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TO CONTRIBUTORS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

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We invite the active co-operation of friends in every section of the Dominion, in order to secure a large circulation for the BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN; and to promote the interests of the paper by furnishing early intelligence of Church, Missionary and Presbyterian news suitable for our columns.

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British American Presbyterian.

TORONTO, FRIDAY, MARCH 15, 1872.

THE STIPENDS OF OUR MINISTERS.

"While it is pleasing to observe such an increase of liberality on the part of our people, it must be noticed that many of our ministers are very inadequately supported. Not a few receive now the same amount of salary which was paid ten or twelve years ago, when money was of far more value than it is at present. Instances might be given, not few in number, of congregations which have increased in numbers and have been built up by the self-denying labors of faithful men, and who are still keeping their pastors on the inadequate salaries with which they began their labours. It is a frequent subject of remark, that congregations after becoming vacant, often increase the salaries which they offer to those whom they call to be their pastors. This is no doubt highly satisfactory and proper, but it would be much more satisfactory did the liberality commence a little sooner."

The above paragraph is from the able and full report on statistics presented to last Assembly. It is a statement of facts which are important both as indicating progress and laying bare one of the chief drawbacks to the success of the Church. We call attention to one or two of these points in hope that some of our readers may be led to do what in them lies to remedy the unsatisfactory position of many of our congregations in relation to their minister. In doing this we shall study to be brief and suggestive, as a hint is enough for the wise:

"Many of our ministers are inadequately supported"—yes, of two hundred and ninety-six ministers in charge, one hundred and thirteen or more than one third receive less than \$600 per annum, that is less than \$2.00 a day, less than many a mechanic earns—less than a clerk in a store or a junior in a bank. Yet on that stipend the minister is expected to live and support and educate his family, in a way corresponding to the position in life which he holds. This is a state of things demanding immediate attention.

In not a few cases the salary of ministers has not been increased for ten or twelve years. Yet every one knows that the expense of living has increased at least fifty per cent during that time. How then can these ministers be expected to live as they formerly did with their expenditure one half greater and their income the same? This evil is aggravated when we further learn, that in many such cases, the congregations are much more numerous and wealthy than

indifferent to such a state of things, or how they can see their ministers struggling with difficulties, perhaps embarrassed when trying to educate his family, and unfurnished through poverty with the literature which is necessary for his calling, and not think of increasing their contributions, while the people are buying land for their children, or laying up money in good investments and becoming not only free from care, but comparatively rich.

We need not wonder at the result next brought under our notice. These successful ministers, whose congregations have increased under their care, but whose services have been unappreciated and not duly recompensed, are called to other congregations, not larger it may be or more important than their present charges but disposed to be more liberal. Then, for fear of losing them, the people propose to increase the salary. Too late then; for if the minister in these circumstances remains, he is, perhaps, told to his face, by the very men who grudge the increase, that all he wants is more money—and his influence is affected, as well as his feelings hurt; and if he goes to the new field, the same charge is hurled at him, as there evidently is no inducement for him to make the change except more money. Do what he may, he cannot escape the unchristian charge of worldliness, while in reality the poor man may be crushed in spirit because he is oppressed with debt, or feels himself unable to maintain himself and family in respectability, and only thinks of making a change because he cannot live on the old salary.

Our people complain of the frequent changes which take place in Canada. Allowing for exceptional cases, we are of opinion that translations and resignations would be fewer in number, and ministers would be more esteemed and probably be more efficient, if their circumstances were more easy. Self-respect is a tower of strength; and the feeling is a most unpleasant and humiliating one, even when through the kindness of individuals whose gifts or accommodations from time to time enable a man to keep up appearances, that the salary is not sufficient, and that in some way or other it must be made up as a charity. The workman is entitled to his wages; and in view of their own interests as well as a matter of Christian obligation—a duty owing, not to the minister, but to his and our Lord—the Christian people should see to it that the stipends of our ministers be largely increased.

As to the increase so general when a vacancy occurs: In this we all rejoice. It shows that when the people come to consider the matter, they can do more; and that the starving of our ministers is owing to want of Christian consideration. The new minister has a larger salary, is more easy and comfortable, and, perhaps, for a time at least, is more acceptable and successful. Perhaps, also, the man who left is in a better position, and, feeling relief, labours with better heart and more success in his new sphere. The congregation has benefited by the change, and so has the minister. The new minister may not be better than his predecessor, nor the new congregation larger or more important than the former charge, but the latter pays a larger stipend, and the former receives a larger stipend—and this results in benefit to both. Query, would not the gain have been greater had the increase been made before a call came, and the pastoral relation remained unbroken; and had the ties of Christian fellowship between minister and people, already strong, become yet stronger by long-continued Christian confidence and beneficence?

We commend this matter to the prayerful consideration of our intelligent laity. The matter lies wholly with them. What we want is, not resolutions and reports, but action; and every congregation that increases the stipend of its minister, by so doing helps on the cause, and aids in bringing other congregations up to that point of liberality which is necessary for the success of the Church.

The greatest sinner, who trusts only in Christ's blood, will assuredly be saved.

CHRISTIAN MISSIONS.

Our cotemporary, the *Presbyterian Advocate*, published in St. John, N.B., has in a late number an article on "Our Mission System," which will be found in another column, and which, we think, deserves serious attention. We are very much in the same position as the *Advocate*. We would not like to say that the churches have been greatly mistaken in the fields of missionary labour which they have generally chosen, or that the fact that races are seemingly doomed to extinction, should be regarded as a good reason for not sending the Gospel to them, so long as more vigorous and more numerous branches of the human family are unattended to; but at the same time it is well to consider what is said on the other side of the question, and to learn even from objections if not cavils, what is the wise and proper course to pursue. Christians, in all their efforts for the advancement of the good cause, are bound to act in a wise, considerate and practical manner, and not to feel satisfied that they are doing their duty when they are simply engaged in mission work, unless, upon the fullest and most prayerful consideration of the matter from every point of view, they are convinced that they are so engaged in such fields and with such appliances as, under the blessing of God, and according to the ordinary calculation of a wise and enlightened prudence, is likely to result in the greatest present and prospective good.

We, on this continent, have special relations to the Indians of the wide extended Northwest. Every year those relations will become more intimate, and our obligations to the red man of the wilderness will, if possible, be always more pressing. If, through the ever advancing wave of white population, that race is doomed to extinction, that may be only an additional argument for devoting special attention to its evangelization, instead of being a reason for allowing it to "fade away" in its ignorance and heathenism. We are inclined to think that the conscience of the Christian people of Canada of all denominations will say that this is so. At the same time, even though this much be granted, it may be an open question not yet practically settled, what is the best plan to pursue in dealing with those wandering tribes? Can we hope to evangelize them by making the mission station a fixture, and drawing them round it? Or is it necessary that missionaries to such tribes must in the first place take their lives in their hands, learn the language of those whose good they seek, and accompany them in their wanderings, so as to preach among them fully, and faithfully, and successfully the unsearchable riches of Christ, and thus bring them to settle down eventually in civilized and Christianized communities, and to be absorbed in, not destroyed by, the great tide of population which will now steadily and increasingly flow toward the great prairies of the Northwest?

Some missions to the Indians have been encouragingly successful; some have been painfully the reverse. Of course, mistakes will be made in all enterprises; but when any Church discovers that, with whatever excellent motives and aims, such a mistake has been made, the part of wisdom and duty is, not to persist in a course which is found to be injudicious, seek to rectify that as speedily as possible, and to pursue some other plan, which further consideration and more enlarged experience may show to be in many respects preferable.

Machinery for aggression is an indispensable characteristic of every healthy living Christian Church. How that machinery is to be most efficiently applied, comes to be a great question, only second to that which determined how it is most effectively and most fully to be secured.

The ever-changing circumstances of our North-West territory may then render certain modifications of missionary enterprise indispensable; but we hope they will never lead either the Presbyterian or any other denomination to cease their efforts for the spiritual good of the Red men of America, under the plea that they are doomed at any rate to destruction, and that, therefore, labour on them is little better than in away.

PRESBYTERIANISM IN NEW BRUNSWICK.

We call special attention to the letter of our New Brunswick correspondent, from whom we hope to hear frequently. Undoubtedly the Presbyterian cause in the different Provinces which now form our Dominion of Canada, has suffered in many ways from its adherents having had little or no knowledge of what each of them was doing, and to what extent they were all prospering in their efforts to advance the good cause. It is a fact, in every way to be deplored, but not denied, that the large majority of the Presbyterians in Old Canada knew, and know still, far more of Churches in Great Britain and Ireland, on the European continent, or even in India and China, than of their fellow Presbyterians in the Lower Provinces. Not a few, of course, have long been well aware of the fact that Presbyterianism was alive and active both in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, but the great majority have known simply nothing on the subject, and we doubt very much if they know almost any more now.

We are quite sure that the more the Presbyterians of Ontario and Quebec know of their brethren in the maritime provinces the more they will respect and love them, and the more they will seek to work along with them loyally and intelligently for the advancement of the common cause which is dear to the hearts of all, and which rises far, in their estimation, above all political combinations, and all mere secular arrangements, however important they may be in their own place and however all-important selfish schemers and mere party wire pullers may try to make people believe they are.

The Presbyterian element in all parts of Canada is an exceedingly important and influential one. It might be far more so, and we trust will be, at no distant day. If we can help in bringing round this by making Presbyterians in all parts of our Dominion better acquainted with each other, and from this better able to take vigorous and concerted action, in reference to both sacred and secular matters we shall feel that we shall have accomplished a good and an important work.

We hope speedily to have regular correspondents in all the provinces of the Dominion, and, as opportunity offers, other quarters as well. To what extent we shall be able to realize our hopes will of course depend very much upon the practical encouragement we receive; and, so far we must add that has been satisfactory.

OUR AGENTS.

Mr. C. H. Robinson is travelling in the West on behalf of the BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

East of Cobourg, Mr. Thomas Greer is pushing an active canvass.

We commend both gentlemen to the kindly offices of the Presbyterian public; and trust that their efforts may result in large accessions to our list of subscribers.

We trust that our readers will carefully peruse the sensible, practical letters, which are in course of publication over the signature of "Iris." The suggestions made in the one which appears in to-day's issue, if adopted and acted upon by every congregation of the Presbyterian Church throughout the land, would immediately effect a revolution of the happiest character, producing results alike beneficial to the Church in general and to the individual givers in particular.

It is related of Ingres, the French painter, that one day when King Louis Philippe called at his studio, the busy man, not desiring to be interrupted either by king or peasant, politely declined to see his Majesty, and went industriously on with his work. Once, also, when Queen Victoria called at the studio of Sir Edward Landseer, the great Englishman, who happened to be in a fine frenzy over his dogs, sent to his royal visitor a gentlemanly regret at not being able to see her ladyship, and did not allow his brush to stop. In like manner, a few days ago, when the Grand Alexis and his retinue visited the studio of William Page, President of the National Academy of Design, the venerable artist, who was at that time intensely engaged in his little upper gallery, allowed the princely party to wander at their royal will among the pictures down stairs, neither interrupting his visitor nor suffering himself to be interrupted by him.

OUR MISSION SYSTEM.

Much attention has lately been given to the missionary labours of various countries, and the balance of opinion is that the results achieved are not commensurate with the magnitude of the efforts made. The tribes selected for labouring among are, in many cases, members of fast decaying peoples. After years of labour, the missionaries have nothing but the graves of an extinct race to preach to. Other tribes that have been made the objects of missionary effort are separated from the rest of the world, and have no chance of becoming centres from which the principles of Christianity may radiate. Many of the fields chosen for mission work have been deadly to the missionaries. And the methods chosen for the work of converting the heathen are sharply criticised as being radically wrong.

There is no doubt of the greatness of the work that has been accomplished by Christian missionaries. Many souls have been saved, many idols overthrown, many abuses abolished, and the fields of commerce widely extended by their efforts. But whether these efforts have been as wisely directed as might have been, and whether the means now employed for the accomplishment of the ends desired are as effective as others that might be used, are questions that will bear discussion.

The concentration of missionary effort upon such races as the North American Indians, the Maoris, and the South Sea Islanders, is objected to because those races are rapidly dying out, and the good seed sown among them can never spread from them to others. African missions are condemned on account of the fearful mortality among those engaged in them. The missionaries are asked to abandon these scattered remnants of decaying races and concentrate upon the Chinese and Indo-Aryan races the full measure of their energies. The example of the Apostles is pointed to. They preached their doctrines in the great centres of population, and left them to radiate through the world instead of going to the ends of the earth—to the islands of the sea—and expounding the great truths which they were intent upon planting in the heart of mankind. It is not pretended that the soul of a cultivated Indian or Chinese heathen, is of more value than that of a Maori; but it is asserted that a hundred souls may be saved among these people, where one is rescued from darkness among the inferior races. The Christian seed planted in Hindostan, China or Japan, will take root and spread abroad, increasing in power and influence with the lapse of time, instead of being confined by the waves that wash the coasts of a narrow island whose people are doomed, by some unknown but inexorable law of their being, to extinction.

Then the whole machinery employed by the missionaries for making converts is called in question. That machinery consists largely of schools for the education of natives. The missionaries thus become mere school teachers, and the number of their pupils who become converts is very small in proportion to the labor expended in the school-room. It is asserted by enlightened Hindoos that the children sent to the mission schools are warned against the efforts that will be made to change their religion, and go prepared to reject all religious teaching. They also assert that many more graduates of the Government schools are found in the ranks of the converts, simply because they are educated and left free to choose between Christianity and Brahminism.

But perhaps the greatest change demanded of the missionary is in his attitude towards the caste privileges of the people. The convert is now required to abjure caste before baptism is accorded to him. The cultivated Brahmin is required to place himself on a level with the despised pariah. This is resented as an uncalled-for interference with the social customs that have grown up in centuries of civilization. It is denied that caste is in any sense a part of the religion of the people. It is as much a natural growth as the social distinctions of England, and only requires the solvent of Christianity to make the relations between different castes as cordial and respectful as those existing between laborers, shopkeepers, and landed aristocrats in Great Britain. Those who hold this view demand that the missionaries should devote themselves to inculcating the beneficent truths of Christ's gospel, and leave the people to its softening power. It will abolish their brutal customs, and break down artificial barriers in time, just as has been done in Europe.

These arguments are worthy the attention of the Christian world. Our missionary societies should inquire whether their departures from the Apostolic methods of evangelizing have been crowned with a success that justifies the continuance of the modern methods. If they can be improved by being simplified, it should be done at once.—*Presbyterian Advocate*.