

The Provincial Wesleyan.

Provincial Wesleyan

THURSDAY, APRIL 15, 1858.

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The Christian world has just been led to commemorate the crucifixion of Christ, and then to celebrate, in its anthem of exultation over the last enemy, the victory of Him who is risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept. It would be appropriate under any circumstances that we should employ our feeble pen at this season of the year to bring some tribute to the cross and crown of our Emmanuel. How much more imperative becomes the duty when we find the latest number of the *Coryphaeus of Scepticism—the Westminster Review*—launching its tirades of infidelity against the cardinal doctrines of Christianity, and especially assailing the central fact of the Christian's hope—seeking to undermine by its perverted application of scientific reasoning, so called, the foundation on which is reared the superstructure of our faith: if Christ is not risen from the dead our faith is vain, we are yet in sins.

Protestanism, we are told by the *Westminster Review*, is religiously weak, and its religious weakness arises from its inability to satisfy the demands of scientific reasoning on those two cardinal events, the incarnation and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Infidelity has hitherto been met and vanquished with its own weapons on every field where it has planted its fury forces in hostility to the armies of the living God. Shall it not be driven in discomfiture from this position too? Assuredly Christianity need not shrink from the test which Scepticism now offers to apply, although it has already established its claims beyond the reach of controversy by various evidences and invincible argument.

"Science," says the *Westminster Review*, "teaches us to study every question *a priori* with a view to judge how much *a posteriori* evidence will suffice for its decision. If a statement is beforehand highly probable, we need no moderate and ordinary testimony to create belief in it; if it be decidedly improbable, we want first rate and clear testimony; if it be intensely improbable, we need testimony direct, conclusive, and unimpeachable." Let us pass from this principle to the two great miracles which lie at the foundation of orthodox Christianity; we mean, of course, the miraculous conception and the resurrection of Jesus; and let us calmly consider how they would be treated if they were now for the first time heard of and brought to the test of ordinary scientific evidence."

Well! the champion of infidelity has chosen his position; he has planted his battery with scarpous care: now let him advance. He does not attack, he observes, the genuineness or the authenticity of the Apostolic narratives. He does not directly impeach the credibility of the witnesses. Infidelity does not fully religion good service in former days by requiring investigation of these points. The purpose now is, accepting the statements as the honest records of those who saw and heard the things of which they bear witness, to show the incongruity of their statements, and their insufficiency, after all, to establish the facts which we assume them to prove. This, by a final and scintillating process, The Reviewer proceeds:—

"We have said—let us calmly consider:—yet we suddenly find our pen arrested. We had intended to bring forward some thoughts on the former of these miracles—such thoughts as were simply directed to the purpose of testing it: but upon consulting judicious friends, we are warned that the topic is too delicate; and that a clear argument, however popular and however carefully worded would shock religious decorum. While Protestantism bids us to believe upon proof, English decorum forbids us publicly to canvass the proof! Briefly then we will say, that the whole evidence alleged in the Gospel of St. Matthew is a *dream*—certainly not very satisfactory ground to a man of sense." Inane philosopher! Art thou so decorous? or, art thou not dismayed? Go—age in infidel scenes—unravel to thy wading visitors the mystery of man's first creation, are thou essayed to dissipate the mystery of Christ's miraculous incarnation. But—challenged to sustain by scientific evidence our belief in the miraculous conception and resurrection of Jesus—shall we suffer thus to escape thine argument? "The whole evidence alleged in the Gospel of St. Matthew, is a *dream*!" So is, and is the Gospel of Matthew the only testimony adduced? Does science then ignore all enquiry exciting and all corroborative facts? The only evidence alleged a dream! As well might it be said that the only evidence of gravitation is that an apple fell before the eye of Newton? Does science draw no deductions, make no comparison and take no account of established truths? But we seek to apply the postulates of the reviewer. We take the first: "If a statement is beforehand highly probable, we need no moderate and ordinary testimony to create belief in it." The statement is, that by the miraculous agency of the Holy Ghost, Mary conceived the child Christ Jesus. The statement itself is highly probable because the inspired prophecies of the Old Testament Scriptures and the universal belief of the Jewish nation, unto whom were committed the Oracles of God, had pointed to such an event as about to transpire. "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." For a fact then, antecedently probable, the condition of moderate testimony was surely satisfied when a virgin did conceive, and bring forth a son, whose name was called Emmanuel, who, of himself, boldly claimed to be the son of God, who though to human appearance of humble parentage (Joseph the Carpenter's son) was found at the early age of twelve years mature enough in intellect and knowledge to dispute with the masters of learning, who, when he grew

to manhood gave repeated proofs of his divine power in that he healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, cast out devils, raised the dead, by many marvelous acts exhibited his unlimited control of the laws of nature, and penetrated the profoundest recesses of human hearts unveiling their most secret thoughts; and who vindicated by the manner and circumstances of his death his claim to be the promised Messiah of whom it had been foretold, "A bone of him shall not be broken," of whose garments even the Scripture was fulfilled. "They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots," and across whose cross there gathered at noon the darkness of night, while the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. Surely now, even the man of sense who would place no very implicit reliance upon a simple dream would yet be sorely puzzled to explain away a dream followed by such wonderful corroborative facts as these. But if the sceptic will not be convinced and demands "testimony direct, conclusive, and unimpeachable," let him take account of the appearance of the angel of the Lord to Mary, recorded in the first chapter of St. Luke, and of the announcement by the angel to the shepherds, "Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord." Let him read concerning the baptism of Christ, that when he went up out of the water "the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him; and lo a voice from heaven, saying, 'This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.'" Let him, when he has dissipated his doubts respecting the resurrection of our Lord, contemplate that if Christ is not risen from the dead our faith is vain, we are yet in sins.

The evidence of Christ's death and resurrection is almost as "unimpeachable" as that against the miraculous conception of our Lord. It rests upon the want of resemblance, challenging immediate recognition, in that body which was "raised in glory" to the one which was "sown in dishonor;" and is thus summed up—"They (the disciples) do not lay before us the result of their sight or hearing but merely the inferences of their mind, that the person who broke bread in a certain way *must have been Jesus, though he looked very unlike him*." The writer has placed himself in a dilemma. He denies the death of Christ; we ask him, *where was the living Christ?* If he denies the resurrection of Christ; We do assume, however, that Mr. Freeman must be mistaken in his own recollection of events; that he paid his subscription to the Society, and expressed his desire to quit another person. 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Maitland Circuit.

The Rev. WILLIAM TWEDY under date March 21st, writes as follows:—

My time being fully occupied I have been prevented hitherto from giving some particulars concerning our Church in a part of this Circuit called Burncoat. It is situated about fifteen miles below the village of Maitland. This singular name was given to the place on account of some circumstances that took place in connection with its first settlement.

By the blessing of God upon the labours of His servants a small society was raised up in this locality, various were the difficulties with which they had to contend in those days of comparative ignorance when the nature and designs of Methodism were but imperfectly understood. For some time they were subject to great inconvenience not having a suitable place in which to assemble for the worship of God. At length, though few in number, they determined to attempt the erection of a house for God; the site chosen was a piece of land given by Mr. Robert Faulkner, a warm friend to the cause of Methodism. By a special effort they succeeded in finishing the outside and in this state it continued to be occupied for some years, and such was its condition when I came to this Circuit some eighteen months since.

Believing that it would not only add to our comfort but greatly facilitate the interest of our cause in that place, we determined to make an effort to complete the building, and I am happy to say that we have so far succeeded, that the Church is now nearly finished, the seats all free, and no doubt this latter, especially in a small community, is a most desirable object, and should always be kept in view. The zeal and perseverance of Mrs. John Faulkner did much toward enabling the Committee to meet the necessary expenses. And we should on behalf of the trustees express our gratitude to those friends who aided us in this good work by their contributions.

Having now a comfortable place in which we can assemble to worship God, all that we need to realize our most enlarged expectations is an outpouring of the Holy Spirit which we are hoping are now to experience.

The question proposed by Solomon at the dedication of the Canadian Union, which is threatened by some positive Local Church representatives, in regard to the amount of population involved in it; and it is believed that a convention will regulate and legally control all parties in the Colonies. Those in the majority in the Legislative Council, by the Hon. Mr. DeBlaire, accepting of her Majesty's selection of the seat of Government, but delaying the expenditure of money on buildings till better times. Dispatches from the Colonial Office relating to Hudson's Bay, do not satisfy all men, but many Canadians, but the Ministerial majority, I fancy, right or wrong, will approve. It is not visionary to suppose that so long as a Federal Senate will sit for the British North American Provinces, and that a Railroad will sweep from Nova Scotia, through Canada and the Hudson's Bay Territories, to the Pacific.

There has been a good deal made in the House of the public debt of Canada, and it must be granted that acts of official extravagance and corruption cannot logically be contradicted by Ministers; they ought not to be blamed, however, for any conduct that tends to the conservation, greatness, and welfare of the country; nor are our security, good, and the interests paid? and of these, I believe there is no doubt. Objectors need more noble and patriotic ideas, and political parties should harmonize when the benefit and fame of Canada are involved.

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An effort of the American panic on Canadian Society, to which I have referred several times, many persons have been without work, and in most cases have suffered great pecuniary loss, during the winter. Corporations, Houses of Industry, Dorcas Societies, and Ministers and Laymen of all communities, have by most praiseworthy efforts, done what they could to fulfil employment for the inactive, and supplies for the aged, sick and indigent; and it is thought that in any place sympathy and benevolence have been more conspicuous than in Newfoundland.

We have an interesting and earnest debate in progress on the merits, rights and operations of the Bank Depository of the Upper Canals Department of Public Instruction. Bookkeepers assert that it is an unnecessary monopoly detrimental to them, and they are not without important help from our editorial.

The present offers many opportunities for the practical application of education and public convenience, and utility, and gives ventilation of a full exposure and defence of the important branch of the department.

I have just read a copy of the third thousand, published cheaply by Mr. Pickup, of Montreal, of the "AUTOCRIOGRAPH OF A Wesleyan Methodist Missionary, formerly a Roman Catholic," and sold at the Canadas Wesleyan Book Room.

As a Canadian publication, it appears in a very correct and respectable form, and any reader of this Province, will be at no loss to say that it is the production of a Doctor of Divinity, whose abilities make him popular at the town of G—. The writer's conversion from Popery is exceedingly gratifying and instructive, and the volume contains an astonishing number of well selected in-cidents and characters, and much pious, elegant, forcible scripture; though on one or two topics he may not obtain the unreserved acquiescence of all readers. The writer is historic, evangelical, Wesleyan, and anti-Papal, and it is soon perceived that the author is a decided Christian himself and has possessed a paramount wish to make others Christian, during his quarter of a century of arduous and strenuous Methodist itineraries. The instance Dr. Hickey's Life of Bank, and Dr. Ryerson's and Mr. Case's Sermons—no work that I have seen which so cogently and variably places the Wesleyanism of all the British North American Colonies before the public in the light of experience and fact. Truly enough it is, this Wesleyan auto-biography has a style of his own, and that is one reason why I like him. He never wears. He is terse, lucid, and warm-hearted—often metaphorical, sometimes playful, and now and then ironical; yet why not, when he generally is so good too, which all professes of the humorous do not know how to be?

Precise prudence that, which would fill every writer into throes of inspiration, to tell all their nature. Such boldness would dash the gracefulness of the acacia to the ground.

Sin—I permit me to explain some statements made in your editorial of April 1st, headed Protestant Alliance, which are suited to make a wrong impression. The writer says my name stands "enrolled in clear autograph" "on the counter of the Wesleyan Book Room." This fact is explained in my letter in the *Christian Messenger* of March 8th. Having in that letter expressed

so publicly my disapproval of the fundamental principles of the Alliance, I have authorized the Society to erase my name from its list of members and from the subscription list.

Again you say, "No name remained on that Committee without the approbation of its owner, for he had knowledge of his appointment and might have withdrawn."—The incorrectness of this statement also is shown in my communication above referred to. Again, "The printed sheet containing his name was in his hands six weeks before its issue to the public," &c. This also is incorrect, for no printed sheet came to my hands until I suppose six weeks after the document referred to was sent abroad. I think I could also show that this was the case with regard to others whose names were on that document. The writer should have ascertained the facts before he made such statements as the above.

For obvious reasons you will also permit me to explain a communication in the *Witness* of April 3rd, signed by the Rev. R. Messrs. Hunter and England. They state, as the result of their visit to me that I was to write an apology to Mr. Hunter. But if I had done so, I could have allowed no other to be made of such a communication than to be published in the *Messenger* where my complained-of letter first appeared. Your readers will at once see that this only would have been simple justice.

Yours, &c.,
DAVID FREEMAN.

Halifax, April 5th 1858.

Letter from Mr. C. Robson.

To the Editor of the Provincial Wesleyan:

In—a letter, written by the Hon. Charles Tupper, and published in the last number of the *Wesleyan*, the following passage occurs: "I did not surprise myself to find that the Church was now nearly

finished, the seats all free, and no doubt this latter, especially in a small community, is a most desirable object, and should always be kept in view. The zeal and perseverance of Mr. John Faulkner did much toward enabling the Committee to meet the necessary expenses. And we should on behalf of the trustees express our gratitude to those friends who aided us in this good work by their contributions.

Having now a comfortable place in which we can assemble to worship God, all that we need to realize our most enlarged expectations is an outpouring of the Holy Spirit which we are hoping are now to experience.

The question proposed by Solomon at the dedication of the Canadian Union, which is threatened by some positive Local Church representatives, in regard to the amount of population involved in it; and it is believed that a convention will regulate and legally control all parties in the Colonies. Those in the majority in the Legislative Council,

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they ought not to be blamed, however, for any conduct that tends to the conservation, greatness, and welfare of the country;

nor are our security, good, and the interests paid? and of these, I believe there is no doubt.

Objectors need more noble and patriotic ideas, and political parties should harmonize when the benefit and fame of Canada are involved.

Mr. Brown has given notice of motion for a Select Committee to be appointed and charged to examine, and it remains to see whether the Christian public of Canada is to be again balked by the fatalitarian casting-vote of the Speaker.

It is much thought that some modification shall take place in the Governmental appropriation to Colleges, and the requirement of Vice-Chancellorships, &c., to be filled by Professors,

makes its application for an augmentation almost certain.

The recent proceedings in your Eastern Connexion for the attainment of a College, to embrace a Theological Department, are worthy of its position and merits, and we wish you a completed and prosperous success.

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The Provincial Wesleyan.

Poetry.

The Little Sleeper.
She sleeps; but the soft breath
No longer stirs her golden hair;
The soldier hand of Death
Has stolen thine unaware;
The lovely edies
Is still as beautiful and fair,
But mournfully we miss,
The gentle habitant that sojourned there.

With stealthy pace he crept
To the quiet chamber where it lay—
That angel thing—and slept,
And whispered it come away;
He broke the fairy lute
That light with laughter used to play,
And left all dull and mute
The silver string that tinkled forth so gay.

Then with his finger cold
He shut the glancing windows to;
With fringe of drooping gold
He darkened the small pane of blue.
Here from the marble floor
He swept the flowers of crimson hue;
He closed the ivory door;
And off the porch the rosy curtains drew.

The angel-guest is gone,
Upon the spoiler's dark wings borne;
The road she journeys on
Wends evermore without return.
To ruin and decay
The fairy palace now must turn;
For the sun's early ray
Upon its walls and windows shall not play,
Nor light in golden root-to-morrow morn.—
Chambers's Journal.

Miscellaneous.

A Day in the Dungeons of the Inquisition at Rome.

Mr. Dallas has communicated to the *Catholic Layman* the particulars of an actual inspection of the dungeons of the Inquisition made in company with a friend last autumn. The "Palazzo della Inquisizione" is now occupied by two companies of French soldiers as a barracks. After describing the means by which he and his friend obtained access to the place, and some of their first impressions, Mr. Dallas comes to the dungeons. The candles having been obtained, he says—

We went down a broad flight of steps, which led us into a large vaulted hall of stone entirely under the level of the ground. There were plain marks that this was intended to be a hall of judgment; and the places where iron rings had been fastened into the stone wall in a row were sufficiently obvious. The soldiers told us that there had been rings in these holes when the French troops first came, but that they had been wrenched out when wanted for use in the barracks. At one end of this apartment there was a kind of ante-hall, made part of the hall itself by a large arch. This ante-hall was domed, and in the centre stood above an iron ring was fixed. In surveying this apartment, it was impossible not to arrive at the conclusion that there were in the hall of torture where the hideous examinations before the inquisitors were carried on under what is called "the question," which means under the terror of the threat of torture or the actual application of it. It was heart-breaking to look upon that iron ring, and reflect upon the awful agonies of the pulley, which was the common mode of "questioning" those who were suspected of heresy.

We passed from this hall to several other rooms; in one of these a wooden shed of recent construction was placed. This called forth a joke and a smile from the soldiers, from whom we learned that it was the place of confinement which had been arranged for that military punishment commonly called "the black hole." After going through several large kinds of cells, we came to one in which there was a large arch bricked up. This had been done, we were told, when the French took possession of the barracks; but our guides informed us that there was a similar arch in another direction close to the place of prisons, which had not been bricked up because it was found to be nearly closed with the rubbish which had been thrown there in the first violent transacking of the Palace by the insurgent Roman people. We were led to this other arch, and found it as it had been described. The rubbish filled the whole space of the arch, except about three feet at the top. We crept up the rubbish, and made our way through the opening, dropping down a rather steep descent on the other side.

We found several more prisons similar to those we had been in passing from the hall of torture; and after having satisfied ourselves with the sight, we were about to return, when the soldiers told us that we had yet to descend to other prisons; and they led us to the top of a flight of steps, narrow though which had brought us from the quadrangle, and leading us to a second underground course of dungeons. At the bottom of this second flight of steps we came into a square place with a well in the centre of it, surrounded by a low wall; on holding our candles over this wall the light was reflected by water at a considerable depth, and we threw something in to ascertain that it was water. From that square place we went through a range of prisons much smaller than those above. It was difficult to imagine how human beings could have lived in such places of confinement, so far removed from wholesome air, and entirely in darkness, unless when artificial light was occasionally used.

The description of these dungeons can give no notion of the feelings with which we passed through them, and the increasing sense of horror began to have a sensible effect upon us. This had not, however, prepared us for the "hell" which we guiding soldier in advance loudly made to us, "Descendez, messieurs, encore!"—Come down still lower, gentlemen! " and we found ourselves at the top of a flight of steps, descending to a third underground course of dungeons. The soldiers went down, and I began to descend, but my friend protested against a further exploring into these unhealthy graves during the proverbially unhealthy season of August in Rome. I looked down and saw the bottom of the flight of steps, and, feeling really sickened, I turned, and we found our way to the surface; not, however, without encountering more difficulty in the ascent of the rubbish from the inner side than we had experienced in coming from the outer.

On arriving once more in the light of day and air of heaven, the soldier was extinguishing our lights; I could not refrain from bursting forth in earnest expression of the feelings produced by what we had seen; but when asked of these as horrors, one of the soldiers said—"Horror sir; you have seen them?" Are there any worse places to be seen?" said I. "Come and judge for yourself," said the soldier. He led us across the quadrangle; we followed him through part of the entrance into the guard room, where several soldiers were lying about; from whence we passed into a

passage, at the end of which we came into a good-sized light room, paved with flagstones, except on one side, where there was a large wooden trap-door level with the floor. The room appeared at that time to be used to receive lumber. I naturally walked up to the trap-door, but one of the soldiers said, "No, here is the place, sir," and pointed out, on the other side of the room, one of the flagstones about two feet by eighteen inches in size, having in the centre a large iron ring. He attempted to lift this stone, but found it too heavy.

Another of the soldiers had gone into the room to light our candles, and returning, assisted his comrade, and the stone was raised and laid flat over. It was a thick heavy stone, broken to cover the opening which was presented to our view. This was a deep shaft of the same dimensions as the stone which had covered it, having on one side a perpendicular ladder of steps fastened against the wall all the way down. One of the soldiers took his candle and began to descend its shaft; when more than half his body was in the shaft he said, "You will fall, gentlemen!" I asked, "Have you ever been down before?" "Yes, three times." "And what is found at the bottom?" He answered, "There are two passages, one going this way and the other that; they are a little broader than this, and in those passages are the doors of the little dungeons—let me call them 'cells'."

The bishop had not the statistics of other denominations, and hence could not speak of their numbers, but he stated that the Methodist Episcopal Church had between 90 and 100 regular preachers, 62 local preachers, and 3,112 members, 75 Sunday schools, 530 officers and teachers, 2,750 scholars, 15,000 volumes in libraries.

The bishop's description of his journey to Oregon, and the various incidents on the route through that wild mountain and desert region, was thrillingly interesting. His description of the valleys, mountains, rivers, and towns of Oregon, possessed a peculiar interest.

He stated that the population was from fifty to sixty thousand, and sketched its character. He gave an account of the educational interest of the state, and spoke of the Pacific University, and the Oregon City, Santiam, and Umpqua Academies.

The Methodist Church in Oregon has 57 itinerant and 43 local preachers. There are 68 churches, 2,456 members, 61 Sunday schools, 306 officers and teachers, and 1,531 scholars.

He also described the physical condition of the country, with many other items, which made his lecture one of the most interesting that has been listened to for a long time.—*N.Y. Advocate of Freedom.*

From Mr. E. Sturtevant, *Physician and Surgeon*, Boston:

—*Diarrhoea—Relaxation.*

"Your Pills are good enough to send me, but I am not in my practice, and have not time to study them. They are adapted to the classes of the human system, that we see fit to work upon them with them, which had reacted the other remedies we usually use. Indeed, I have never had any patient complain of the effects of your pills."

From Dr. J. C. Jackson, New York:

"Your Pills are the prince of pills. These excellent pills are a great help to me in my practice, and are very certain and effectual in their action on the bowels which makes them invaluable to me in the daily treatment of patients."

From Dr. T. V. Carpenter, New Orleans:

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