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FOR THE CHRISTIAN EXAMINER.

ON THE ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF PHONETIC LANGUAGE.—BY DR. RAE.

A careful consideration of the circumstances that influence the condition of man forming epochs in his history—steps in the progress of civilization—would lead us, as it seems to me, to divide them into two classes: the one of primary, the other of secondary, operation. Of the former, that is of those which exert an immediate agency on his condition, we might instance his taming and domesticating the more powerful of the inferior animals, the ox species, the horse, the elephant, camel, &c.; his acquiring a knowledge of agriculture and of navigation. All these discoveries, and others similar to these, have in times past, exercised a very powerful and immediate influence on the condition of man, or at least on the

men who have invented or adopted them.—The steam engine is an instance of a discovery now operating largely on the condition and relations of our race. Others again are of secondary agency; they are merely different modes of bringing about the same, or nearly the same, events. As instances I may cite the use of one species of grain instead of another, of oats in place of wheat; or of one sort of material in place of another for dress, of cotton, for example, instead of luen or woollen—the use that some nations make of malt liquors, when others use wine or spirituous liquors—or again, the adoption of rhyme in poetry, in place of measure; of painting in place of sculpture. The operation of all such things is only secondary, and the effects they bring about are sensible only after long periods.

Of these latter circumstances, of

things exerting only a secondary influence on the condition of our race, I know not any of equal importance to the one on which I propose now to offer a few observations. The adoption, by the most civilized nations of the world, for the purpose of communicating their ideas by the sense of sight, of characters, not the representatives of the ideas themselves, but only of the arbitrary sounds that happen to have been fixed on to denote them.

The subject is unquestionably both curious and interesting, and might give worthy employment to an erudition which I do not possess, and to leisure and materials far more extensive than I can command. I should not therefore venture on it, were it not in the idea that the object of our meeting* here is rather for the purpose of rousing thought and inquiry, than of determining opinion, and under the hope that the view I am to give of the matter, may perhaps awaken the attention of some of the members of this society, to a train of investigation very singular in itself and full of interesting conclusions, and which discoveries that have been recently made, and which every day adds to, places more and more within our reach. I need not causlessly occupy time in attempting to prove that a language of visible signs is naturally a language of pictures and not of sounds. This is the immediate expedient which men employ to convey ideas in the rudest state of society, when distance of time or place prevent them from communicating through the medium of spoken language. Thus the Indian of our continent, who takes a party through the woods and over the waters of the interior, takes care to leave a token of

who he and his party are, and what are their movements, at every remarkable point in his route, and thus to hold necessary communication with the scattered families of his tribe, who but for some such expedient would be ignorant of the motives of each other, and unable to meet and arrange matters for their common welfare or safety. He paints, on a piece of bark, a rude picture delineating the number of the individuals with him, and their sexes and ages; marks the size of the moon, at the moment of their passage, and the probable period of their return, by the appearance which it, or the last of successive moons which he delineates, will exhibit; and indicates the success of the hunt, by rude figures, of the animals captured. Finally, he takes this piece of bark, and fixing it on a pole, makes it point in the exact direction in which the party are proceeding. From such rude beginnings as these, the systems of picture writing, which at one time or other have prevailed among all races, have had their origin. In Mexico, we know this system had attained considerable perfection. In China, it embodies the whole learning, laws and science of that very ingenious people. It attains its facility of expression by adopting general signs for its prime characters, and expressing all particulars by a due combination of these elementary marks. Thus, in the first beginnings of picture writing, a lion would be painted as a lion, a sheep as a sheep, in such hasty and rude essays as the imperfection of the art of painting could compass. But subsequently, in the progress of this sort of writing, all attempt at a perfect representation, or at any representation of the mere form, would be dropped. A general simple character would be adopted to denote an animal; another character combined with

*This paper was read before the Literary Society of Hamilton, U. C. It has not been thought necessary to make any change upon its original form.

it would indicate that it was a quadruped; another that it was carnivorous; and a fourth, assigning to it a mane or beard, would characterise the lion. A sheep again would be described by a few significant strokes, as an animal of the herbivorous or grass eating sort, bearing wool. It is easy to conceive that these characters might be comprehended within less space than the letters by which we mark the sounds appropriated in the English language to denote these two objects. They would have the advantage of being significant, not of a mere arbitrary sound, but of the characteristics of the two animals. Accordingly, there have not been wanting many who have given the preference to picture or symbolic writing, over every other system of signs for the communication of ideas. The arguments by which they support their thesis, are at least plausible. They may be summed up under two heads. The superior precision of such a language, and its universal applicability.

Almost all disputes, it is said, arise from the misapprehension, or misapplication of terms, and may be traced to the looseness and inaccuracy of spoken language, which, answering sufficiently well for the purposes of common life, becomes, when transferred from them to abstract discussions and general reasonings, the source of a vast deal of ambiguity and error. This it is said might be got rid of entirely, and for ever banished from science, by the adoption of such a language. Every distinct primary idea that we have, might have a peculiar sign appropriated to it, and these united according to fixed rules would give precise and unambiguous expressions for the most complex ideas and their relations. The principle is one similar to that regulating the nomenclature of the modern science of

chemistry. Such a language would be universal and would become the means of the freest communication between individuals speaking every different tongue. Frenchman, Englishman, German, Prussian, Greek, would use it in the same manner that they now do the arabic numerals, or as the various branches of the Chinese race, speaking different dialects or languages, employ their picture writing. By arguments drawn from such a view of the subject, Dr. Wallis, more than a century ago, and Dr. Anderson, at the beginning of this century, and several ingenious men since, have maintained the superiority of such a language, and have seriously urged its adoption.

Since, then, picture writing is undoubtedly the earliest written language, since it may become, as in the hands of the Chinese, a very distinct mode of communicating thought, and since, in point of universality of application, and perhaps in some other respects, it is superior to any other character, it becomes rather a difficult matter to explain how it has not been universally adopted, and how, in place of it, we have come to use characters not significant of ideas, but the representatives of spoken language, of various arbitrary sounds, which the conventional usages of different nations have adopted as means of conveying thought.

In the conjectural explanation which I am about to give of this fact, I am obliged to take it for granted, as an admitted point, that Egypt was the great parent of European art and science. I cannot, within the bounds prescribed me, display the strength of the foundation on which this assumption is built. It is one however, which I believe will be granted as so very probable, as almost to amount to certainty.

It is to some circumstances peculiar

to Egypt, and the surrounding nations, that I would trace the invention of a phonetic language, or language communicating by arbitrary sounds. There are circumstances, it seems to me, which must naturally have tended to retard the progress of picture writing in these countries, and to call forth attempts to communicate by means of written characters sounds themselves. A great part of the peculiarities of the ancient civilization of Egypt, are unquestionably owing to the very peculiar nature of the country itself—a long fertile valley, flooded every year by a regular inundation, having the Nile and various canals open at other seasons, and bordered throughout by ranges of granitic mountains. These mountains furnished them with materials for all their great structures. Vast masses of granite were easily lifted from their beds, and transported to every part of the land by water. Vast and imperishable structures were thus raised with comparative ease, and they were accordingly erected to an extent which has astonished mankind for thousands of years. The effects produced by the constant view of these enormous and imperishable monuments, on the minds of the Egyptians, could not fail to be considerable. The very contemplation of these objects gave a sort of vastness and immobility to their ideas and character. An instance may explain my meaning.

Let us suppose that a man ignorant of what we reckon the first principles of sculpture, sets about forming an image in stone, of some human form; he will infallibly give to it the stiffest attitudes, because that it is the easiest both in conception and execution. The body will be erect, the limbs rigid, the arms extended along the sides, and probably the back resting on a mass of the ori-

ginal stone. Now this is the precise attitude of all the Egyptian statues. They are acknowledged to have a very striking beauty—a beauty peculiar to themselves, arising from the perfection of the execution, and the air of repose that is breathed over them; but they have all this one attitude. I think we cannot explain this circumstance otherwise than by considering the influence which the principle of imitation must have acquired from the imperishable nature of first attempts in statuary, and these consequently serving as models on which all subsequent essays were to be moulded, as the cause producing it. The attitude in which their ancient heroes and demigods appeared to them in their magnificent temples, would become sacred to their eyes, and would be the fashion in which all their successors would desire to be exhibited. This circumstance is the more remarkable, that according to Winkelman, an admirable judge, their sculptures of inferior animals are not only beautiful, but full of life and energy.

Now I think that it is almost certain that the same fixity of character which distinguished their sculpture, must have been imparted from similar causes, to their picture, or symbolic writing, and that their system would consequently be but little varied in its essential parts from the original plan of giving actual and recognizable representations of visible objects. This conjecture is proved to be in some measure correct, by the signs that actually occur in Egyptian hieroglyphics, in which birds eyes, serpents, &c. make up a large portion of the figures covering the surface. Now this is obviously a system incapable of giving any thing like free expression to thought. The principle of the Chinese written language of symbols, and of all such hypothetical languages

as have been projected, is to reduce the primary signs to as few as possible, it is said about two hundred; to make these signs the representatives of general ideas; and to form all such particular objects as birds, serpents, &c. out of the combination of them. It is obvious that it is only by such a plan that a language of symbols can attain to convenient expression; otherwise the recollection is perplexed and lost in the multitude of particulars. Resting then on the probability of the picture language of Egypt, and of the countries to which it gave civilization and art, being in a great degree defective, as one of the main supports of my hypothesis, I proceed to consider some causes that might probably lead to the first attempts in forming a pictorial language representing sounds, and to others that might probably lead to the extension and general adoption of this phonetic language.

The Phœnicians are generally said to have been the first inventors of phonetic writing. It will suit my desire of condensing my ideas on the subject, to assume that they were so. Let us then see what in Phœnicia might have induced men to adopt the expedient, strange in these days, of making pictures meeting the eye suggest sounds to the ear.

The Phœnicians were a trading nation. They visited the whole coasts of the great Mediterranean, and trafficed with all the fresh and numerous tribes that gave life and energy to its then fertile shores. They launched beyond it. Portugal, France, and Britain bought from them and sold to them. This is certain. How much farther they may have ventured is not known. Now a merchant is a great recorder; he wishes, indeed it is necessary for him, to keep a note of all his transactions. To keep such a record by means of the im-

perfect picture language of the Egyptians, would be very difficult, in some cases impossible. Take, for example, a proper name—the name of some individual. Among people of a primitive race indeed names are generally significant words, referring, like those of the Indians, to some occurrence in the life of the individual, or like many of our own, to some habit or accident belonging to some of our ancestors. Such names can be marked by pictures as well as other things. The son of the Farrier, the son of the man with the black locks, his grandson, or so on, might easily be represented by pictured signs. But when we take words of a foreign language, as they communicate to us nothing but sound, we have no other idea of them but of the sounds they give. Thus, to a Phœnician, such names as these, Cataline, Cæsar, Berence, and Penelope, would be incapable of being directly represented by any signs.

To represent such names as these, in some manner or other, might nevertheless be a matter of great importance to him. Would it be impossible to do so? I believe not. Let us suppose, for example, that one of us knew nothing of even the elements of our literature, the alphabet, and that he yet had to keep in memory such a name as Cataline:—Might he not adopt the expedient which children use in play, and by drawing a representation of a cat, r eye and a line, make out Cataline. In the same way he might keep a note of such a man as Cæsar, by two characters representing to his conception the sea and the air. Berenice might be, bee-wren-ice-eye; Penelope, pen-el-hop-pea; and by similar expedients, a little strained, he might represent in sounds, probably as near as his language would permit, all, or almost all, proper names that he might be desirous of recording.

That such a supposition is any thing but improbable, is proved by the fact of such names, the names of Roman Emperors, being so represented on Egyptian monuments.

But, is it reasonable to suppose, that our Phœnician merchant, having adopted this expedient in the case of proper names, would confine it to those alone, or would he not be tempted to apply it to other matters almost as useful to him. What is the literature that our trading voyagers of the present day most apply themselves to? The names of the commodities in which they traffic with the various nations and tribes they visit. If they are trading with barbarians or savages, they almost uniformly endeavour to construct a vocabulary of the most common terms that occur in their intercourse, catching and recording the sounds, to be sure often very imperfectly, but still in a manner wonderfully useful to themselves and others. Is it not reasonable to suppose that the Phœnicians would do the same, and that confused by the multiplicity of languages, fragments of which they would be obliged to possess themselves of, they would endeavour to assist their memories by preserving in this way, a record as perfect as they could of the sounds of the most common vocables in each? For my own part, I think there can be no doubt of it. Practise in this case would gradually lead to the adoption of those visible signs which most clearly and distinctly marked out the shortest elements of sound. Thus they would acquire a written language of syllabic sounds. Such undoubtedly were the first Phonetic characters adopted. They represented syllables, not single letters. The ancient Hebrew is so to a certain extent. Such a set of characters, though rude in comparison with an alphabet, would, without doubt,

be preferable for the communication of thought to a very imperfect picture language, such as the Egyptians and their hundred nations formed, and would gradually supply its place, and gradually be itself improved.

There are many circumstances in my opinion strongly corroborative of the views now presented. I would first advert to the form of the letters in the most ancient alphabets, as clearly indicative of their origin. If phonetic writing did not grow up gradually and imperceptibly, in the manner which I have endeavoured to explain, from a constant effort to adopt the pictured signs representing the shortest and simplest current significant sounds of one language, to convey, first, an approximation to the sounds of foreign vocables, and lastly, to embody the general elementary sounds of the language itself, and thus to become a convenient vehicle for communicating thought, by recalling to the mind the sounds which we give to thought; if it did not thus grow up, it must have proceeded from the first, on some plan, and been from the beginning arranged, on such principles as are the simplest and most suited to answer such a purpose. Suppose that any one were now to form a set of characters to represent the sounds of any language, he would naturally in the first place set about ascertaining with accuracy, the number of simple elementary sounds in the language in question; and in the second fitting them with appropriate characters. A first requisite in these characters would be to render them as simple in form, and distinct in shape, as he possibly could, that they might readily catch the eye, and not be liable to be confounded with each other. They would resemble those adopted by the writers in what is called short hand, and would present an

assemblage of simple, straight, and curved lines. Now if we take any of the most ancient alphabets, for example the Hebrew, instead of this simplicity and distinction, we find the characters combining the opposite defects, being complicated in form, and yet difficult to distinguish from one another. One of the great elementary obstacles to reading Hebrew arises indeed from this very circumstance. Many of the characters so closely resemble each other, that the student runs into continual mistakes. This circumstance, impossible otherwise to account for, may be easily explained by supposing each to have been originally the picture of some visible object, which in the process of assuming a shape that might be easily traced, lost its distinctive characters. Thus, to recur to our original example, the picture of a lion and a sheep, if represented by a few strokes of the pen, would look very much alike.

The other circumstance to which I would allude as corroborative of my hypothesis, is, that of the mystery of the Egyptian hieroglyphics. I have endeavoured to show the probability of the natural progress of picture writing from actual representations of things and events to mere general characters, the representatives of general ideas, having been checked in Egypt, by circumstances peculiar to that country. That there the inventive principle must have been restrained in picture writing as in sculpture, by the attention of the people being constantly turned to the most ancient models, both from their imperishable nature and their sacred character.

The Chinese, on the other hand, wrote first on leaves—the most perishable of materials. The original records of every age died with it, and were only preserved in copy by constant renew-

al. The continual efforts of the Chinese were therefore concentrated upon giving their characters the most significant forms, and thus their writing speedily became general and comprehensive. The resemblance which any of the Chinese characters have to any natural object, is very remote, indeed now entirely undistinguishable. They are truly representatives of general ideas, quite unlike the real pictures upon Egyptian blocks. Now, if this account of matters be correct, and if the Egyptian picture writing had the inherent defect, from a rigid maintaining of its first forms, of being irresolvable into representations of elementary and general ideas, it would be necessary, to express by it any thing farther than a record of the simplest events, to make its characters receive a metaphorical, and loose, and extended meaning. Thus the representation of an eye might sometimes signify omniscience, a serpent, eternity, &c. Such a method of communicating thought would indeed be full of ambiguity and difficulty, but yet when accompanied by a viva voce interpretation, might serve to recal to the mind long trains of interesting ideas, and would naturally form a study, having considerable charms for those devoted to it. This, till lately, was the prevalent idea concerning the nature of the hieroglyphics of Egypt. Recent discoveries have shown, however, that it was in so far incorrect, that in some instances at least, the characters used by the Egyptians were essentially phonetic, serving to communicate ideas, simply in so far as they were the representatives of sounds. Now if a phonetic character was introduced in the way I have supposed, and had come into use among any people bordering on the Egyptians, or among the Egyptians themselves, for the purpose of communicating with

their neighbours, it is very likely that, in many instances, it would be employed by them to help out the imperfections of their picture language. It seems to me, however, very doubtful that it would entirely supersede and banish it. The more likely supposition I think is, that both systems of writing would be employed, and that sometimes the two would be blended together. The hypothesis however of those who have been lately engaged in these investigations is, that hieroglyphics are altogether phonetic. Though of course I speak with very great diffidence on such a matter, I confess I cannot bring myself to believe this explanation of the subject to be entirely correct; and my doubts are strengthened from the circumstance of the different interpreters giving different versions of the same inscription, and from the promising light that seemed to shine on these records of remote ages, being again involved in gloom.

I would now turn to another point. Supposing the account I have ventured to give of the causes introducing our present system of writing to be correct, it becomes an interesting inquiry to us, what might have been the consequences had no such causes existed? Had the Egyptians used no more durable material, for example, than wood for sculpture, or for preserving the memory of events, and had their picture language consequently had unlimited scope to mould itself into such a language of symbols as that of China? in this case, I think it cannot be doubted that it would have had, like that of China, very general currency, and have come like it, into very extensive use. Had such an event occurred, it is, I think, at least problematical, if any other character would have superseded it; and it seems very likely that all the world would, for

communicating their ideas, have employed, instead of the less direct and apparently less perfect expedient of phonetic characters representing sounds, the simple and more obvious method of symbols expressive of the ideas themselves.

The effects which such an event would have produced on the progress of human knowledge and feeling, and on the general course of human affairs would undoubtedly have been very great. To endeavour to trace these were a very interesting speculation. I can, however, only attempt to touch on a few of its leading features.

The most obvious of these is, I think, that one common medium of communication being in use among all the civilized nations of Europe and Asia, the stock of knowledge which each possessed would have become the common property of all. The literature, the science, and the history of all nations would have been in a manner one. The history of the most remote periods, of mighty nations, and of extended empires, of which we have perhaps *never* heard, or of which we have *only* heard, would have consequently come down to us safe, through all the revolutions of ages. They perished because the records of them not being the common property of all nations, but wrapped up in their individual languages, their existences became extinct with themselves. In so far the introduction of phonetic writing must be esteemed a misfortune.

There is another point of view also, in which at first sight it would seem disadvantageous. It must be acknowledged that spoken language is an exceedingly imperfect vehicle for the communication of scientific truth. We are chiefly moved to speak by our wants, our desires, our passions, and hence

language is the vehicle of feeling and emotion, rather than of simple truth. It catches, as it were, the surface of things, and strives rather to show what seems to be than what really is. There can be no doubt that a language of symbols would be a far better medium for the communication of any established science. It is accordingly on this topic that they who have advocated its adoption, as I have already remarked, have chiefly enlarged. I will not farther enter on it, or seek to show its apparent strength, than by requesting you to consider the advantages which have accrued to two sciences, arithmetic and mathematics, from the introduction of such a language. Cyphers in arithmetic, and signs and letters in algebra, form a language of symbols, and by the clearness and precision with which they enunciate scientific truth, must be acknowledged to have furnished instruments far preferable for communicating it, and infinitely more efficient in discovering it, than the written languages that preceded them. Similar advantages, it is said, would arise to general science by adapting a similar plan with regard to it, and making the signs it employs simple and distinct expressions of fundamental truths. I cannot agree with this conclusion. Were it possible indeed in the other sciences to arrive at fundamental truths as indubitable as those of mathematics, I would fully concur in it. But we know we are always rather hunting after such, than sure we have got them, and hence the assumption that we had actually reached them, and our framing a language for the expression of every fact in the moral and physical sciences upon such assumption, were even yet, as it seems to me, a very dangerous experiment. It would undoubtedly add greatly to the facility of communicating

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what we thought to be knowledge: but it would also very certainly tend to fix the present state of knowledge as the perfection of science, and restrain all farther advances. One may form a very slight notion of the probable effects of such a measure by considering a circumstance in the recent history of chemical science. At the time the chemical nomenclature was reformed, a particular air was considered to be the exclusive principle producing acidity by uniting with other bodies. It was hence termed *oxygène*—the producer of acids. About 25 years ago another air was shown to be also a producer of acids, and to form a component part of one of the most extensively diffused of them all. The fact was nevertheless disputed, and with an obstinacy and pertinacity which I think we can scarce explain without calling to mind the influence of names. The admission of chlorine as a simple substance disturbed the propriety of the whole nomenclature of the science, and therefore war was waged against it for nearly twenty years. If this opposition to the change of a nomenclature of mere sounds and apphrable to but one science could thus restrain the progress of science in the nineteenth century, how prodigious must have been the influence of a nomenclature of symbols embodying the whole compass of the then known sciences, in the ages to which we refer. Suppose such an instrument in the hands of an Aristotle, and reflect how difficult it was to move the sciences beyond the limits which he had marked out for them, even without the advantages which it would have given him, and I believe you will agree with me that with such a coadjutor on his side the attempt would have been quite unsuccessful.

But if the influence of such an event on the mere sciences would probably

have been on the whole injurious, there can be no doubt I conceive that it would have been greatly more so on all that is connected with the feelings and the imagination. We by no means know, we can scarce hope to know, the mysteries of our own nature; we feel as it were the tides that agitate the depths of our intellectual and moral being; but these depths we have not yet got a plummet line to sound. Yet it seems necessary to our happiness, necessary to the full expansion of our being, that we communicate to others the changes that come over, as the pulses that vibrate through the inmost soul. We cannot do so as a matter of science, for our nature surpasses our science. We reach after this aim of ours by every means. The whole man labours to compass it, but it is chiefly through the medium of spoken language that it is gained. This sweeps indeed only over the surface of things, but it sweeps over the whole creation, and collects and embodies in one whole, all that we can reach of what is within or without us. It gathers power from the very vehicle by which it is communicated, and by the very modulations which it gives to articulate sound, shakes the whole soul. He who has heard a Sidons or a Kean, and recollects the deep emotion produced by the mere tone in which a few syllables were uttered, will understand my meaning. This—spoken language—is the special instrument of the poet; through it he gives meaning, music, and metaphor, to his creations, and without it, it scarce seems that his art could have an existence. Suppose a play of Shakespeare, or a song of Burns, put into symbolic character, where would be the poetry of either or their power to bear us with them in the tide of deep thought and feeling, along which they hurry us.

All connected with imagination would, it seems to me, by the introduction of symbolical characters, be dulled and deadened. Compared with what it is now it would show, as a distant scene viewed through a telescope does, when compared with one on which the naked eye looks upon close at hand.

Again, the introduction of symbolic language would have had a reflex effect on spoken language. In the ages preceding literature of any sort, the language of sound is cultivated entirely as a language of sound, and it is cultivated with amazing care. It is felt to be the power of all others, the mightiest and the most enviable. Compared with his actual stock of ideas, the savage has a power of effecting his purposes by a vivid communication of them which is altogether astonishing.

In the ages which follow the savage or the barbarous state when civilization and literature have their sway, spoken language, where it is preserved as the medium of communication through the interposition of signs meeting the eye, is still cultivated for this its secondary object, with assiduous diligence by the whole intellect of the age, and if not further improved at least maintains its purity and efficiency. But let us suppose that genius, abandoning sound as its instrument, adopts in its place the sense of sight; is it not likely, nay, is it not certain, that spoken language would fall into neglect and corruption, and that men attending to signs, appealing to another sense, would allow those communicated by the organ of sound to become imperfect and corrupt. Of this too I think there can be little doubt.

Thus, if our conclusions be right, there would have sprung from the event I have assumed, as at least possible, four important consequences:—1st. we

should have had a much more perfect record of the events that have happened in remote ages—2d. science would have been stationary—3d. imagination would have been dead—4th. spoken language would have been very imperfect.

This view of the subject, and the conclusions to which it has led us, derive some interest and may be said to be to a certain extent confirmed, from the actual condition of the only great people employing a symbolic character at present in existence. Chinese authentic history claims a very extended period as comprehended within its limits, and pretends to tell the events and to narrate the revolutions that have had place in north-eastern Asia for several thousands of years.

Chinese science is stationary. Confucius, the Aristotle of the east, is the great master. Truth is not, it is there conceived, approachable in itself, it is only the picture he holds up of it that is to be come near. Imagination is dead, however they may account for it. All observers agree in the fact, and in this particular place, a well defined line between the people of India and Europe, and the picture reading Chinese. The powers of the intellect, and these hampered and confined, are all that remains to them.

Their spoken language is a mass of monosyllables without elegance or power, and having so little claim to precision, that they are obliged to help out its imperfections by hints addressed to the eye, ever anon tracing out in air with their fingers the visible sign which they are aiming to express by the voice.

These coincidences of what might be supposed to be with what is, are certainly remarkable, and, as well as the whole subject, are I think calculated to suggest

thoughts—thoughts somewhat deep concerning the various chances and changes to which our race have been exposed.

A BRIEF INQUIRY INTO THE SCRIPTURAL INSTITUTION OF DEACONS WITH REASONS FOR ITS CONTINUANCE IN THE CHURCH.

The compilers of the Tract, entitled the Form of Presbyterian Church Government, usually bound up with the Confession of Faith, in treating on the officers of the Church, have enumerated that of deacon, as a distinct, ordinary and perpetual office. "To this office, they say, it belongs not to preach the word or administer the sacraments, but to take special care in distributing to the necessities of the poor."

It appears from sacred history* that in the infancy of the church, as it existed in Jerusalem, this duty was discharged by the Apostles themselves. The new converts under the influence of a spirit of remarkable liberality brought their contributions, for whatever general exigence intended, and laid them down at the Apostles feet—placed them absolutely at their disposal. Perfect peace and harmony then prevailed within the precincts of the church—for the whole multitude was of one heart and of one mind. This is one of those scenes, so rarely witnessed, on which one delights to gaze from different points of view, and to admire this earliest triumph of the Gospel over the selfishness and discord of man corrupted nature.

Very soon however the affairs of the church, as yet still under apostolical government began to assume a more mingled appearance, and we hear some of those murmurings which are ever & anon issuing forth from the societies of imperfect

* Acts c. v. 1, 3—c. 1 v. 34—c. 5, v. 2.

beings. The occasion which gave rise to these was an alleged neglect of the Grecian widows in the daily ministration—or in that distribution of charity, which was made daily to the necessitous out of the common fund. The Grecians, it would appear, suspected that partiality was shewn the Hebrew widows while their own were neglected. Whether the cause were real or imaginary, it became necessary to examine its grounds, and to apply a remedy.

So soon as the Apostles were apprized that murmuring and dissatisfaction existed, “they called the multitude of the disciples unto them.” The church had already assumed the form of an organized society, subject to the authority of its apostolic rulers. Here we have an act of this authority—the apostles convoked the multitude of the disciples. In every community power must rest somewhere in order to its government and well-being. All societies, whether civil, literary, or religious, find this to be indispensable. And accordingly in every religious community framed by the ordinance of God, provision was always made for its order and good government, by the establishment of a governing power. Under the mosaic economy this was vested in the High Priest and Sanhedrim. In the primitive church it was vested in the Apostles, and in the elders ordained by them in every city. And in this respect every great division of the church in modern times follow them, though not without some considerable diversity in the practical details of their management.

When the multitude were assembled on the call of the Apostles, it does not appear, that the latter made any explicit allusions to the cause of murmuring and dissatisfaction—the alleged neglect of the Grecian widows. They made no

apology, offered no justification, administered no rebuke. The probability is, that in some particular instances, the Grecian widows might unintentionally be overlooked in the daily ministration. The Apostles could not do every thing in such a large community in which these secular concerns might now be extensive; and without adverting to the particular complaints when the assembly met, the apostles set themselves to propose a general remedy by the appointment of particular officers, whose duty it should be to take charge of the poor, and manage all other temporal affairs connected with the spiritual community. Acts 6. 2, 3, 4.

This portion of history may serve to throw light on various particulars respecting the management of the temporal concerns of the primitive church. At first they were entirely in the hands of the Apostles, not from design but from convenience and necessity of circumstances. No positive order had as yet been established in regard to such matters, and individuals of their own accord, and without any previous consultation with the Apostles, laid their donations at their feet, and requested them to act as the almoners of the common liberality. The Apostles, although as deeply impressed then as they were afterwards, with the superior importance of the ministerial function, yielded for the time to the general solicitation, and took charge of the receipts and the charitable distribution.

This is consonant with the usual method in which the Holy Spirit, by the instrumentality of the Apostles, built up that form of order and discipline which was designed to remain in the Christian Church. Its rules and economy were not all devised and promulgated at once, and in a complete system.

'They grew out of circumstances in succession, and must be deduced from these circumstances. The offices of the household were appointed as the necessities of the household demanded. Evangelists, Apostles, Bishops or Presbyters, and Deacons, were instituted in succession, for their respective duties, and thus though the structure of the spiritual temple, having been variously raised, presents at first view an appearance of irregularity, yet is there visible throughout the whole a uniformity and harmonious adjustment of parts—with such an allowable diversity in subordinate arrangements intermingled, as renders it a suitable and practicable model to the universal church in every diversity of place and age.

The reason stated (in v. 2) unfolds to us the views entertained by these holy men of the sacred nature of the ministerial office while it explains the nature of the duties of that office newly instituted. "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables." The Apostles, and the pastors of the church after them, were to attend wholly upon the ministry of the word: the Deacons were to be employed in serving tables—that is were to take care of all the financial and economical affairs of the church. This measure is not to be regarded as a temporary expedient for a particular case, but as a general rule founded on a great and immutable principle; namely, that the ministers of the Gospel ought to be wholly consecrated to their spiritual function; that its duties required all the time, learning, talents, and zeal which any man can be possessed of; and in order that they may not be distracted by other cares, there ought to exist in the church a class of office-bearers who should take charge of the poor, and superintend its revenues. Both offices, are or-

dered of God, and both have their duties and responsibilities. The main object, therefore, proposed in the appointment of these men, and in instituting the office of deacon was that they might serve tables and attend to the daily ministrations of the poor, and by consequence to all the temporal affairs of the church. They might if qualified be called to fulfil other duties, but nothing more belonged to their office as deacons.

But it has been asked, did not the deacons preach? Were not Stephen and Philip at least often employed in preaching? Yes, they were; but this did not constitute any part of their special function as deacons; this belonged to them in another character, that of evangelist, which it appears both Stephen and Philip sustained, and with which they were probably invested at a period subsequent to their election to the deaconship. For it would seem a necessary consequence of the principle laid down by the Apostle (v. 2) that when these two were designated to the office of evangelist they would lay aside that of deacons, since, if the apostles found themselves hindered in the ministry of the word by the secular cares of the church the evangelists would not be less embarrassed by them. The obvious view then of this case seems to be that if any evangelist, on the first election of deacons were chosen to this office, it was on a special emergency, and to afford immediate relief to the apostles; and if subsequently, any deacon were called away to the preaching of the Gospel, he would relinquish the office and duties of a deacon, and give himself continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word; while the circumstances which gave rise to the institution of the office manifestly shew that it was intended for the management

of the temporal affairs of the church, and demonstrate the inexpediency of connecting it with the ministerial office.

The duty and the privilege of the church in this matter was to look out from among themselves men, and choose them to this office. There is a striking propriety manifested in requiring the people to select these office-bearers. The apostles themselves were eminently qualified to make the selection; they were inspired with the gift of discerning spirits, and were able to tell with infallible certainty, who among the members of the church would most faithfully discharge the trust reposed in them. But they refrained from authoritatively interfering in the appointment. While they maintained the prerogative of their own office they scrupulously avoided infringing the rights of the people: thus giving the sanction of God to the dictate of reason, that the community which fills the treasury ought to manage its distribution. Behold a remarkable feature in the secular economy of the church, exhibited in this act. While its inspired rulers ordain authoritatively its order they leave unimpaired the great principles of human liberty, and calls all its converts to the unfettered enjoyment of them. How far have those branches of the church departed from the rules and practices of the apostles, who leave the laity nothing but a blind and passive subjection! The consequences of such usurpation have been most pernicious to the progress of the Gospel. A callous indifference to its success, or an infantile imbecility in promoting it, has grown upon the church, its priesthood is its only agency, and the sinews of its membership have become shrunk and powerless.

While however the apostles in calling upon the members of the church to

select these secular office-bearers, left their natural and inherent right unfringed, yet in the exercise of that spiritual authority with which Christ had invested them, they explained and defined the qualifications requisite to the office. The church were to select men of honest report—of reputable characters and standing in society—men attested for unimpeachable integrity and unswerving partiality. For wherever a trust is reposed, there ought to be valid reasons of confidence, that the murmurings of the discontented and the insinuations of the jealous may be silenced. They were to select men full of faith and of the Holy Ghost. For as office-bearers in a spiritual community, even though their special duties were purely secular, it was right and necessary that they should possess the spiritual character, that their faith in the doctrines of the cross should be fully established, and that they should have obtained that abundant grace then so richly enjoyed, and so essential to their usefulness. They were to select men of wisdom, without which the greatest purity of intention cannot preserve from error and injurious measures. This was a necessary qualification for deacons, even in reference to the simple secularities of the primitive church; for even then, they had to deal with the interested and the prejudiced, to silence their murmurings, and to diffuse the hallowed atmosphere of the celestial world over transactions which in their own nature bore the mean impress of time. Oh! what wisdom, what piety, is needed to preserve the temporal affairs of the church from sinking to the level of purely worldly transactions; to prevent the play of human passions amidst scenes consecrated to eternal interests, and hallowed by the presence of the Deity.

The Apostles farther exercised the authority with which they were invested, not merely in defining the character of the office-bearers, but in appointing and ordaining them to their office. Choose men, they say, whom we may appoint over this business, and when the multitude had chosen them, they set them before the apostles, and when they had prayed they laid their hands on them. Thus while they respected the rights of the people, they asserted their own as the commissioned ambassadors of Christ, and both were thus left free to perform their respective duties. How admirable those regulations which the Spirit of God has here sanctioned! How melancholy the contrast now often exhibited even among those who profess veneration for apostolical example! On observing many of the practices, that now prevail in the church in respect to the management of secular affairs, the heart sickens at them; we perceive its pure and spiritual character sullied; the courts of the temple seem filled once more with the tables of money changers. How long shall it be ere we return to the sincere veneration and practical observance of that order sanctioned by the spirit of truth. Unless we do so the church will groan under a debasing secularity; and her celestial glory will continue to be tarnished by the pollutions of the kingdoms of the world.

That the preceding observations are in conformity with the views entertained by the founders of our church, will appear from the following abstract of what they have declared concerning the nature and duties of the office:—

1. The word Deacon is sometimes largely taken for all that bear office in the ministry, and spiritual function in the church: but commonly it is taken for that ordina-

ry and perpetual ecclesiastical office in the kirk of Christ, to whom the collection and distribution of the alms of the faithful, and ecclesiastical goods do belong. See chap 8 of the Policy of the Kirk where it follows, that, seeing that this office is of divine institution, it is an unwarrantable omission in some congregations, that either they put no difference betwixt elders and deacons, or else they neglect to appoint any to the office of a deacon. See tit. 6. § 2 I do not think it reasonable or very consistent, for any to be zealous against adding to the kinds of office-bearers of Christ's appointment, while they are active in or connive at the diminution of any of them. If it be said, the elder is a deacon, I answer, albeit the pastor includes the office of a doctor, elder, and deacon, yet seeing these are of divine institution, reverence is in so far due unto it as to set up these distinct offices: as nothing should be added to the divine institution, upon pretence of imagined decency or order in the invention, so nothing ought to be diminished therefrom, upon pretence that some things in the institution are needless or superfluous.

The duties of deacons may be reduced to these heads collected from Mr. Guthrie's treatise of elders and deacons, and the heads of the Policy of the kirk. 1. That they take exact notice of the poor, and that they timeously make their case known to the session, to the end their straits may be relieved, and so their breaking out into begging may be prevented. 2. They are to collect and receive that supply for the poor, which the members of that congregation, or strangers, shall be inclined to offer. 3. That the money so received be faithfully delivered to the session, according to whose judgment and appointment the deacons are to distribute the church-goods. In which matters they have a decisive vote with the elders: but in other cases their opinion is only consultive, and they may be always present. 4. That they take care of orphans and idiots, and such as want knowledge and ability to dispose of, and order the things that concern their food and raiment. 5. They are to take care that what belongs to the poor be not dilapidated, or misapplied. 6. They are to acquaint the ministers and elders of the sick within their quarters, that so they may be visited, and, if need be, supplied. 7. By the 9th chapter of the Policy of the Kirk, deacons were not only to collect and distribute the ordinary alms, but all the church-goods, tields, &c. and uplift and pay to the ministers their stipends. This

were indeed a work proper for their office, an ease to the minister, and would prevent much noise and offence that is raised when charges to make payment are given, either at their own instance, or in name of their assignees or factors. & They may be employed to provide the elements, to carry them, and serve the communicants at the Lord's table

The circumstances of our church in Canada still more imperatively require the service of such office-bearers. All the funds necessary for the building and repair of churches are drawn by direct and voluntary contribution from the people. To bring these under the best order and security—to equalize the burden—to prevent contention—to preserve regularity both in the receipts and expenditure would require a court of deacons in each congregation, whose character must bear some resemblance to that prescribed by the apostle—men full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost.

It may be asked—and is not the present system of trusteeship quite sufficient for this end? Let it be granted that in many cases the affairs of a congregation are as well managed by trustees as they could be by the same men bearing the name, and formally invested with the office of deacon. Still we think it “unwarrantable” to discontinue any office in the church of divine institution, or even to lay aside the name by which it has been designated. But farther there are many evils incident to the present method of trusteeship which prevails among our congregations, which might be avoided by an adherence to the primitive institution. For it often happens that individuals are chosen trustees who are very loosely connected with the church, who are not communicants, and who from the immorality of their conduct could not consistently with a pure discipline be admitted to sealing ordinances. Nay,

we have known persons chosen to be trustees without their knowledge or consent; and even against their known wish, and when the electors had no reason to presume that the individuals so elected would ever give the slightest attention to their duties. Now were we to return to the primitive method of entrusting all the temporal affairs of the church to persons chosen by its members, and solemnly ordained to their office by the minister and elders, these evils and irregularities might in a great measure be avoided. The very name, associated as it is with the scripture history, would suggest to the electors the character most suitable to the office; and the solemn ordination of the persons chosen in the face of the congregation, with the vows and engagements therewith connected, would tend to secure a conscientious discharge of his duty on the part of the officer, and a becoming deference to his office on the part of the people. The occasion moreover both of the election and ordination would afford very suitable opportunities to the pastor for admonition respecting those prudential affairs of the congregation which if not discreetly managed must soon involve it in strife and dissolution. And it might be hoped that the remembrances of those scenes would moderate that spirit of secularity which too often enters into and debases the church in her temporal transactions.

This reform would go far to correct another evil which has sometimes manifested itself not obscurely—namely, a degree of opposition between the trustees of a church, and its spiritual rulers. From the want of a proper understanding, it has occasionally happened, that these two classes of office-bearers have regarded each other somewhat in the light of rival antagonist powers, instead of coadjutors in the same cause.

the express design of the temporal office being to lend its entire aid to the spiritual power. Were the scriptural deaconship to be substituted for the mere secular trusteeship, the hazard of such a collision would be greatly obviated, and mutual co-operation would be more certainly secured.

Another very important advantage would be gained, of which we are almost wholly deprived by our present system of trusteeship—the deacons in respect of their moral qualifications, as well as in the discharge of their official duties, would be amenable to the spiritual courts—the Session and Presbytery, a responsibility that cannot be nullified without the sacrifice of a great principle in Presbyterian church government, namely the true spiritual constitution of the church, and the consequent overshadowing pre-eminence of its spiritual rulers.

Farther, by such a return to the practice of the primitive church as it respects its temporal officers, our different congregations would be more perfectly brought into the form and model of our church government. For the deacons would then always be members of the church, and appointed by its authority, and under solemn engagements to fidelity in their conduct and management.

N.

M.

ON THE LEGISLATIVE INCORPORATION OF THE CHURCH.

The Christian church, in its simple and primitive character, is nothing more than an association of persons, professing the religion of Christ, united for the purpose of promoting the spiritual well-being of each other, and of the rest of mankind. In this view it claims from the civil authorities, nothing more than what all well-disposed subjects have a right to claim under every government

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—PROTECTION; it admits no interference, in spiritual things, with the prerogatives of its supreme Head; its laws and ordinances are under the administration of its own overseers, duly set apart, according to the divine institution, to rule over the heritage of God in his fear. In its spiritual character the civil power cannot or ought not to have any authority over it.

But while we thus assert the spiritual character of the church, and its essential independence, it is never to be lost sight of that it cannot well or long subsist, without entering into certain necessary civil relations. It cannot subsist long or in an extended form, without some financial economy. It must have edifices in which the congregations shall assemble; these congregations, by voluntary offerings, or by the bounty of the state, or by bequests from the pious dead, may acquire property; this property must be preserved and improved for the purposes to which it was originally set apart; it must be put under judicious and secure management. Could we be assured of perfect integrity and unanimity among those to whom the management of it is committed, during all the changes of office-bearers that may take place in the progress of centuries; that none of them would embezzle or divert it from its legitimate purposes, or that its rightful possessors would never be disturbed by the rapacious, then it might not be necessary to make any particular regulations respecting it. But all history has shewn that church property is, perhaps more than private, exposed to the hazard of mismanagement and alienation. It belongs not to one individual, but to many, who are tenants in common. From the number of the parties whose rights are concerned, disputes are the more likely to arise; divisions may follow, and many difficult questions

be evolved, as to which party the individual property shall appertain. An ecclesiastical judicature cannot decide on questions of civil right, and nothing would remain in such unhappy circumstances but an appeal to the civil tribunal.

To obviate as far as possible these evils, acts of Incorporation for church property have been very generally sought for by particular churches, and granted by the Legislature. "The design of such a statute is to enable the members to act by one united will, and to continue their joint powers and property in the same body, undisturbed by the change of members, and without the necessity of perpetual conveyances, as the rights of members pass from one individual to another. All the individuals composing a corporation, and their successors, are considered in law but as one moral person, capable under an artificial form, of taking and conveying property, contracting debts and duties, and of enjoying the civil rights which their charter confers on them. One of the peculiar properties of a corporation is the power of acting in perpetual succession, like one individual, without incurring any personal hazard or responsibility, or exposing any other property than what belongs to the corporation in its legal capacity. The ordinary incidents to a corporation are—to have perpetual succession, and of course the power of electing members in the room of those removed by death or otherwise;—to sue and be sued, and to grant and receive by their corporate name;—to purchase and hold lands and chattels;—to have a common seal;—to make bye laws for the government of the corporation;—and the power of amotion, or the removal of members." In reference

to a religious corporation, these powers refer only to the management of temporalities.

But in order the more effectually to secure this good management, it is impossible altogether to keep out of view or overlook certain questions that lie rather within the range of spiritual jurisdiction. Church property is acquired, and held, and managed for religious purposes. Confining our observations to the Presbyterian church, let us suppose an edifice built by certain members of our communion, that they and their successors may enjoy it for divine ordinances according to the received standards of doctrine, discipline and worship. The building with all its revenues, whether they arise from pew rents, or other endowments, are by the original contract to be devoted to this particular form of religion. No one will question the natural right of the parties so to devote this property which is their own. And if the Legislature grant the parties an act of Incorporation to secure this property in perpetuity for its specific use, a legal authority is given to a previous agreement, and the civil court, in case of dispute, arbitrates according to the provisions of the charter which the Legislature has granted. From this view of the case, it is obvious, that two classes of rights, very different in their nature, may become the subject of dispute. The one class will purely respect the faithful management of the property—the other class will respect the uses to which it is applied, that is to say, whether the property be really used for the maintenance of doctrine and worship according to the standards of the Presbyterian church. In the former class, the integrity of the managers is the matter to be ascertained; in the latter, the orthodoxy—the moral character, the fidelity of the minister. The one is

proper matter for investigation by the civil court; the other properly belongs to the ecclesiastical. The difficulty in legislating for church property lies chiefly in the latter. Yet it is especially necessary to the ends of justice that this be amply secured.

In order to this, every act of Incorporation ought to provide for the integrity of the trustees in the faithful use of the property of which they are the guardians; and at the same time it ought to secure the proper jurisdiction of the spiritual courts over them. This may best be illustrated by an example. Let it be supposed that the minister of a congregation has been suspended or deposed by his Presbytery on a charge of heresy or immoral conduct; that the trustees and the congregation, or a majority of them, have nevertheless resolved that this deposed minister shall be kept in possession of the pulpit; it is manifest that in such a dereliction of duty the Presbytery could have no power to prevent the evil unless through the intervention of the civil courts—for the question has now become one of civil right, namely, whether, in such circumstances, the parties in possession are entitled to keep possession of the property. It is manifest that they would not be so in equity, for the minister duly deposed by his Presbytery is no longer a minister, and the property is diverted, contrary to right, from its original intention; and besides, all parties having solemnly engaged to submit to the decision of their spiritual judicatures, their contempt of discipline is a positive breach of faith. Provided these facts were admitted, these contumacious persons would be dispossessed on any decision in equity. But let it be supposed that the contumacious party raise a question as to the formality or justice of the Presbytery's proceedings, then it

would remain to be considered whether the civil court was competent to review the proceedings of the spiritual court, or whether they should *simpliciter* receive the certified sentence of the spiritual court as decisive. We presume that this last should be the case—for all parties had previously agreed to the principle essential to Presbyterianism, that the decision of the highest ecclesiastical judicature in a question of discipline is final. If this were admitted the civil court would feel itself bound to reclaim the property from those who refused to comply with the conditions on which it was held in trust, and to deliver it over to its rightful guardians, and for its specified uses.

This we presume is all that is meant by an expression found in the resolutions passed in the convention of delegates from the Presbyterian congregations which met at Cobourg in April, against which some captious objections have been made; "*that all Sessions, Presbyteries, and Synods, should be constituted bodies corporate, and that effect should be given to their judgments and proceedings, in matters spiritual, in the same manner as is done in Scotland.*" We are not aware that even in Scotland where Presbyterianism is the form of religion established by law, that the civil courts are ever called upon to enforce an ecclesiastical sentence, except in cases where some civil right is concerned—as in the instance above supposed; and their interposition in such cases is manifestly essential to the ends of justice, and differs in no respect from their interference in the management of the affairs of any other trust or corporation.

But that the rights connected with spiritual jurisdiction may be properly maintained, without any danger of dispute with those to whom is entrusted

the adjudication of rights purely civil, it is essential that they be precisely defined. This ought to be done in what is technically called **THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH**, or that system of rules according to which it is to be guided as an ecclesiastical body. These are enacted, or sanctioned by the spiritual judicatures, as the rules for managing the temporal affairs contained in the act of Incorporation are sanctioned by the civil Legislature. The principal points which such an instrument should embrace are,

1. The full recognition of the authority of the spiritual judicatures in all matters of doctrine, discipline, and worship.

2. A specification of their right to determine and judge of the qualifications of all office-bearers in the church, whether ministers, elders or deacons—and to constant supervision of the same.

3. A specification of the manner in which the election of the minister shall be conducted—the time within which such election shall be made—the consequences of delaying beyond that time—the mode of supplying the pulpit during the vacancy—the provision for the ministers maintenance.

4. The right of the Presbytery to define the limits of the parish, or the sphere of the minister's pastoral labors.

5. The right of the Session to appoint collections for religious and charitable purposes, as in their discretion they may see fit.

The constitution of every church should embrace these points, and any other that may be thought necessary for the better maintenance of order according to the laws and usages of the Presbyterian church. It would serve many useful purposes were the Synod

to prescribe a general form for all new churches.

The propriety of endeavoring to obtain an act of Incorporation for the Synod of Canada, from the Colonial Legislature, was first urged upon the attention of the Synod by the Hon. Wm. Morris, at their meeting in 1835; but neither at that time, nor since, has the subject been fairly taken up by any of our church judicatures. The necessity of such a measure however is daily becoming more apparent, and the time is now fully come for discussing the question previous to a formal application to the Legislature. We intended to lay before our readers a copy of an act of Incorporation for the Presbyterian churches passed by the Legislature of New Brunswick in 1832. But as the following draft—copied chiefly from an act passed by the Legislature of New York, is fuller and more precise—we give it only to avoid repetition. We need not say that some alterations have been made in it to adopt it to our own institutions:—

DRAFT OF AN ACT OF INCORPORATION, &c

WHEREAS it is expedient and necessary, that the congregations of the Presbyterian church of Canada, in connection with the church of Scotland, already formed into an ecclesiastical community, governed according to its own laws, customs and usages, *quoad spiritualia*—should obtain an act of Incorporation for the mere secure management of their temporal affairs—Be it enacted, &c.

1st. That the Elders and Deacons of every Presbyterian church or congregation now or hereafter to be established in this Province, in connection with the church specially designated as aforesaid, and elected according to the rules and usages of the said church, shall be the Trustees for every such church or congregation, and it shall be lawful for the said Trustees, if not already incorporated, to assemble together as soon as they shall deem it convenient, and execute under their hands and seals a certificate certifying the name or title by which they and their successors

forever as a body corporate, by virtue of this act, shall be known and distinguished; which certificate being duly acknowledged or proved as aforesaid, shall be recorded by the Clerk of the Peace for the District, in a book to be by him provided as aforesaid; and such trustees and their successors shall therefore, by virtue of this act, be a body corporate by the name or title expressed in such certificate.

2d That the trustees of every church or congregation, herein above mentioned, and their successors, shall respectively have and use a common seal, and may renew and alter the same at their pleasure, and are hereby authorized and empowered to take into their possession and custody all the temporalities belonging to such church or congregation, whether the same consist of real or personal estate, and whether the same shall have been given, granted, or devised, directly to such church or congregation, or to any other person or persons for their use; and by their corporate name or title to sue and be sued in all courts of law or equity, and to recover, hold and enjoy all the debts, demands, rights and privileges, and all churches, chapels, school-houses, parsonages and burying places, with the appurtenances, and all estate belonging to such church or congregation, in whatsoever manner the same may have been acquired, or in whose name soever the same may be held, as fully and amply as if the right or title thereto had originally been vested in the said trustees; and also to purchase and hold other real and personal estate, and to devise, lease and improve the same, for the use of such church and congregation, or for other pious uses, so as the whole real and personal estate of any such church or congregation shall not exceed the annual value or income of one thousand pounds currency; and also to repair and alter their churches and meeting houses, and to erect others if necessary, and to erect dwelling houses for the use of their ministers, and school houses and other buildings for the use of such church or congregation; and such trustees shall also have power to make rules and orders for managing the temporal affairs of such church or congregation, and to dispose of all monies belonging thereto, and to regulate and order the renting the pews in their churches and meeting houses, and the perquisites for the breaking of the ground in the cemetery or church yards, and in the said churches and meeting houses for burying the dead, and all other matters relating to the temporal concerns and revenues of such church or congregation; and to

appoint a clerk and treasurer of their board, and a collector to collect and receive the said rents and revenues, and to regulate the fees to be allowed to such clerk, treasurer, and collector, and them or either of them to remove at pleasure, and appoint others in their stead; and such clerk shall enter all rules and orders made by such trustees, and payments ordered by them, in a book provided by them for that purpose.

3d. That the trustees first chosen, shall continue in office for three years from the day of their election, and immediately after such election the said trustees shall be divided by lot into three classes, numbered one, two, and three, and the seats of the first class shall be vacated at the expiration of the first year, of the members of the second class at the expiration of the second year, and of the members of the third class at the expiration of the third year, to the end that the third part of the whole number of trustees, as nearly as possible, may be annually chosen; and the said trustees, or a majority of them shall, at least one month before the expiration of the office of any of the said trustees, notify the same in writing to the minister, or in the case of his death or absence, to the elders, specifying the names of the trustees whose times will expire, and the said minister, or in case of his death or absence, one of the said elders shall, in manner aforesaid, proceed to notify the members of the said church, or congregation, of such vacancies, and appoint the time and place for the election of new trustees to fill up the same, which election shall be held at least six days before such vacancies shall happen, and all such subsequent elections shall be held and conducted by the same persons, and in the manner hereinafter directed, and the result thereof certified by them, and such certificate shall entitle the persons elected to act as trustees, and in case any trustee shall die or refuse to act, or remove within the year, notice thereof shall be given by the trustees as aforesaid, and a new election appointed and held, and another trustee be elected in his stead, in manner as follows.

4th. That no person belonging to any church or congregation, intended by this act, shall be entitled to vote at any election, until he shall have been a stated attendant on Divine worship in the said church or congregation, at least one year before such election, and shall have contributed to the support of the said church or congregation, according to the

laws and usages thereof, and the clerk to the said trustees shall keep a register of the names of all such persons as shall desire to become stated hearers in the said church or congregation, and shall therein note the time when such request was made, and the said clerk shall attend all such subsequent elections, in order to test the qualifications of such electors, in the case the same should be questioned.

5th. That nothing in this act contained shall be construed or taken to give to any trustee of any church or congregation, the power to fix or ascertain any salary to be paid to any minister thereof, but the same shall be ascertained by a majority of persons entitled to elect trustees, at a meeting to be called for that purpose, and such salaries when fixed, shall be ratified by the said trustees, or a majority of them, by an instrument in writing under their common seal, which salary shall thereupon be paid by the said trustees out of the revenues of said church or congregation.

6th. That whenever any church or congregation incorporated under this act shall deem it necessary and for the interest of such corporation to reduce the number of their trustees, that it shall and may be lawful to do so at any annual meeting: *Provided*, that the reduction shall not be such, as to leave less than three trustees in the corporation aforesaid.

7th. That the treasurer of every church or congregation, incorporated as aforesaid, or the trustees elected as aforesaid, shall once in every three years, and between the first day of January and the first day of April triennially, exhibit upon oath to the Chancellor in the Court of Chancery, or to any one of the Justices in His Majesty's Court of King's Bench, or any of the Judges in the Court of Common Pleas in the District where such church or congregation shall be situated, an account and inventory of all the estate, both real and personal, belonging at the time of making such oath to the church or congregation, for which they respectively are trustees or managers as aforesaid, together with an account of the annual revenue arising therefrom; and if any such trustees or person entrusted as aforesaid, shall neglect to exhibit such account and inventory for the space of six years, after the expiration of every three years as aforesaid, and shall not then exhibit the same, and procure a certificate to be endorsed thereon by the Chancellor or Judge, that he is satisfied that the annual revenue arising from the real and personal estate of such corporation does not, nor has not for

the six preceding years, exceeded the sum which by law it is allowed to receive, then such trustees or persons entrusted as aforesaid, shall cease to be a body corporate: and in every case when it shall appear from such account and inventory, that the annual revenue of any church, exceeds the sum which by virtue of this act, they may or can respectively hold and enjoy, it shall be the duty of the Chancellor or Judge before whom the same shall be so exhibited, to report the same, together with such account and inventory, to the legislature at their next meeting.

8th. That it shall be lawful for the Chancellor of the Court of Chancery within this Province, upon the application of the trustees of any incorporated church, in case he shall deem it proper, to make an order for the sale of any real estate belonging to such incorporation, and to direct the application of the monies arising therefrom by the said corporation to such as the said corporation, with the consent and approbation of the Chancellor, shall conceive to be the most for the interest of the society to which the real estate so sold did belong: *Provided*, that this act shall not extend to any of the lands granted by His Majesty or the Legislature for the support of the said church or congregation.

9th. That whenever any corporation as aforesaid shall be dissolved by means of any non-user or neglect to exercise any of the powers necessary for its preservation, it shall be lawful for the church or congregation which was connected with such corporation to re-incorporate itself in the mode prescribed by this act, and that thereupon all the real and personal property which did belong to such dissolved corporation at the time of its dissolution, shall vest in the new corporation for the said church or congregation.

According to the preceding draft all congregations are empowered to incorporate themselves only if they shall see fit. There are many reasons why it should thus be left optional. It may be a long time in new settlements, where the congregation is widely scattered, imperfectly organized, and without any property, ere it would be necessary to avail themselves of the benefits of such an act. It is enough that they have it in their power when their circumstan-

ces require it.—Every congregation is a distinct corporate body—the responsible guardians of their own temporal affairs. No local disputes therefore can disturb the general body—an evil that might often be experienced were the whole church incorporated as one.—All the trustees of the church must be deacons. This ought to secure that they should be members of the church, subject in all things to its spiritual overseers, and take upon themselves the solemn obligation of fidelity at their ordination. When the time of their service is expired, it is not necessary to suppose that they lay aside their offices as deacons, though they are relieved for a time from the actual discharge of its duties as trustees. Within the period of a few years they would again resume these duties, for those eligible to such an office in most congregations cannot be very numerous. It may be presumed, when duties so important are involved, that they will always be entrusted to the best.

Though an act of Incorporation conformable to the preceding draft would probably secure to particular congregations all the advantages that could be expected from such a measure, it would seem to be farther necessary that the Synod should be incorporated for certain purposes connected with the general interests of the whole church. Such an act should confirm its power—of jurisdiction over its own members—to acquire and hold property for endowing and maintaining a Theological Seminary—for the granting of bursaries to students of Divinity—for the establishment of a ministers widows' fund—and such other purposes as might be competent and necessary for an ecclesiastical body. The form of such an act would require the best counsel, and the maturest deliberation.

The writer has ventured to make

these suggestions more with a view of calling the attention of abler minds to the subject, than because he is pertinaciously attached to the particular opinions he has submitted. Nothing will give him greater satisfaction than to see this important question fairly examined and discussed in all its bearings ere any steps are taken to carry it into effect. We must be well persuaded that what we wish is right, and would be beneficial ere we ask for it the sanction and perpetuity of law.

N.

M.

PRACTICAL SERMONS. No. II.

THE CONNEXION BETWEEN THE PRESENT AND A FUTURE EXISTENCE.

By the Rev. Alexander MacNaughton,
Lancaster, Glengary.

He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still. Rev. xxii. v. 2.

To one accustomed to contemplate objects in the light of Christianity, no sight can be more solemnly affecting than that of a large assemblage of human beings. He sees before him a crowd of immortals, who are either heirs of glory, or children of perdition; pilgrims of a day, who are on their way either to heaven or hell; the fugitive occupants of a scene in which they are all fulfilling a destiny—a destiny which all of them will accomplish in a few years—some, perhaps, in an hour or a moment. The tie which connects them with the present, is slender as a thread. The narrow stream of death is all that separates them from the world of spirits. The summons to cross it may arrive without a moment's notice, like a thief in the night, or a flash of lightning from the skies; and once over,

their condition is fixed for ever, whether for weal or woe.

This is a view of our condition which ought never to be absent from our minds: for it is in proportion as we realize it, that we will act suitably to the end of our being. And it is a view which ought more especially with governing influence to rule in us your guides to immortality, and to accompany us in every word that we speak in public, and every discourse that we prepare in private for your instruction; so that we may appear before you as immortal beings addressing their fellow immortals, and acquit ourselves of the solemn responsibility which rests upon us as watchmen in Israel, who have to render so strict an account. The words of our text are a peculiarly awakening call on us so to do; for they were delivered under circumstances of no ordinary solemnity. All the visions of this mysterious book were at length unfolded to the Apostles. The page of the future History of the Church: was spread out before him in all its chequered colours of light and shade. He saw the conflict between truth and error, light and darkness, from the birth of Christianity to the consummation of all things;—the alternate successes and reverses, but the final triumph of the cause of Heaven; he saw all this before his astonished vision, with the various manifestations of character which it was the occasion of calling forth,—the civil tyranny, the grinding oppression, the impure idolatry of the enemies of Christ, on one side, on the other, the unswerving loyalty, the undying attachment of the persecuted yet persevering friends of Jesus, throughout the whole period of the eventful conflict. Here then, the angel unfolds the visions to the inspired prophet, or (what is more probable from verses 12, 13,) Jesus Christ

himself, the great Angel of the Covenant, whom the visions mainly respected, steps forth; and as John was on the point of sealing them, says, "Seal not the saying of the Prophecy of this Book, for the time is at hand." The unchangeable issue of the fulfilment of the prophecies, to the friends and enemies of Jesus, is thus solemnly announced in the words of our text. "He that is filthy, &c." These words, whether we view them as a parenthesis in which the sacred writer expresses his own feelings, or, as is more probable, the language of the Angel of the Covenant, he declares in the context that he will come quickly to give to every man according to his works,—challenge the most serious attention of all to whom they are proclaimed: for all of us have the same interest in the solemn truths that they announce. They speak of the approach of a period when the characters of all shall be unalterably fixed:—the wicked, left hopelessly wedded to their wickedness, and the righteous immutably confirmed in righteousness and true holiness. The eventful period referred to, is the coming of Christ to judge the world, when He will summon all that lived upon the earth before his tribunal, and will pronounce the irreversible sentence which will determine their eternal destiny. Comparing the interval between the present and that day, with the eternity which succeeds it, it may be considered as already at hand, and accordingly the context says so. But viewed in reference to the measurements of time which obtain among men, it may be still considered as distant: for many events in the plan of Providence foretold in this Book,—many revolutions among the nations, which still occupy numerous pages in the world's history, remain yet to be unfolded, ere the arrival of this

last and most important of days. But to each of us, my Brethren, the day of death is the same as the day of judgment; for "as death leaves us so judgment will find us," and "as the tree falleth, so it must lie," and that for ever. All changes of character, either for better or worse, are confined to our present state. Death fixes upon it the stamp of perpetuity, and refers us to the judgment of the final day, only for the public sentence of the Judge upon those materials for evidence which our lives accumulated, and the hour of death completed. The great doctrine of our text, then, is *the subserviency of time to Eternity*—the intimate connexion between the present world and the next. Allow me then in the succeeding observations, to open up to you the nature of the connexion, by shewing,

I. That our condition hereafter, grows out of our character here; and

II. That this condition once fixed, is fixed for ever.

First then, we say, that our condition hereafter grows out of our character here:—in other words, that while on earth, we are daily ripening either for Heaven or hell. To speak of each alternative separately:—

1. While we live under the dominion of sin, we are ripening for hell:—an awful truth, little intimate with the thoughts and contemplations of men; yet one of the most elementary which the Bible presents to us. Men believe in general that hell is the final abode of impenitent sinners; that persevering in their iniquities, they cannot escape it; but they little consider how it is so; they little think that in inheriting this bitter portion, they are just reaping the fruit of what they have themselves sown, and take their station in the *only* place for which they are fitted by the characters and tempers which they have

themselves ripened into the consistency of fixed and permanent habits. Yet such is the awful fact. Hell is doubtless a place of punishment prepared for the rebels against the Divine Government; a dungeon of condemned criminals, in which the Most High, as a moral lesson to the rest of his boundless dominions, displays the terrors of his avenging justice, on those who refused to submit to his equitable government, and to touch the golden sceptre of his grace. This is certainly an important truth; yet it is not the *whole* truth. Hell is also, so to speak, the habitation which the wicked have reared for themselves. The fuel which feeds its flames, is the produce of their own perverse industry. Every pang, every groan, which is there extorted from them; and drinks up their spirits, is one of self-infliction—the result of previously formed habits, and as closely connected with them, as the crop of autumn is with the preparatory labours of spring. Nor could they tenant any other abode in the universe of God without a complete violation of that order which pervades its illimitable extent. Of that order, *adaptation* is one of the fundamental laws. Look around you: view the inanimate creation. There every plant has its own appropriate locality;—that, where prevail the soil, the temperature, the measure of light, and air, and moisture, adapted to its nature and habits. Look also at the animal kingdom. Of its numberless races, one swims in the water, another flies through the air; one grazes on the plain, another browses on the mountain top: this collects its scanty subsistence amid the frozen regions of the Pole, while that can maintain life only under the vertical sun of the Equator. Yet each moves on in its own element, and occupies the position on the globe required by its constitu-

tion, its wants, its pleasures and its instincts. Such is the decree of that Providence who assigns to all animated beings their habitation, and adapts *it* to *them*, and *them* to *it*. Adaptation is the governing law of his procedure. In the moral world it is his purpose that the same law ultimately prevail. It obtains already in the most extensive provinces of His dominion:—in Heaven, which is a completely *holy* place, and tenanted by beings of an untaintedly holy character; and in hell, the dread prison house of universe, and the exclusive abode of incorrigible and irreclaimable wickedness. On earth too this was once the law: man was a holy being, and the world, a paradise worthy of such a tenant. But sin having entered, disorder entered along with it;—and now we see the good and the bad, the righteous and the wicked, mixed together like wheat and tares in the same field, the wolf and the lamb in the same fold. But this confusion is not destined to continue. And man, though he fell, having been placed under a dispensation of mercy, in order that they who sought it might regain the honours of their primitive state, and they who loved their degradation, might be confirmed in it, earth is now merely a preparatory state, the introduction to another, a *theatre*, for the manifestation and ripening of character with a view to the final destination; the place where the future seraph or the future demon is born and educated for his permanent lot. It is the character *here* that determines the condition *hereafter*.

Does sin then form the pervading element of this character? In that case hell, where sin is matured, is the future abode, and every sin that is unrepented of and indulged in, whether exhibited in purpose, act, or habit, is so far hell begun in the soul, a strengthening of the

bonds of union which ally the sinner with the impure spirits who inhabit its dark and desolate provinces. What is the character of these unhappy spirits? Just that character of which every unrenewed man exhibits the first outlines in the present preparatory state, one of revolt from God, to which they owe their downfall; and of a malignant hate to the whole of his holy offspring. Witness the wiles and machinations by which their combined hosts, with Satan the arch-apostate at their head, first shook man's allegiance to his Maker, and still labour in filling their ranks with recruits from this world. The character of these unhappy spirits, is one which exhibits the complete annihilation of the dominion of reason, conscience, every sentiment of piety, and every feeling of kindly affection; with the unopposed mastery of every unholy malignant passion, mutual recrimination and hate, self-torturing remorse, despair. This, my Brethren, is hell, the hell which the devils endure. It is the awful combination of so many elements of pain, discord, misery; the poison of so many bitter and deleterious infusions, operating on each and all without any counteracting antidote, that, if not solely, yet mainly, supplies the vials of that wrath which the hand of Divine justice pours out on their heads, and supplies fuel to the fire which shall never be quenched, and food for the worm that never dies. And who will say that it is insufficient? Just take the world in which we live, banish, in supposition, from it for a season all the pious, the benevolent, the pure; release it from all the restraints which divine and human laws impose upon it; let Atheism, Extortion, Lust, Avarice, Revenge, stalk forth in unbridled dominion, occupying every house of a widespread and numerous population—and let these in the

pursuit of their object, own no relentings, and stop at no limits short of those opposed by the equally violent resistance of those who are assailed, and who in *their* turn pursue their own purposes with the same maddened and infuriated eagerness:—O! what a hell would such a world exhibit, and who would not rather experience a thousand deaths, than be condemned to live a single day amid such complicated and unspeakable horrors! Yet is the Hell of the Bible a source of horrors still greater and more agonising. It is the hell of beings in which every vestige of good principle is extinct, in which every evil principle has attained a gigantic strength, desolating every department of the soul which it masters, spreading strife and desolation among all with whom it comes in contact; yet destined to a perpetual reign of withering triumphs, by that attribute of immortality which refuses to its wretched victims even the sad refuge of annihilation. This is the hell for which every impenitent sinner is opening; the hell, of which, if he examines himself, he may discover in himself the awful beginnings gradually unfold themselves. Disaffection and alienation from God is the ruling principle of hell. Is it not also the ruling principle of the sinner on earth? Does he not nourish in his bosom that carnal heart which is enmity against God, and does he not daily testify this, by spending the life, the breath, the faculties, which God gave him, in acts of rebellion against His paternal government? Hell is the home of strife, of envy, deceit, malignity, bitter unrelenting persecution, undying hate. And are not these the dispositions which govern the unholy here? The restraints of education, of human laws, of civilized society, and the partial dominion of conscience and good

feeling—the few fragments remaining of our primitive image—do much to check their more violent outbreathing. Yet how much do they influence the under current of life even in the best regulated communities amongst us; and how often do they burst forth in fearful explosions, desolating the peace of families and leaguering kingdoms in hostile array against each other. Let them be restrained, and repressed, and disguised as they will, they are the ruling tenants of every unrenewed heart; their seed is planted, and their roots are firmly fixed there: “We ourselves,” says the apostle, painting man’s natural condition, “We ourselves also were sometime foolish, disobedient, serving divers lusts and passions, hateful, and hating one another.”

As hell is the region of sin, so also is it of its necessary concomitants, misery, remorse, torment, despair. But are these confined to that region? What mean those fearful struggles between inclination and conscience; those visitations of remorse consequent on criminal excesses; those galling wounds inflicted by the consciousness of ill desert and of the contempt of the good; that dread of futurity—those forebodings of a coming judgment—which so often poison the enjoyments and throw a pall over the path of the most prosperously wicked? These are just anticipations of the future hell which awaits them; partial, yet sure intimations of the connexion between sin and suffering, and of the inherent tendency of sin to work out its own punishment in the misery of which it is productive. And were it not for the diversions which the world affords to drown reflection and silence self-reproach; for the mixed state of things which now exists; for the dispensation of mercy and forbearance under which we live; were it not,

in one word, for the many counteracting circumstances which prevent the tendencies of sin from ripening into their full and bitter fruits—even *here* the lot of the wicked would be intolerable; and all amongst us in whom sin is the reigning tyrant, would be forced from bitter experience to acknowledge that it was the dominion of suffering, and sorrow, and vexation of spirit. As it is, every act of present sin is an addition to the store of future misery: every instance of wilful disobedience to God is receding a step farther from Him the true centre of happiness. It is a strengthening of the barrier of separation; and by weakening the sense of moral obligation, scars the conscience, confirming the dominion of evil lusts, and banishing the last remnants of expiring virtue and holiness, urges us forward to that ultimate point of depravity which causes the Spirit of God to take his final departure from us, and consummates our alliance with the tenants of hell. And when we see so many around us who sin with a high hand and unblushing brow; so many whom no obstacles can arrest, no means subdue, whom neither the ministry of the word, nor the dispensations of Providence, nor the strivings of the Spirit, nor the remonstrances of their own consciences, have been able to arouse—who, on the contrary have, like the ground often trodden, become more and more hardened, till the truths which could once awe even *them*, are now profanely despised—have we not before us in them living examples of hell not merely begun on earth, but of fearful progress towards its consummation! Of all who are in this melancholy hopeless state, we may say with the apostle that they are “*nigh unto cursing.*”

To be continued.

MISSIONARY AND ECCLESIASTICAL INTELLIGENCE.

THE DESTITUTION OF MINISTERS IN THE UNITED STATES.

The following melancholy picture of the effects of the present commercial difficulties upon the funds of the AMERICAN HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY,* and consequently on the comfort of the ministers and missionaries depending upon them, is given in a late number of the New York Observer. The object of this Society is to assist small congregations throughout the United States in maintaining their ministers. There are at present upwards of 500 ministers and missionaries to whom it grants pecuniary aid:—

The Committee have been compelled to notify the Missionaries of the existing embarrassments, and to request them to withhold their drafts on the treasury for the present, and pledging our efforts for their payment at the earliest practicable moment. In taking this step, the Committee had no alternative. To suffer the drafts to come in when the means of meeting them were wanting, would be to add to the bitterness of disappointment the dishonour of a protest. The letter conveying this decision has now, probably, reached every corner of the land, and is producing its afflicting though unavoidable results in many a worthy family of the self-denying ministry of our feeble and frontier churches. Some of them have written in reply, detailing the em-

*Of the missionaries and agents employed by the Society, including seventeen in France, 57 were in commission at the commencement of the year, a large proportion of whom have been re-appointed and are still in the service of the society, and 222 appointments have been made, making the whole number aided within the year, including twenty-four in France, under the care of the Evangelical Societies of Paris and Geneva, 410, which is an increase of thirty-eight laborers beyond the number employed during the previous year. Of those 410 are settled as pastors, or employed as stated supplies in single congregations, and 191 extend their labors, either as pastors or stated supplies, to two or three congregations each, and twenty-four, including agents, are employed on larger fields.

The receipts during the year, including a balance of \$14,469 15 in the treasury from the previous year, were \$100,631 71. The balance remaining in the treasury is \$1,102 02.

barrassment and suffering to which they are subjected, by our inability to meet their orders. Could these cases be spread out before the Christians of this country, in all the particulars of domestic privation, and the curtailment of ministerial usefulness, they would draw tears from the eyes, and, we cannot but think, would draw relief from the hands, that now withhold the needful pittance.

And now, *what shall be done?* We wish the churches distinctly to understand that THE MISSIONARIES ARE SUFFERING. It is not a mere *curtailment* of the operations of the Society, which results from the want of funds; not simply the necessity of *declining to send our new missionaries*; but the actual distress of those already in the field. Christians, *your* agents, *your* brethren, sent out to do *your* work, commissioned on the faith of *your* support, are in want; their wives and their little ones are suffering a privation of food and raiment. Says one in a recent letter to the Corresponding Secretary:

"I had counted on the amount due to me to meet some engagements; but for these the Lord will provide. I am willing to live poor, and have to do, whether I am willing or not. At this time I have not a potatoe nor a mouthful of meat in the house, nor means to buy it with; but the Lord will provide for us."

Another Missionary who had made a small draft on the Society, apologises for it as follows: "I received your circular on the 21st June, and am sorry to say that my draft on you had previously been paid away. I had no cow, and scarcely any bread for my family, and the distress under which our country groans, is so severely felt in this region, that my people were unable to assist me in any manner. I have received from them only to the amount of eight dollars in the last five months."

Through the prevailing pressure in most instances, the people aided by the A. H. M. S. are unable to meet their engagements to their ministers, and the latter have been led to contract debts for the necessities of life, hoping for better times, and supposing that at least their *missionary* appropriation would be forthcoming when due. The trials of feeling which they suffer in view of the apprehended dishonor to the cause of religion, should they not be able to pay these debts, are more painful than even the privation of bread. One writes, "it was with deep sorrow that I heard of the embarrassed situation of the A. H. M. S., and your desire that I should defer my order for money. I have been compelled to run in debt for several necessary

articles, and I was just on the point of making out my draft when the letter came to hand. Dear sir, what shall I do? I am in debt, and those debts will soon be called for. My situation is trying."

Another, who had disposed of his drafts to a person who is not a Christian, but one "who prides himself on punctuality in pecuniary matters, and narrowly watches professors in this respect," expresses strong solicitude that the amount may be paid, lest the honor of religion should suffer.

Another whose order had been despatched two days before receiving the circular of the Executive Committee "would not have it returned for half its value."

We might multiply extracts giving the same general view of the necessities of these men. But these are sufficient to present the question of duty to the reader. Help must be had, and that quickly. Some of the Missionaries have most nobly relinquished the whole or a portion of their claims on the Society; but this can be done but in few instances and in no instance can it be done except with the prospect of great privation. And while they are thus setting the example of self-denial and liberality, shall it not be followed by the churches? We entreat the disciples of a Saviour, who lived in self-denial, and died amid suffering and scorn for our sakes, not to shut up his bowels of compassion from his ministers—his faithful laborers, whom he has pronounced "worthy of their hire."

By order of the Executive Com. of the A. H. M. S.

We hear much in certain quarters of the efficacy of the *voluntary principle* to supply a country with religious instruction, and reference is often made to the United States as a noble exemplification of its complete success. So persuaded are the people of the United States of its efficacy, that ministers would not dare in that country to whisper a doubt that *it is not the best mode* of providing for the ministry, although the most painful evidences of its insufficiency, and of the sad and numerous evils incident to it, are constantly obtruding themselves on their experience. Of late many in Britain, deluded by the representations that are made respecting the manner in which religion

is supported in America, have imbibed their notions, and are seeking to level the religious establishments existing there, that the full blessedness of American institutions and principles may be introduced among them! Should they ever succeed in their insane project, it may safely be predicted, that they, or their posterity, will find the lessons of experience very bitter. The preceding statement clearly shews how injurious it must prove to leave the religious instruction of a country exclusively to the precarious donations of private liberality;—observe we say *exclusively*, for it is perhaps impossible to provide by legal endowment *entirely* for the spiritual wants of a whole community; and it would not be desirable, if were possible, to remove those objects on which private liberality may be suitably expended, and for which it may be competent. But by casting religion on private liberality alone for maintenance, it is exposed to all the fluctuations of commerce and manufacture; in times of pecuniary embarrassment its resources are dried up; and services which ought never to know any remission must be retarded or wholly discontinued. Ministers in these circumstances will always be eminently the sufferers. The burden will fall directly, and without any mitigation upon them. For in a country, like the United States, the most liberal classes, are probably the merchants in the great cities; but is it to be thought, that such persons will continue their liberality in seasons of commercial distress, such as those under the pressure of which they at present suffer? Nay, will not all classes very naturally conclude that the voluntary donation for the support of religion is a thing that may very properly stand over until they can better afford it, that is, until the sum can

be spared without any diminution of their own conveniences? Individuals of such very decided Christian principle may be found, who will continue to give even when giving is a sacrifice; but experience has always proved that the majority will act differently; and hence in every season of embarrassment, ministers depending on the voluntary principle, will be the first to feel their resources fail. And if it should happen that the support given to ministers, even in the most prosperous times and when fully paid, is barely sufficient, it is obvious, that in times of great mercantile stagnation, such as the present, they will soon be plunged into absolute penury and want. Were they only sharers in the general distress, and in the common degree, they would not be objects of any particular commiseration. But it is worse with them than this. All other classes of men may accumulate, and in this country they generally do so. Ministers, however, have not the power—they have little share in the general prosperity of their people—and when adversity comes, it affects them, not merely with a diminution of customary gains, but with an abstraction of the very means of subsistence. This is more than a hardship—it is a positive injustice; and so long as it is permitted to continue in the church, it will wither her strength and retard her progress. But it is a vice essentially inherent in the voluntary system according to the form in which it is usually set out by its narrow-minded advocates. For, supposing that the principles of a people were stable enough to afford any good basis for the system, the means at their disposal are not, on every emergence, adequate to the end. “Viewing it in this light, we entertain little doubt, that as the general course of civilization is to sys

tematize what is irregular, and to reduce to certainty what is accidental, so, with respect to the maintainance of a clergy, the method of endowment will be found, in the long run, preferable to the voluntary principle."⁴ Were the various communities in the United States disposed thus "to follow the general course of civilization"—they would adopt some system by which such afflicting appeals as that contained in the preceding statement would be rendered unnecessary. If they do not choose to call upon the state to endow their churches—let them do it themselves upon the voluntary principle; let it constitute part of their system to accumulate funds for securing the perpetuity of their religious institutions, as well as to lay by for the purpose of guarding them against occasional embarrassments. Nor is there any danger that their Christian liberality should ever be left without an object, so long as the tide of emigration is rolling annually tens of thousands upon their shores, and surrounding nations are immersed in heathen darkness.

It becomes the members of our own church in Canada to ponder these facts and principles well. Establishment with exclusive privileges in this country, it would be unwise and vain to seek after. It is not at all adapted to our meridian, nor to the state of society in this province. But to seek after endowments is both wise and necessary, and the sooner the system is commenced of building them up for every congregation in the Province, the better. It is no injustice to any one that Presbyterians should consecrate a portion of their own wealth to support and to perpetuate that religious system which

they believe most agreeable to the word of God. Nay—if this their belief be sincere, they are bound in conscience so to do. And if they may devote their own substance in perpetuity for this object, no candid mind will blame them for seeking to obtain from the Sovereign's bounty, or from the legislature, whatever assistance may be necessary towards this same object. We may the more earnestly make application for such assistance without any suspicion of personal avarice; for any endowment of land, the only kind that can be expected, will not materially relieve the burdens of our people during the present generation.

We would appeal to ever candid and enlightened persons, whether or not, such a state of things as that depicted above, is not likely to have a very injurious influence on the minds of Christian ministers, and on the church itself. What distraction of thought must they labour under in their sacred calling on account of themselves, and their families! How strongly tempted must they be to turn away from a service which denies them even bread! And how strongly must it operate against those exertions which the church is constantly making to induce young men to enter upon a course of preparation for the sacred ministry! Young men of the highest religious principle, who may desire "to testify the gospel of the grace of God," will naturally and properly forecast the probabilities of success and usefulness should they enter upon that work—and it will be difficult to convince them, if after a protracted and expensive preparation, they have nothing to expect but the hardships of penury when they have actually entered upon it, that they can be very successful in circumstances so unfavorable. We refuse to be ranked among

⁴A very remarkable and candid admission made by an able advocate of the voluntary system. See Westminster Review, Oct. 1836

those who would offer the tempting bait of worldly gain to induce young men to enter into the ministerial service of the church. It is mournful to behold the leprosy of avarice on those who stand at the altar of God. But we wish to see them raised above unholy distractions; disentangled from all secular affairs, that they may be free to devote their whole time and mental power in promoting the spiritual interests of their flock; and always able to purchase, without any undue abstraction from the proper demands of their household, those helps which books and other means may afford, to enable them to keep pace with the improvement and literature of the age.

Voluntaryism, as it exists in the United States, without any system of accumulating endowment, does not we are persuaded, provide these means. Its irregular operation is felt and deplored by many of the distinguished Christians in that country. The ministry is uneducated; its ranks are not adequately supplied; great numbers are drawn away from the duties of the pastoral office to secular employments; some are compelled to abandon their duties entirely and very many, who persevere in them, are obliged to utter such humiliating complaints as are contained in the above appeal to the sympathies of the Christian public.

While we have confidence that God will provide for the maintenance and extension of the Saviour's Kingdom, let us not forget the lessons that history and experience teach us; that this has ordinarily been accomplished in the course of His providence, by securing for the church not merely the voluntary donations of the living Christian, but the accumulated endowments of Christians departed, who have thus left their memorial behind them.

EDINBURGH GAELIC SCHOOL SOCIETY.

To the Editor of the Christian Examiner

Montreal, 8th July, 1837.

SIR—I have forwarded to your address, a parcel of reports received from the Gaelic School Society of Edinburgh, and I request that you will have the goodness to insert their appeal. It is strange that this most excellent Society should have received assistance from the most distant of the British possessions—and yet the British North American Colonies, where so many natives of the Highlands of Scotland have settled, should have contributed nothing to its funds. I am sure it has not been from a want of will, but from a want of opportunity.

Donations in aid of its funds will be thankfully received by the Honble. Peter McGill; John McPherson, Esq.; Robert Gillespie, Esq.; J. G. McKenzie, Esq., and D. P. Ross, Esq. of this city. I sincerely trust that the Canadas will show liberality towards this object. We have long received assistance from Bible, Missionary, and other Societies, in our native country, and when such an appeal is made to us, is it to be unheard? I am certain not. May the Lord bless the efforts of this valuable Society, and may He open the hearts of all my countrymen to assist in diffusing the blessings of a religious education throughout the Highlands of Scotland.

I am, &c.

J. O.

THE APPEAL OF THE EDINBURGH GAELIC SCHOOL SOCIETY.

The Committee of the GAELIC SCHOOL SOCIETY perceiving that the present state of its funds, and the defalcation for some years past, of its ordinary income, do most seriously threaten the very existence of the Society, feel it to be their duty to make to the public, and especially to those friends who have manifested a deep interest in its operations, an appeal in behalf of an institution upon which, it is universally acknowledged, the blessing of God has signally rested.

The salaries to teachers, and other obligations due in the course of this month of November, amount to nearly £1000; to

meet which large debt, the Committee are not at present possessed of more than £250 of funds. They have no fear whatever, that the public will allow the loss from this deficiency to fall, either on the excellent Christian men, who have, as instruments, been zealously planting the gospel seed in the hearts of the sequestered Highlanders, or on the committee, who, as almoners of the public bounty, have been directing it into a channel which has so largely conduced to the moral improvement of the country. But the Committee feel relief to that extent merely, would not be at all commensurate with the requirements of the case. The question is, shall the Gaelic Schools be allowed to go down? Seminaries, which have been distinguished by those who know them best, as the schools of Christ—those candles of the Lord which have been blessed as the special instruments of reviving religion in many benighted portions of the Highlands, and which, to human view, cannot be extinguished, without eternal damage to the population of many a glen, where they are now almost the only lights that can penetrate the darkness, and which are hailed by many a faithful pastor, as his most efficient auxiliary in districts beyond the reach of his superintending care,—shall these schools go down?

The Committee can assure the public this embarrassment has arisen from no improper or extravagant expenditure on their part. They did, in consequence of the General Assembly's Schools absorbing the most of the congregational collections, reduce, though reluctantly, the number of schools from 85 to 55, as stated in last Report; and they have now, in token of their submission to the urgency of their circumstances, given up other five schools, reducing the establishment to 50. But while they do so, and deeply lament over the necessity of doing so, they cannot bring themselves to believe that the public has *deliberately said*, "Let the Gaelic Schools go down—we prize them not." They believe that this state of things, distressing as it must be to every Scotsman who loves his country and his countrymen—and still more to every Christian Scotsman who feels a responsibility for the soul of his brother—has, in a great measure, arisen from the *quietness of the Society's operations* in the midst of those loud and frequent calls on the behalf of other objects,—objects of deep interest, no doubt, but which their promoters never could have desired to operate to the extinction of such a favourite institution as the Gaelic School Society. * * *

The Committee have the satisfaction to state that in so far as they can judge they have reason to believe each individual of the 50 Teachers retained by them, to be a pious Christian man; and each person into whose hands this circular may come has to consider and determine as in the sight of God, whether he will by withholding a little pecuniary support, give his suffrage that this machinery, working by 50 pious and zealous Teachers among a poor and ignorant, but most interesting portion of our countrymen shall be for ever destroyed. * * *

There are in Canada, many natives of the Highlands of Scotland, who have acquired something almost entitled to the name of wealth, and yet cherish an unabated affection for the land of the mountain and flood, the land of their sires. We doubt not that the preceding statement will move their liberality, and that some of its substantial fruits will be transmitted to the Committee of the Gaelic School Society, to mingle with the offerings received from their countrymen in other climes.—But why, we would ask, is the maintenance of these schools cast upon public charity? Can the education of any class of the people be matter of indifference to an enlightened Government? If the poverty of the Exchequer be the plea, surely some keen-eyed economist might find a quarter where retrenchment might be made, without entailing ignorance and barbarity on the rising generation. Could our voice reach him from this wilderness, we would venture to whisper in the statesman's ear that no object is more worthy of his care than the moral and religious education of the people, that as a mere question of finance, it is cheaper far to govern them by enlightening them, than to restrain and keep them in order by military force, and expensive tribunals, and penitentiaries and prisons. We will not cease to hope and pray that such views of policy may ever prevail under the reign of our young Queen, whose accession to the throne is this day, and in this remote part of the empire, hailed with joyful acclamations by her Canadian subjects. Let the ample resources of Britain be legitimately em-

ployed for her own intellectual and religious cultivation, that the large beneficence of her people, being relieved, as far as may be from every internal burden, may be more effectually directed to the evangelization of the world, more especially those parts of it which have a direct claim upon them, the destitute Colonies of the Empire, and the extended territories in the East, subject to the British Crown. Let the state make this worthy application of her resources. Let the people thus practice a heavenly charity.

SYNOD OF NOVA SCOTIA.—At New Glasgow, the 16th of November, 1836, was held a *pro re nata* meeting of the Synod of Nova Scotia, in connexion with the Church of Scotland.

The Moderator stated to the Synod, that this meeting had been summoned, in order to receive the report of Mr. Martin, who had been appointed in 1835, as their agent, to represent them, and advance the interests of the Colonial Church, under their superintendence, with their brethren and friends in Britain.

The Synod cordially approved of the Moderator's conduct in calling this meeting; and Mr. Martin, having been requested to furnish the Court with an account of his mission to the mother country, laid upon the table a letter from the Rev. Dr. Burns of Paisley, testifying, in strong language, to his indefatigable zeal and fidelity, as agent for the Synod, while in Scotland. He produced overtures in favour of the North American Colonial Church, from the Presbyteries of Aberdeen, Dunoon, Hanulton, Stirling and Perth, and from the Synod of Aberdeen, the Synod of Perth and Stirling, and the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, to the last General Assembly.

He presented also to the Synod, the ninth Report of the Glasgow Colonial Society, containing an account of the proceedings of that institution for the past year. the annual report of the General

Assembly's Committee on Colonial Churches, strongly urging the claims of our ministers and people upon the parent Church, and along with the documents, the Act of the last General Assembly, earnestly recommending collections once in every year for the Church Extension Scheme, for the Colonial Churches, for the Highland Schools, and for the India Mission. He informed them, that a donation of four hundred bibles and testaments, in English and Gaelic, had been made to him, from the Edinburgh Bible Society, and that religious tracts to the amount of £35 sterling had been given him by the London Tract Society, both of these donations, with the intention of forming a depository at Halifax, and for the use of the Synod; and he closed his report by reading his journal, kept during the period of his residence in Britain, minutely detailing his missionary travels and labours in that country, and the assistance and encouragement he had received from many private friends and public bodies throughout the land. The Synod, on hearing such varied and important intelligence, as has now been submitted to them, find it difficult to express, in adequate language, the high sense they entertain of Mr. Martin's disinterested zeal in undertaking this mission, as well as of the prudence and fidelity with which he has discharged the duties thereof. They consider themselves warranted to regard the simultaneous movement of so many venerable and respectable bodies in their favour as an omen of good, not only to themselves individually, but more especially to that portion of the Colonial Church with which they are connected. Accustomed, as they have been, to expect much from the liberality and Christian zeal of the Glasgow Colonial Society, they find even their fondest hopes exceeded by the actual amount of good already performed by this excellent institution. The generous and liberal policy recommended by various Synods and Presbyteries, as well as by the Colonial Committee of the

General Assembly, while they afford gratifying evidence that their agent has been unslumbering at his post, serve powerfully to convince them that the parent Church takes large and enlightened views of what their necessities require, and is not backward to do all that becomes her high character towards sustaining, comforting, and encouraging them under their privations and arduous duties. They trust that such a holy brotherhood of love is not cast away upon them. They do feel in no small measure sustained, comforted, and encouraged, in the performance of their arduous ministrations and missionary travels by the assurance of support from such a powerful and friendly auxiliary. They would, indeed, ill deserve such signal testimonies of kindness, if they did not feel thereby inclined to farther devotedness and perseverance in the solemn duties of their sacred calling, and they desire humbly, yet fervently, to bless Almighty God, who has thus powerfully moved the hearts of their brethren and kindred towards them.

They know that they can best express their sense of his many mercies—that they can best requite the cheering kindness of their fathers and brethren in Scotland, by tenderly feeding the sheep of Christ entrusted to their care, and by faithfully ministering, according to their abilities and opportunities, to those portions of the vineyard in this colony which are still destitute of religious ordinances

The liberality of the Ladies' Association at Edinburgh in sending out this season Mr James Fraser, an acceptable missionary to Cape Breton, and of the Glasgow Colonial Society, in sending Mr. John Ross as Minister to the United Congregations of Shelburne and Yarmouth, and Mr Donald McConnachie as Minister to Lochaber and St. Mary's, happily enables the Synod now to enlarge the sphere and the amount of their own missionary labours. They joyfully pledge themselves to this pleasing duty, in the fond hope that the period is not far distant, when a suffi-

cient supply of fellow-labourers will enable each of them to attend more exclusively to his own flock, whilst numerous destitute settlements around them on every side, which are now anxiously looking to them for religious instruction, shall be favoured with the constant and acceptable ministrations of enlightened and pious pastors.

In consequence of the information received through their agent, and with a view to keep up the friendly intercourse with the parent church, which has now been so happily established, the Synod also appointed a committee of their number, to carry on a regular correspondence with Principal McFarlane, the Convener of the General Assembly's Colonial Committee, and with other friends and Church Courts in Scotland.

THE PRESBYTERY OF QUEBEC met at Quebec, on the 12th June, present, Rev. John Clugston and John Cook, and John Strang, Esq. and James McKenzie, Esq. Elders.

Mr. McAulay appeared at the bar of the Presbytery, the libel against him was read in his presence, Mr. McAulay was heard in his defence, and was requested to give in written answers to the several charges laid against him. The Presbytery adjourned till the evening, when written answers were given in by Mr. McAulay; The Presbytery, deeply sensible of the importance of this case to the great interests of the Church, and to the individual minister libelled, so small a number of members being present, and being at the same time unwilling to delay the decision of the case unnecessarily, appointed a meeting to be held at Georgetown, county of Beauharnois, on the 18th of July.

On the 18th of July the Presbytery met at Georgetown, according to appointment Present, Rev. John Clugston, Moderator; Rev. Walter Roach, Rev. John Taylor, Rev. James Anderson, Rev. John Cook; Rev. J. C. Muir; Rev. Thos. McPher-

son; John Strange, Esq. of Quebec, R. H. Norval, Esq. of Beauharnois, and Hugh Brodie, Esq. of Montreal, Elders. The libel against Mr McAulay was again read, together with all former minutes, letters, and necessary papers on this case. Mr. McAulay was heard in defence, after which the Presbytery proceeded to judgment on the charges brought against him in the libel. When the following judgment and decision was come to.—The Presbytery having taken into consideration the confession and acknowledgments of Mr McAulay, were unanimously of opinion, that he is guilty of prevarication, wilful falsehood, and fraud, and deem it unnecessary to proceed to the probation of the libel. It was moved and agreed to, without vote, That the said Mr McAulay be forthwith deposed from the office of the Holy Ministry, according to the laws of the church of Scotland, and usages in such cases; and that the Presbytery enjoin, that this sentence be read by every minister within the bounds, from the pulpit, after divine service, on the first Lord's day after notice received. Against this judgment Mr McAulay protested and appealed to the next meeting of Synod, and craved extracts. The Presbytery appointed The Rev. John Cook, The Rev James C. Muir, and John Strang, Esq. Elder, to defend their judgment at the Synod.

The discussion of this important case occupied the attention of the Presbytery till 11 o'clock in the evening

W. R.

THE PRESBYTERY OF HAMILTON.

An ordinary meeting of this Presbytery was held at Hamilton on the 12th ult. After disposing of routine business, the Presbytery received Mr Gale's report of his missionary visit to the settlements on the lower part of the Grand River. Mr. Gale stated that in obedience to the injunction of Presbytery, he had visited these settlements in the second week of June,

that he preached on Sabbath, the 11th, in the morning at York, to a considerable congregation; in the afternoon, at Cayuga, where only a small number attended, in consequence of an unfavourable change in the state of the weather; that he also preached on the Monday evening at Caledonia, to a congregation of 60 or 70 persons. Mr. Gale further stated that on all these occasions, he had explained the views of the Presbytery in regard to the formation of missionary associations, urging their adoption on the people, and that from the cordial reception these views met with both in public and private, and from the earnest desires which many of them with whom he conversed manifested to obtain the regular ministration of gospel ordinances, he entertains a good hope that a decided effort will soon be made by them. From Mr. Gale's representation it appeared that the settlements have made rapid advances during the last two years, in population and in general prosperity, the improvements on the navigation of the river having been almost completed, and several neat and thriving villages having sprung up within that period. Spiritual improvement however seems to lag sadly behind. On the whole line of settlement from Caledonia to the mouth of the river, which is about 30 miles in extent, it does not appear that there is any regular minister or stated services on the Sabbath, nor are any of the villages yet graced with a church. These wants cast a dreary shade over the scene, to the Christian's eye, notwithstanding its peculiar natural beauties, and the many indications of temporal prosperity which it exhibits. The Presbytery appointed Messrs. Stark, Gale, and McIntosh to preach in these settlements, at such times as they may find it convenient, before the meeting of the Presbytery in October; the two first on week days, the latter on a Sabbath.

The Presbytery also appointed Mr Garduer, of Fergus, to preach at Woolwich on the first Sabbath of August.

The Moderator laid before the Presbytery a call from the Presbyterian inhabitants of St. Thomas, Yarmouth, and Southwold, inviting Mr. David Allan, preacher of the gospel, to become their pastor, together with a letter of acceptance from Mr. Allan, and other documents, and the Moderator stated that he had presided at the giving of the call, and that the whole matter had been proceeded in with regularity. The Presbytery sustained the call and prescribed the usual pieces of trial to Mr. Allan, and resolved to meet at St. Thomas on the fourth day of October next, for further procedure in the matter. Mr. Ross of Aldborough was appointed to preach at St. Thomas on Sunday the 21st September, and to intimate to the congregation the steps taken by the Presbytery with respect to Mr. Allan, and their purpose to proceed to his ordination as their pastor, according to the laws of the church, provided no valid objection be offered.

A petition was given in and read from the Presbyterian inhabitants of Woodstock and its vicinity, numerously signed, and setting forth, "that the petitioners are living in the total want of the valuable blessing of the stated dispensation of the word and ordinances of grace in the manner of their fathers, and praying the Presbytery to adopt such measures in regard to them as may as far as possible supply their spiritual wants, and particularly that they may be constituted a congregation in connection with this church." The Moderator made some interesting statements respecting the condition of the petitioners, and the Presbytery, after mature consideration of the case, appointed the Moderator to preach at Woodstock, and to confer with the heads of families, in regular standing with the church, in regard to the nomination of suitable persons to hold the office of Elders among them, and to cause a certified list of the persons who may thus be chosen, to be transmitted to the clerk of the Presbytery, in order that their trial and

ordination may be proceeded with. The Presbytery further recommended to the Moderator to give us much of his attention and services among the petitioners as may be compatible with his other duties, and instructed the clerk to transmit an extract of the minute of the Presbytery on this subject to Mr. Greig of Woodstock, to be communicated by him to the other petitioners, and to assure them of the sympathy of the Presbytery with them in their present spiritual destitution, and of their co-operation for its relief.

Petitions were given in and read from the Presbyterians of London and its vicinity, and of the township of Williams, in communion with this church, stating that notwithstanding their earnest desires and continued exertions they are yet without the regular ministrations of a pastor of their own church, acknowledging their obligations to the Presbytery for the occasional supplies they have sent them, and praying that a deputation of Presbytery may be authorized to dispense the sacrament of the Lord's supper amongst them. The Presbytery resolved to grant the prayer of the petition, and ordered that the necessary arrangements to this effect be made at the meeting to be held at St. Thomas.

After some discussion the Presbytery adopted the following overture to the Synod:—The Presbytery of Hamilton taking into consideration the lamentable destitution in respect of a preached gospel under which the inhabitants of Canada, and especially the Presbyterian population, labour, and the utter inadequacy of the supply for such destitution, which has been of late afforded by the parent church, and the slight prospect of its immediate increase, do respectfully overture the Synod to send a delegation of one or more ministers to Scotland, with the view of awakening the church to the pressing demand for missionary labourers in this colony, and of obtaining a

supply of them adequate to our necessities.

The Presbytery had read various documents relating to the missionary operations within its bounds, and the clerk was instructed to draw up an account of the same, and forward it to the Corresponding Secretary.

Among the routine business, we may note the examination of Mr. McColl, the injunction to sessions, to give in at the next meeting—complete rolls of the elders constituting them—together with the formal returns required by the Synods.

A. G.

CHURCH EXTENSION IN SCOTLAND.

Extracted from the report of Dr. Chalmers to the General Assembly, 1837.

The cause was only to be made known to become triumphant everywhere. The Committee felt assured that a public meeting held in every parish would make the whole of the ancient kingdom of Scotland, in overpowering majorities, come forward for the defence of the Church, and the furtherance of the great object she was now pursuing. Their's was a cause which was too firmly rooted in the principles and sense of the Scottish community to be given up in despair. It might be shaken, but it could not be overthrown. Did they but know where its great strength lay, they would never be dismayed, either by controversy or the designs of its adversaries, and amid all the uncertainties which overhang the fluctuation of human policy, they might calculate on victory at the last,—the legitimate and moral victory of public opinion in their favour. The Rev. Doctor then proceeded to particularize a few instances of efforts and sacrifice, which, in the absence of aid from the Government, had been made for the erection of new churches, under the Assembly's Extension Scheme. The Duke of Buccleuch had determined on providing an additional place of worship at Dalkeith, at the magnificent cost of £5000, and it might turn out to be more. In addition to this, his Grace had demonstrated his attachment to the Church in handsome donations to various new churches. Two of their number had gone as a deputation to the north, and had waited upon the Duke of Richmond, who gave them the important

assurance, not only of his general friendship to their object, but his purpose to ascertain and provide for the destitution of his own extensive parish. It was gratifying to receive the countenance of men holding such language, but not more gratifying than the reception which, two days before, the agents had experienced from a body of operatives in a large spinning mill at Montrose. It was agreed that they should hold a meeting on the subject, and there were no want of arguments, nor of men able to maintain them, but the result was the hearty congratulations of all the people, and many of them promised to give up a day's wages for the erection of a church to themselves and their families. This was one of the proofs that their church had an amalgamating power over the hearts of the many. Instead of fierce contention in the arena of opposing rights and opposing interests, they should behold those orders of an else discordant community, which now stood at a distance from the Church, appear united in the most sacred and enduring works, pouring their contributions into the common treasury.— There was one instance of a common hand-loom weaver, who wished his name to be concealed, but who had given £100 to the Church Extension Fund, the hard-won earnings of past years. The landed proprietors of the parish of Cambusneithan had unanimously resolved to double their subscriptions for a new church in that place. This was an important movement, as it might operate as an example, and be followed up by other landed proprietors. Mr. Dundas, of Arniston, in conjunction with the Marquis of Lothian, had also engaged to erect a new church in the parish of Temple. and Lord Dundas had resolved on the erection of a new church at Grangemouth, which, on the most moderate statement of its extent, would at least cost £1000; and farther, that his Lordship had generously resolved to superadd an annual endowment of £80 to the same, which, converted into a capital, would make his total contribution amount to the magnificent sum of £3000. The Chisholm, who was a Member of Parliament for Inverness-shire, had nearly completed a church on his own property, which would accommodate 1268 persons. Mr. Tindal Bruce had advanced £500 for a church in the parish of Auchtermuchty; and Mr. W. Campbell, of Glasgow, had acted, throughout the year, in giving twenty guineas to each of the new churches erecting throughout the country. Such was the value entertained of his example, that it was right to state, that altogether, the

offerings of this last gentleman in the cause, since the meeting of last Assembly, amounted to £2000. The town of Rutherglen had completed, at its own expense, a manse to the minister of the new parish, and large collections had been made there for Church Extension. Mr. Wm Collins of Glasgow, after holding a meeting in Largs, went personally round amongst the inhabitants, and that at a season of the year when the greater number of the visitors were absent, and with the influential assistance of Mr. Dow, of Largs, raised within its limits £632 for the Church Extension fund in the course of a few days, and this after they had supplied their own wants. Mr. Collins next went to Greenock, where he realized £1000. Edinburgh, from a small fraction of its whole extent, raised nearly £2000, through the medium of visitations in several of the streets, which gave an earnest of what might be expected if local meetings were held in every district. The thanks of the Committee were also due to Mr. Maitland Makgill, for his unwearied exertions and services in favour of the cause. Subscriptions had been raised in the ten original parish churches in Glasgow for the cause; and the sum realized from the hearers of one church was £1,900. In these parishes the subscriptions were still going on; and, in all, the amount already received was £8,467 10s. The sum of £2000 had been raised in Edinburgh, by contributions after public meetings, through the medium of household visitations in several of the streets. But the Presbytery of Hamilton had made the greatest and most successful efforts within its bounds. During the last two or three years, twelve churches had been erected within that Presbytery, its previous numbers having been fourteen, so that the number was nearly doubled. The town of Paisley had fully doubled the number of its churches within the same period.

“The peer and the peasant, the merchant and the mechanic, stood side by side, and all gave, as the Lord prospered them, in the great cause of lengthening the cords and strengthening the stakes of our beloved Zion. And let the result confirm this—160 additional Churches! £160,000 of money contributed, and additional accommodation provided for about 150,000 people.”

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER OF THE REV. DR. BURNS IN THE SCOTTISH GUARDIAN, JUNE 6TH, 1837.

DEAR SIR.—Allow me to introduce to the notice of your numerous readers, a literary curiosity—the *Niagara Magazine*; yes, Sir, the Niagara religious Magazine. Indeed, the copy before me seems to have been bespangled with the spray of that stupendous waterfall, and this just makes it the more picturesque. It is a most respectable specimen of the Theology, and the typography, and the paper manufacture of our thriving Canadian Settlements; for you must know that it is all of native growth.—The paper a little yellow indeed, but this will soon be remedied, by the arrival at Niagara of a large shipment of the same beautiful, large, and well-made article which gives weekly currency to that most unpretending, but most valuable of all our periodicals—“*The Scottish Christian Herald*.” The title of the work is—“*The Canadian Christian Examiner, and Presbyterian Review*.” It is not “the organ”—properly speaking—of any Church or ecclesiastical judicatory; but it is the vehicle through which a large number of pious and enlightened ministers of our Church, in Canada, intend to convey, monthly, a portion of religious instruction and intelligence to their friends and fellow-countrymen in the Western Colonies.

This last matter (Synod Library) I would wish to press on the particular attention of ministers and laymen in Scotland, who may be in possession of many books which they might easily spare. In the prospect—it may not be very remote—of a Theological Institution for educating young men, natives of the colonies, for the work of the ministry there, it is recommended that means should, in the meantime, be used for collecting a library of Theological and general literature for its use, and for the benefit of the Synod at large. The friends of Theological literature are solicited to make presents of books to this interesting object; and reference is made to the valuable library now established at Pittsburg, U S for the use of the “Western Theological Academy” of the Presbyterian Church in the States. The minister who visited that rising seminary states, that he saw with great interest, on many of the books in that library, the names of not a few fathers and brethren of the Church of Scotland, whom he knew and esteemed, and who had enriched this library with presents from their private collections. Well do I recollect the visit

of Mr. Campbell of Pittsburgh to this country, and I for one had great pleasure in giving him some dozen or two of volumes, my only regret being that I could not part with more at the time. Our excellent friends, Mr. Bryce, No. 20, Buchanan Street, Glasgow, and Mr. Johnston, 2, Hunter Square, Edinburgh, will be most happy to take charge of any books that may be sent them; and a mercantile gentleman, who returns to Kingston, Upper Canada, in the beginning of August, undertakes to forward them FREE. I know a clerical friend who has already promised me one hundred volumes; and I notice his example for the encouragement of others. I may also add, that books of any kind that are likely to be useful to the Colonists in their remote and unprovided Settlements, together with tracts, pamphlets, odd numbers of Magazines, Catechisms, &c., will be highly valued (if sent as above,) and they will be duly forwarded to the various Settlements.

It may be gratifying to our brethren in Canada to be informed, that the loss of the ten libraries, and of the large supply of tracts from the London Society, by the shipwreck of the *Iona*, has been promptly replaced, at the charge of the London and Glasgow Societies, and that these shipments will, we hope, soon reach their appointed destination. I am also instructed to say, that the London Tract and Book Society are ready at any time, and on application from any quarter of the Colonies, to grant similar donations on similar terms. Need I add, that the Glasgow Colonial Society and Assembly's Colonial Committee will most cheerfully go along with them in helping on an object so truly Christian.

May I request of my clerical brethren to send me a manuscript sermon, or lecture, or essay, or biographical sketch, or review of a book, or, in short, anything that may enrich and cherish this rising periodical. Let them be so kind as *append their names*, as in the case of the *Christian Herald*—and I can assure them that their communications will be devoured most greedily by the "Backwoodsmen," and will tend to make up in some degree for the want of regular pastoral instruction.

When an honor to Scotland and to Scotland's Church, to be permitted to stamp the seal of Christianity on an infant empire!" * * *

ELIJAH'S INTERVIEW.

BY CAMPBELL.

On Horeb's rock the prophet stood—
The Lord before him pass'd;
A hurricane in angry mood
Swept by him strong and fast;
The forest fell before its force,
The rocks were shivered in its course;
God was not in the blast.
'Twas but the whirlwind of His breath,
Announcing danger, wreck and death
It ceased. The air grew mute—a cloud
Came muffling up the sun,
When through the mountains deep and
loud
An earthquake thundered on;
The frighted eagle sprang in air,
The wolf ran howling from his lair;
God was not in the storm.
'Twas but the rolling of his car,
The trampling of his steeds from fur.
'Twas still again—and nature stood
And calmed her ruffled frame,
When swift from Heaven a fiery flood
To earth devouring came.
Down to the depth the ocean fled,
The sickening sun looked wan and dead,
Yet God filled not the flame.
'Twas but the terror of his eye
That lighten'd through the troubled sky.
At last a voice, all still and small,
Rose sweetly on the ear;
Yet rose so shrill and clear, that all
In heaven and earth might hear
It spoke of peace, it spoke of love;
It spoke as angels speak above;
And God himself was there.
For oh! it was a Father's voice,
That bade the trembling; earth rejoice.

ERRATA IN THE JULY NO.

- P. 129, 1st col. line 21—for communion, read *concion*.
 P. 130, 1st col. line 17—for attendings, read *attendance*.
 Do. 2d col. line 28—for his oracles, read *the oracles of God*.
 Do. 2d col. line 35—for purposes, read *prepares*.
 P. 132, 1st col. line 25—for henty, read *larity*.
 P. 133, 2d col. line 1—for principles, read *privileges*.
 P. 136, 1st col. line 38—for present, read *purest*.
 Do. 2d col. line 8—for turning, read *winning*.