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## NOTES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We are compelled from the crowded state of our columns to leave over a good many articles already in print. They will of course appear next week.

"A Presbyterian" received, and the business matter attended to. Be sure to notify any irregularity in delivery that it may be attended to at once.

"B. S."—Next week.

"X. Y. Z."—We believe the Toronto subscriptions for the rebuilding of Knox College amount to \$30,000. Now then let us see what other places will do.

"J. S."—We are not in a position to state what are to be the duties of the proposed Mission Secretary, and it will be seen that Mr. MacKay of P. M. M. whose letter will be found in another column, is equally at sea. We shall be glad if any of our readers will supply the needed information.

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FRIDAY, MAY 2, 1873.

## TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

The Pope has disappointed both hopes and fears in not dying as was anticipated. It is said he is again in his usual state of good health.

The Indian troubles on the other side are not yet settled. There does not appear to be any grounds for thinking that trouble is likely to arise from the same source in our North-west territories.

The English law officers have declared that the New Brunswick School Law, about which so much ado has been made, is quite constitutional, and cannot therefore be vetoed either by the Governor General nor the Queen on any merely legal grounds. Sir John Macdonald has asked English officials to review their opinion in the light of a letter and statement forwarded subsequently by the Roman Catholic Bishop of St. John, N. B. It is not expected, however, that there will be any change.

The political struggle at Ottawa goes on with no marked results for either side. It is becoming increasingly evident that the Ministry is not going to be turned out during the present Session, unless, indeed, the revelations exposed through the Huntington Committee should be specially damaging. All who have the credit of Canada at heart will look anxiously for the result of that investigation. There can be no compromise on the subject. If the charges are proved, then we should hope there is in the country still so much conscience as to refuse to tolerate the continuance in power of men capable of such infamous proceedings. If they are not proved, at least morally if not technically, then the opposition will have weakened its position before the country immensely, and will have led people to attach but little importance, in time to come, to its very gravest accusations.

The excitement in Scotland over the election of the different School Boards has nearly subsided. The elections are all over and the different officials are setting to work. The "use and wont" men, in favor of the Bible and Shorter Catechism being taught in School hours, are largely in the majority, and the practical difficulties are not to be so formidable as was anticipated. The compulsory clause is received with general satisfaction, and the School rate raises no trouble. In fact both those points have long been familiar to and accepted by the average Scotchman as both right and reasonable. As far back as the 16th century there is evidence that both were acted upon, as witness the following extracts from ecclesiastical records given by Dr. McBurnie in his 'Life of Melville.' The first is from the Kirk Session Records of Anstruther:—

October 26, 1595.—Aent the complaint given in by Henrie Cunningham doctor in the school, the session thinks meet that all

the youth in the town be caused com to the school to be tenecht, and that sic as are puer shall be furnished vpon the common expense."

The second from the Synodical records of the diocese of St. Andrews.

"Forgonnd, August 14, 1611.—The skole entertained, and for the better provision of it there is ordained, that ilk pleuch in the parochie sall pay to the skolemaster xijis mjd, and ilk bairn of the parochie sal pay vis viijd in the quarter. Strangers that are of ano uthor parochie sall pay xx or xxxs as the minister can procur. As it is agreed in uthor congregations."

With all the talk, however, about religious instruction in the Scottish Parish Schools, it appears that according to the reports of Government Inspectors both in the Highlands and Lowlands, the ignorance among the children of the merest elements of Bible knowledge is at present fearfully manifest. In the great majority of cases the scholars can repeat the answers to the questions in the Shorter Catechism but have not the glimmer of an idea of what is meant by them, and know almost nothing of the contents of the Bible. We are afraid there is too much truth in this representation, and that it applies still more to both the week day and Sabbath Schools of Canada. A very large amount of the religious instruction given in these it is to be feared is little better than a sham. That, however, is no reason why religious instruction should be dropped. It only calls for improvement in the quantity and especially in the quality.

## PRESBYTERIAN ASSEMBLY AT BALTIMORE.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States meets at Baltimore on the fifteenth of this month. It promises to be one of more than usual interest. As on former occasions there will be a full daily report given in the General Assembly Journal, which will be supplied for the whole period by Messrs. John W. Dry & Co., Box 2330, New York, post-paid to all subscribers in the States for one dollar in advance. We hope that a good many in Canada will subscribe for the series.

## Contributors and Correspondents.

## MISSIONS OF THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—I have read your article headed as above with pleasure, and yet with a feeling of shame, to find that the Presbyterians are at the very bottom of the list of contributors, although almost at the head of it in numbers. Although in our part of the Dominion we know that the New Connexion Methodists raise the amount stated by sending their children begging from door to door, (a course which I would not wish to see followed by Presbyterians,) still it is shameful that our Church should be so far behind in her contributions for missions. It is true that it is hard to get money when information about the different missions is supplied so sparingly, but I do not think that scant information is the only reason or the main one for small contributions. In fact I believe that a lack of personal interest is the true cause, and until we introduce this feature into the missions of the Church we will never see as much done as should be accomplished by such a wealthy denomination. But how are we to bring about this personal interest? This is the question—a question easier asked than answered. Still I intend to give one answer, and hope that others may be led to think the matter out. I would propose that the amount required to carry on the work of the various mission stations thoroughly should be estimated, and an opportunity given to the members of one church to choose one or more stations which take an interest in the work, and supply the funds for carrying it on. Of course under this arrangement the party in charge of the work would report directly to the party supplying the funds, and through him to the Presbytery, and in this way those who supplied the money would know exactly (and see if they wished) how it was spent, and what good it was accomplishing, and there could be no complaint such as is often made, that "We don't know how the money is spent." In cases where the expense would be too much for an individual, the mission might be undertaken by a congregation, and the reports would be most interesting for the prayer-meeting, while the inspection of it would be profitable employment for any of the members who had the leisure and inclination to visit the mission fields. In Foreign Missions where the expense would be too much for a congregation, it might be provided for by all the churches in our city, or under one Presbytery, in which case reports would come direct to the city or Presbytery so providing. It is true that a system like that proposed would require a thorough change in our way of working, but it is evident that a change is wanted if

we would overtake the amount of missionary work we should as a Church. Our Home and Foreign Mission Committees might have less to do, but the work would go on. There might be no large fund at Toronto to draw on, but there would be treasurers and treasuries all over the Dominion, watching the progress of the good work with an interested eye. Emulation, too, might play her part under this system, and Toronto lead the way for Montreal, or Montreal show Toronto how to "abound in good works." The wealthy man giving his five or ten dollars a year would not fancy, as he often does now, that he carries the whole mission operations on his back, while he who could supply a hundred dollars could support or materially aid some missions that his interest in its smallest details would be called forth, and much that would be wasted in his own house and others would be carefully looked after and utilized at the mission stations.

It is said of one of our most successful banking institutions that the managers' forte is in looking after details, and I believe the details of our missionary operations would and could be much better looked after under some arrangement like that proposed, and success I doubt not would result.

I am aware that there would be disadvantage attending such a thorough change, but I believe the advantages would preponderate. The interest that attaches to the "child's own garden" or to one's "pet scheme" would be brought to bear on our mission schemes, and money and laborers would be much more easily got and much more plentiful.

PHOS.

We are afraid our correspondents scheme would not work well, and if carried out would be altogether un-*Presbyterian*, but we gladly give the letter a place in our columns, on our settled principle of affording a hearing to all sides.—*Ed. B. A. P.*

## PRESBYTERIAN UNION.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—There are some who think that controversy on religious subjects does no good, and ought, therefore, to be avoided. It is, no doubt, true that there have been often controversies about trifles, and there have been also controversies about matters of great moment, that have been conducted in such a manner and spirit as to have done, probably more harm than good. While we are willing to allow all this, we are, however, bold to affirm that religious controversy, when conducted in a right spirit, with proper ends in view, has been, and still is, a most important means of tendency to promote a healthfulness in the religious world. A thunder-storm in the air, and an agitation in the ocean, are not more necessary in the natural world to promote salubrity and drive away noxious influences, than a controversial agitation in eliciting truth, dispelling error and tending to separate the healthful from the pernicious. What would tend more to the elimination of error among the adherents of Rome than a properly conducted discussion in that church of some of the more vital doctrines of Christianity? Is not the stagnation of controversy on these points an occasion of great spiritual corruption and misapprehension? And even among Presbyterian churches we are vorily persuaded that a most important step towards a healthful and consistent union will be in connection with a rightly conducted controversy or discussion about those matters that form, at present, barriers between them and keep them partially, or entirely alienated from one another. Is there any good reason why all the Presbyterian churches in the Dominion of Canada should not be one? Would some of your intelligent readers be courageous enough, to state in the columns of the PRESBYTERIAN what the hindrances to union are? No one will deny that there are *Lions* in the way. How are many of these difficulties to be overcome? It is not surely by the repression of all discussion, but by a friendly interchange of views on points of difference, in order to a better mutual understanding, which may promote "the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." The Canada Presbyterian and the Presbyterian body in connection with the Church of Scotland, have for some time been contemplating the desirableness of a union; but how is it to be effected? Is it by squashing all discussion of the points that now divide them? No, it is by a free and friendly interchange of sentiment on the controverted subjects, so that they may reciprocally apprehend what the real difference between them is, and whether that difference, if any, is sufficient to keep them in separate ecclesiastical organizations. Every true patriotic Presbyterian in Canada would work for the union of all Presbyterian bodies in the Dominion. Such a thing is possible; it could be brought about within five years, were all to merge the differences which may exist, and be willing to make small sacrifices, as nothing very great would be required.

Yours, &amp;c.

RUSSELL.

## GLENGARY.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—For some time back two or three individuals have been carrying on a correspondence in your valuable paper on the subject of a Mission for Glengary. My estimable friend and co-Presbyter, the Rev. Nathaniel Paterson, of Martintown, has been one of these. With great reluctance I feel constrained to say that the interests of Protestantism would have been better served had this correspondence not met the eye of any; inasmuch as Popery is fully alive to all it sees, and hears, and reads, of our doings, and workings as Protestants, so that whenever any zealous, but incautious individuals of our number proclaim an attack on it with a flourish of trumpets, it draws its chains more closely around its deluded victims. Already the Romanists in this quarter have taken warning, and what is the result? It is just this—that a people comparatively inaccessible before are still more so now. And we who are among them are left to deplore the result.

Ever since I have been settled here, two years ago, I have been trying to do all that I could, both to enlighten Protestants on the subject of Popery, and to gain access to Roman Catholics, leaving results in the hands of God, and I have much reason to believe that my labours have not been altogether in vain in the Lord. Roman Catholics often come to hear in church on Sabbath, and scarcely a week passes without a visit from one or more at the Manse, to whom I have invariably spoken about their spiritual state and danger as sinners, and the great reality of eternity. This I believe they would not have courage to do, if the priest and chapel were near. Our distance from them renders it much easier for them to go and come without being detected. Not long ago I admitted a French Canadian into Christian fellowship, after dealing faithfully with him, and obtaining from him a full recantation of the errors of Popery. Afterwards I baptized an infant child of his. I am reluctantly compelled to make these statements to show the Christian public the utter groundlessness of that sweeping charge brought against myself and the other ministers of these townships, together with their congregations, by my dear friend Mr. Paterson, in your issue of the 7th inst. "I reverence speaks, I believe, 'in his haste,' very much like the sweet Psalmist of Israel, when he said 'all men are liars.' I have the greatest regard for Mr. Paterson, as a gentleman, and as a faithful minister of Christ, and I am sure on reflection he will be sorry for what he said. No doubt there are ministers and congregations in Glengary who do but very little for the conversion of poor Romanists. But this cannot in justice be said in reference to all.

The Roman Catholics of Glengary, who number about nine thousand souls, have indeed till very lately been comparatively neglected, and now the best way to reach them is a question for serious consideration, which can be answered satisfactorily only by those who know the Highland character in all its phases, and who have had some experience in dealing with Romanists. And their opinion, so far as I am aware, is—that no missionary at present would be of any use, unless he would act as Colporteur. Now we have two excellent Colporteurs already in the field, supported by the B. & F. Bible Society who are doing a good work, and who, as the Agent of the Society told me not long ago, might be furnished by us with suitable tracts, for distribution among Papists, and directed also as to the movement among them. We have formed lately an Auxiliary Book and Tract Society at Kirkhill, with this object chiefly in view, and we would welcome any addition to our stock of Tracts and Books, from any quarter through the P. O., or by Express. Thus we are endeavoring to sow the good seed, and we trust Mr. Paterson will follow our example.

I should like, however to see a Pastor settled over the small but spirited station at Alexandria. True there are only four or five families connected with our church in the village, and three or four more in the country, but there are four or five families in the village connected with the Kirk, and if they should see it to be their duty to fall in, the number would be increased. Perhaps in the course of time three or four families might fall in from neighboring congregations, who might find Alexandria nearer than the churches which they at present attend. I do not anticipate any accession to their numbers from Romanism, as the people are more closely watched there, more indeed, than in any other part of Glengary. This will appear from the efforts put forth by the Montreal students for the last two years, without any appreciable result. If the church cannot afford to pay a minister for Alexandria, it would be well to attach the station at Dalhousie Mills to it. The distance is only eleven miles. The congregation there numbers about thirty families. And the two together might raise \$400.00 towards the support of their minister. A minister of the right stamp settled over these congregations would be hailed with delight. Such a man would do far more good among Romanists at present than any

missionary could, however zealous. I trust some arrangement of this kind will be carried out by the Presbytery of Montreal, and the General Assembly at its first meeting.

I am, yours respectfully,

W. Ross.

Kirkhill, 24th March, 1873.

## MISSION SECRETARYSHIP.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—It is truly gratifying to the numerous readers of your excellent paper, to see your outspokenness, fairness and impartiality in dealing with all the practical questions that come before you, relating to the prosperity of our Church. The organ question has been very fully discussed in the columns of your paper. Those in favour of instrumental music in Divine worship were heard and those opposed to it, so that every reader of the B. A. P. is in a position to judge for himself which is right. Again, the subject of Collegiate education was for some time before the church, and very valuable suggestions were given by 'Index' in the various papers published by him on Presbyterian Wrongs; it is to be hoped that much good will result, and the friends of Knox College will be stirred up to their duty in securing buildings for it, that will be worthy of its name.

The attention of Presbyteries was recently called to the necessity and propriety of appointing a Mission Agent or Secretary for our church. Some have expressed themselves in its favour, and others consider it premature under the present circumstances. With the latter view your humble correspondent entirely agrees. Our church can ill afford to pay \$2,000 or more as a salary to a Mission Agent, when so much money is needed to carry on more successfully and on a larger scale our missionary operations, and besides the duties devolving on such Agent have never been clearly defined by our Assembly, so that many are ignorant about the nature of his office. What would be expected of such an individual? Is it to write articles very frequently on Home and Foreign Mission Committees in their annual reports along with the Clerks of Presbyteries? Other ministers, Foreign Missionaries and laymen can give all the information that is required on these topics, so that a Mission Agent for this work would be superfluous. Again, would he be required to visit all the congregations and mission stations of our church within a certain time and lecture to them on these topics? Missionary meetings are generally held in every congregation and mission station once a year, the ablest meetings in the Presbytery are often appointed to address such meetings and give the people all the information they can on the missions of the church, and besides every pastor is expected to preach on mission, at least once a year, so that a Mission Agent's services in this kind is altogether unnecessary and unexpedient. Even if he were to undertake such work, it is very doubtful if there would be an increase in the contributions to missions, that would pay his salary and travelling expenses, yet many feel that something should be done to get the members and adherents of our church to take more interest and give more largely to the schemes of the church, and how can this be accomplished? This question can be easily answered in this way, let efforts be made by ministers, missionaries, elders, members and adherents, to get our denominational paper circulated among all Presbyterian families, and through the columns of that paper let much information be given on the Home and Foreign Missions of our church and also of other churches. The BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN is our church paper, it has already won golden opinions and proved itself worthy of support by every Presbyterian in the land. Let it be more widely circulated, enlarged in its size and contain more missionary news, and be more in its style and tone like the *Interior* an excellent Presbyterian paper published in Chicago, every number of which contains very interesting articles on missionary or religious subjects. Our church paper will then prove to be the best Mission Agent that could be appointed. It is to be feared that there may be thousands of Presbyterians in the Dominion who do not receive it as their family paper. This Mission Agent will only cost \$2 per annum to a family, and his travelling expenses will only be a few cents a year for which it will travel hundreds of miles to its place of destination, and give far more information on Missionary topics than a Mission Agent could give.

One of the greatest drawbacks in our Church for many years has been that we had no weekly religious newspaper, and there is no doubt that untold loss has accrued to our church by this want. Other denominations had always an advantage over us in this respect. For instance, a few years ago when I was engaged in a Baptist controversy, I felt then very much the want of a church paper. The Baptists then published in their organ all they could get to favour their exclusive views, but not a word on our side of the question, hundreds of Presbyterians might have read what was in their paper and by plausible remarks might be led to think that their views were correct. We