

British American Presbyterian.

Vol. 3.—No. 11.]

TORONTO, CANADA, FRIDAY APRIL 24, 1874

[Whole No. 115

Contributors and Correspondents.

NOTES FROM THE MARITIME PROVINCES.

In accordance with a promise made some time ago, I shall endeavour to give a few notes which may be of interest to the readers of the BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

UNION IN THE EAST.

The Presbytery of St. John in connection with the Church of Scotland held its regular meeting last week. Among other business of importance transacted by the court was the unanimous approval of the Basis of Union.

Whether it is that we manage to keep more cool in consequence of our proximity to the sea, there is little or none of the strong feeling in regard to Union, which seems to be stirring up the fiery spirits in the West to rush into print with the old battle cries of disruption times. In fact there is very little excitement, and just as little enthusiasm either one way or the other. In a few cases there is some opposition, although it is not of such a nature as to imperil the Union should the negotiating Churches in Ontario and Quebec prove to be favourable to the present Basis. So far as I can gather, the slight opposition is more of a sentimental nature than ought to be. It prevails chiefly in Nova Scotia, and finds its greatest strength in the neighborhood of Pictou. Those in connection with the "Kirk" who dislike or oppose the Union, do so, mainly on the ground that it would be the means of severing their connection, such as it is, with the Church in Scotland. While the Church in these Provinces has no legal connection with the parent Church there, the colonial committee of the parent Church grants, every year, a certain sum in support of weak congregations which may require such help. It is thought that this help would be withdrawn should the Union be consummated.

The slight opposition on the part of a few to the Church of the Lower Provinces is, I apprehend, more the result of old political feeling engendered during the anti-confederation controversy than any real opposition to Union itself. There may be a very few who still retain a feeling of hostility to Ontario and Quebec, and consequently feel bound to oppose any measure which contemplates ecclesiastical incorporation with the Presbyterian Churches of these Provinces. That feeling is, however, dying out, and will soon entirely disappear. Politically, anti-confederation is the deadest of all dead issues.

UNION IN THE WEST.

On turning to the West it seems to be very plain from the way in which the elections for the General Assembly are going in the Presbyteries of Ontario and Quebec that the scent of coming battle is in the air. Can it be possible that there is any attempt to pack the General Assembly with partisans in view of the "coming struggle"? Does it not look a little like that when one Presbytery leaves at home one of the very best business men in the Church, and if I am not mistaken, the Convener of one of its most important Committees?

Would it be any stretch of the imagination to suppose that the brilliant intellects who had planned such a victory should be filled with joy at the thought that one of the best debaters in the Church had been kept out of the Assembly when the most important of all Church questions was coming up for decision. Or, perhaps, the ballot system of voting was merely used to administer a lesson and teach humility. I have heard that such an experience has not been unknown in the Presbyteries of the C. P. Church in former years. Humility is one of the grandest of the Christian virtues, but those who attempt to administer the lesson to others are not unlike those who

"Humility to serve their pride, and seem
Humble upon their way, to be prouder
At their wished journey's end."

Other Presbyteries seem to have been making their choice of commissioners with special view to a vote on the Union when comes up. Well, of one thing you may be assured—if the Union fails now, it is infinitely postponed and the Canada Presbyterian Church is henceforth under the rule of a minority. The Church has given no concert sound in regard to the question of Union, and if the next Assembly takes the work of last and previous Assemblies, it can only be, because it has handed over the guidance of its most important interests to a very few good men who have been able to forget the old battle cries of past generation. There is a little difference in my humble opinion between '44 and

frankly confess that I could have done both upon the College question and

the Headship in no distinct utterances than the Basis and Resolutions give us. The time for procuring any alteration of the Basis has passed. It may not be accepted or rejected, and that means Union or not Union. It is unfair to ask that the brethren of the Church of Scotland should be treated as honest men and not rogues. When they solemnly declare that the documents which they present, faithfully embody their views, the question for the Churches interested in the matter is not. What object the framers of these documents had originally in view, nor yet whether they present the document at issue, in the best possible way, nor yet whether the Union Committee did their work as well as it might be done, but whether the Basis and accompanying documents present that doctrine at all. As I understand the matter, that is really the question to be decided. If the doctrine of the Headship is there, then the negotiating Churches are shut up to one of two courses, either to accept them as an honest expression of opinion, or else to reject them, and in so doing declare that they do not believe the statements which the brethren who present them have made to us. In the latter case Union is of course utterly hopeless. There is no use in the world, in talking about future negotiations with men whom by our acts we declare to be unworthy of belief.

STATISTICS OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

At the time of the meeting of Synod last year the Church of Scotland in all the maritime Provinces, included only 32 settled pastors. There were 8 vacancies, while to supply these there were only one ordained missionary and two Catechists. The Committee on Statistics gave in a report last year which was received and the Committee discharged. The Report was not printed and consequently there is no information available from it. However, the report of the Home Mission Committees, the Convener of which was the Rev. J. M. Grant, of Halifax, gave some interesting if not encouraging particulars. From that Report it appears that there were on the Roll of Synod in 1863 just 31 ministers, while last year the number was 32—a gain of one in five years. The total amount raised for Home Missions, both by Synod and Presbyteries was \$2,263.88, while \$1,020.00 was received from the Colonial Committee of the parent Church. It appears, from the statements of the Convener, that 17 congregations contributed nothing to the Synod's Home Mission Fund. The Report is an able document and strongly urges the necessity of increased liberality in the support of the Home Mission Fund.

It is stated, and I believe correctly, that the ministers of this Church receive a larger average stipend than those of any other Church in these Provinces. In consequence of the absence of statistics I am unable to verify the correctness of the statements.

This Church has no Theological Hall, but sends its candidates for the ministry to the Theological Schools of the Old World. There is a Bursary Fund from which liberal aid is granted to Students of Theology.

STATISTICS OF THE CHURCH OF THE LOWER PROVINCES.

Turning to the Presbyterian Church of the Lower Provinces, I find that there were on the Roll of Synod last year, 121 ordained ministers of whom two are Professors of Theology. There are, in addition to those on the Roll of Synod, two ministers of the Church Professors in Dalhousie College at Halifax, three in the New Hebrides and two in Trinidad, being five Foreign Missionaries in the employment of the Church, while there were only nine employed in the Home Mission work of the Church at the same period. In consequence of settlements a slight increase has taken place in the members on the Roll of Synod.

On referring to the Report of the Committee on Statistics I find that the total number of communicants was 18094, while the net increase of the year was 333. This result is reached by deducting the removals from the increases. I have no other means of reaching a comparison with previous years. The number of families is returned at 14,693, and adherents including 77,694.

On referring to financial matters, the tables show that the total amount raised by the Church for all purposes was \$145,143.03, being at the rate of \$10.91 per family, while the average contribution per communicant is at the rate of \$8.02. The average stipend paid by many of the congregations in the smaller towns and rural districts, will compare favourably with the salaries which are similarly situated in Ontario or Quebec, while as a general rule the charges pay very much smaller salaries to their pastors than the pastors of city congregations within the bounds of the Canada Presbyterian Church receive from their peo-

ple. There is no good reason why this should not be the case. The cost of living is as great in Halifax as in any city in the Dominion.

COLLEGE.

The Church of the Lower Provinces maintains, in addition to its staff of Theological Professors, two Professors in Dalhousie College—the national University of Nova Scotia. At least, it is all that there is to represent such an institution. There are two Governors or members of Senate appointed by the Church. The Church of Scotland appoints one Professor and the Governor in the same institution. The salaries paid by the Church of the Lower Provinces are not at all magnificent—very much the reverse. All the Professors whether in the College or the Divinity Hall received at the rate of \$1,200 a year. At the meeting of Synod last year it was agreed "to remit the entire subject to the committee with a distinct understanding that Professors' salaries ought to be raised to at least \$2,000.00." From all I can learn this is not likely to be done. Many of the congregations have not contributed to the College Fund and not a few of those that have obeyed the Synod have given very inadequate contributions. Several causes have combined to produce this result. Into these I shall not enter at present.

There are several denomination Colleges in the Maritime Provinces, partially supported by the Government, and in the possession of University powers. This, of course, tends very materially to weaken what ought to be strong national institutions. It seems to me a misfortune that the Church of the Lower Provinces is at all involved in the support of Dalhousie College. It would have been much more to the purpose if the Church had given its strength to the support of a powerful and thoroughly equipped Theological College and used its influence in the country to induce the Government to maintain a truly national and non-sectarian University. Just as long as the Presbyterian Churches have any share in the appointment and support of Professors in Dalhousie College, so long will the other denominations have a strong claim upon the Government for the support of their Colleges. That claim is always vigorously pressed. I mention these matters because I know that a very great amount of ignorance exists in the West regarding educational matters in connection with the Church here. Of course, if we are to go into comfortable ecclesiastical house-keeping together it is only right that we should know as much about each other as possible.

SCHOOL QUESTION.

The Local Legislature of New Brunswick closed its last session a few days ago. Its proceedings were generally not of much interest to a Western reader. There was, however, one subject of very great importance which elicited a vigorous debate. I refer to the School question, which is by far the most important in the local politics of New Brunswick. Upon this question the Government will take their stand and go to the country. They are determined to maintain the great system of free unsectarian Schools, which, during the short time the Act has been in operation, has been eminently successful. As you are aware, the Roman Catholic Priesthood is bitterly opposed to the whole system. Every effort has been made in order, in some way, to saddle the Province with Roman Catholic Separate Schools ruled and governed by the priests. Their demands are not lacking in boldness. They claim that Christian Brothers and Sisters of Charity shall be allowed to teach in public separate schools, clothed in the vestments of their orders, on the authority of a certificate from their ecclesiastical superiors and not from any Board of Examiners. In fact, if all their demands were granted the Roman Catholic Schools should be on precisely the same footing as are the schools of the same body in the Province of Quebec. This, the people of New Brunswick are determined they shall not get. The battle will be fought out at the polls, but the issue will in all probability be presented to the people in an indirect form—either to continue or repeal the Free School Act. Horrid lies the danger. There are not a few who would be utterly opposed to the Roman Catholic demands, who may be quite ready to repeal an act, the principle of which has not gradually grown in the minds of the people as with you in Ontario. There is in a good many places an unwillingness to be taxed for School purposes, especially among those who have some property and no children to educate. It is here where the enemy must be met and conquered. I hope there is no danger from any in-

terference on the part of the Dominion Government. There is, no doubt, a strong temptation to make the attempt at least, to conciliate and to win the support of a powerful organization like the Roman Catholic Church. Should any attempt be made by the Dominion Government to interfere with the Local Educational affairs of one thing I am certain that there would be a permanent alienation from, and distrust of the present Dominion Government on the part of a great number of its most loyal supporters in the Maritime Provinces. About that there is in my mind no doubt whatever, and I have some means of knowing something of the feeling of a large section of the Protestant population in the Sea Board Provinces. The present Government has now the support of a large section of the population, and I do most sincerely hope that the School Question will not be the means of causing it to lose the ground which has been gained.

O. H.

Acadia, April 14th, 1874

DR. CHALMERS ON THE MODE OF BAPTISM. ROM VI. 3, 4.

BY REV. JAMES A. THOMPSON, ERIN, ONT.

"The original meaning of the word baptism," says the Doctor, "is immersion, and though we regard it as a point of indifference, whether the ordinance so named be performed in this way or by sprinkling—yet we doubt not that the prevalent style of the administration in the Apostle's days was by an actual submerging of the whole body under water. We advert to this, for the purpose of throwing light on the analogy that is instituted in these verses. Jesus Christ, by death, underwent this sort of baptism—over immersion under the surface of the ground, whence He soon emerged again by His resurrection. We being baptized into His death, are conceived to have made a similar translation. In the act of descending under the baptism to have resigned an old life, and in the act of ascending, to emerge into a second or a new life—along the course of which it is our part to maintain a strenuous avoidance of sin, which as good as expunged the being we had formerly; and a strenuous prosecution of that holiness which should begin with the first moment that we were ushered into our present being, and be perpetuated and make progress toward the perfection of full and ripened immortality."

Baptists are never done parading this passage, with some others of similar import, from various authors, before the minds of their people, and before the minds of others as well, with a view to proselytism. Let us look at it for a little, and see what amount of substantial support it yields them.

1. Dr. Chalmers says, "We doubt not that the prevalent style of the administration in the Apostle's days was by an actual submerging of the body under water." Now (1) the expression "doubt not" seems to indicate that he was not decidedly certain as to the amount and strength of his authority for what he was about to advance. It is weaker than expressions we are in the habit of using in connection with a statement of only our own private opinion, and points rather to a mere feeling or impression on our minds, which may, after all, have no real foundation to rest upon. (2) It was his impression then, or opinion, that immersion "was the prevalent style of the administration of baptism in the Apostle's days." It was not the *only* style, according to him, but only the *prevalent* style. On this ground, it would appear that (3) he regardeth "it as a point of indifference, whether the ordinance so named be performed in this way, or by sprinkling." And well he might, according to his view; for if both styles had been practiced in the Apostle's days, and one of them had been wrong; Paul was not the man to leave the Church in the dark, or even with any room for doubt, on a point which controversy has raised to such importance. If the Apostle, as is held, alludes to immersion, in this passage, for the purpose of illustration, it no more proves that that particular mode met with his special approbation than his frequent allusions to the Grecian games proves that he would have approved of their introduction into some part of the worship of God, or to the moulding of any part of that worship of their model. And (4) Dr. Chalmers was not inspired. "Cease ye from man." "To the law and to the testimony."

2. But does the Apostle allude to any particular mode of outward baptism here? What is meant by these three expressions, "baptized unto Jesus Christ," "baptized into His death," and "buried with Him by baptism into death?" There would seem

to have been in the Apostle's mind the ideas of baptism into the life of Christ, baptism into His death, and baptism into His burial. Has ever any branch of the Christian Church invented a complex mode of baptism intended to represent these three ideas? Could it be done? Are there any Christians in the world so stupid and foolish as to think the attempt necessary, especially in the entire absence of any scriptural authority and direction, in the matter? Isolating the idea of baptism into Christ's death,—the prominent thing in that death was His being "lifted up." Infants are held up for baptism. But how could antipædo Baptists adopt any such mode, without the erection of a derrick with pulleys and all other necessary apparatus in their churches, instead of a water-tank, or basking themselves to a pond or river? In that case too, immersion would have to be abandoned, unless practised as a separate and distinct part of the whole ceremony. The fact is, the Apostle seems to be wholly occupied, in this passage, with spiritual baptism, or the effects of baptism "with the Holy Ghost," and to have no reference whatever to any mode of outward baptism. The idea of immersion seems to have originated in the illogical, groundless impression, that because John the Baptist baptised in Jordan, therefore he must have done it by immersion; and the Bible has been ransacked for stakes to prop up the immersion and set it in the position of a firmly established and clearly promulgated scriptural doctrine, and "command." But it won't do. Immersion cannot be proved from Scripture to have been the *only* mode, or indeed a mode of baptism practised either by John the Baptist, or by the Apostles, or by any in the Apostles' days.

It is strange that Dr. Chalmers should have allowed such an impression to run away with his better judgment, and give birth to such a fanciful interpretation as that quoted above. He was, do doubt, a great and good man, and in many respects a star of the first magnitude; but that is a different thing from saying that he was in every respect, a great, a cautious and thorough theologian. Baptist views are scarcely seen or heard of in theological or philosophical Scotland. They are not a felt power in the country. It is evident Dr. Chalmers, in all his experience, never came into collision with it, or probably his verdict would have been somewhat different. He would have opened his eyes a little wider, and given the question the benefit of a second, and perhaps, of a third thought, before he penned his interpretation. And, at all events, let it be remembered that the authority of Dr. Chalmers is not that of inspiration. Whatever weight his name may carry, is more than counterbalanced in this matter by such names as those of Drs. Wilson, of Belfast, Withrow, of Londonderry; Miller, of Princeton, and Messrs. P. Edwards, of Aberdeen, and James E. Quaw, of Bedford (Michigan.)

Let me here recommend, as I venture to do, the work of the last named author, as one of the most original and interesting, and at the same time, complete and satisfactory discussions of this whole question ever published. The title is, "Bible Baptism, or the Immerser instructed, from various sources. By James E. Quaw, A.M., V.D.M." Detroit: Benjamin Wood, Publisher.

Globe v. Christianity.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR.—Allow me to tell a Presbyterian Minister, whose letter appeared in your issue of April 10th, under the heading "The Globe vs. Christianity, that his determination to exclude the Globe from his house after the term of his present subscription, because of its "Chicago Correspondence" and matters of a vile and infamous character, reminds one very strongly of a toper drinking a very big glass of whisky for the purpose of getting the worth of his money.

Yours,

A READER OF THE GLOBE.

SIR.—The Globe vs. Christianity is the heading of an article of grave complaint by a Presbyterian Minister in the BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN of 10th inst.

On first reading it I confess to have been somewhat seriously impressed, but on a more close review, I discovered that the chief cause of complaint was of a political rather than a religious character, the object of his complaint (in disguise) is evidently to get a side thrust at the political influence of George Brown and the Globe. "On account of the Chicago correspondence after my present term of subscription I will not allow the Globe to enter my house."

Rather amusing to think that such a tender conscience, should continue to eat so much mental poison because it was paid for.

A CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.