

Church of Canada revived and strengthened, and made a faithful witness for the Redeemer.

From the very design of the publication, our first business must be to record the proceedings of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, as, in the labours of its missionaries and ministers, in so far as these are reported to us—the progress of its seminaries, and the deliberations and decisions of its rulers. Yet, we hope to find space for much information in regard to other churches; and, from our intimate relation to the Free Church of Scotland, we shall feel a peculiar pleasure in keeping our readers informed regarding its many noble enterprises.

To promote brotherly love and union in the Christian family, is a duty binding on every member of it, at all times; yet this duty is especially called for in the present day, when so much dissension prevails among the professed followers of Christ, and when that dissension is found to be so prejudicial to the spread of the Gospel, and to be so favourable to those mighty hostile powers, which are now seen in all lands to be marshalling and combining their hosts to oppose the Kingdom of Christ.

It shall be our aim, then, in so far as may be compatible with the primary design of the publication, to keep our readers informed respecting the progress of the Kingdom of God, amongst all denominations of Christians. And, desiring to see a closer union amongst all Presbyterians who sincerely uphold the doctrines of the exclusive headship of our Redeemer, the spiritual independence of the church, the supreme authority of the scriptures, and are agreed in regarding the Westminster Confession as a true exposition of their doctrines, we shall feel it a duty to advocate this union in so far as is consistent with the proper aim of our work. And we believe that we can give it our advocacy in no way better, than by making our people acquainted with what is doing for the common cause of the Saviour, by those churches with whom we desire a union.

To narrate the progress of Christ's Kingdom must be, aye, and until Satan is cast into the bottomless pit and shut up there, to narrate, also, more or less, of the opposition which he is making to that kingdom. Popery and infidelity are undoubtedly its grand opponents; yet the spirit of each of them is working and manifesting its own opposition to the truth in many quarters in which those systems are repudiated. Thus, the Prelacy of the days of Laud, which is identical with the Puseyism of our times, possesses some of the essentially malignant features of Popery, and the liberality, falsely so called, of certain religionists and politicians, which professes to regard with equal complacency, every form of religion and worship, is practical infidelity. These are errors which are working extensively in these times, and working in harmony with each other; and if we are to record the progress of the truth, and the efforts made to promote it, we must also record more or less of the operation of these antagonistic principles.

Having our readers chiefly amongst the members of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, and called on specially to seek their edification in this work, we feel the importance of it at this time, from the peculiar circumstances of this church—who of us will not acknowledge that, as a church, we are in many respects in a condition of weakness and immaturity; many of our congregations

are but recently organized, and want vigour and coherence; many of them are destitute of pastors, then they are scattered over a vast extent of territory, so that an actual intercourse between office-bearers and members can be maintained only partially, and that with great difficulty. Then, it must also be acknowledged, that we greatly need the reviving and quickening influences of the Holy Spirit. When we compare ourselves, not with others around us, but with the standard which the divine word sets before us, we must acknowledge that there is amongst us much want of a hearty consecration to the Saviour—much want of self-denial and liberality in upholding his cause—much want of spiritual-mindedness amongst both office-bearers and people, and that there is too little of life and power in the administration of the ordinances.

Now, the grand remedy for all these evils is the effusion of the Holy Spirit; and a publication like ours, which shall record faithfully the progress of religion amongst us, as connected with the preaching of missionaries, the planting of ministers, and the general administration of the church, must have a direct tendency to lead the readers to recognize the need of that Spirit, who alone giveth an increase to the planting and watering of any of his servants.

Again, the condition of our church is one of growth. Feeble as our condition in many respects is, some have reason to acknowledge that their labours have not been in vain. An increase of hopeful communicants, an improvement in the aspect of family religion, increased attendance on bible classes and prayer meetings, are tokens which gladden the hearts of some in respect to their own congregations. Then, see how it is with us in regard to an increase of the public means of grace:

In October, 1811, we had 23 ministers, and now, in three years, we have increased to 57. In two years our theological students had increased from 7 to 37; and the character of these youths, and their devotedness to preparatory study, are even more promising to the church than their numbers.

Now, contemplating these things, and considering the progress which the Presbyterian Church has made in other places, may we not hope that she is yet destined to accomplish a great work in contributing to the evangelizing of this land? Yes, if we fail to do much for the cause of God, ours will be the guilt of neglecting golden opportunities—of being unfaithful to the very principles which have done so much to the christianization of Scotland, of Ulster, and the United States of America. For while we would not forget what God has done, and is doing, through Episcopacy, Congregationalism, and Methodism, and other forms of christianity, we cannot be blind to the fact, that he has ever since the Reformation, put distinguished honour on churches holding the truth as we profess to hold it, and organized according to the Presbyterian platform.

God's dealings with us as a church have been peculiar, and warrant the belief that he has some important work for us to perform.

We had been originally, as we at least believe, connected in an organic way with the Established Church of Scotland: now we have been brought away from that connexion, in carrying out our testimony against her defections, and we are now

strictly and properly a Canadian Church. And in this change of our condition we have been great gainers: as, *first*, by the testimony which we have been enabled to maintain for great principles, at some cost of worldly emolument; *secondly*, from our being brought away from all dependence for the support of the ministry on a government which pensions alike Popery and Puseyism, and every form of evangelism which is pliable enough to take the stipends of its ministers out of the same purse with these forms of error. *Thirdly*, from our being brought into more intimate communion with the revived Church of Scotland—for such we regard the Free Church to be—without having our independence in any way compromised.

In these circumstances, then, we may well find encouragement in the great work to which the Lord is calling us in this land. And oh! that we may obtain grace to be obedient to his call, and faithful to his service. To the rousing of the church to her duty, and for prosecuting it vigorously, a varied instrumentality must be employed; and in that instrumentality our humble publication has not certainly a first—not even a second or a third place—but still it has a place, and an important one. It should inform our people respecting our enterprises, and gain their co-operation in them—it should stimulate their liberality, and urge them to constant prayer, that the spirit may be poured down from on high, and converts multiplied like grass of the earth.

It argues great ignorance of the laws which regulate Christ's Kingdom to suppose that it is to be advanced by the mere acts of synods, or the deliberations and resolutions of committees and associations of any kind. These certainly are all in their own place important; but little has been gained, or can be gained, until every individual member of a church is brought to feel that he has a part to act in the common movement, and that on his individual co-operation the success of that movement is in part, at least, suspended.

Alas! we have been so familiar with the sight of the church in a torpid state, that we are ready to think it is enough if her ministers and other office-bearers concern themselves about measures for her improvement and advancement; but the times are fast approaching when it will be found that a selfish and prayerless professor, or a congregation that has neither its prayer meetings nor its collections for the advancement of the kingdom of God, are as certain hindrances to the onward movement of the section of the church to which they belong, as a coward soldier or coward regiment obstruct the movements on the battle field, of the division of the army to which they are attached.

England's great naval hero signalled his fleet, before his last battle, with these words: "ENGLAND EXPECTS EVERY MAN TO DO HIS DUTY;" and now the conflict between truth and error—between the cause of Christ and that of Satan—is becoming so close and intense that the energies of all the soldiers of the cross must be put forth in order to Messiah's final victory. And it is the mission, so to speak, of the "Record for the Presbyterian Church of Canada" to pour in, amongst the members of that church, information respecting the common cause, and to stimulate all to labour and pray for its advancement. And may the good spirit of God prosper it more abundantly to the attainment of these great ends!