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THE
CANADIAN PRESBYTER.

NOVEMBER, 1858.

OUR COLLEGE.

This institution is of the utmost importance to our welfare and progress as a Church. It is the only source from which we can now expect an adequate supply of well trained ministers to occupy our rapidly extending field of operations. Scotland tells us that, like the wise virgins, she has none to spare from her reserve of probationers. The fear *there*, is that the supply even from the three fountains of theological literature will not be enough for herself and her Colonial daughters. We cannot, therefore, depend upon any annual number of young men coming to us from the land of our Fathers. That, for special reasons and by peculiar providences one and another will from time to time be attracted to our shores, we may reasonably expect, and if they are good and true scholars and preachers they will always be welcomed with open arms. We are also given to understand, by the deputies from the sister Church in Ireland, who lately, with so much pleasure and profit to us, visited our land, that we need not look for any further supply of laborers from them. From various causes the number of their own Students has greatly fallen off since the year of the famine, and their own vacancies and mission fields will absorb all that they can provide. From England not much either is to be hoped for. Her College is not large, and the young men educated there are more likely, if unsuccessful in their own Church, to transfer their services to Scotland, than to turn their attention to the Colonies. We, however, look upon the congregations in England as a famous nursery for the arduous work of the Colonial field. Nine-tenths of these are small, poor and fluctuating. They contain little spiritual life, and are surrounded by influences of a nature so powerful as all but to prevent them from making any impression upon the native population. The result is, that they are in five cases out of six purely Scotch, and depend for their prosperity and existence upon an uncertain and capricious immigration. After a young man has laboured for some years and acquired valuable experience in such corners of the vineyard, he will find his ardent hopes nipped in

the bud,—his spirit humbled and broken, in another way than that which adorns and exalts the christian life; under the pressure of such an experience he is likely to look to the free and wide domains of our Church in these lands, and to deem even the most arduous of our labours a comparative repose. From England we may therefore look for a few earnest and well-trained refugees. But even after reckoning our *income* of men from all quarters we shall yet come very far short of our necessities. To the College, therefore, we must look for those who will form the body of the Church's ministers, who will sustain her nascent life, maintain unsullied her ancient virtues, and guide her to the acquisition of new domains.

We have long been of opinion that the component elements of our Canadian ministry, judiciously intermixed and blended as they are in most of our Presbyteries, provides a most admirable agency for the rearing of a strong and vigorous Church in this land. The well disciplined and experienced men, with long heads and sharp wits, whom we get from the old world, allied harmoniously with the vigour, practical sagacity and labour-loving native youth, who "to the manor born" adapt themselves so naturally to the exigencies of their lot—these form an army in which there is combined the skill and sagacity of age with the sanguine ardour of youth. The beneficial operation of these two elements we have more than once had occasion to note in the operations of our Church, and *prima facie* they give promise that in the future she will have a history on which her children will look back for lessons and examples of wisdom. There need therefore be no rivalry between our native and our imported elements, but rather an affectionate cherishing one of the other; both are needed in this country. It is the union of both that has borne our Church thus far onward in her course of acquisition. In thus marking the characteristics, as we think, of the old and the new country materials of our Church's ministry, we by no means would be understood to say or imply, that in the *old* there was any lack of vigour, or any disinclination for labour; or that in the *new* there was any defect of wisdom or sagacity. Recollecting as we do the unwearied and herculean labours in this land of our fathers who have entered into their rest, we cannot say that the ministers from home, who have spent their strength to extend and consolidate the Church, were defective either in vigour, zeal, or endurance. Nor on the other hand, dare we say, that the native ministers of Canada have shown any lack of wisdom or sagacity in counsel or device, in the emergencies of their Church's history. Yea, not unfrequently we have found the wisdom belong to the young sons of the soil and the restless vigour to the ancients from home. What we mean to say is, that viewing the characteristics of the two elements which go to form our Christian ministry in Canada, we would, after the manner of a discriminating naturalist, say, that to the one belongs the specific virtue of ecclesiastical experience and discipline, to the other that of earnest practical life.

From these considerations we deduce the necessity of upholding our College to the utmost, and seeking for it an unquestioned and unquericnable efficiency.

This institution is little more than a decade old. It sprung out of a necessity universally felt by the ministers and members of our Church in the year 1844. Its first professors were men whom we all delight to honour. They were scholars and christian gentlemen. Their Students remember them with reverence and are no discredit to their teachers. The College has had a variety of fortunes. It "hath had troubles." The Church has been most prolific in legislation on its behalf. Many a Committee has sat upon it, and many a lengthy and carefully penned report has been made of its state and prospects. Numerous are the recommendations, schemes and instructions of which it has been the subject. We do not know a Synod since the year 1844, in which it has not been a prominent topic of discussion. Its future historian will find a mass of curious material scattered throughout our Church's archives, for the illustration of its early history. It has now happily reached a *corporate* condition. Legally it is no longer a name and nothing more, it has now a statutable existence, and can present itself bodily in prescribed attire at her Majesty's Courts of jurisprudence. Ere another year elapses it will be organised in that form, which, considering the conservative character of Colleges in general, it will in all probability retain for many ages to come.

The difficulty which our College has hitherto chiefly had to contend with, is not the want of men but the want of money. For some years there has been a growing deficit in its income. Spasmodic efforts have from time to time, to be made to keep its head above water. It is a labour like that of Sisyphus to keep it going even in a moderate way. Every year we have to make an outcry about its empty exchequer; and it puzzles the brains of its wisest friends to know what is best to be done to improve its financial position. Perhaps some unreflecting person will say to this, that we are attempting more than the Church is able to undertake. What are we attempting it may be proper to ask in reply? We are attempting to rear a native christian ministry, not only for the Church of the present, but of the future. We are endeavouring to educate efficiently between 40 and 50 young men willing to devote themselves to the service of Christ. For this end we are doing our best to provide convenient, certainly not elegant, College buildings, and to maintain three competent professors of theology. For these purposes we require at least an income of £1500 per annum. We cannot do well with less. To reduce our expenditure would be a discredit to the Church. The College fabric is, in our judgment, the most humble if not shabby of mansions that could be chosen for so noble a purpose. The last time we visited the College we felt quite ashamed to look at its ungarished, uncarpeted and unfurnished comfortless apartments. What grieved us much, too, was to find that many of its friends thought every thing very nice. The Ladies of Toronto ought not, for their own credit, to allow another year to pass without seeing that the apartments and halls of the College are painted, carpeted and decently furnished. The Ladies of Scotland are building an Assembly Hall, surely the Ladies of Toronto can beautify and furnish our Hall of Divinity. We can vouch for it that Hamilton and London

and Montreal will lend their valuable aid. Our staff of Professors is barely large enough to make us respectable, and that they are remunerated as they ought to be on a stipend of £400 a year, is not our opinion. The expense of residing in a city like Toronto is very great. The duty of entertaining strangers and the necessity of purchasing books, for the most part of an expensive kind, entail upon them considerable expenditure. To propose, therefore, to reduce their stipends, would be virtually to discharge them from their office. To subtract from the number of the professors even one would be to cripple the institution. Three is the least that ought to be appointed to conduct anything like a complete curriculum of theology. More would be very desirable, but less would be a calamity. The Church is besides pledged to maintain the College in at least its present efficiency. That it is able to do this, who that knows the numbers and standing of her membership can for a moment doubt. We have 15957 members in full communion, besides a large body of adherents, many of whom are both able and willing to contribute to the Church's exchequer. Now who will say that it would be a difficult matter for us to raise the sum of £1500 for the College. Half a dollar from each member would realise the sum of £1094. Surely it is possible to obtain from congregations contributions for this most vital scheme of the Church to the amount of one half-dollar per member! We fear that the proper effort for the support of the College has not yet been begun in most of our congregations. In many of them a Sabbath day collection once in the year is deemed sufficient—a collection to which in many cases there is little more given even by the wealthy than the usual copper. In looking down the list of contributions for last year, we find very few congregations who come up to the minimum sum of 2s. 6d. per member, and many are very far below it. We do not think that this state of things arises from the inability or unwillingness of the people to give, or from their want of appreciation of the College. On the contrary, we believe, that none of our schemes are so generally popular as this. To none of them is there a more general liberality shown. The matter needs only to be properly presented to the attention of congregations. There is no object for which ministers may more legitimately or freely plead than this. It commends itself to the christian understanding, as a means by which the command of Christ to the Church to "preach the Gospel to every creature" may be most truly obeyed. There is besides no feeling more deep or universal among Presbyterians than the necessity of an educated christian ministry. An amusing instance of this we remember in the case of a worthy man in one of the Free Church congregations in the west of Scotland. He was noticed by the elder to leave the Church just as the minister, who happened that morning to be a student—an unlicensed man—entered the pulpit. On being questioned as to this unusual act on his part, he replied "If ministers dinna need to be College-bred I can preach mysel." We have therefore this noble basis of intelligent common sense appreciation of an educated ministry to work upon, and if proper measures be adopted, we see no reason why the means to maintain not only our present College with efficiency, but even a fourth professor, may not be obtained from the Church.

It is evident to any one who has examined into the subject that the system of Sabbath day collections for the College must be altogether abandoned. Other methods must be adopted of a kind fitted to draw attention to its wants and to impress its importance to the Church upon the minds of our people. One and the same method may not be suited in every congregation, but, as a general rule, collectors should be appointed in each Church, to visit every family and every member, either monthly, quarterly, or annually, as may be thought best for the circumstances of the people, and to obtain from them regular contributions. In cities and towns the plan of monthly collections will be both the easiest and the most profitable. In the country such periods might be adopted as the habits of the people will readily suggest. One brother informed us that every year at the proper season he appointed a few young men of his congregation as collectors. They cheerfully undertake the duty, and calling upon each family realise in a short time greatly more than he could ever obtain by any other method. In most country Churches such a plan would be both simple and practicable, and were it now to be adopted, we hesitate not to say, that the funds of the College would be trebled in the course of another year. In the cities, we know of congregations in which monthly contributions are obtained by the agency of lady collectors, and by which means four times as much is cheerfully given than could be got in any other way. No effort at *organisation* has yet been fairly tried in the Church on behalf of the College. We trust that an attempt in this direction will immediately be made in all our Presbyteries. The College Committee has appointed a Committee of its number with full power to correspond with Presbyteries and congregations, to effect, if possible, permanent congregational organisations for the College. Four members of this Committee have undertaken to visit the Presbyteries, each in his own neighbourhood, and to offer their personal assistance to promote the objects in view. We trust that this effort will not, like too many others, be unproductive of permanent benefit. Systematic efforts on the part of congregations are our only hope. Unless this be accomplished we despair of ever seeing the College placed upon a sure basis of prosperity.

It is true that we ought to receive more liberal donations for our Theological Institute from the wealthy members of our Church. This is a most suitable object for the expenditure of their liberality. In all ages and countries educational institutions, and especially those in which theology is taught, have been more or less upheld by the large donations or bequests of the wealthy. Ancient times are specially worthy of commendation in this respect. The old seats of learning in Britain are all maintained in their present wealth and dignity, not so much by the endowments of the State, as by the *dona Dei* of our pious forefathers. For this virtue modern times are not quite so celebrated as the ancient; but still they afford some eminent examples, among which may be mentioned the erection and endowment of the Free Church College of Glasgow, by the munificent gifts of Dr. Clarke. In no way could surplus wealth be more beneficially expended for the welfare of future generations than by gifts and legacies to Colleges.

Endowments have come to be regarded as essential to the welfare of such institutions. And seeing that we neither claim, nor hope for, assistance from the State, we may reasonably expect consideration at the hands of our more wealthy sons and daughters. It is gratifying to find that already we have been the recipients of such favors. Let us hope that we may yet have to record many instances of a similar kind.

Ere long vigorous efforts must be made by us for the endowment, either partial or entire, of our professorship. Until this is done, the College will be a source of constant anxiety and perplexity to the Church. Without this it cannot be said to be a fixed and permanent institution, but will be constantly exposed to the fluctuations of the ever changing temper of the times. It would however be premature and unwise at present to ask the Church for endowments. We are not prepared for such a movement. But we may reasonably ask for such an income for our College as will raise it above poverty, and give it a respectable standing among the Halls of learning in the Province.

It cannot be denied that the feeling of the Church towards the College will very much depend upon the character which it makes for itself. It is no more independent of the popular sympathy than are our Congregations. It will meet with esteem or otherwise at the hands of our people just as it merits it. If it does not send forth well-trained and acceptable students it will not meet with either favour or support. Upon the diligence and faithfulness of the students in the prosecution of their studies will depend, under God, in a large measure, the reputation and consequent prosperity of the Institution. They, as well as the professors, are as cities set upon a hill which cannot be hid. Such motives, minor though they be, will it is hoped have some influence in promoting the ardour of their zeal and stimulating them to aim at the highest excellence in the work of the Christian ministry. Bearing upon this topic it might be wise, in those who have rule in such matters, to avail themselves of the services of our best known and most capable ministers, at the opening and closing services in the College. In the United States such a practice is universal. The United Presbyterian Church has, as we think, wisely fallen upon the same plan. By this means the *interest* is extended. A large circle of people are personally affected by the public report of the services. An opportunity is also afforded of giving extra academical addresses to the students of a fatherly, and fraternal cast, free from the *dogmatic*, which exhortations *ex cathedra* necessarily more or less partake of. Nor do we see any reason why the gifts of our ministers in special departments of study might not be made available by an occasional extra collegiate lecture for the benefit of the students. The institution of an annual lectureship in connection with the College would be most conducive to its welfare. It would be a highly popular element. While it would benefit the student it would also hold up an object of ambition to the gifted ministers of the Church. There are a multitude of literary, theological and scientific topics which cannot possibly be embraced by the professors in a three year's curriculum, but which it would be greatly to the advantage of the student to have

brought before him by a competent instructor. Without adding to his labour it would enliven and enrich the student's course of study. Our College would also, we are persuaded, by this, and other means, work itself into the very heart of the Church.

The time may come when too, perhaps, a little rivalry may be no bad medicine for the Toronto Institution. If the Provinces are to be federated, as is proposed; or if the seat of Government is to be permanently fixed in Montreal as is suspected; and if the Union between ourselves and the United Presbyterian Church is to be, as we trust, happily consummated; it may then be warrantable to divide the Church into two or more Synods, and as a matter of course to erect a new Theological Hall for the Eastern Province, in affiliation with the McGill University of Montreal. This University offers great facilities for under graduate education, and privileges of no mean order to associated Institutions. Its governors would hail the advent of a Theological College with pleasure, and would accord to it all the prestige of the University. There is nothing like prospecting. The miners on the placers of California, and on the banks of the Fraser River are adopts at such enterprises. The children of the Kingdom may be permitted to take a leaf out of their book, and to search the realms of the future for treasures of wisdom and knowledge. We are by no means sanguine that the conditions on which we base our prospects are of very likely occurrence; but in this fast age who knows what a day may bring forth? We cherish the hope that the East may yet, by the increase of its Protestant population, be the theatre of a large and vigorous Presbyterian Church, to meet the wants of which a College will become a manifest necessity. In the meantime, however, we have an institution, most worthy of support, that requires our best energies to place on such "coigne of vantage" as will be a credit to us as a Church. For this laudable end let us stir up one another to a godly emulation.

WORDS BY THE WAY.

A MINISTER AND TWO OF HIS DEACONS WALK HOME TOGETHER FROM A MEETING OF THE DEACONS' COURT.

M.—The hour is not late. Our business has had smooth and quick despatch.

1st. D.—I am sure a Court like ours has an advantage over any Board or Committee in the transaction of its business. All who have any official charge of the interests of the congregation are, or may be present; and harmony of action and a good understanding are maintained between its various departments.

2nd. D.—Quite so; yet it is said that in some places a jealousy of the presence of the Ministers and Elders has been expressed. I have not heard of their being actually excluded.

M.—If they were, the meeting would no longer have the character of a Court of our Church. Indeed, it would be preferable to have annually elected Committees than to have boards of Deacons sitting in close conclave, with permanent control over the property and treasuries of congregations.

1st. D.—In that I quite agree, Deacon though I am, and counting mine office no mean one.

2nd. D.—There seems to be a fear that *ruling* Elders will become *domineer-*

ing Elders, and over-ride all the rights and liberties of us, poor humble Deacons. But if other Courts are like ours, I am sure it would be a great loss to exclude the Elders, not to speak of the Minister. They have the longest heads among us, and the largest experience. Several of them were useful Deacons for years; and far from desiring to put them out, I wish they came to the meetings more frequently.

1st. D.—I declare it is a shame to stir up class jealousies among office-bearers of the same Church. We should try to concentrate all the wisdom and energy we have on our common object, that there may be peace within our walls and prosperity within our palaces.

M.—You are very right. An open, brotherly, confiding spirit among office-bearers is of the first consequence. It baffles even the Devil himself, who exults in sowing suspicions and discords.

2nd. D.—Our Treasury is scarcely so flourishing as it was a year or two ago. I fear the general funds of the Synod must feel the hard times.

1st. D.—If the Mission to British Columbia and Vancouver's Island is prosecuted, it will be a favorite scheme with the people.

M.—I have every expectation that it will proceed. Two of our ministers, I hear, have offered to make an exploring and preaching expedition to those parts—setting out in spring.

1st. D.—Perhaps one or other of them will be so delighted with the Pacific shores that he will not come back.

M.—It would really be a fine position, worthy of a first-rate man, to found Presbyterianism in those parts. But if men of experience cannot be induced to settle there, we must try to send one or more of the young preachers or pastors. Of the young men who issue from our College, we have at least this to say, that they are generally of an enterprising missionary spirit.

2nd. D.—Do you think, Sir, that our Home Missions in Canada are sufficiently pushed?

M.—I fear not. We want more men and more money. Our enlargement is steady, but it does not surpass, if it even equals, that of some other denominations. We could however rapidly multiply our pastoral settlements, if we had even one or two thousand pounds yearly to distribute in supplements and aids over the country, in places where our cause is new, or weak and struggling.

2nd. D.—There ought to be no difficulty in raising that sum. But the distribution would have to be made with great care. I don't see how the settled ministers, with their own parishes to attend to, can keep up any sufficient supervision of destitute congregations and stations, and of wide mission fields.

1st. D.—Nor I. Might there not be two Superintendents of missions appointed, one for the east and another for the west?

M.—Such a plan has often been talked of, but Presbyteries are jealous of any new power coming into their bounds.

2nd. D.—Ah! then Presbyters are not without jealousy any more than Deacons.

M.—They are very like other men: but apart from any question of feeling, there are principles of some importance supposed to be involved—the parity of Presbyters, and the local prerogatives of the Presbytery as a Court of Government, amenable to the Synod only.

1st. D.—Still would it not be possible to have one or two Superintendents of the mission field, without real detriment to these principles?

M.—I am inclined to say that it would, provided that the appointments were given to men of good sense as well as missionary ardor. We are not, under the plea of parity, to reduce the Church to a dull level *flat*. We appoint Professors of Divinity, and though they may look for a little extra deference, no one

seriously thinks that they have any ecclesiastical standing but that of equality with the pastors. A Superintendent of Missions would be no more dangerous to parity than our Professors are. The Presbyters, too, might have all their essential rights guarded by Synodical regulation, in case the Superintendent should forget or slight their authority.

1st. D.—At all events, if the experiment failed it could be discontinued and some other plan substituted. Anything in the line of progress is better than neglect.

2nd. D.—I wish the long-talked of "Union" were fairly completed. The Church wants more size and strength for bold undertakings, and a large policy.

1st. D.—I am sure I wish for it too, but I can't think, as many seem to do, that all the delay which has occurred has been unnecessary, or blame the ministers for splitting hairs and making abstract difficulties.

M.—You have been reading and thinking on the subject, I perceive. The delay and discussion may be protracted too much, but hitherto they have done a great deal of good. And the more that the people on both sides investigate the question that needs to be adjusted in order to the formation of this Union, the more will they will see that we cannot slur it over, or wrap it in a napkin, or let it float in thin air; for it concerns the royalty of Christ and the supremacy of His laws.

2nd D.—Well! I have many friends in the United Presbyterian Church—elders and members—and I don't know one whose judgment on the protection of the Sabbath and other practical points affected by this question, does not exactly agree with our own.

1st D.—I have noticed the very same thing among my acquaintance.

M.—And so indeed have I. There is, I take it, no serious practical difference between the two Churches. But many of our friends, influential in the U. P. Synod, seem unwilling to commit their Body to any form of words, as a term of ministerial admission, containing the principle of national duty and responsibility to Christ, and without this we have no security that the present practical agreement on applications of that principle will continue.

1st D.—That is a very serious matter, and needs wise management.

2nd. D.—No doubt of it; but it seems to me there has been a most characteristic Scotch caution all along. I suppose I am too impatient; but every day as I see how our divisions throw an advantage into the hands of rivals, I can't help longing for the consolidation of the Presbyterian interest in this Province. If all the Canadian Presbyterians could agree together, and have two thorough Theological Colleges, one at Toronto and the other at Montreal, to supply the pulpits with earnest young preachers, they would form the most influential Protestant Church in the country, and the firmest barrier against Popery.

1st. D.—Right! But by influential you don't mean fashionable. In that respect the Church of England will always beat us. In all the Colonies it has drawn to itself a good many old Scottish Presbyterians who had obtained official positions, and scores of young fellows who have thought more of keeping themselves in fashionable society than of proving faithful to the Church of their forefathers.

2nd D.—There have been too many such specimens in Canada, and though not so numerous as formerly, cases still occur. I myself have known several fine young men come out to this country, sons even of Presbyterian Ministers and Elders at home, who, after a few weeks' attendance at our Church, have by and bye slipped away altogether to one of the English Churches, for no reason under the sun but to be, as they suppose, in the fashion and meet gay companions.

M.—I think it rather creditable to our Church that it has no charm for the frivolous, but, in every country where it exists, is the resort of grave and solid minds.

1st D.—Yes; and not a few serious Episcopalians would be glad to come under the sound and substantial instruction of our ministers, only they are affrighted at the thought of joining “the Dissenters.”

2nd D.—And what a deal of puppyism there is in all that style of language! Surely we are all dissenters in the only sense in which the word applies. The Episcopalians dissent from our views and usages, and we dissent from theirs. Some of them seem to suppose that the whole question between us is determined in their favor, by pursing up their mouths and calling us “the Dissenters,” and their noble selves “the Church.”

M.—Never mind! We can afford to smile. What I regret is, that so large a body of our fellow-Christians should *starch* themselves out of sympathy with the general Protestant public, and by committing themselves, or letting their Bishops and Clergy commit them, to a very exclusive position, weaken the common cause of Reformation Christianity in Canada, by which we all stand or fall. Among them are many of the best people in the country. And I like this about them, exclusive though they are, that they have a Church system, comprehensive and coherent, which will work well under good Bishops, and which I, for one, greatly prefer to the *incoherency* of the English Nonconformist Churches, or as they say in the States, “Societies.”

1st D.—I think I perceive what you would chalk out as the best line of policy: first, a union of all the Presbyterians into one strong Church; and then a good understanding between us and the Episcopal Church, as a barrier against Popery on the one hand and Sectaryism on the other.

M.—You have pretty closely expressed my mind; and if there were less selfishness in these Churches, and a more statesman-like breadth of view among their leaders, such a policy might be realised sooner than any of us now imagine.

2nd D.—Aye, if you get us breadth without laxness, and harmony of action with the Episcopalians, without betraying our old testimonies and liberties, I shall begin to rub my eyes hard with wonder.

M.—And lift up your heart in praise, I hope, also. But what a stern True Blue you are! You ought to write for the “Canadian Presbyterian.” Here I am at my own door. Good night! Good night!

THE WONDERS OF CREATION IN THE WEEDS OF THE WATERS.

We have not before attempted anything of a scientific cast in our Magazine. Other topics of a more practical nature have rather invited our attention. Perhaps, however, an article upon the little things in the kingdom of Nature, in which God gives such beautiful and glorious displays of His perfections, may be a pleasing variety to our readers. We do not propose to ourselves a treatise of such a scientific nature as by its technical and difficult terms to be unintelligible to ordinary readers. It is our desire that the Magazine should be read, and that too, with pleasure and profit. We shall therefore avoid the use of such forms of speech as may not be easily understood by persons of common intelligence.

The subject of this paper will be the Fresh-water Weeds, *Algae*, of Canada, and the evidence which they give of the perfections of Jehovah.

Very few have turned their attention to this department of Botany. To appearance it is not a very inviting one. There is not generally much *external* beauty in the species which it comprises. One has to search in ditches and stagnant pools for many of them, and to gather others from the running brooks or rivers; yet it will be found on investigation that there are few of the Creator's works more beautiful in their forms, structure, and colours, or more curious in their modes of reproduction, than these. Humble though they be, they are not without their important uses in the economy of nature. The venerable Ray, in

his "Wisdom of God in Creation," says:—"Let us not esteem anything contemptible, or inconsiderable, or below our notice taking; for this is to derogate from the Wisdom and Act of the Creator, and to confess ourselves unworthy of those endowments of Knowledge and Understanding which He hath bestowed upon us."

Let the reader accompany us on a Monday forenoon's walk, and we shall disclose to him some of the hidden mysteries of the vegetable world. Come with us to the northern suburb of the City of Montreal, out by the well-known Mile-end road. Ere we reach the Toll-bar we shall pass through a broken fence and trespass upon the enclosed field by the way-side. In a shallow pool about the middle of this large meadow, into which from the dust of the road we have passed, you will observe the stones and the blades of grass covered with a substance as red as sealing-wax. Perhaps you will think at first sight that this is nothing but iron-rust that somehow or other has found its way into this out-of-the-way place. Take this piece of limestone into your hand, pass your finger over its surface, and you will find it quite soapy to the touch; pass also these blades of grass through your fingers, and you will find a soft soapy substance of a bright red color left on your hand. Well; What, you ask, is this? We tell you that it is the *monad* of vegetation—it is the least of organized vegetable forms. It is a single celled globule, not bigger than the point of a needle, if even so large. It is the red snow plant, or, in botanical language, the *Protococcus nivalis*—which is just another name for what we have given in plain English. Now let us look at this object by the aid of an achromatic, or colorless microscope. It will require a high power to see it properly. We shall choose an object-glass that will magnify two hundred diameters. Well you will not see this plant very large, after all. It looks, you say, like the head of a pin for size; it has a brilliant scarlet or red color, bright and clear as a garnet. You will now exclaim: How beautiful! Look carefully at it, and you will see that it rests upon a bed of jelly, and is composed of a single globule or round bead, and that the red coloring matter is surrounded by a clear glassy-looking substance, in botanical phrase called hyaline or mucous. This forms the outward coat of the single cell of which this plant is composed.

You will perhaps now ask: How do these tiny plants grow? Look a little more carefully at one of the largest of them, and you will see the red matter which it contains granulated, that is, assuming the appearance of little spots or grains. These are the embryo or beginnings of young plants. By and bye they grow big, and are not pleased at the restraint imposed on them by their parent, and after some battling and much swelling they burst a hole in their mucous dwelling and escape into the wide world, to become themselves independent atoms. Look round the field of view under the microscope and you will perhaps see some clear cells without any color. These have been emptied of their contents after the manner I have described. You may also see very tiny specks of bright-red floating free in the water; these are the children, doing for themselves, and aspiring to the state of parenthood.

The history of this remarkable substance is curious. Specimens of it were brought first by Captain Ross from the Arctic Regions, under the name of Red Snow. It excited deep interest among botanists. Some thought it a Fungus of the family *Uredo*; others that it was an infusorial animal generated in the atmosphere, and falling with the rain or snow. Finally it has been classed among the *Algæ*. It covers vast tracts of snow to a considerable depth in the Arctic country. It has been seen on the Alps of Switzerland and the mountains of Scotland. On the Island of Lismore, in Ireland, it is found abundantly. In the field to which we have carried our readers it is confined to a few spots, and we have not met with it excepting in one other place at some distance from the

city. It will doubtless be found in other places abundantly. It is found either in water, melting snow, or on rocks and leaves exposed to inundation or moisture. You may take a piece of the rock covered with it home, and add it to your collection of Natural History. It will keep for a long time, and on being moistened with water will resume its natural appearance.

You may now ask, What can be the use of such a tiny speck as this? In the first place it delights us to look at it, and it informs us of the skill and contrivance of our Father in Heaven. Then again you may see, if you keep looking through the glass, that there are a few animals swimming about in the drop of water with which it is moistened almost as small as the plant itself. These plants are the food which God has provided for some of their number. The God who feeds the ravens and the young lions feeds also these atoms of animal life with those still smaller atoms of vegetation. Another use they serve is to make a fertile vegetable mould out of which other plants of a higher order and of more use than themselves may grow. They do this by manufacturing out of the water starch and mucous, and drawing substances out of the inorganic air. In a comparatively short time they will cover a rock with a rich soil, and by the action of their chemical constituents eat out and disintegrate the calcareous or limy substance which the rock contains, and on which they grow. It is very much by the agency of such *little* things that God has prepared the world for the comfortable habitation of man. They are also very beneficent in the operations of their life. Like all water plants they breathe the poisonous carbonic acid gas that arises from decayed vegetable or animal matter, and give off into the atmosphere the healthy and invigorating oxygen. You have perhaps heard lately about the polluted state of the river Thames in England, and of the disagreeable effluvia that in hot weather arises from it. Now it is well known that if water plants and algæ could be allowed to grow in that river, they would absorb all the pollution and give off an abundance of pleasant life-giving air.

I might mention other uses in which would be seen the providence of God in the creation of these little monads; but what I have now said is perhaps enough to convince you that God makes nothing in vain, and that in their beauty as well as in the actions of their life they all praise Him, and declare the wondrous perfection of His wisdom and goodness.

Now, dear reader, walk with us a few paces to the left of the little pool whose vegetable organisms we have just been looking at, and at the margin of another larger basin of clear rain-water we shall show you another curious work of God. At your feet you will find a soft, leathery kind of substance of a greenish-olive color, not unlike in color and consistency softened flakes of glue or gelatine. You will see that it assumes a rather rounded or globular form, and that it is hollow in the centre. This specimen, about, as you see, the size of a fig. is well grown, and floats free in the water; it has no attachments, no roots. Look a little more carefully and you will find smaller specimens adhering to blades of grass below the water; detach them and they will float upon the surface. You will find some of the lobes of this substance of a soft bright verdigris green, fading gradually into a clear brown olive. What, you ask, can this substance be? It is not very pleasant to the touch, and you would not perhaps have handled it had we not asked you. There is nothing, however, disagreeable about it. It will not adhere to or soil your fingers, and no unpleasant odour proceeds from it. Surely, you say, this is not a vegetable! It looks more like the spawn of a frog or some such animal than a real plant! But it is, notwithstanding, a real and a very beautiful plant. To the eye it has nothing to attract or win admiration; but its outward covering, though somewhat rough, may yet be truly compared to a leather jewel-case, which to appearance is nothing remarkable, but which when opened displays the fondly treasured pearls or brilliants. So

just let us open the outward case which you hold in your hand. We shall cut a thin slice of it with a sharp knife, and placing it between two pieces of thin glass press it gently, till it becomes a transparent object. Put it now under the microscope with the objects-glass of 200 diameters, as before and tell us what you see. "I see," you reply, "most beautiful glistening curved strings of tiny pearls; each string, too, is independent of the other, but all lying in such elegant negligence as to form a most exquisite picture. Some of them too have enlarged pearls in the centre, just as I have seen such objects arranged in the jeweller's." You will observe that they have not quite the pale lustre of pearls, but are of a pale fine green. Each string of pearls is just a string of little cells joined together. At first they are moniform, that is, like a tube with no swellings or bead-like appearances; by and bye the green contents or grains of the cells enlarge themselves and swell out, into the forms of beads, the clear hyaline or glassy case in which they are enclosed. After a time the young spores burst their prison-house and become floating independent members of the Society. These things grow in a curious way. Each cell divides itself into two, and thus forms two cells, and this process going on over the whole length of the string, it very quickly enlarges itself to its mature dimensions. You see that this is a most delicate substance—that a little pressure with your finger upon the glass will separate these strings into pieces. But look at the beautiful provision which is made for their preservation. They are encased in a strong, tough, gelatinous substance, clear and pure as crystal, and of a delicate brown color. This is the jewel-case in which the Father in Heaven encloses the pearls which in His wisdom He has formed. No better dwelling-place could be provided for them than this. It permits the freest action of their life—it binds them together in most loving embrace—it affords them access to light, air and water—the food upon which they feed. It is also curious to note, that it must be by some peculiar process, which we cannot discover, that these curved filaments secrete, or accumulate to themselves, the mass of jelly with which they are surrounded, and which is evidently fifty times larger than their own bulk.

In botanical phrase this plant belongs to the large, curious, and beautiful family of the *Nostochineæ*, or the *Nostocs*; a name which we cannot explain. Its origin and history are unknown. Probably it is an Oriental term. It is neither Greek, Latin, nor French, and, like many names of the human species, its signification is lost in the mist of antiquity. The special name of the plant we have been looking at is *Trichormus incurvus*, which just means a curved necklace or string of pearls.

Now you will allow that out of darkness light has come—that out of a most unpromising piece of jelly-looking substance, from the touch of which you would before have shrunk, you have seen a lovely instance of the wisdom and contrivance of God. This plant, like the previous one, both makes and enriches the vegetable soil—it is food for many little animals—it helps to purify the water and the air from noxious elements, and to make them suitable for animal life—it besides forms one of the great links in the chain of creation. From the atom of vegetation up to the gigantic trees of Western America, which tower three hundred feet into the air, there is a gradual stage of progression. By a diligent search into the records of creation we may trace God's beautiful handiwork from almost nothing up to the grandest and sublimest of His works. What an accumulation of evidence does not this give us of the being and perfections of Jehovah!

If our readers appear interested in this subject, we shall give them further curious instances of THE WONDERS OF CREATION IN THE WEEDS OF THE WATERS.

A. F. K.

TO AN ICEBERG.

Iceberg! thou thing of wonder! which upon
 The multitudinous waters as thy throne,
 Sittest in majesty, thy form sublime
 Fills the whole soul with awe, so grand thou art!
 Thy airy pinnacles pierce the upward air,
 Rising in form fantastic from their base,
 As if created by the fabled spirits
 Sung in old song, in frolic and in jest,
 Or to strike fear in frail humanity.
 Now sharp and clear as needles, pointed keen,
 Stretching their spires aloft unto the clouds,
 Firm 'stablished on a huge mountain's back.
 Here in vast ridges, high and long drawn out,
 As if the raging waves of ocean, caught
 By some all-potent spell, had been transformed
 To rocks of marble, or of crystal rude;—
 There in some masses piled, but all confused,
 Irregular, as if some stately tower
 Disrupting, had fallen down in direful ruin,
 Its massive stones, whilst they were falling, fixed
 Even on the very spot, where first they touched.
 Magnificent thou art, when the sunbeam,
 Glancing upon thy many-angled sides,
 Reflected back in iridescence bright,
 Sparkles with diamond sheen, now ruby red,
 Now green as emerald; anon the golden hue
 Changes to opal white; now all in one,
 Now one in all, in scintillations bright,
 Passing in transmutation quick as thought.
 Yet thou art coldly grand; the air is chill
 Which sweeps around thee; the gazer wraps his cloak
 Closer about him, and looks upon thy bulk
 With shuddering admiration.

There was a man
 Whose life was an accumulation of vast wealth.
 Abundance poured itself into his store:
 Like Midas, everything he touched grew gold
 As if by magic. Fortune's unequal hand
 Contributed to swell his greatness up.
 His chariot flew along the dusty road;
 And when he walked abroad men greeted him
 With low obeisance, proud if but one word
 He deigned to drop on their servility.
 He lived in luxury, but not in love.
 The poor looked on him, and went shivering by,
 Chilled with his icy splendor. For them, no look
 Of sympathy was darted from his eye;
 No kindly hand proffered the smallest mite
 From his vast store; no word, which, soft as down,

Warm as the summer's sunbeam, bid them hope
 For better days and brighter joys to come,
 Fell from his lips ; no sigh from his cold heart.
 And thus, upon prosperity's bright sea,
 He floated buoyant ; till one brief sad day
 Sapp'd his secure foundation, and he fell ;
 As thou shalt fall, thou proud, cold Icicle !
 Fall with a crash into the surging waves,
 Which back recoiling, for a moment stunn'd,
 Regathering force, shall foam, and roar, and hiss,
 And leap exultant on thee, searching keen,
 Thy every nook and cranny, in their zeal
 For thy destruction ; licking thy greatness down,
 To their own baseness.

Sublime thou art,
 As on the heaving waves thou sittest calm ;
 Like to an Empress on her glorious throne,
 High-robed in gorgeous splendor, flashing bright,
 Till men with reverence, bow their lofty heads,
 And humble salutation make. We gaze on thee,
 And our adoring hearts lift up on high,
 To Him who made thee so magnificent.
 Thou art His workmanship, who from the first,
 Spake earth into existence from the deep.
 He gave the word, and water, air, and fire,
 Snow, rain, and subtle fluid electrical.
 His willing servants, met at His command ;
 And working silently through the still night,
 Gave thee thy form and substance, changing hues,
 And varied shapes, fantastic as a dream.—
 His work, who shades the lilly's shrinking form,
 Who paints its beauty, and adorns with grace
 Its tiny flower ; enriches its perfume,
 Refreshing sweet unto the fevered one.—
 His work, who spreads abroad earth's fertile soil
 With varied green ; who, rich in all He does,
 With lavish hand pours out the teeming store,
 Who heaves on high the mountains, spreads the plains,
 And sends the foaming rivers flowing down,
 Scattering abundance upon every side,
 To lose themselves in mighty ocean's wave.

All Thy works praise Thee, Lord ! And shall the song
 Be hushed, when Man, Thy last and noblest work,
 Looks round upon Thy fair creation vast ?
 No ! let the strain from human lips ascend,
 Let human hearts the melody accord ;
 And from the rising East, to setting West,
 Let the glad anthem roll in swelling tone—
 " Oh Lord, our God, Thou hast done all things well !"

THE UNION QUESTION ABROAD.

There is evidently a tendency in the Presbyterian Churches of the present day, to seek some common ground on which the divided family may again harmoniously unite. Every where the same question is asked; why don't we unite? and everywhere the same answer is given—we do not know! It is hard to give an intelligent statement, with which a Christian can sympathise, of the grounds and reasons of our separation. In the Colonies, the rigid boundaries which State statutes have marked out for favoured communions at home, have no place at all. Such being the case, it does seem possible for men who have the love of God in their hearts, to devise some common *form* of confession, on which, without violating any principle held by either, to become an incorporate body. It is evident that there is no *prima facie* obstacle to union. The three Churches into which the family is separated lie parallel to, and not across one another. We are not like old school and new school with their antagonistic doctrines and principles of ecclesiastical procedure. Nor are we like Presbytery and Prelacy with their mutual repulsions and innate antipathies. But to use an illustration coined by a prince of figurative speech, we are like the little pools which the receding tide leaves upon the sea shore, in which the elements of each are the same, and to unite which the waters of divine grace have but to rise and with their mighty impulses obliterate the walls of separation.

Our Sister Churches in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia are fraternally striving to effect a happy union. Conferences are being held—brotherly feeling increases apace—hearts are warming with affection for one another—eyes are being opened to discern the lineaments of Christ in one another's christianity. We fondly anticipate a glorious result. The all-conquering love of Christ will yet overcome the divisive, and it may be unconsciously divisive, tendencies of human nature. As an evidence of progress we present our readers with the Basis of Union agreed upon by the Committees of the Free and United Presbyterian Churches of Nova Scotia. These articles are admirable in spirit and conception. In some respects we even like them better than our own. In their terms they are more simple, and they carefully and wisely avoid the Sibboleths of either party. They make full provision for perfect liberty of conscience, and yet state with equal clearness, point and brevity the supremacy of Christ over the nations. The *third* article excels ours in the skilful way in which the responsibility of the civil magistrate to God is stated. As to the mode in which this responsibility may be discharged, they do not, as we think wisely, condescend upon any statement, and deem, that, in regard to it, they are not called upon to come to any deliverance.

Perhaps some such clause as this is just what our United Presbyterian brethren in this country desiderate, to satisfy their scruples and to clear their conscience. If so, the Committee on Union may take advantage of the wisdom which comes from the East of us, and introduce into our basis a similar form of words.

We extract the following from "*The Ecclesiastical and Missionary Record of the Free Church of Nova Scotia*," and commend it to the careful perusal of our readers:—

"The Committees on Union of the Presbyterian and Free Synods of Nova Scotia met for conference at Halifax on the 22nd September. There was a good attendance of both Committees:—the number who took part in the conference being ten in all. Professor King was called to the chair, and Mr. McGregor appointed Secretary.

The Basis of Union which had been drawn up and agreed upon in the course

of the negotiations for union, which took place in 1844-46, was taken up by the meeting, considered in its details, and unanimously adopted.

Some conversation took place respecting the best mode of combining or amalgamating the two Colleges, when the union of the Synods should be consummated. A Sub-Committee was appointed to consider this matter and report to another meeting of the Joint Committees, to be held about the beginning of March.

The following is the Basis of the Union which the Committees have agreed to recommend to their respective Synods:—

The Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, and the Synod of Nova Scotia adhering to the Westminster Standards, recognising each other as Churches of Christ, deploring the differences which have hitherto existed between them, and desirous of forming a union, agree to the following statement of principles as a basis.

I. That whatever designation may be adopted by the united Church, it shall be in all respects free and completely independent of foreign jurisdiction and interference, but may hold friendly intercourse with sister Churches whose soundness in faith and whose ecclesiastical polity accord with the sentiments of the united body.

II. That the great object of the union shall be the advancement of the Redeemer's Glory, by a more visible expression of the unity and love of the members of Christ's body, the cultivation of a more fervent piety, devoted zeal, and practical Godliness, and subordinate thereto the setting forth of a more united testimony against all Popish, Socinian, Arminian, Erastian, and other heresies, as these have been exhibited in past ages, or are now manifested under the garb of the religion of Jesus, and the providing by the combined exertions of the United Body of a duly qualified ministry for an efficient dispensation of Gospel ordinances within our bounds, and for the enlargement and permanence of the Church, and the preparation of a platform of discipline for the sake of obtaining a uniformity in the proceedings of Ecclesiastical Courts.

III. That the Standards of the United Church shall be the Confession of Faith, with the Catechisms Larger and Shorter;—the following explanations being subjoined, in reference to the statement in the Confession regarding the power of the civil magistrate *circa sacra*, as limited by the act of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 27th August, 1647, and excepted to by the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia.

1st. That the United Body disclaim as unscriptural, all right on the part of the Civil Magistrate to regulate or review the procedure of the Courts of Christ's Church, maintaining that the Church is a free institute under law to Jesus, and to be ruled entirely by his authority, and furnished by him with ample power to meet, deliberate, and consult in his name whenever, and as often as, the rights or interests or government of his house may require.

2nd. That while recognising magisterial authority as an ordinance of God for good to man, and holding in the language of the Associate Presbytery, that "it is peculiarly incumbent on every civil State wherein Christianity is introduced, to study and bring to pass that civil government among them run in agreeableness to the mind of God, be subservient to the spiritual kingdom of Jesus Christ and to the interests of true religion," a principle clearly founded on the supremacy of our Lord Jesus Christ over the Church and over the nations, this United Body repudiates the idea of attempting to enforce the belief or profession of Christianity by the power of the sword, as alike contrary to the law of Christ, the Spirit of His Gospel, the rights of conscience, and the liberties of man.

3rd. Finally, while recognising the responsibility of the civil magistrate to God, and praying for the time when "kings shall be nursing fathers and their queens nursing mothers" to the Church, the Synod finds that the question as to

the mode in which the civil magistrate may discharge his responsibility, is one in which, in their circumstances, they are not called upon to come to any deliverance."

From the United Presbyterian Magazine we also subjoin a very interesting communication, read before the Mission Board of that Church in Scotland, by the Rev. A. M. Ramsay of Melbourne, now at home, and which was received with pleasure by the Committee and called forth their cordial thanks. It is as follows:—

"A general Presbyterian union is evidently at hand. Negotiations for this purpose have been carried on for years, amongst the three great divisions of the Presbyterian interest. About two years and a half ago, such a union seemed on the point of being consummated—the union committees of the several bodies having come to a perfect understanding as to the position which the united body should take in reference to the subject of the duty and province of the civil magistrate in matters of religion. The Free Church Synod, however, at the time, were not prepared to adopt the recommendation of their own committee; and no further progress was made. Shortly after this, a considerable number of the ministers of that Synod, having accepted the Government aid, notwithstanding the public and practical protest which the Synod had made in the early part of its history against the indiscriminate endowment of truth and error pursued in the colony, a fresh difficulty was experienced in conducting our union negotiations. More recently still, an attempt to form a union between the Free Church and the Established section has resulted in a division of the Free Church—there being at the present time two parties claiming to be the Free Presbyterian Church of Victoria. But notwithstanding these unhappy agitations, and strange as it may seem, a friendly feeling exists between the ministers and congregations of the different Presbyterian bodies; indeed, the late, and, as we believe, temporary distractions and divisions that have taken place, both amongst the United Presbyterians and the Free Church, have only deepened the conviction of the absolute necessity for a general union. There is a majesty in numbers, and a weight in the councils of a large assemblage, the want of which is painfully felt in our Colonial Synods. By a general Presbyterian Union, the feeling of individual responsibility would be increased, calmness and breadth would be given to our deliberations, and differences of opinion in public questions would be prevented from assuming the character of personal disputes; while the general order, discipline and efficiency of our churches would be more thoroughly secured. There are upwards of 42,000 Presbyterians in the colony of Victoria; and I do not know that from any other religious denomination a more powerful influence for good could emanate, were they all united into one grand ecclesiastical community. With the acknowledged compactness of structure and unity of action which our common Presbyterianism presents, and fired with the heavenly zeal and energy of its Knoxes and Erskines, and Gillespies and Chalmerses, what blessed results to the Church of Christ, and the country at large might we not anticipate."

LONG AND SHORT SERMONS.

From the Presbyterian Expositor.

There seems to have long been a very general sentiment in favor of *short* sermons. Indeed, we occasionally meet with language on this subject, from which the inference would be almost legitimate, that one of the chief excellencies of a minister of the Gospel is, to say as little as possible to his people. "There

is nothing," says Rev. Wm. Jay, "against which a preacher should be more guarded, than length." And he adds—"I never err in this way myself, but my conviction always laments it; and, for many years after I began preaching, I never offended in this way. I never surpassed three-quarters of an hour, at most. I saw one excellency was within my reach,—it was brevity; and I determined to obtain this." The same excellent writer quotes Lamont as saying—"Nothing can justify a long sermon. If it be a good one, it need not be long; and if it be a bad one, it ought not to be long." We cannot help thinking that wise and good men employ such sweeping language without due reflection. When Mr. Jay says, there is *nothing* against which a preacher should be more guarded than length, his language needs to be much qualified; and when Lamont says, *nothing* can justify a long sermon, he condemns the Apostle Paul, who preaching on a certain occasion, "continued his speech until midnight." He must have preached a very long sermon; and though a certain young man fell asleep, and then fell from a window, there was doubtless *something* to justify its length.

The words *long* and *short* convey to the mind no definite idea, unless there be a standard to which they refer; and, so far as we are informed, there is no fixed standard by which to measure the length of sermons. Some would insist upon *thirty minutes* as the average length: others would allow thirty-five or forty. Mr. Jay thought he preached short sermons, when he did not exceed forty-five minutes. The late Dr. Miller, of Princeton, quotes with approbation the saying of Whitfield, that "a sermon of more than an hour long, though preached by an angel, would appear tedious, unless the hearers were angels too;" and he expresses the opinion that "where there is more than one service statedly performed, no sermon ought ever, on an ordinary occasion, to be more than forty-five minutes in length." Dr. Doddridge, without attempting to determine the number of minutes, said to his students—"Know when to have done,—and if good and pertinent thoughts arise in the mind, take care not to pursue them too far, so as to draw out your discourse to an immoderate length."

This subject is, undoubtedly, one of great practical importance. With much diffidence, we venture to enter a qualified dissent from the indiscriminate laudations of short sermons, and condemnation of long ones, with which we constantly meet. We have no doubt that sermons may be, and often are, too long; and we have as little doubt that they may be, and sometimes are, too short. We are also quite clear in the conviction, that no very definite rules can be laid down on the subject. A minister may preach very short sermons because he desires not to labor more than necessity demands; and people may prefer to hear them, either because they regard the hearing of preaching as an irksome duty, or as a Sabbath entertainment. The Scriptures contain a very extensive system of Divine truth, of great practical importance. Ministers are appointed to teach this system to the people; and the people are the disciples, or learners. Judicious ministers, like judicious teachers in other departments, will determine, in view of existing circumstances, how often they should appear before their people, and what time should be occupied in their discourses. A few suggestions, however, may not be out of place.

I. The proper length of a sermon depends partly upon the other services which precede and follow it. The prayers are, in many instances, not only long, but tediously so. We venture to suggest, that part of the zeal expended against long sermons, be employed against long prayers. If the sermon ought not to exceed thirty or thirty-five minutes, it is scarcely reasonable that the prayers should occupy fifteen or twenty minutes each. A prayer of ten minutes before sermon, and a prayer of five minutes at the close, would leave more time for the instruction of the people; and such prayers would be long enough

for edification. Long prayers and short sermons seem to be the order of the day,—although the Scriptures seem not to favor long prayers in public.

It is likewise common for pastors not only to read a portion of Scripture before the sermon, but to spend some minutes in expounding it. If these expositions are longer, the sermon should be shorter; but frequently the pastor, desiring to discuss pretty fully some important doctrine or duty, may deem it wise to omit the exposition, and to occupy the time in preaching. In such cases, the sermon may properly be of greater length. At communion seasons, if the administration of the Supper immediately follows the sermon, it should be shorter than at other times. Dr. Miller very properly fixes the length of the entire service, on ordinary occasions, at an hour and a half.

II. The length of a sermon should depend partly upon the character of it. If it be rather of the nature of a moral essay, it ought to be very short; for such discourses, ordinarily, do not arouse the mind to think, nor reach the feelings of the heart. Failing to awaken deep interest, they soon weary the hearers. If the sermon be dryly doctrinal, it should be short; for, whilst such discourses make an appeal to the intellect, they touch not the heart, neither do they reach the imagination, or gratify the taste. The mass of the people, unaccustomed to close, unexciting investigations, soon grow weary of dry logic, and either fall asleep, or think of something more interesting. If the sermon is destitute of logical connection—consisting of common place or desultory remarks—it ought to be short. Such sermons fail to instruct, and cannot excite any very deep interest. If sermons are chiefly hortatory or declamatory, they will not long hold the attention of the congregation. If the style is very polished and starchy; if the sentences are artificially formed, the antitheses obviously arranged coolly and tastily; the sermon ought to be quite short. That which is artificial may interest for a short time; but nature soon wearies of what is unnatural. If the sermon be highly rhetorical, abounding in figures and flowers, and aspiring to the sublime, it should be short. Preserves and sweet meats do very well to finish a dinner with, or to taste, when one is not hungry; but they make a very undesirable regular meal. The mind may be pleased and excited by the beauties and sublimities of the mere orator; but this state of feeling can be maintained but a short time. Perhaps the better plan would be to preach very few sermons of either of the kinds now mentioned.

But if sermons are instructive, whether doctrinal, historical, biographical, experimental or practical, provided the views presented are clear, are presented with animation and with deep feeling on the part of the preacher, illustrated in a manner suited to the audience; they may be longer. A discourse of thirty minutes, if it fails to interest the hearer, will appear longer than one of twice or thrice the length, of a different character. The first great secret of successful teaching or preaching, is to awaken interested thought in the mind of the pupil or hearer. Tell him something he did not know, or did not know so well; or present some new and striking view of truths already understood. The human mind is inquisitive, and the feelings readily become interested with new and striking views. Most persons have heard, and read, and thought enough on the various doctrines and duties of religion to have felt themselves in some degree of perplexity. Explain what they do not understand, or remove difficulties or objections; and they will listen to you. The preacher who excites his audience *to think*, within the first five minutes of his discourse, has overcome the chief difficulty in holding their interested attention. He has then only to furnish matter for continued thought; and if his own feelings warm with the progress of the discussion, the interest of his people will deepen with his. Many preachers occupy fifteen minutes in a sort of general introduction, before fairly entering upon the subject they design to treat. This is time worse than lost;

For the people begin to feel impatient, and their attention to flag, before the preacher has fairly reached his subject. Let the first sentence be to the point, and excite the minds of the hearers to think, and then lead them on from thought to thought, as fast as their minds can well travel; and at the end of fifty-five minutes they will feel no weariness.

The faithful pastor will instruct his people in the *doctrines* of the Gospel. Frequently he will give a pretty full discussion of a doctrine in a single discourse. How can this be done in a sermon of thirty, or even of forty-five minutes? Take, for example, the Divinity of Christ, Divine Decrees, Regeneration, Preservance, &c. He must be a remarkable man, who can give a satisfactory discussion of any one of these and similar subjects, in the time allowed by the advocates of short sermons. It is indeed possible very much to condense our arguments and remarks; but it is not easy to do so before a popular audience, without becoming obscure. The reply of Pitt, when charged with diffuseness, is specially applicable to the preaching of the Gospel: "A man who addresses a popular assembly, must either use repetition or diffusion; and I prefer the latter." We have preached a great many times on the great doctrine of the Gospel; and when discussing such subjects, our discourses have seldom been shorter than an hour. Yet we do not remember to have lost the fixed and interested attention of any congregation, in the city or in the country, whilst delivering such discourses. We have twice delivered a series of biographical discourses, embracing not less than twenty-one—commencing in the Spring and running through the short, hot evenings of Summer—not one of which occupied less than an hour; and yet our house has been crowded to overflowing during the entire course. And this series of discourses was delivered in two of our large cities. We have delivered several other series of discourses during winter evenings, of similar length, and with the same results. The true secret of holding the attention of audiences, and preventing weariness, is to be found far more in the character of sermons, than in the length of them. Time flies rapidly when the mind is deeply interested. What is more common than to see large assemblies listen for hours to a public debate, without feeling any weariness? It is all a mistake to suppose that weariness necessarily begins, when people have listened to a speaker more than thirty-five, or even more than fifty-five minutes. Hundreds of times have we seen a whole audience feeling intensely at the end of a sermon an hour long; and many a time have we seen congregations show manifest signs of weariness, under sermons of less than forty minutes.

III. In determining the proper length of sermons, the circumstances of the people should be considered. In our large cities, a considerable portion of the people have the opportunity of hearing their pastors twice or thrice per week; yet, as a matter of fact, many of them hear them but once. And during the Summer months not a few of them do not hear their pastors at all. The amount of time, therefore, spent under the instruction of their pastors, during each year, by the majority of our city congregations, is really very small—far too small, when we consider the extensive system of truth they ought to learn to understand. Still, however, the religious privileges of those residing in cities and large towns, are very much greater than those of persons residing in country places. The pastors of our country churches know, that much the larger portion of their people hear but one sermon per week; and multitudes of them, only one in two weeks, or even less. Many of them ride from five to ten miles, often over bad roads, in inclement weather, to get to church. Now, it may answer to preach thirty-minute sermons to our city churches; the frequency of them may compensate for the shortness. But to preach such sermons to people who can hear but one sermon in one, two or three weeks, and who have no other public religious privileges, is to reduce them to starvation. If the

teacher cannot meet his pupils often, common sense says, let him spend more time and teach them more, when he does meet them. And if the pastor of a country church will take the pains to prepare for his people a good, large meal, he will find them hungry enough to eat it without dropping to sleep. In some of our country churches, the custom is to have two sermons, with an interval of half an hour. Where this arrangement can be made, shorter sermons would be better.

There are circumstances which justify very lengthy sermons. A minister, for example, is called to preach for a few days to a vacant church, or to aid a young brother in a series of meetings. The people desire to hear sermons on several important subjects, during his stay; and the state of things in the community renders it important that he discuss these subjects fully. This he cannot do, answering the objections of errorists, in short sermons. Some years ago, we spent a few days in upper Missouri. We had occasion to preach on Justification, Regeneration, and the mode and subjects of baptism. And then certain sceptics, men of intelligence and standing, sent a request for us to preach a sermon on the Inspiration of the Bible. Several of these discourses occupied from an hour and a half to two hours. The house was crowded to its utmost capacity; and the interest was general and intense, and we have reason to know that the results were most happy. This was by no means an unusual occurrence in our experience. How absurd to say, *nothing* can justify a long sermon!

The state of religious feeling must be taken into consideration, in determining the proper length of sermons. Every pastor has observed how much easier it is to gain and hold the attention of his people, when the standard of piety is high, than when it is low. In times of revival all agree, that preaching should be more frequent than at other times. Then people will listen to a larger number of sermons, and will be profited by them. And the very same interest which makes them desire more frequent preaching, will make them willing and even anxious to hear longer sermons, if they cannot hear them as frequently as they should. At such times, moreover, it becomes occasionally necessary to instruct them very fully in regard to some particular doctrine. Laboring, some years ago, in a powerful revival in a church in Ohio, we were requested to preach a sermon on the mode and subjects of baptism, inasmuch as the minds of several of the young converts were unsettled on these points. It was evidently better not to preach on the subject, than to handle it superficially. The sermon occupied two hours and a half, and was heard not only with unabated interest, but with deep feeling.

Again—the time of the year should modify the length of sermons. In the heat of Summer and in the short Summer evenings, ordinary discourses should be shorter, because it is more difficult for the people to hear profitably.

IV. The cast of the preacher's mind, and his peculiar gifts as a speaker, should be considered in determining the length of sermons. There are some preachers—men of impulsive, but undisciplined minds—who make their deepest impression upon an audience within thirty minutes, but who cannot keep up the interest much longer. There are others whose forte is in the clear, logical presentation of truth. In preaching very short sermons they would fail to interest their hearers deeply; but their subjects increase in interest as they proceed from step to step, and their closing appeal comes with the steadily accumulating force of conclusive arguments, until it seems almost irresistible. Every judicious minister can determine for himself how long he can profitably hold the attention of his people; and no wise man will continue his discourse, when there are evidences of weariness. We readily admit, that very few men ought to attempt, on ordinary occasions, to preach longer than from forty-five to fifty five minutes; but the circumstances are so various, that no definite rule, as it seems to us, can be applicable to all cases.

IMPROVEMENT OF PRAISE.

(From the English Presbyterian Messenger.)

There is so much common sense and so many admirable suggestions in the following letter, written by a Gentleman in Liverpool, whose knowledge of the subject entitle him to speak with authority, that we deem it may be for the promotion of Church psalmody in our own Churches to reprint it in the "Presbyter." No subject is deserving of more attention than this at the present day, no department of public worship has fallen into such a lamentable state of neglect in the Presbyterian Churches of Canada as this. It is time that something was done to improve our service of Praise. Strenuous efforts are being made both in Scotland and England for this purpose. To those who feel an interest in this subject, this letter will be highly appreciated.

"DEAR SIR—I was very glad to see this most important subject referred to in your last number. It is one in which I have always felt a great interest, in connection with the progress of our church. As you formerly, on several occasions, were kind enough to insert in the "Messenger" some previous remark of mine on the subject, I trust you will also admit the present communication.

It is not so much the want of efficient precentors that is the great drawback, as the apathy of the general body of the people in our congregations in following or accompanying the precentors; and an amendment in that respect, to any great extent, will never take place till greater attention is paid, and more prominence given to this subject, under the auspices of our ministers and managers.

The plans suggested by 'A Precentor' are most excellent for the purpose in view; but I have seen, and know from experience, that the exertions of our precentors will be successful *only* 'if assisted by the minister and office-bearers' of our own respective churches. I have seen those exertions succeed when so assisted and countenanced; and I have seen them fail, over and over again, when not so countenanced, and it will be so again.

I have talked, and written, and acted, with reference to this subject, until I am almost inclined to lose faith in 'perseverance,' (which, under Providence, has raised me from the plough to a profession,) and I now write under the disheartening belief that I might as well save me the trouble.

The fact is, we have been so long accustomed to a lethargic and careless mode of performing that portion of our church services now referred to, that we seem to be oblivious to our faults in that respect.

Those excellent 'composures,' the 'Confession of Faith,' and 'Directory,' insist upon its being 'the duty of Christians to praise God,' the voice being 'tuneable,' with 'grace in the heart.' A higher Directory still, the Bible, inculcates the same doctrine, and urges the performance of the duty. The importance of that duty does not, however, seem to impress itself sufficiently on the hearts and minds of our people; neither is much trouble taken in order to become possessed of the tuneable voice—the grace in the heart being dormant.

The sitting posture, when singing, which is adhered to in some of our churches, is quite consonant to our lethargic manner of offering praise. I, however, consider it a very irreverent act towards Him to whom the praise is offered. There is no doubt that, anciently, the people 'stood and praised.' It was all very well to sit in church in Scotland on such occasions, after walking

"Over the hills and far awa."

as I have often done myself, but I confess it has a very lazy appearance. It puts one in mind of fire-side or family-party singing.

I am no latitudinarian; and though now within the fold of the Presbyterian

church in England, I was brought up in the arms of the Scottish establishment, in the good old lazy, cozy, sleepy times, when there was no motion in the still waters of orthodoxy, except the commotion now and then caused by placing a minister over the heads, or, at all events, against the will of the people. I confess, however, I am ashamed to read such a sentence in the public prints as 'the antipathy of Presbyterians to church music,' knowing that the reference is to our church; and I don't like at all our being called 'sour Presbyterians.'

The Scotch are famed for secular music, and why should they not be so for sacred music also?

"There's one of music's loveliest wreaths entwined
In Scottish hearts, and liberty's the tree
On which the sacred blossoms had their growth."

The practice which extensively prevails amongst us of singing, and of hearing sung, those lovely melodies which are 'entwined in Scottish hearts,' ought surely to prove that our voices and hearts, when properly attuned, are capable of being used, for holier songs and higher affections. It is, however, lamentable to think that there are very many in our congregations who 'can sing a good song,' as it is called, who would, nevertheless, be utterly unable, and indeed ashamed, to stand up and lead in singing a tune for a psalm or hymn. We must, however learn to sing, as well as learn to pray. There must be practice also if we wish for perfection.

I often feel sorry, on looking round in church, at the times of singing, to see the lips of many closed, and to hear others only joining in soft murmurs. How does such conduct agree with the injunctions 'O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard.' 'Play' (and why not *sing*?) 'skillfully with a loud noise.' 'Make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms.'

The fact is, that the mode in which our church services are conducted does not tend to encourage psalmody. Our sermons, generally, are prolonged too much, and, in consequence thereof, we are often treated only to a verse or two, to redeem the time. I submit that that is not as it ought to be. Our Lord and his disciples sang a hymn (which is understood to have been composed of several psalms,) and not a verse or two thereof. Our gratitude to our great Benefactor is small, if it be to be measured by the extent of our praises. 'The voice of nature is *unceasing* praise.'

The best and ablest divines encouraged sacred music. Without taking up much more of your space, I would only refer to what Luther said on the subject, namely, 'Next unto theology, I give the place and highest honour unto music.' 'I want to see the arts, especially that of music, in the service of Him who has given and created it.' 'Young men ought not to be ordained into holy orders until they are well experienced in school knowledge and in singing.'

It is quite certain that with us we should not at all be the worse of possessing a little more of the ornamental and graceful in art in our churches. There is a 'beauty of holiness,' as well as a 'spirit of holiness.'

"For God delights in beauty as in truth."

When I attend occasionally, other places of worship where there is good singing, I lament our deficiency. If we were to pay proper attention to the cultivation of the human voice in psalmody, we should hear less respecting the use of the mechanical instrument, the organ; and whether we sing 'in unison,' or 'choral harmony,' practice is necessary.

Apologising for the length of this letter, which however is merited by the subject,

I am, Sir, yours, faithfully,

W. SINCLAIR.

WORDS OF THE WISE.

THE CHRISTIAN'S GOD THE GOD OF ALL GRACE.

BY THE REV. H. NEWCOMB, M.A., 1696.

He is the "God of all Grace," on account of his clemency and condescension.

One may have access to him with boldness through Christ. "Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high, who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth." Ps. cxiii. 5. 6. "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" It was condescension in God to look on man in his innocency, or to look on glorified spirits in heaven; but it is his pleasure to see his creatures happy, and he delights to do them good. It was grace in God that he made man happy at first, gave him such noble faculties, and entered into covenant with him; but his grace is manifested to us much more in our fallen condition, now that we have forfeited all by sin, and made ourselves sinners: "God made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions." God might have left man in this state, but he is "full of compassion."

It is infinite clemency in God that pardon should be enjoyed when a sinner repents. This is not after the manner of men: if a man accused before the judge were to say, all that has been sworn against me is true, and I have done thus and thus, but I am sorry for it; would it not be replied, what is that to us, we are sorry you took no better care, but the law must be observed? Man has not power to forgive some offences, he is limited by God; and sometimes when a man has power in his hands to forgive another, he has no power in his heart. Not so with the God of all grace, who has both authority and mercy, and when a sinner heartily repents, through Jesus Christ, he pardons and forgives him. This is infinite grace, and the convinced sinner thinks so when he feels the intolerable weight of sin removed: "Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile."

It shows the infinite clemency of God to admit sinners into so near a relation as that into which they are brought through Jesus Christ: "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." John i. 12. If God were to pardon a poor wretch and let him live, it would be great grace, but much more that he should receive him into the number of his children. O the infinite grace of God, that contrives every thing to make those happy whom he loves; to make them his children! He gives them the disposition of children to love and fear him, and gives them a right to all the privileges of his children:—this is the happiness of the regenerate.

He proves his clemency and condescension by hearing the prayers of his people. God is known by this character; a prayer-hearing and answering God. His children, through Christ, prevail with him for what they want. Is not this infinite grace, that he should hearken to man; that it should be said: "This

poor man cried and the Lord heard him?" God delights in the prayers of poor sinful creatures; and there is scarce any great thing done for his Church and people, but it comes in answer to prayer. He does not stir up his people to earnest prayer, but he hears them in what they pray for: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." James v. 16. If thou art in covenant with God, thy prayer shall prevail; and if thou art striving, groaning, and wrestling in prayer, he sees it; and through his grace thou shalt obtain what thou prayest for, according to his will. Is not this infinite condescension, that he should be nigh unto all that call upon him in truth? We have free liberty, through Christ, to come with boldness to a throne of grace.

POETRY.

THE HEARER OF PRAYER.

Of all the names beneath the heaven
Which is the fittest to be given
To Him who rules on high?
What phrase, that mortal lips can frame,
Is least unworthy of Thy fame,
Great Lord of earth and sky?

In vain we seek to shadow forth
Thy power, thy truth, thy matchless worth,
Thy love, thy ceaseless care.
To inspiration's page we turn,
And there the words in glory burn—
"Oh Thou, that hearest prayer!"

Not all the eloquence sublime,
That graced each sage of earlier time,
Such words could e'er devise:
Mighty to bind with viewless chain
Man's spirit to his God again,
To draw him to the skies.

Poor wanderers on life's darkling way,
Uncertain still, and apt to stray,
Unsafe, whate'er our care,
It is a blessed thought indeed
That Thou art near us in our need—
That Thou dost hear our prayer.

The angel hosts that round Thee fly
Exalt thy praise above the sky,
And fill the heavenly air.
But sweeter notes shall swell the hymn,
When saints redeemed shall worship Him
Through whom Thou hearest prayer.

A. J. W.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES OF BOOKS.

THE NEW ENGLAND THEOCRACY: a History of the Congregationalists in New England to the Revivals of 1740. By H. F. UHLEN. Translated from the 2nd German edition, by H. O. Conant. Boston: Gould & Lincoln. pp. 303.

The idea of this volume was suggested to the author by the late Dr. Neander who has introduced it with a short preface, expressive of his interest in all that concerns the American Churches. Brief as the history is, we consider it a satisfactory treatment of the theme, being executed with the carefulness and intelligence characteristic of a German scholar. For some minds the topic may have little attraction, but it is rich in instruction for those who care to study the tendencies, and to note the outworkings and comparative values, of ecclesiastical systems.

The history opens with a notice of the rise of the Independents in old England, and bearing them to the shores of America, traces their career in New England to the middle of the 18th century. The chief figures in the narrative of course are John Robinson of Leyden, Governor Winthrop of Massachusetts, John Cotton of Boston, Increase Mather, and his son Cotton Mather—and finally, President Edwards. But not even our high estimate of these men, and our respect for the grave earnestness of the Puritan settlers generally, can induce or enable us to contemplate with any degree of pleasure the ecclesiastical history of New England. Mr. Uhden leads us correctly through the intricate controversies that were waged on the questions of Church Membership and the Sacraments, and accurately describes the various declarations and "platforms" constructed at Saybrook and elsewhere. But, though himself disposed to admire, the author will scarcely succeed in enlisting any warm admiration of the public, out of New England, in favor of the early Colonial Congregationalists.

The shameful persecution of Baptists and Quakers in Massachusetts is narrated with some minuteness. Several instances which occurred of the tyrannical suppression of young Presbyterian organisations by the dominant Independents, might also have been mentioned, but were perhaps unknown to Mr. Uhden. We are not however to single out for special reprobation acts of intolerance that occurred in an intolerant age, and that had too many precedents and parallels in other parts of Christendom.

Apart from these acts altogether, we are compelled to say, that the entire history, even as written by a friendly pen, makes on us an impression unfavorable to the whole scheme and system of Independency. It began its course in New England with numerous advantages—a homogeneous and pious people—a connection with the State that conferred influence and provided substantial maintenance, without any restraint on its Christian freedom—an able and zealous ministry of the Word. But it frittered away its force in discussions and controversies, let slip its old orthodox symbols, became infected and at one time almost extinguished by Unitarianism. It has revived in recent years—but only as one of the Denominations, no longer as *the* Denomination or Church of New England. It has discontinued the office of Ruling Elder which at first it recognised;—it has altered the original functions of the Deacon;—it has dropped the venerable creeds, confessions, and catechisms which the first Independents so highly esteemed—and notwithstanding various attempts to obtain some of the benefits of the Presbyterian government, it has adhered to and become the servant of an unchecked and uncertain democracy.

The propriety of the title "New England Theocracy," appears from the very strict connection established by the Puritan Settlers between Church and State. Desirous to realise the ideal of a Christian Commonwealth, they admitted to State

Office, and even to the position of Freemen in Massachusetts, none but Church members of their own persuasion. This was of course associated with another principle, that none should be members of a Church, unless their avowed faith, experience and life were such as the Church approved. The theory, though conceived in a fair sense of duty, proved as all the world knows, impracticable. It was, in our judgment, a better theory than that of the extreme voluntaries of modern times—but failed, because it did not recognize the fundamental differences between a Church and a State, and therefore did not so much ally and connect, as confound them, and compromise the character and integrity of both.

The bearings of the New England experiment on the relation of Church and State seem to have interested Dr. Neander, who was, like many of the more advanced Continental divines, weary of the Erastianism under which the Lutheran Church lies, but he remarks truly that the *emancipation* of the Church from the State, which is the thing needed, does not necessarily require the *separation* of the Church from the State. We observe that this great question, which every where begins to raise fresh discussion and evidently awaits fresh solutions, has been a leading topic of enquiry and debate at the recent meeting of the "Kirchentag" at Hamburg. The working of the German mind on a question so long agitated in Great Britain and America, will possess a peculiar value and interest.

Of the volume before us, we have only further to say, that it is printed and published by Messrs. Gould & Lincoln, in their usual correct and pleasing style.

THE HARVEST AND THE REAPERS; HOME WORK FOR ALL, AND HOW TO DO IT. By Rev. H. NEWCOMB. Boston: Gould & Lincoln. pp. 270.

The amiable and earnest author of this book has dedicated it to the converts in the revival of 1858. Its design is to awaken a deep interest in personal efforts for the conversion of souls to Christ, and to suggest some plans by which to bring the members of the Churches generally into living contact with the unevangelized masses around them. On this work the author has spent much thought, and his practical experience in missionary operations constitutes the work one of much value to those who desire to promote the Christian welfare of their perishing fellow-creatures. In the first chapter he considers the spiritual destitution of the large cities of England and the United States. He exhibits accurate statistics to show that the neglect of religion is as great in the country as it is in the cities and towns of the Union. Over the whole country he calculates that out of the population of twenty-seven millions there are only four and a half millions giving attention to religion. In view of this deplorable state of things he points out very faithfully the duties of Christians to their unconverted neighbors and friends, and insists that every hearer should be a preacher—that the Church is a missionary body, and that individuals are responsible for the extension of spiritual blessings to others.

As bearing upon this point, he sets before the reader the example of holy men of old—their regard for the honor of God and the condition of the unconverted. In chapter fourth he lays down a plan for carrying the Gospel to every creature in the land. This plan is just the territorial or localised plan of the late Dr. Chalmers. A district is chosen by each congregation, visitors appointed for small sections, and every means are to be used to impress upon the inhabitants the interests of eternity—to bring the children to school and the adults to attend upon public worship. Many valuable counsels are contained in the book for the efficient and systematic working out of this plan. The importance and value of prayer is largely insisted upon, and several valuable counsels are given as to the nature and character of true prayer, and as to the conducting of prayer

meetings, both public and private. The author seeks, with true Christian earnestness and affection, to press upon Churches and individual Christians the urgency and necessity of this work of evangelization. It has been undertaken with much spirit by the several Churches in Brooklyn City, N. Y., and so far followed with most blessed results. No book, in our estimation, is more wanted than this at the present day. It will, we trust, tend to awaken professing Christians from the lethargy into which too many of them have fallen. We have a large measure of profession in our cities and towns at the present day, but for the most part it is profession, and nothing more. Very frequently it is accompanied with entire disinclination to do *any* kind of work in the Church or for religion. The most paltry excuses are constantly pleaded by Church members for the avoidance of every duty that requires personal labor. The minister is supposed to do and to be capable of doing everything, and very often unmeasured and unmerited censure is heaped upon his head for the neglect of work which it is physically impossible for him to overtake. We wish this excellent and most readable book could be put into the hands of every member of our Churches. We trust that it will be as widely perused as its merits and the importance of the subjects of which it treats demand. The work is neatly got up by the publishers, and the type is large and clear. We most cordially recommend it as one of very great practical value.

SUMMARY OF INTELLIGENCE.

ECOLESIASTICAL AND MISSIONARY.

NON-INTRUSION IN THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.—It is with much pleasure that we notice a movement in this direction in the Established Church at home. The late settlements of ministers, contrary to the most unequivocally expressed wish of the people, has drawn the attention of good men in that communion to the dangers to which their Church is exposed from this quarter. Accordingly we find gentlemen of high standing and most zealous members and elders of the Church, at the head of whom is Sir James Campbell, well known for his munificent charities, memorialising the Presbytery of Glasgow at its late meeting. They express their regret at the proceedings in Church Courts in the matter of disputed settlements for several years past. Considering the evils of settling unacceptable ministers over reclaiming congregations, they declared that it was "essential to the interests of religion and to the welfare of the Church, *that the principle of non-intrusion should be distinctly and unequivocally recognised in the laws for regulating the settlement of ministers.*" The memorial further states that Lord Aberdeen's Act, however well intended, had been found in practice not sufficient in all cases to prevent the intrusion of unacceptable ministers upon congregations; and that a change in the law is required, which shall give unequivocal effect to the Call of the people. This memorial was received with that respect which the names attached to it merited. It has been laid on the table of the Presbytery, to be considered at its next meeting. We rejoice in this movement, and wish it God-speed; not only because it is a testimony to the wisdom of our Free Church movement, but also as giving promise that the grounds of separation may yet be removed between those two sections of the Presbyterian Church.

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN MISSION, OLD CALABAR.—The Rev. Mr. Waddell and his wife, who have so long and efficiently conducted this mission, have been obliged permanently to retire from it on account of their health. After twenty-eight years of assiduous labours in tropical climates—sixteen in Jamaica and twelve in Africa, Mr. W. feels he needs the bracing influences of a more temperate region. He has achieved a great and difficult work in founding and firmly establishing the Mission at Old Calabar; in so doing he has linked his name with Africa as one of its benefactors, and have won for himself the honorable title of the Apostle of Old Calabar. We are glad to find that this Mission is prospering in the hands of our brethren, and gives promises of great future blessings to that down-trodden and benighted land.

MEETING OF THE GERMAN EVANGELICAL KIRCHENTAG AT HAMBURG.—The proceedings of this Ecclesiastical Assembly were opened on the 14th September by a sermon from the General Superintendent, Hoffman, of Berlin. His text was Rom. xii. 1-3. In the first part he dwelt on the Confession of Faith, on which the Kirchentag is founded; in the second, expounded the Apostolic exhortation. This union of Churches adheres to the Augsburg Confession as the expression of its belief. The first subject of discussion was, "The rights of the congregation to special pastoral care"; on which, after an interesting discussion, resolutions were adopted to the effect,—That the partition wall which exists in Germany between pastor and people is a great evil; that the members of the Church have a right to pastoral care, and that it should be sought for by God-fearing people. They appeal to patrons of Churches to provide *pastors*, and advise that Ministers should be bound to pastoral duties at their ordination, and finally express gratitude for symptoms of improvement. There were further considered the important subjects of "The abuse of official oaths," "The connection between Church and State," in which the necessity of Church office-bearers being separate independent persons, capable of acting independent of the State, was advocated. "The relation of the Christian to temporal property" was also considered. Home Missions and the state of the poor in connection with Reformatories, was a topic that excited much interest. The duty of private Christian benevolence, over and above State provision for the poor, was forcibly inculcated. The last subject was, "Popular Superstitions as a hindrance of vital godliness." It was introduced by Prof. Wutke. To a vast audience he unsparingly exposed the idolatry and atheism of daily life in Germany. Strange as it may appear, this Assembly of clergymen met with powerful opposition from the local press. Only one out of the seven Lutheran Churches in Hamburg could be obtained for its meetings. Fears were even entertained of a riot, so great was the opposition of the people; but these fears were disappointed, and a deep interest was ultimately evinced in its proceedings.

POPEY IN IRELAND—The *News of the Churches* informs us that "The most important item of Home intelligence is the recent visit of Cardinal Wiseman to Ireland, and the method of his reception. The object of that visit, by his own statement, is to secure greater union among the Romanists of England and Ireland in order to secure political advantages. The present Popish brigade is to be doubled or trebled at the next election, and its members are to be nominees of the Cardinal, acting for the Pope. Simultaneously with the Cardinal's visit, a statement has been issued at a Synod in Tuam condemnatory of the system of mixed education in Ireland, and demanding a sectarian system. The proposal for having intermediate classical schools connecting the national schools with the Queen's Colleges, is strongly reprobated as endangering the middle classes. No candidate for the priesthood would, it is said, be allowed to attend such schools. Extraordinary efforts are at present being made to place the "Catholic" University in Dublin on a better footing, and to provide, through it, evening classes for tradesmen and mechanics, to draw them away from Mechanics' Institutions and similar mixed gatherings. An attempt will, undoubtedly, be soon made to obtain a charter for this college. On the whole, the Romanist hierarchy in Ireland are determined to make a stand for entire control of all educational machinery among their own people and this with a view both to political and religious ends. We hope that our Protestant statesmen will be on the alert to prevent such a result.

AGITATION FOR REFORM IN THE CHURCH OF ROME.—The most important intelligence from the Continent is the memorial of 500 bishops and clergy, chiefly in Bohemia, to the Archbishop of Vienna, for a thorough reform of many of the abuses of the Church of Rome. They complain, that for the want of necessary reforms, they are fast losing their hold upon the people. Among other things, they urge the permission of marriage to the clergy.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AND PROGRESS.—The present intolerant laws in SWEDEN may be said to be practically abolished. The agitation abroad has chiefly accomplished this. It is not yet known whether any new laws, or what laws, will be established in their stead. The old conventicle law, prohibiting private prayer-meetings, is also in abeyance. In RUSSIA, greater liberty in educational matters has been recently, among the other liberal concessions of Alexander II., granted to the Jews. In TURKEY, we have most cheering intelligence of the progress of the Armenian missions in the district of Nicomedia, and also of the accessibility of the Bulgarian population to scriptural instruction. Political affairs in Turkey remain in a very complicated state. Some fears are entertained even in Constantinople of a Mohammedan rising. The mission among the Jews

in *Smyrna*, under the Established Church of Scotland, continues to be visited with much success.

MOVEMENTS IN INDIA AND CHINA.—In INDIA there is said to be a great shaking in the native mind in the provinces lately the seat of war. From *Meerut* and *Agra* there is very favourable intelligence. If the societies in this country enter with ardour upon this field, they have good prospects of an abundant harvest. The Church Missionary Society is about to establish a mission at *Lucknow*. There is much anxiety felt as to the policy likely to be adopted by the Home Government; whether that of the Company, or of Sir John Lawrence and his supporters. A great opening is made for missions in CHINA by the late treaty, which secures freedom for mission agency in all parts of the country. It is feared that the advantages gained may also be abused for the extension of the Opium Trade. On this subject, a memorial has been presented to Government, from the secretaries of various missionary societies, and others.

AUSTRALIA.—The Education question is occupying much attention. A scheme for purely secular instruction was carried in the Legislative Council of Victoria, but afterwards withdrawn on account of the strenuous opposition of the Churches. The Sabbath question is also exciting attention, on account of an organized attempt of the publicans to open their shops on Sunday, a course which is at present forbidden.

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH.—All the Diocesan Synods of this Church except one have recently met. The principal subject of discussion has been the Bishops' Pastoral Letter on the Eucharistic controversy. In the Synods of Brechin and Aberdeen, the Letter did not meet with approval; in that of Moray and Ross the numbers were equal; in the Synod of Glasgow it was adopted by a very large majority; it was also approved in that of St. Andrews. At the Synod of St. Andrews a further step was urged, that the old Scottish service should be given up altogether, and that the English service should everywhere be adopted in its place. The change was strongly opposed by the Bishop, but in spite of his opposition, the Synod divided in equal numbers for and against the motion—several clergymen stating that they felt they must give up the Scottish service or their congregations. As there was no majority either way, the matter was left in abeyance. There appears to be much division in the Church, and it is impossible to foresee the result till the whole College of Bishops be assembled.

HOME MISSIONS IN SCOTLAND.—"In Scotland, the Congregational Union is now concentrating efforts on towns as well as on country villages, and works side by side with every other denomination of evangelical Christians. The United Presbyterian Church is exhibiting renewed vigour, and the Free Church has put forth a giant's strength to reclaim our moral wastes. 'Give us,' said her House Mission Committee, 'an annual income of £5000 for our large towns alone,' and the Free Assembly unanimously resolved to give an annual collection in 640 churches, which will secure twice that sum. 'Give us,' asked the Home Mission Committee of the United Presbyterian Church, '£3000 for our city work; and the memberships are giving £500. 'Help us,' said Committee of the Church of Scotland's Home Mission, 'half a million of money, and we shall establish new interests in every destitute district;' and the friends of that Church have already subscribed £350,000. All this, too, is done, while the general income of the churches had advanced. The income of Free Church has increased from £250,000 in 1848 to £331,000 in 1858,—a sum exceeding by £60,000, the total annual value of all the patrimony, including even the glebes and manse of the Established Church of Scotland."

LANCASTER, C. E.—OPENING OF A NEW FREE CHURCH.—We are happy to announce that our friends in this district have at length erected a Church in the village, and that it is now finished and dedicated to the worship of Almighty God. It is built of brick, with an overhanging roof, and pointed Gothic windows. The interior is neatly finished; both pulpit and pews are designed with some taste, and executed in the most substantial manner. For a country Church, this is a remarkably commodious and comfortable erection. It is built upon the glebe, and at no great distance from the manse. The whole cost of the structure has been about £750, which, we are happy to say, is all but if not altogether entirely paid. There will, we are assured, be no debt upon the Church. This is as it should be. Much future embarrassment and trouble will thus be avoided, and the efforts of the Church may be directed without distraction to promote the cause of Christ within and beyond their own district. The Moderator of the Synod—the Rev. T. Wardrope—opened the Church on the 24th October, and preached two eloquent and appropriate sermons to large and deeply-interested audiences. On Monday a Bazaar and Sciree was held in an adjacent building, at which a large number of the Glengary

people from considerable distances were present. In the evening the Church was filled with an audience, the like of which we were told was never seen in Lancaster. Addresses of a lively and interesting nature were successively delivered by the Revds. Mr. Anderson, the pastor; H. Campbell, Cornwall; D. Fraser and A. F. Kemp, Montreal; and T. Wardrope, Ottawa. An excellent choir sung several pieces of Sacred Music during the evening with great sweetness and effect. A few hours were thus spent with much profit and pleasure. The audience retired evidently delighted with the whole proceedings. We regard this as a most auspicious event. We have long been of opinion that a Church was wanted in this village. The wisdom of this movement will be seen, we are persuaded, in the increased prosperity of the congregation. The sum of £30 was collected during the day, which will be appropriated to the building fund. This Church is most creditable to Minister, elders and people.

LITERARY.

HEATHEN LANGUAGES—The celebrated Comparative Grammar of Bopp is just now being published in a second enlarged edition. The great Sanscrit dictionary, edited by two Germans, Böthlingk and Roth, has now appeared up to the fifth part of the second volume. It is printed in Petersburg at the expense of the Russian Academy. The Chinese Grammar by Schott, in Berlin, is warmly recommended by the few students of that language. Bushmann, in Berlin, published a learned work on the tongues of Mexico and northern America. Hahn's Hereró Grammar has been mentioned by us formerly. A *Namaqua Formenlehre*, edited by Wallmann (a missionary like Hahn) ought to have been added to it. Dillmann (the latest translator and interpreter of the Book of Henosh), publishes a grammar of the *Æthiopic* language—all labours from which, indirectly, missions must draw profit. Meadow's *Chinese and their Rebellions* has been translated into German by Dr. Neumark. Berlin, 1857.—*News of the Churches*

BUSH'S NOTES.—The Book of Numbers has just been published by this well-known scholar, lately Professor of Greek and Oriental Literature in the New York University. It is highly spoken of by the Princeton Review for its accurate scholarship and the wide range of its literature. It contains very numerous references to the ancient versions and quotations from geographers and travellers. The text is adorned with many sparkling gems from Bishop Hall and Matth. Henry. The devotional and doctrinal remarks are in perfect harmony with these authoritative Calvinistic writers.

"**HYMNS OF WORSHIP**" is the title of a volume recently published in Philadelphia by Martien, and designed for use specially in the lecture-room, the prayer-meeting and the family. They have been selected by a Pastor; and their distinctive feature is, as far as practical, to exclude all hymns in which the Most High is not directly, expressly and chiefly addressed. Another principle which marks the collection is that praise in the family and the Church is a social and collective act of a plurality of persons: it is the voice of the united *We*, and not of the independent *I*. Although exception may be taken to the universal application of these principles, yet in the main they are correct, and the book of hymns selected according to them is spoken of in high terms.

THE FASCICULI ZIZANIORUM MAGISTRI JOHANNIS WYCLIF, CUM TRITICO, has just been published by the State Paper Office of England. It is edited in an imperfect manner by the Rev. W. W. Shirley. It contains a collection of tracts and documents, partly controversial and partly narrative, bearing upon the events of the period in which he lived.

THE FOUR GOSPELS IN SYRIAC.—The remains of a very ancient Recension of these books in Syriac, hitherto unknown in Europe, has been discovered, edited and translated by Wm. Cureton, D.D., and published by Murray of London. Certain quaint volumes had been put into the hands of Mr. Cureton, obtained from a monastery in Syria, one of which consisted of eighty leaves of vellum of different hues and thickness, covered with Syriac writing of different dates and in different hands. The volume on examination proved to be a Syriac version of the four Gospels, incomplete, but of a very early date. This is a version hitherto quite unknown, and of the highest importance for the elucidation or critical arrangement of the text of the Gospels. The Gospel according to Matthew, which appears to be an actual transcription of the Aramaic version of that Evangelist, the learned author has enriched with a valuable commentary and notes. This discovery cannot but be grateful to Biblical scholars.