

British American Presbyterian.

VOL. I.

TORONTO, CANADA, FRIDAY, AUGUST 16, 1872.

No. 27

Contributors & Correspondents.

NEW BRUNSWICK.

Re-Opening of Calvin Church—Dr. Irvine—Lecture on the "Anglo-Saxon."

(From our own Correspondent.)

Last Sabbath was a red day in the calendar of the members of Calvin Church (Presbyterian) congregation in this city. Their new Church building has now been favorably opened for public worship. It will be remembered that I referred to this congregation on a former occasion as having lost their edifice some sixteen months ago by fire. It was for the moment a sore blow on a weak and struggling congregation. They were just beginning to feel that they had almost surmounted the difficulties that beset their path. The building was insured to about a third of its value only, and there was a remaining debt that the insurance just covered. Hence all that was left was the site. As soon as possible they set about rebuilding, and have now all but completed a beautiful and substantial building, one of the best in the city. This is of brick, the former was of wood. Its seating capacity is about 800.

The Rev. Dr. Irvine, now of Augusta, Georgia, conducted the opening services. The Dr. is well known in Canada, having been pastor successively in Toronto, Hamilton, and Montreal. His first pastorate on this side the Atlantic, however, was in this city. Twenty-eight years ago he came out to take charge of St. John Presbyterian Church, a congregation that had just been formed as an offshoot from St. Andrew's Church, the oldest Presbyterian congregation in the Province. He spent some eight or nine years here, the church that had been purchased from the Baptists having to be enlarged twice in that time. Calvin Church was afterwards an offshoot from the charge to which he ministered while here. His present visit is a revival of old memories which are still green, though he has paid but one visit here since he left, that visit being so long ago as 1858. At all these services which he conducted on Sabbath, the Church was crowded to the utmost, many having had to go away. The collections taken on the occasion were very handsome as collections go in St. John.

The first service was properly speaking, the dedicatory one. In the introductory services a hymn was sung which was composed for the opening of a church in the city of Savannah, by the pastor of it, the Rev. Mr. Park. Dr. Irvine being present on the occasion was struck with its appropriateness and sent a copy to St. John before he came. It is a beautiful and fitting composition. The portion of Scripture read was that recording the dedication of the Temple of Solomon, and the text was "Our holy and beautiful house," from which he preached an eloquent and powerful sermon. The other services were of an interesting and instructive nature. On the Monday evening also he gave a lecture on the "Anglo-Saxon," the proceeds of which went to the building fund. Altogether the occasion will be a memorable one, not only to the congregation, who are proud to see their edifice completed again, but also to the numerous personal friends of the Dr. who rejoice to see one once again whom they loved so well.

H.

St. John, 8th August, 1872.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN:

SIR.—Your review of the pamphlet, "Why women cannot be turned into men," may well be considered a challenge to every woman who reads it. I had hoped some one else would have attempted a full reply, but have seen only a very partial one.

The writer and reviewer of the pamphlet assert and assume with their utmost assurance and "kindliness" the deficiency, inferiority, incapacity and absolute dependence upon marriage of the whole sex; establishing their position by facts or otherwise for which no explanation is sought compatible with the dignity and capacity of woman. "Opposition to the advocates of 'Woman's Rights,' as at present generally understood," is womanly and right; proving her unfitness to occupy the sphere of man, though rendered other than superfluous only by the action of these aforementioned advocates, may be dignified and just; but a demonstration of her incapacity—her constitutional, irremediable incapacity—creditably to occupy

her own, is unjust, and must be faulty and false.

"That woman all along have been deficient in invention," is established among other things by a reference to the corn-grinding of the East, by contrasting the hand-mill used by the women with the wind, water, and steam mills which were brought into existence only after man had undertaken that department of labour. In the following sentence the writer herself fingers the key probably unlocking the mystery which she explains only by supposing and asserting the natural deficiency of woman. "When man," she says, "that is free man, took up down-grinding themselves,"—and then a fine word panorama of results: "Men, that is, free men;" then the bondman is not prolific of inventions! and may be classed almost with woman in this respect. Perhaps her, too, is naturally deficient in inventiveness! Your authoress would scarcely offer the explanations in this case; but would probably account for facts by a statement of circumstances. Now what bondage can be compared to that of the married woman? It may be bondage of love, all the more complete, if so. (We will omit the consecration of the unmarried in the meantime.) How is it possible for a married woman to make her talents tell in the department of invention? Consider what is necessary in the case. Her mind must first be sufficiently free from other cares to be intelligently occupied upon the mechanical arrangements of the apparatus to be superseded. Genius would then have the opportunity to flash the light of its suggestion. Now comes the struggle with difficulties. She must find time and opportunity to think out her idea, to make slow and careful experiments in order to adapt the mechanical contrivances of the coming machine to the movements required and already performed by hand. The invention as yet exists only in the mind, works its wonders there, must be perfected there, planned as a whole, every point in its place, suited to its office. (Think of any married woman finding time,—time for uninterrupted and concentrated thought such as all this requires.) Now the first model must be constructed. The use of tools and command of means is in some measure required for this. The various defects, palpable in the material, though undiscovered in the spiritual creation must be testing and quick perception be detected and remedied. When all complete, and, as far as may be perfect in model, the construction of the machine itself is to be achieved. Time, thought, knowledge, the use of tools and means are all required now, before the first specimen in all its clumsiness and almost certain inefficiency could crown the labours and try the patience of the inventive genius. How could she do it? What would become of her household duties while all this was going on? "These are only difficulties," it may be said, "and if the inventive genius were possessed would be overcome; that they have not been overcome shows that the inventive genius is not possessed." Is that fair? Any one who candidly considers what is necessary in order to perfect a bright thought into an invention must see that infinitely varied occupations of woman, the constant and unavoidable demands upon her resources as to thought, strength, and time, keep her in a position far more unfavorable to the perfecting of such, than even the slave, unless he be crushed into something less than man by downright cruelty.

The needle and sewing machine are contrasted in the same way. It is very true that woman toiled away with the little needle for centuries, and that she would have done so to the end of time, but for the inventive genius of man is very probable; but to attribute this to a lack of inventiveness in her, or the faculties constituting inventiveness, is unfair and unfounded. Consider the history of the inventor. Elias Howe, touched with the sufferings of his own wife and others in connexion with the needle, determined to produce a machine to lighten their labour. He devoted his hours after work to the consideration and execution of his plan. Don't you suppose his wife might have done the same if she only had had the inventive genius! Month after month went by. The hours after work would no longer suffice. Howe was now a man of one idea, his whole time must now be given to the perfecting of his plan. Of course his wife might have done the same, had she only had inventive genius! His family must in the meantime be supported: a friend took his burden here, and supplied what was needed. Well, wouldn't a friend have

turned up for her too, and have discharged her duties just the same! When his work was completed and patented, no one in his own country cared to buy the patent, so he went to England, patented it there too, and found a firm there to purchase his right for a trifle; but they did not make the discovery very public, simply using the machine in their own workrooms. Back to America then, where he found a company making and selling his machines without any regard to the patent. He asserted his right, however, and succeeded eventually in not only introducing his wonderful modern improvement but in reaping the pecuniary benefit of his patience and skill. Now, of course, all this his wife might have done, and that she did not do it, and that no other man's wife did it, proves conclusively that women are deficient in inventiveness! True, the difficulties were great; but had the genius been possessed, they would have been overcome; that they were not overcome, shows that the genius was not possessed! It would be somewhat difficult to prove the first of these two propositions, but unless that is done, there is no ground of inference for the second, so calmly assumed in the article referred to.

Where such difficulties, in their nature insurmountable by her, are not in the way we do find woman's quick wit sufficient for her necessities in a way that your authoress quietly overlooks. She represents woman as receiving the needle and distaff from the hand of man, and blindly using them until he had something better ready to give her. I can refer to no authority, but think there is a tradition that both needle and distaff were invented by woman herself. And surely the writers own memory must furnish her with instances innumerable where the inventive genius or faculty of herself or sisters has been displayed in original contrivances as diverse and evanescent as the flowers of spring-time, not set in a model or matured into the ripe fruit of an invention, but helping and cheering through many difficulties, where man, perhaps, with his slower intellect, might have stopped for lack of an idea, or failed to go forward for lack of a rule to guide him.

One word as to music "A hundred women," it is said, "are taught music for every man that learns it; yet, while is the woman that holds rank among composers?" How are women taught music? as an accomplishment or as a profession? Is there one woman in a million who takes music as a profession; devotes her whole life and energy to it, carries her studies to their utmost lengths, forgetting that she is a woman, made for lovely works of love, and not for a life, either of artistic enthusiasm or ambition? Thus men become artists; and there is no other way. The creative power in its fulness and glory, can be exhibited only by such. If there be a woman who thus studies music, I would reverse the statement quoted and say, for one such there are hundreds and thousands of men.

The statements about cooking may be lamentably true, but the inferences drawn therefrom are illegitimate and particularly unkind. "Even cookery," it is said, "has not done much for them. It has not given them unflinching accuracy, for those things which can be done 'anyhow,' will be done 'anyhow,' more or less.—If a sodden potato, or a tough steak, or a heavy pancake would act as sudden sniting poisons, then cooking would not be intrusted to women; but as the process of poisoning is slow and imperceptible, it is left to them, and they practise it with great equanimity." Here incapacity is directly charged; not accidental, owing to circumstances, but necessary, natural, helpless, and hopeless, because women are women, and cannot be turned into men, or be expected to possess similar powers! How can I be brief? There is so much to say, so much injustice here. Is cookery so simple that it can be picked up "just anyhow," with or without a teacher? Is it not guided by rules and principles that must be mastered—not only remembered, but understood—in order to the intelligent practice of the art? Do not let those who do not understand think that a little painstaking is all that is required, for the painstaking learner without a guide is trying in the dark, and doomed to many, many mortifying disappointments and failures before even the simpler rules can be mastered for herself. And what percentage of the mothers are competent to act as intelligent teachers? Fortunately, it is not as small as the preceding sentences would lead one to suppose. How many

mothers and daughters constantly spread a table with light, sweet bread, delicious butter, cakes of which a confectioner need not be ashamed, and meat and vegetables with which no fault could be found. But with many, still, it is otherwise, and how are the girls in these households to acquire the knowledge and skill? Not "anyhow." When a man chooses baking as his profession, he goes to one who can teach him, and spends his days, one after the other, in repeated efforts to master the trade; he gives the whole of his mind to it, and finally can work with the utmost precision. Can it be laid against woman, that without a teacher, and with a dozen other professions to be mastered in some good degree, her efforts in the same line should not exhibit a similar precision? However abominable faulty cookery may be, it is, in most cases, not inexcusable. Neither is it irremediable, as the hypothesis of our author, if proved, would establish. But space forbids more here.

"Women cannot be turned into men." No, truly. But that can be proved without representing them as inferior beings, as your author has done. That may not have been her intention, but it is what she has achieved. Woman has her sphere, and man has his; but she is as exquisitely fitted for hers as he for his; neither is hers one that demands meaner qualifications. A man devotes himself, his whole energy, to one profession. After mastering it so far as already understood, he may, if a man of genius, press further and further into the hitherto unexplored regions bordering on what is now his own possession. Thus, as our author has it, "he seeks for knowledge and its sources, earns it, fights for it, buys it with hunger and wounds." This is just as it should be; less would be a disgrace. To this every facility is given him. How truly, then, much less than absolute perfection in his own profession is inexcusable in him, implying serious incapacity or carelessness. Now, there can be no denying that a woman's true work is house-keeping—making and keeping a home homelike. In order to this, she must acquire some good degree of proficiency in not one, but a multitude of arts. The blushing Canadian girl who consents to become William's or Thomas's bride, undertakes thereby to discharge the duties of a baker, a dairy-maid, a laundress, a dressmaker, a tailoress, not unfrequently a white-washer and paper-hanger, a gardener, a nursery-maid and teacher, with an occasional trial of the office of a sick-nurse. Can she have such a knowledge of all of those as he who has made one of them a life study? Is it wonderful that some of them are sometimes indifferently executed? Yet for this wonderful work she is by nature exactly fitted. Is it not casting a slur upon her Maker's wisdom to assert that she is not? Her quick, clever, comprehensive intellect, that has been neglected as far as training is concerned, to the shame of the stronger sex, is perfectly adapted to seize quickly and hold forever the essentials in all the arts that may be needed; to accommodate itself to the varied circumstances that are hers; and to enable her very often to bear up bravely, even when the proper, intelligent training has been almost totally neglected. Only let her education be a preparation for her duties; and in order to this, let her intellect be cultivated; let her, of all people, be taught to think. And besides, do let her mind be enriched with some of the treasures of knowledge which man, properly her provider, in this as in other departments, has so abundantly conquered and gathered. And see if educated womanhood, I say not accomplished, does not prove worthy of the truest admiration and trust.

Space forbids a presentation of the reasons why the unmarried woman, seemingly as free as the man, should not rival him in his own departments; but these must be obvious to the candid, and are natural and not humiliating. The subject of woman's dependence upon marriage, if not misrepresented in the article referred to, is very partially presented, so much of the truth only being dwelt upon as leaves the whole sex in a very pitiful and unnatural position, but it would not do to presume further upon your patience. I beg pardon for the length of the communication, but have not known how to condense further.

Yours truly,

August 2nd, 1872.

The flower which we do not pluck is the only one which never loses its beauty or its fragrance.—*Alger*.

A joyous, happy heart will gather up sunshine in life, where a mournful nature could find cause only for sorrow.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR.—A copy of the enclosed has been sent to the "Presbyterian" Montreal, for insertion, but as I am quite sure it won't, I ask a space in your paper.

To the Editor PRESBYTERIAN, MONTREAL.

SIR.—The August number of your paper to hand, and I have read with regret the article headed "The New Governor General." A more senseless and unfortunate article could scarcely be found, and one which must engender feelings of bitterness, which a prudent man would allow to sleep and be forgotten.

Does the writer of that article not know, that there is no Established Church of Scotland or any other Church in this Canada of ours? The name in "connection" is as everybody knows, actually without meaning. We are proud of the name, and ought to be so, as we have received nothing but kindness and great consideration at her hands. Yet she has no jurisdiction, claims nor exercises none. It is true an ordained Minister of the Church of Scotland is received here and admitted to a charge without reordination, just as an ordained minister from the Presbyterian body of the United States, in good standing is received here. Both, however, have to sign an acknowledgment that our Church here is independent, before being placed. Why, then, harp upon that theme, when it is certainly senseless and hurtful.

Again, is it in good taste compatible with good breeding to lecture our "New Governor General," on how he should act towards the different sects in Canada? His known liberality of sentiment should have prevented our Snobish Editor from throwing dirt in the face of a man bearing the exalted character of Statesmanship and gentlemanly bearing and who is wholly devoid of bigotry.

Stop that miserable twaddle, or you will utterly disgust and drive away every respectable man from your fold. Except, perhaps, the few clerical and one lay snobs, who at the last meeting of Synod, desired to offer a left-handed compliment to the new Governor by a slight on our last.

Yours truly

D. J. M. IREDALE.

Ironstone Bank,

Markham, 12th August, 1872.

TERCENTENARY OF THE ST. BAR THOLEMEW MASSACRE.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR.—Saturday, the 24th of this month (August), is the three hundredth anniversary of the butchery of the Protestants in France, commonly called the St. Bartholomew Massacre. Surely the Protestants of this country will not let the day pass by unnoticed. Ministers should on the following Sabbath direct the attention of their people to the subject. For my own part, I purpose doing so on both of the days referred to. I would be far from seeking to cherish enmity among Protestants against Roman Catholics as fellow beings. But Protestants ought to be kept in mind that Popery is in spirit the very same to-day that she was on the 24th of August 1572.

Yours,

UN MINISTRE HERETIQUE.

PLASTER AS A PROTECTION FROM FIRE.

After the conflagration in Paris, it was generally found that, with good plaster work over them, beams and columns of wood were entirely protected from the fire. In cases where limestone walls had been utterly ruined on the outside by the flames dashing through the window openings, the same walls, internally, escaped almost unscathed, owing to their being coated with plaster.

On many such plastered walls the distemper decorations were still to be made out. The iron roofs rendered good service, and the party walls of each house were carried up right through the roof—a most important precaution, for otherwise nothing could have prevented the disastrous conflagration from being more extensive than it was. It was also found that good wood work in beams and posts, good wood floors, well pegged, and good wooden staircases, were safer and more to be depended upon than cast iron columns and stone staircases, landings and floors. Stone staircases well protected by plaster were fireproof, although not so safe as wood in case of heavy debris falling upon them.