

British American Presbyterian.

Vol. 4—No. 3.]

TORONTO, CANADA, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1875.

[Whole No. 159

Contributors and Correspondents

MISSION WORK IN MANITOBA.

As that season of the year approaches when our church will be expecting to reinforce the missionary staff of this province, if not from any other source, at least from the graduating classes of our colleges, it may not be uninteresting to your readers to hear something from the North-West.

It is only recently that people in Ontario became convinced that white people could pass the winter here with any degree of safety. Even yet many well informed persons suppose that to pass a winter in Manitoba is rather a hazardous undertaking. If there is anything that modifies a person's astonishment when he hears the opinion of people living outside the province, in regard to the winter here it is just to remember the mistaken idea he himself formed about it at one time. A stranger in passing his first winter at Manitoba has his mind so imbued with the expected horrors of the winter, that he spends it in a sort of painful suspense, expecting something terrible to happen before the winter is over. Canadians who have spent one or more winters in Manitoba kindly assure the new comer that the winter here is much more agreeable than in Ontario, yet it invariably requires a winter to make them believe this.

One striking peculiarity of the Ontario immigration to Manitoba is the large proportion of it that is Presbyterian. The need of missionary supply for this province should not be estimated simply by the numerical strength of settlements, but by what these settlements are soon to become. There is nothing that surprises the visitor who has seen the slow, and toilsome process of improving land in the eastern provinces more than to see the large settlements that have been formed here in from one to four years, and the wonderful improvements that have been already effected. But though the country is so easily improved and settlements form so fast, it could not be otherwise than that mission work would involve a good deal of travelling. It could not be expected that each settlement would be for a few years in a position to support a minister, or be sufficiently numerous for a missionary to be settled for its sole benefit. Every missionary coming to this province must make up his mind to be willing to do a good deal of travelling, and be ready to put up with many inconveniences necessarily connected with a new country. But though the difficulty of extra travelling for a few years is to be met by the Manitoba Missionary, still there are other advantages which were not enjoyed by missionaries in the eastern provinces. Travelling is very easily accomplished in this province. At no time of the year do the roads present any serious difficulties. A person can go almost anywhere at all times. Most of the country is as easily travelled as a level pasture field. With very little snow, the cold is sometimes stinging, the air is so dry that travelling in winter is really enjoyable. During summer a cool bracing breeze continual blows over plains that resemble one vast flower-garden from the opening of the spring till the end of summer. Both summer and winter, the roads and air are so dry that exposure is not only safe but also pleasant. But the beauties of the country, and the agreeableness of the climate are not the reasons that should induce our church to send her missionaries, and her missionaries to come to this beautiful field, but the pressing necessity of the work, a necessity that will be increasing with each succeeding year. Settlements that will be important places in a few years are springing up everywhere. Other denominations are active, and ready to take advantage of every opening. So far since the transfer our church has done her part comparatively well; but now is just the time to take hold with increasing energy. It is far better that our missionaries should be on the ground as the settlements are being formed, than to delay till they gain more importance, for the places will be surely occupied by others. Each year will witness an increasing tide of immigration, and by no other means can a church gain greater influence than by having her missionaries ready to welcome the newly arrived immigrant.

If there is any part of our country that demands the earnest and prayerful attention of our people more than another, that place is this fair province, a province which is as it were the entrance to our vast possessions in the North-West; a province that is soon to be the home of many now in the eastern provinces, and that is destined before long to exert a powerful influence in our new Dominion.

MANITOBA.

[ED. NOTE.—We shall be glad to hear from "Manitoba" again. Give us facts—incidents of travel—the condition of particular congregations—the experience of individual settlers. All will be welcome, with each letter not too long. The tendency of too many letter writers is to go to an unconscionable length; and that spoils all.]

Can it be Considered?

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—How would it do to try the Methodist system in regard to the Ministry? Can it be shown that our present system is scriptural, or that theirs is not so? I suppose it could be arranged to have Ministers settled for a definite period, say for four years in the same place and then let them be sent to other places. Would not such an arrangement have many advantages.

Would not our people have the benefit of a greater variety of gifts? Would it not be better for Ministers now and then to recommence their labours under new conditions, and in new circumstances? Would it not tend to develop faculties which previously were little, if at all developed?

Would it not bring relief in many instances to people who are sighing for a change, and to ministers who are equally anxious for it?

Would not ministers who are in positions where it is impossible for them to have their children educated as they ought to be, (under such a system) find what they previously need?

As it is do not some of our prominent ministers move with wonderful regularity about every four years? And would it not be well to afford men of less popular gifts, and fewer personal attractions, an opportunity of tasting the sweets of the same system?

Do not some ministers go because they cannot stay, and others stay because they cannot go? And would not a change all round at regular recurring periods bring with it many and singular advantages?

Would it be deemed out of order to have this matter ventilated a little? I am half disposed to look favourably upon an experiment in the direction suggested by these inquiries, and I am quite sure I have sympathizers in the matter.

February 9th, 1875. H.

The Hymn Book.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—Having stated in a former letter why I regard, in common with multitudes of God's people, the Book of Psalms as designed for public worship, the next point in the article on "Psalms vs. Hymns" to which I would direct attention is:—

II. The exclusive use of the Psalms in public worship under a past dispensation. It is stated in this article referred to, "that it is more than doubtful whether only the hundred and fifty hymns contained in the psalter, were used by the Jewish Church;" and that the "head of the church has sanctioned praise by song, but, nowhere either in the Old Testament Scripture or New, has he restricted praise to the use of one hundred and fifty songs." Some good proof might well be expected of such an important statement, but all the evidence given is a reference to some particular song used on special and extraordinary occasions. But, I am persuaded that no proof can be given to show that these songs used by Moses at the Red Sea, and by Deborah and others, were even used in the stated worship of God, or were even used on any other than the special occasions to which they relate. Besides, at that time, no hymn book had been provided for the church; nor is there any evidence that the singing of God's praise then constituted any part of his stated worship. When some special providence, such as those referred to, demanded a public expression of gratitude and praise, some individual was raised up, who, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, furnished a song suited to the occasion. But if these songs had been intended to be used in the stated worship of God, why, when afterwards a collection was made into one Psalm Book, were these songs left out? Some of the songs contained in it are found in other parts of the Bible. The eighteenth is found in the second Book of Samuel. The ninety-sixth and parts of some other psalms, are found in the second Book of Chronicles. Why are these selected and those rejected? Why is this distinction made? Was it the influence of "prejudice?" No, Mr. Editor; the most satisfactory answer is this, namely, that this collection being designed for permanent use in the stated worship of God, those songs have a place in it, and those only, which, in the estimation of infinite wisdom, were best adapted to the edification of the church in all ages. No Jew ever attempted, so far as any information from the Scriptures can be obtained, to add to that collection, or is there any proof that any other songs were used in the regular worship of either the Synagogue or Temple, after that collection was made. Had such an attempt been made, I have no doubt, it would have met with a much stronger opposition than that offered by these modern, bigoted, and prejudiced psalm-singers, to the use of hymns of mere human composition.

But what, it may be asked, of those two instances referred to in the New Testament. Are they not in point? They are what Simeon said when his eyes first saw the Saviour, and what Mary said when she was assured of the "performance of those things which were told from the Lord." (Luke i. 46; ii. 28). The former you call "Simeon's Song," and the latter, "the Magnificat," a term not yet very familiar to Presbyterians. But in neither case is it affirmed that what was spoken as the expression of their feelings and sentiments, on the occasions referred to, and that by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, was either a song or even sung. Mary merely "said" and Simeon only "said," and neither of them sung. Nor is this any proof that what they said was ever at any time after used by the Jews or early Christians in the stated worship of God. How irrelevant

then, to say at least, to adduce these as proof that either the Jews or other songs in public worship, than those in the psalter, or that Christians are at liberty to use them. And what value is there to be attached to the confident, but unsupported assertion, that "nowhere in either the Old Testament Scripture or New, has he restricted praise to the use of one hundred and fifty songs?" Was it not enough to restrict to their use that they were selected, appointed to be used, and their use in public worship approved? If any body of Christians were now to make a collection of hymns, and appoint and approve the use of that one, ought it not to be sufficient to restrain its members from the use of others? How much more when Divinely selected, appointed and approved, as the Hymn Book has been. As "the Word of God which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule, direct us how we may glorify and enjoy Him," ought to restrain from reading lessons out of other books than the Bible in public worship. So the fact, that the only manual of praise given to the church, and sanctioned by her glorious head and king, is the Book of Psalms, ought to restrain from singing other songs of mere human composition. Unless, indeed, doctrine subscribed to by all Presbyterian ministers and elders, namely, *Divine institution necessary to acceptable worship*, be abandoned; and that of what is not forbidden in the word may be introduced, be adopted—a doctrine which has ever hitherto been repudiated by the Presbyterians, and one which is now, to so great an extent, corrupting the church of Christ. In this case, additions may be made to the institutions of worship at will—lighted candles, the cross, the crucifix, facing the east, the use of raisins for the wine in the Lord's Supper, of which I have heard, and all the paraphernalia of Ritualism and Romanism, may be brought in on the back of this doctrine.

But let it be admitted, for a moment, that those songs, other than those in the psalter, both in the Old and New Testament referred to, were used by the Jews and Christians in Apostolic times in public worship. What authority would this be to Christians now to use hymns of mere human composition? For were they not all inspired songs? This no one will deny. And all that T.O. says in his letter in relation to those spoken of in the New Testament, goes to prove it. He quotes Fausset in proof of his point, who says, "a psalm inspired, as that of Mary Zuehariah, and Simeon, and Anna." The only conclusions in this case, that could fairly be drawn from the promise is, that Christians now may use inspired songs, other than those to be found in the Book of Psalms. With this decision, and the wholesome restraint which it would exercise over Hymn-singers, Psalm-singers will not be much dissatisfied. As human nature, however, is the same in all ages, there may have been some among the Jews, like too many now-a-days, restricted by no institutions or appointments, either ecclesiastical or divine, but "who will have liberty" to do as their own judgment, taste, and mere human expediency dictate. But if it can be shown, as I think it can, that this Hymn Book is not a "Mosaic Institution," and is the only divinely appointed manual of praise, as well as the only non-sectarian one in the church, the sentiments of Roman and Episcopalian divines whose praise is in all the churches, cannot well be justified.

God, he says, "has given us a large collection of hymns, and has commanded them to be sung in the church, and has promised his blessing to the singing of them. No respect here must be paid to names or authorities, though they be the greatest on earth; because no one can dispense with the command of God, and no one by his wit can compose hymns to be compared with the Psalms of God. I want a name for the man who should pretend that he could make better hymns than the Holy Ghost!" His collection is large enough, it wants no addition—it is as perfect as its author, and not capable of any improvements. Why, in such a case would any man in the world take it into his head to sit down and write hymns for the use of the Church! It is just the same as if he were to write a new Bible, not only better than the old, but so much better that the old may be thrown aside. What a blasphemous attempt! And yet our hymn-mongers, inadvertently, I hope, have come very near to this blasphemy; for they shut out the Psalms, introduce their own verses into the church, sing them with great delight, and as they fancy, with great profit; although the whole practice be in direct opposition to the command of God. Yours, respectfully, PSALMOS.

Communication.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—I wonder if Rev. David Inglis knows that the heritors in the Church of Scotland have power to build new churches, and compel every dissenting proprietor to pay according to the value of his property, his share of the expense of building?

What would he say, supposing he were a United Presbyterian or Free Churchman, having factories four miles from the Parish Church, and having no connection with, or interest whatever in the village in which that church was situated, were he compelled to pay \$500 because the Parish Church Heritors had decided to build a new church?

And how would he feel when in the allocation of the sitting by the sheriff he was told that the heritor who paid \$10 had first to be sued, and that being a merchant proprietor and not a small heritor there were no seats, not even one sitting for him?

Would the Rev. D. Inglis become enamoured with the un-patronaged Kirk? Please insert and oblige.

A FREE CHURCHMAN.

Alberton, Feb. 17, 1875.

Infidel Rant.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—In a work by Wilkie Collins, entitled, "The Law and the Lady," we find the following piece of balderdash:

"The incomprehensible submission of Scotchmen to the ecclesiastical tyranny of their Established Church has produced—not unnaturally, as I think,—a very mistaken impression of the national character in the popular mind." * * * *

"Public opinion looks at the institution of 'The Sabbath' in Scotland; finds it unparalleled in Christendom for its senseless and savage austerity; sees a nation content to be deprived by its priesthood of every social privilege on one day in every week: forbidden to travel, forbidden to telegraph, forbidden to eat a hot dinner, forbidden to read a newspaper; in short, allowed the use of two liberties only—the liberty of exhibiting oneself at the church, and the liberty of secluding oneself over the bottle. Public opinion sees this, and arrives at the not uncharitable conclusion that the people who submit to such social laws as these are the most stolid, stern, and joyless people on the face of the earth. Such are Scotchmen supposed to be when viewed at a distance. But how do Scotchmen appear when they are seen under a closer light, and judged by the test of personal experience? There are no people more cheerful, more companionable, more hospitable, more liberal in their ideas, to be found on the face of the civilized globe than the very people who submit to the Scotch Sunday! On the six days of the week there is an atmosphere of quiet humour, a radiation of genial common sense, about Scotchmen in general, which is simply delightful to feel. But on the seventh day, these same men will hear one of their ministers seriously tell them that he views taking a walk on the Sabbath in the light of an act of profanity, and will be the only people in existence who can let a man talk downright nonsense without laughing at him."

It may be said that what I have quoted is the language of a fictitious character. But it is in perfect harmony with other parts of Collins' writings in which he expresses his views, and therefore I shall treat it as his own language. Well, Wilkie Collins, in these extracts, is either very foolish or very false. If he knows no better than what he states, he is the first; if he knows better, he is the second. He says the Scotch Sabbath is unparalleled for its senseless and savage austerity. He, plainly, detests the Sabbath as God commands it to be kept. How he would rejoice if he saw it abolished! He evidently knows more about the theatre than he does about the Bible.—He sneeringly calls the Presbyterian ministers a "priesthood." In the sense in which he uses the word, they utterly reject it as their title. There is no reason why it should be applied to them. His statement that the Scotch are deprived by their ministers of every social privilege on one day in every week, is a gross untruth. Works of necessity and mercy are allowed on the Sabbath. "Forbidden to telegraph." Telegraph operators need the Sabbath rest as well as others do. "Allowed only the liberty of exhibiting oneself at the church, and the liberty of secluding oneself over the bottle." This looks as if it had been written by one when he was secluding himself over the bottle. Collins wonders how Scotchmen are so cheerful, and so forth. Just because they keep the Sabbath in which he, in his gross ignorance, thinks so dreadful. The more one keeps the Sabbath as God commands us to do, the more he will possess these qualities. Religion is the only source of true excellence and happiness. Collins is just as well qualified to criticize the Scotch Sabbath as a blind man is to criticize painting, or a deaf man music. Let him stick to criticizing theatrical performances.

The chapter which contains the passages under review is headed, "A Specimen of my folly." Well, if it is not a specimen of Collins' wickedness, it is truly one of his folly. Pitying him, we can hear him talk downright nonsense without laughing at him.

It will be a sad day for Scotland if the "Wilkie Collins' Sunday" ever prevails. A SCOTCHMAN.

The Name of the United Church.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—The Union of the Presbyterian Churches of the Dominion of Canada is now certain soon to be consummated, at which I rejoice, though one of the disruption ministers. I observe that it is proposed to call it "The Presbyterian Church in Canada." I have waited, hoping that some one would call attention to it; but as no one has done so, I would take the liberty of doing it. I consider this title not only impr. per but absurd. It will be admitted that it is a native church; the majority of ministers, office-bearers, and members are natives of Canada, or soon will be. Now, how absurd would it be to say of any one, "He is a native in Scotland," or a native in Ireland, or a native in Canada; so absurd would it be to say, "Presbyterian Church in Canada. I reside in Canada, but am not a native of it." It would be quite proper to say "Presbyterian Church of Scotland in Canada," or "The Church of England in Canada," but quite improper to say of a native Church, independent of any foreign connection, "Presbyterian Church in Canada." There are other titles which might be adopted without such impropriety: "Presbyterian Church of Canada," "Presbyterian Church of the Dominion of Canada," "Canada Presbyterian Church," "Canadian Presbyterian Church." I care little what name, provided it does not involve an absurdity, though I would prefer the first, and though the last is more euphonic.

Yours, &c., C.

The Prose Psalms.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—Not long since I noticed an article in your paper touching very dangerous ground: namely, "The Psalms of David in metre." I must say I sympathize very much with your New Brunswick correspondent, and I hope at the very first meeting of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, a committee will be appointed and arrange a book of psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, for the use of the whole church. I have no hesitation in saying that the prose version of the Psalms is far superior to the metrical version, and if the congregations would join heartily in chanting that version, it would be a great improvement on the singing of the present metrical version of the psalm, so far as the words go at any rate. I don't deny that some of the psalms are very beautiful, but a great many are no better than doggerel, and even may be called funny or queer. Your correspondent is, I think, quite right as to many of them being unsuitable for our land and circumstances. Many of them were composed by David on particular occasions, in which we cannot extolly sympathize, and the language to ordinary people must appear highly exaggerated, and cruel, and unchristian. I will mention a few instances of what appears to me queer poetry, as for example:—The 6th verse of the 6th psalm, the 16th of the 7th, 10th and 11th of the 17th, 25th and 26th of the 18th, 8th of the 35th, 9th and 10th of the 65th, 12 and 28th of the 68th, and 14th of the 74th. I am sure in all honesty the paraphrases are much more beautiful, much easier to commit to memory, and much better adapted to singing. In connection with this, I would notice the inconsistencies of many good Presbyterians. They cleave to the curious old metrical version of the psalms for singing in the congregation, and the very same people will give out, and join in singing all sorts of hymns or glees in Sunday-school and prayer meeting, and to all sorts of merry tunes. Now, I think it would be better to adopt the prose version of the psalms at once, and either read them or chant them, and then have a first rate carefully selected book of hymns. The Presbyterian Church of England have a very nice selection, some thirty or forty of our paraphrases being included. I only throw out these thoughts because nothing can be done till the union shall be consummated, and I hope the subject will then be taken up in earnest, and something done to improve our Psalmody and Hymnology.

Yours truly,

13th February, 1875. ADVANCE.

Semper Eadem.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—In your paper of the 11th instant appears a communication by "Ecclesiasticus," stating that Jesuits, as Jesuits, take no oath teaching the resistance of lawful authority. What is cloaked under the words "Jesuits, as Jesuits"? Does he mean that all the faithful are bound to oppose governments and rulers, when it is required to the end of the spiritual power, meaning the advancement of the Papacy? It matters little what the Jesuit's oath is; but that which concerns the State is what they inculcate and have taught over three centuries. "Ecclesiasticus" in Toronto, and "Sacredos" in Montreal, are but the faint echoes of the leading minds of their Church in the sixteenth century. Cardinal Bellarmine, a Jesuit of the greatest learning, and highest authority of that age, in his book, "Lib. de Roma Pontifex," says plainly: "Kings have no wrong done them if they be dispossessed of their kingdoms when proved heretics." Again: "Papa potest mutare Regna," etc. . . . "Summus princeps spiritualis," etc. And this is not the doctrine of the Jesuits only, but of all the leading writers of their Church, for Bellarmine, to prove the Pope's power of disposing of kingdoms is a Catholic doctrine, gives the names of twenty-one Italians, fourteen French, nine German, nineteen Spaniards, and seven English writers of note, and these, he says, not *ex facie plebis, e primoribus*. Barovius, confessor of Clement VIII., and cardinal in 1596, a man of great probity and learning, agrees in all points with Bellarmine, who says: "Regnum Anglorum est subditus Romano," and again, "Non licet Christianis tolerare regem hereticum, etc." Speaking of a certain Sovereign, the Church gives leave to the faithful to obey him, because they wanted power. This is just their position now. And the sum of the matter seems to be, if we accept as true the boast of *Semper Eadem*, that it is only during the infallible Pope's pleasure that states and their subjects shall remain at peace and be loyal to one another, as the claim to depose or disobey rulers, under certain circumstances, has never been disavowed, and although an old weapon is again being furnished up.

ALTIQVIS.

Pontiac, Quebec, Feb. 16, 1875.

MAY it never be forgotten that a revival of the very best music will bring little profit to the Church, without a revival of the very best affections to accompany it. To sing with the spirit as well as with the understanding is the only singing which is every singer upon earth. "My son, give me thine heart." The great enemy of the Church has turned, and can still turn, the music of the sanctuary into a powerful auxiliary for the furtherance of his own dark purposes. He knows that there is nothing so good but what may be converted into an evil. Hence, music, as well as architecture, must not be idolized, but held in subserviency to pure doctrine and holy affection.