mutual, and the manner in which these relative duties are discharged, affects most powerfully the Christian character and life of each other. Where a liberal sympathy is manifested on the part of members to their minister, the reflex influence of that sympathy will return to their own bosoms, richly laden with blessing, and if a different spirit obtains, different results are sure to follow. The same principle, I believe, holds good as regards the discharge of pastoral duties, for whatever the character of a pastor's ministrations may be, the impress will be stamped on the hearts of his flock, the volitions of which, in the direction of liberality and every other Christian grace, whether liberally or the reverse, are in no small degree influenced thereby.

Entertaining these views and believing that the causes of vacancies, the above mentioned principles would apply, I gave to your readers my first communication, dissenting from the unqualified exemption of Ministers from blame, claimed for them by your correspondent, whose article on Vacancies appeared in the B. A. P. for August 1, and which I wish added to the list supplied by my brother, for the judgment of your readers. I have spoken my mind frankly in order that my friend whose goodwill I am anxious to retain may see on what a small foundation rests the charge of "shootings and the corner," levelled at me in his last communication, and also to clear the way of apprehensions which might be, should I again have occasion to cross the trail in his further consideration of the Causes of Vacancies."

A COUNTRY ELDER.

Honest, plain words best pierce the ear.—Shakespeare.

Opening of the New Presbyterian College.

The opening of this elegant and commodious building took place on the evening of Monday, 28th inst. Rev. Principal MacVicar, L.L.D., presided. Representatives from nearly all the Protestant denominations in this city were present. On the platform we noticed, among others, Rev. Taylor, Hon. Justice Torrance, Rev. Dr. Jenkins, Rev. Dr. Douglas, J. W. Dawson, L.L.D., Rev. Mr. Chapman, Rev. Dr. Cornish, Rev. Principal Cavan, of Knox College, Toronto, Rev. Prof. Murray, Rev. Prof. Campbell, Rev. Dr. DeSola, Rev. Mr. Lafleur, Rev. Mr. Wells, Rev. Prof. Ducloux, Rev. A. Young, Valleyfield, Rev. J. Watson, Huntingdon; Rev. R. Campbell, Rev. Dr. Burns, Rev. J. M. Gibson, Rev. Mr. Fortin, Trinity Church; Rev. A. McNish, B.D., Cornwall, Ont.

Rev. Principal MacVicar read letters from the following, expressing their regret at not being able to be present: The Bishop of Montreal and Metropolitan, Rev. Principal Cook, of Morris College, Quebec; Rev. Principal Snodgrass, of Queen's College, Kingston, Rev. Dean Bond, Rev. Canon Bancroft and Rev. M. Henderson.

The Hall was crowded to excess, large numbers being unable to obtain standing room. The meeting was opened by singing the Hundredth Psalm, and prayer by Rev. Dr. Burns. Principal MacVicar then proceeded to deliver the following opening address:—

Ladies and Gentlemen—The happy circumstances under which we meet to-night require from me a few sentences regarding the origin and progress of this College. The Synod of the Canada Presbyterian Church, having resolved to establish a Theological College here, and a charter having been obtained, the three Presbyteries of Montreal, Ottawa, and Brockville were set apart for the support of the institution. The work of instruction was commenced in the winter of 1867, under the care of the Rev. Messrs. Gregg and Atkin, each delivering lectures during three months. Since then till to-night our classes have been held in rooms generously granted free of expense, in the basement of Erskine Church. In 1868 I was appointed Professor in the College, and accepted the office, leaving for this purpose one of the strongest congregations in our church. It is not surprising that the work was looked upon as purely tentative when you remember that we set out amid the openly expressed doubts and fears of not a few, with a mere handful of students, with no library, no scholarships, no endowment, no buildings, and only one professor.

WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED.

After five years of arduous toil we find ourselves in possession of assets amounting in all to between eighty and ninety thousand dollars. We have a library of over five thousand volumes; twenty scholarships of the value of from \$50 to \$60 each; two medals, one in gold, founded by the students last session, and the other in silver, founded by A. Sandham, Esq.; and an endowment fund of twenty-four thousand dollars. We have three professors and the services of an able lecturer and tutor. We have 40 students and 17 graduates; and to-night we rejoice in taking possession of this beautiful and commodious building, of which I shall say more presently. We train men speaking English, Gaelic and French, special provision being made for the education of the last named, so as to fit them for missionary service throughout our country. Our students come from all parts of the Dominion, and some recently from the United States and Scotland. They are graduates in Arts of Toronto University, Queen's College, Kingston; McGill College, and other similar institutions. As to their talents and literary attainments, suffice it to say that a reasonable number of them have taken the English honors in their Arts Course, and I can speak confidently of their devotion and success in their Theological studies.

MISSIONARY REPORTS OF THE WORK.

In this connection I have to mention the pleasing fact that ere long several of our young men will, by the grace of God, be engaged in the foreign field. Equally important is our French missionary work, which is now beginning to be better organized and understood. One of our French students is on the list of graduates, and now labors in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia in connection with the Presbyterian Church there, which church I hope soon to see united with our own. The missionary spirit of all with our own. The missionary spirit of all our students manifests itself in various ways; such as the formation of a missionary society, among themselves, which sustains five or six missionaries annually during a five or six months' absence; and I could point in and around our city where the labors of professors and students are having a most favorable effect. When this College was projected I was one of those who argued that its usefulness would prove most beneficial to the Eastern portion of the Church. In confirmation of the correctness of this view, I am now able to state, in addition to what has been referred to, that five of our graduates are already settled within this Province, including the French Missionary in Nova Scotia; and I have no doubt that others of our young men will follow their good example. With

these facts before you, I ask how far the expectations originally entertained have been realized? Was it not a good thing to have established this College; and would it not have been far better for our Church and the Dominion had it been established fifteen or twenty years ago? But I shall not enter upon an apology for our course, which is now too plain to require such, and which is being followed by other Christian denominations.

OUR RELATION TO MCGILL COLLEGE.

It would be improper, and even ungrateful, on such an occasion as this, to overlook the many advantages which we enjoy, and which are open to all other denominations, from affiliation with McGill College. Its library, museum, scholarships, exhibitions, medals, and lectures are open to our students. Specially should I mention the facilities afforded them for the study of Hebrew and Oriental—languages which usually have to be provided by the Theological Seminaries at their own expense.

OUR NEW BUILDINGS.

It is unnecessary for me to attempt a description of the beautiful, substantial and commodious buildings in which we are assembled, and which you see for yourselves. It is sufficient to say that through the skill, taste, and fidelity of our architect and contractors, it more than satisfies our expectations. It contains accommodation for our library and classes, and comfortable studies and dormitories for our students. That we are not mistaken in making provision for young men in this respect is shown by the fact that every room we have is now occupied, while some of our men are still boarding beyond the College buildings; and I feel sure that I can safely say for all students within these walls that they rejoice to-night that the thing to which some of them have looked forward for five years is now realized; that they greatly appreciate what has been accomplished, and address themselves to their work with renewed vigor, feeling that we offer them as great advantages, and at less expense, than they can enjoy—I shall not say in Canada, but on this continent. These buildings and grounds cost \$48,100. The amount subscribed is \$38,350, of which \$21,600 has been paid. The amount already paid to contractors is \$30,000, being \$8,400 in excess of the amount as yet received by the Treasurer. From the state of our funds it is plain that subscribers who have it in their power to pay earlier than stipulated on the list will confer a favor by doing so. Until this is done we shall be obliged to make payments on an interest account, and thus increase the total cost. In this connection it gives me pleasure to acknowledge the generous contributions given us by persons of various denominations, and especially by our friends of the American Presbyterian Church in this city. I cannot refrain in this public manner from presenting an expression of admiration and grateful thanks on behalf of the professors and students to all the members of the College Board for the energy and dispatch with which they have carried forward this work to a successful completion; and it is but right to say that we are under special obligations to Mr. Warden King, our Treasurer; Messrs. D. Brown, J. Watson, J. Stirling, Secretary; and to the members of our Finance and Building Committees for the valuable time, efforts, and thought which they have expended in the work of the Church. By the blessing of God there has been no accident, interruption, or conflict of opinion in carrying forward our undertaking, and I believe the contractors have performed their engagements in a faithful manner, and handed over a building of which they need not be ashamed.

WHAT IS STILL REQUIRED.

Our classrooms, &c., are not yet properly furnished; the library has room for many additional volumes. Not long ago I invited some one to send us Appleton's edition of the Greek and Latin fathers; it still waits. Will some one signalize our entrance into this building by placing this unique treasure within our reach? In our plans, as originally prepared by Mr. Hutchinson, there appears a library hall large enough to accommodate friends who may wish to meet with us, as is done to-night; also further conveniences for students, and rooms for a resident Dean. Our present rooms are all occupied, and the accommodation will be insufficient to meet the increase we expect. Will some one set an example of liberality worthy of our merchant princes, of our Church and cause, by completing our original plans.

WORK TO BE DONE WITHIN THESE WALLS.

In closing, the speaker said. Here we are to teach the higher of all sciences—that of God-man. We are to train men to preach the Gospel, to expound and defend the Word of the living God, to seek to save souls, and to edify the saints. Here are to grow up our fostering care home and foreign missionaries, and pastors of our churches. Here we are to offer, in these days of doubt and perplexity, uncompromising resistance to all forms of error. While cherishing and teaching the broadest charity, you may expect us to be thoroughly intolerant of all that would rob us of God's truth, and jeopardize the souls of men. We do not think it an impertinence or contrary to common sense, revelation, or Christian etiquette to defame and annul our creed, and to ask others to do the same. The fact is that every man has a creed of some sort; and if it is good, and if he is honest and clear-headed enough to give it expression, we can see no reason why he should put his light under a bushel. We shall not fully stand in the way of the onward march of intellect, and shall seek to help, and not to hinder, the logical and scientific investigations of our age, but as new articles of our faith have yet been annihilated by the persistent efforts of modern scepticism you may expect to find us firmly and resolutely standing by the old creed as worthy of all acceptance, and full of vitality and power, because containing the truth of God. We will not, however, discourage free thought in the proper sense of the term, in the sense in which it was defined by that distinguished statesman, the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, in December last. He said, "Saint Paul, I suppose, was a teacher of free thought, when he bade his converts to 'prove all things'; but it seems he went terribly astray when he proceeded to bid them 'Hold fast that which is good'; for he evidently assumed there were some things by which they could hold fast. And so he bade Timothy to keep that which was committed to his charge; and another apostle has instructed us to 'earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.' But the free thought of which we now hear so much seems too often to mean thought wrong and vagrant, more than free; like Deslos in the ancient legend, drifting on the seas of Greece, without a root, a direction, or a home."

Ladies and Gentlemen, I feel deeply the responsibility resting upon professors and students in those days of unrest and unbelief, and in view of this let me present the Apostle's request, "Brethren, pray for us." Much depends, under God, upon you and upon us. I rely with confidence upon your continued kindness and generosity to sustain and extend this great and fundamental work of the Church. Much has already been accomplished, and the future seems bright with hope and promise. Six, or even three years ago we could not venture to predict what we to-night realize. But "The Lord hath been mindful of us," and let us devoutly say, "Not unto us, not unto us, but to His name be all the glory."

After reading of the Scriptures by Rev. Mr. Gibson the chairman called upon Rev. Dr. Taylor, who in a few words expressed his delight at the rapid progress made in the erection of this building and the favorable circumstances in which they were met. He was followed by Hon. Justice Torrance, who, on behalf of the Building Committee, returned sincere thanks to those who had contributed so liberally to the building fund.

Rev. Dr. Jenkins, in a few well-chosen remarks, conveyed his congratulations to the Professor and friends of the college on the most enviable circumstances in which they were met.

Rev. Principal Cavan, of Knox College, Toronto, then gave an eloquent address, expressive of the most hearty congratulations and sentiments of friendship from those connected with the sister institution in the West.

Narayan Seshadri, who arrived during proceedings, having been at another meeting in the city, was received with hearty applause, and gave an eloquent address.

The meeting was closed as usual with the doxology and benediction.—*Montreal Witness.*

Services,

CONNECTED WITH THE RE-OPENING OF THE ORILLIA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

Some months ago, the Presbyterian Congregation of the village found their place of worship was too small, and felt themselves constrained to consider the question of an increase of accommodation. Several plans were suggested. The majority of the people being averse to the erection in the meantime of a new church, some other course required to be adopted. In the carrying out of any addition to the present church there was great danger of simply building a piece of patch-work, since the edifice had already been twice enlarged. The difficulty of the work was increased from the necessity of preserving as much as possible of the old church, in deference to the feelings of those who had worshipped there for many years, while in this age of growing taste and love of the beautiful, it was incumbent that the required improvements be made in a tasteful and suitable manner. After long and careful consideration, the office bearers adopted a plan prepared by Mr. W. Dunn. In accordance therewith the old roof has been raised nine feet, and re-slunged, two wings have been thrown out at each side to the width of twelve feet, and have been adorned with buttresses, and crowned at the front of the church with two neat porches. Beautiful ornamental and louver windows replace the dull dead appearance of the walls. The old tower with its unsymmetrical tin-crowned spire, has been replaced by a new tower and spire, that at the top of the iron ornament which surmounts it, attains to the height of about 185 feet, and is from its lofty position seen as a conspicuous object from a long distance. The high and somewhat clumsy steps in front of the tower have been removed and the entrance-door made wider, and the steps placed cheerily within the tower. Another entrance has also been made in the porch facing Peter Street. Within the interior the old pews and pulpit, the gallery and ceiling remain unchanged. The side-walls of the old building have been taken down, and arches of unequal size, supported on pillars, take their place. The pillars are capped and the arches ornamented in a tasteful manner. The extension of twelve feet on each side is filled with pews, and an aisle which runs alongside of the outside wall. The walls inside and out have been plastered in blocks in imitation of stone work. About one hundred and eighty new sittings have been added at present, and the plan is so constructed that at a comparatively small expense, a hundred new sittings can be arranged. This plan has been successfully carried out by the contractors, Messrs. Badley Brothers. It was originally intended that the building should be completed and ready for occupa-

tion at the beginning of October. After the contract was signed it was decided to build a tower and spire, instead of repairing the old. This additional work has somewhat delayed the completion of the contract, so that the church was only ready for worship last Sabbath.

As arrangements had been made with several ministers from a distance to assist at the opening services, it was found necessary to open the Church for worship last Lord's Day, although the tower and the painting inside, as well as several other things, were not completed. A large congregation assembled on the Sabbath forenoon, and listened with deep interest to a brief, yet impressive discourse from Rev. W. McConnell, on Hebrews, vi., 17-20. In the afternoon there was a large attendance, considering the inclemency of the weather, and an appropriate sermon was preached by the Rev. R. Moodie, from Psalm, lxxxiv. 1. In the evening the weather became more inclement, but the number present, though not so large as during the forenoon, evinced a continued interest in the services. The devotional exercises were conducted by the Rev. W. McConnell, and a discourse of great excellence and considerable length was delivered by the Rev. Moodie, on I. Corinthians, xii. 31. The collections at these services amounted to \$178.00.

On Monday evening an opening celebration was held in the Music Hall. Notwithstanding the unpropitious appearance of the weather, a stream of people began to pour into the hall, and crowd followed crowd until the place was crammed with about 500 people. How the Managing Committee contrived to provide tables and drinkables for so many will ever remain a mystery, and how they were able to maintain such order and quiet, is creditable both to them and to those present at the meeting. The Rev. J. Gray, who occupied the chair, after a short address presented, with a few appropriate remarks, a large Family Bible to Mr. F. Kean, from the office-bearers of the congregation, in acknowledgment of his kindness in tendering to them the use of his Hall for public worship, during the enlargement of the Church. Mr. Kean, on accepting the gift, replied in suitable terms. The Chairman introduced the Rev. R. D. Fraser, M.A., of Cocketown, who delivered an able, eloquent, and carefully constructed address to young men. He was followed by a happy and brief address from the Rev. W. McConnell. The Rev. M. Fraser, of Barrie, followed next, and by his telling anecdotes, genial manner, and good-humored style of presenting matters kept the audience in a state of happiness, and elicited such roars of laughter as are seldom heard on such occasions. And last, but not least, the Rev. R. Moodie, passing from the grave to the business of the evening in an address full of instructive thoughts and extensive information. The intervals between the speeches were filled up with sweet music and melodious singing from the choir. Mr. and Mrs. Hill also sang two beautiful songs in a way that secured the breathless attention and undivided admiration of the audience. Miss L. Cooke and Mrs. John Perry played the organ with their accustomed grace and skill.

The proceeds realized from the celebration amounted to \$100, which will be devoted, after meeting necessary expenses to the Church Building Fund. We have been informed that the Congregation have placed a mortgage of \$2,500 on their property, to enable them to make the improvements specified above. Mr. M. Millar, has already succeeded in obtaining subscriptions to the amount of \$1,500, and when the Congregation has been fully canvassed, it is expected that the whole amount will be subscribed.—*Orillia Expositor.*

None but a fool is always right.—Harc.

Some men, like pictures, are better for a corner than a full light.—Seneca.

Great minds, like Heaven, are pleased in doing good, though the ungrateful subjects of their favors are barren in return.—Rous.

Since the generality of persons act from impulse much more than from principle, men are neither so good nor so bad as we are apt to think them.—Harc.

Lord, help us, and make our being grow into thy likeness. If through ages of strife and ages of growth, yet let us at last see thy face, and receive the white stone from thy hand. That thus we may grow, give us day by day our daily bread. Fill us with the words that proceeded out of thy mouth. Help us to lay up treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt.

The true ideal is not opposed to the real, nor is it any artificial heightening thereof, but lies in it, and blessed are they who find it. It is the *mons divinus* which hides within the actual, transfiguring matter of fact into matter of meaning for him who has the gift of second sight.—Lowell.

Men and women make their own beauty or their own ugliness. Lord Lytton speaks in one of his novels of a man "who was uglier than he had any business to be," and if he could but read it, every human being carries his life in his face, and is good looking or the reverse, as that life has been good or evil. On our features the fine art of thought and action is continually at work. Beauty is not the monopoly of blooming young men and of white and pink maidens. There is a slow growing beauty, which only comes to perfection in old age. Grace belongs to the period of life, and goodness improves the longer it exists.