

TERMS NOTICES ETC.

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Payment of subscriptions may be made to any Free Baptist minister in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, and to any of our authorized agents as named in another column, as well as to the proprietor at Fredericton.

Items of religious news from every quarter are always welcome. Denominational News, as all other matter for publication, should be sent promptly.

Communications for publication should be written on only one side of the paper, and business matters and those for insertion should be written separately. Observance of this rule will prevent much copying and a great deal of confusion and mistakes.

ALL COMMUNICATIONS, etc., should be addressed RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER, Box 375, Fredericton N. B.

Religious Intelligencer.

REV. JOSEPH McLEOD, D. D., EDITOR.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 12th, 1890.

—Actions have effect where argument fail.

—Speak kind words and you will have kind echoes.

—Gratitude is the soul's echo to the blessing it receives.

—Obstinacy is the heroism of little minds.

—Some people resemble a brook—they are always murmuring.

—When a preacher's reputation for telling stories is greater than his reputation for preaching, it is time for him to abandon the ministry.

—Every man consents to the rum traffic who does not do all he can to prohibit it.

—Act well at the moment, and you have performed a good action to all eternity.

—Too late. The "copy" for the Woman's Foreign Mission column did not come in time for this week's issue.

—There are still churches in which the pews have doors. They ought to be taken off. A pew with a closed door is too much like a private box in a theatre, and suggests a price paid for exclusiveness.

—Henry Martyn said that if he ever saw a Hindu converted to Jesus he should witness something more nearly approaching to the resurrection of the dead body than he had ever seen; but now we have tens of thousands of converted Hindus, not a few of them preachers of the gospel.

—It was Benjamin Franklin who said that while "he did not know whether there is a personal devil he did know that there is a big lie-generating machine somewhere."

—Earnestness, says Dr. John Hall, commands the respect of mankind. A wavering, vacillating, dead-and-alive christian does not get the respect of either the church or the world.

—Wesley said: "I have no more right to object to a man for holding a different opinion from me, than I have to differ with a man because he wears a wig and I wear my own hair."

—DON'T NEGLECT THEM. We hope the churches are not forgetting the needs of the Home and Foreign Mission Treasuries. Every church should give prompt attention to the appeals of these important undertakings. Money is needed by both—and is needed now.

—THEIR SIGNIFICANCE.—The "Independent" notes the fact that Stanley's discoveries in his latest expedition have sent a thrill of exultation through missionary christianity, watching for opportunities to spread the knowledge of the Gospel in all the dark provinces of Africa, and through the International Congress met in Belgium to devise measures to destroy the slave trade. It was Stanley who suggested the great undertaking of the Church Missionary Society in Uganda, on the north shore of the Victoria Nyanza. It was he who opened the way for the numerous mission stations established on the Congo. It is he

who adds an immense territory in equatorial Africa to the field of missionary obligation. Surely God means to reclaim Africa. Stanley is right. A greater than Stanley is guiding exploration to the discovery of new lakes and water-ways, and leading the great nations to unite for the uplifting of the Continent."

—"WORKERS TOGETHER." Isolated, knowing little of what is being done by others, working in difficult circumstances, and the results of their efforts are apparently so incomplete, so fragmentary, that christians are liable to discouragements. Here is an illustration, from the "Free Baptist," which is comforting and encouraging. Some workmen were once sent into a quarry under sealed orders. When they arrived at the place of destination they found they were to quarry and dress a hundred stones of as many different sizes and shapes. Carefully studying these stones, they decided that they could not be so put together as to make any symmetrical structure, and thinking they had been trifled with, declared they would not work. Better counsels however prevailed, and when their work was completed and brought in, it was found that many other sets of workmen had been working in other quarries under similar orders, and of the combined results of their labors the fairest structures the world ever saw was reared. Our work is but partial. When that of the ages—perhaps of the world—is brought together what will the resulting structure be? The New Jerusalem? Who knows?

Let us hear promptly and often from every part of the field, with renewals and new subscribers.

Rev. Robert French.

Another of our aged ministers has gone home. Many hearts will be touched by the death of Rev. Robert French. For a great many years he was a faithful worker in the Vineyard of the Lord. His Christian character commanded always the esteem of his brethren and the respect of all who came in contact with him. In his earlier years he was quite active in the work of the ministry, and he was a good preacher. His advantages in boyhood were few, but he made up for the lack, so far as he could, by diligent study as was possible in his circumstances. Every spare moment found him with a book in his hand, and this habit continued to the very last. For several years, in mid-life, he was ill and unable to preach or take any part in public duties. He suffered from mental depression, but through it all his faith in Christ stood fast; and when he could not or would not converse about anything else he was ready and glad to speak of Jesus, His love and faithfulness. When, after years of suffering, he recovered, he devoted himself, as much as his strength would permit, to the care of the churches. Though having no pastoral charge, he has for several years been in the habit of visiting un-called for churches, and his visits were always appreciated. We regret that the data is not at hand from which to write a fuller sketch of his life—a life that in spite of difficulties made a good deal of itself, that was devoted to the service of God, that was free from reproach, that helped many lives, that in a large degree magnified the grace of God.

We append a sketch, from the pen of Rev. G. A. Hartley, who, also, finds himself without the facts necessary to a full account.

The Rev. Robert French died at his son's residence, North end, St. John, at an early hour on Tuesday morning, February 4th 1890, aged 82 years, and nearly 3 months. He was confined to his house a few days only. About a week before his death Erysipelas made its appearance in his face and spread until the whole face was involved. His health, for a man of his age, appeared quite good, but like a well-appearing old vessel, that seems good and safe in calm weather, but that cannot stand the strain of rough water, he could not stand the pressure of much disease. Bro. French, or as many of us affectionately called him, "Father French," has been in the ministry of our denomination more than fifty years, and has been a clean and faithful servant of the Lord. He was loyal to his convictions of truth and always laboured in harmony with his brethren. "Thus saith the Lord," was always authority with him, but teachings that lacked this, were of no importance. "There is nothing in it," is an expression that many of our people will remember having heard him use, after he had carefully read the Bible through, searching the scriptures, in reference to troublesome new theories. He expressed it well. But

when the Lord spoke he trembled at his word. Two weeks ago last Sabbath morning he preached for Bro. Nobles, his text, which proved to be the last from which he preached was the saying of the Apostle Paul "I die daily." Another old pilgrim has entered rest. Yes, another voyager has entered port. From various places they are going home, to Father's house. Will they recognize each other? Can the children of one family be unknown to each other while living at home with Father? The funeral services, which were held at the house at an early hour in the day of his burial, were largely attended. Of ministers there were present, Revs. J. T. Parsons, S. Welton, Ingram Shaw, Lawson and G. A. Hartley. Bro. Nobles was absent from home. The writer accompanied the remains to the Long Reach, where he was buried in the old family grave yard. A stone, erected by himself stood there awaiting him, having on it the following lettering "Rev. Robert French, born Nov. 11, 1807." The date of his death, when cut, will complete the neat marble slab that marks the resting place of all that is mortal of our highly respected aged brother French. This is the third of our ministers whom I have buried in a few days over two years. Taylor, Read, French."

A memorial sermon is to be preached on the morning of Sabbath the 16th inst, in the North End church by Bro. Hartley.

Some Opinions on Revision.

The revision of the Westminster Confession agitation grows more interesting. It is attracting much attention, as it should. Of the fifty Presbyteries that have voted on the question of revising three-fourths have declared in favour of revision. But there are over two hundred Presbyteries in the United States, and the proportion of three to one for change may not be kept up. The opposition to revision, it is noticed, is chiefly in the Eastern States, the western sections of the church being less conservative. But whatever the result which all have taken action, the discussion cannot fail to have a marked effect on the future of the Presbyterian body, and on the christian thought and teaching generally. That so many leading men in the denomination have so emphatically declared that they do not and cannot accept and teach some of the statements of the Confession, must make deep impression.

The Evening Gazette has been interviewing some of the Presbyterian pastors in St. John, and publishes their views on revision. We have summarized their statements.

Dr. Macrae does not favour revision, but thinks an appendix might be added explanatory of some points. His chief objection to any change in the Confession is that "it represents historically the views and attitude of the reformed churches at the date of its construction, and because whatever changes in its form of presentation of the truth might be now deemed desirable its underlying principles are, in his opinion, accurately representative of the teaching of the Word of God."

Rev. Mr. Fotheringham does not favour revision. He fears that a more cast-iron creed would take its place. He would let it stand as it is, and would do as the Presbyterian church in England has done—frame a new creed on the same lines, adapted to present ways of thinking. He would have certain paragraphs explained so as to avoid prejudice. He thinks the love of God is not sufficiently brought out in their standards.

Rev. Dr. Bennett expressed the opinion that the Confession ought to have been revised long ago. It cannot, he said, be regarded as expressing the views now of either the ministry or the people in all particulars. He fears that a revision would not quite serve the purpose, and thinks it would be better to form an entirely new Confession of Faith in the light of the end of the 19th century. "The truth as it appeared to the reformers has been greatly modified during the past century and especially during the last 50 years. Men do not and cannot think in the same lines which the reformers pursued. Questions of science and criticism have arisen which render it, difficult, not to say impossible, to adopt some of the views presented in the confession." And after all the discussion that has taken place, and those going on, it is out of the question to ask those now entering the ministry to subscribe to a creed against which such strong objections are being presented by leaders in the church.

Rev. Mr. Fullerton is against revision, but wants a new symbol. He says: "The present Confession of Faith, of course, emphasizes the sovereign power of God, to the apparent neglect of that which Christ emphasizes,

ed, the Fatherhood of God; and I think that in the Fatherhood of God we have got the conception of God that is easiest apprehended by the human intellect. I think that the teachings of Christ and the Apostle Paul have a more universal ring than the ring of the Confession of Faith. The Confession of Faith, I would say, marks a period of strong development in the history of religious thought. It lays stress on God's sovereign power in opposition to the power then claimed by the head of the church (the Pope).

As a document, as a creed if you like, it has done good service; but rather than modify it to suit present ideas I think a simpler symbol embracing the salient points of Christianity would have more power in bringing about the union of the churches, and would be more acceptable to the minds of men."

Rev. Mr. Macneil thinks the Confession a grand old scriptural creed, which more correctly embodies the system of doctrine taught in the scriptures than any other merely human symbol. He does not like the idea of revision; it seems to him like revising Westminster Abbey or some old structure that had better be kept as a monument of ancient architectural skill. He would favour a new Confession, but none now, as he thinks the spirit of the age is too restless and impatient to prepare a satisfactory creed. The time may come when the Presbyterian churches of the world may be able to agree on some shorter and more satisfactory symbol of doctrine. He does not think the church can continue much longer in her present relation to the Confession. And yet, he says, the main system of doctrine taught in the confession is scriptural and correct. There are a few errors of excess and of defect that might be removed without touching the system of truth therein set forth, and while he hesitates to favor present revision, he thinks an additional short statement might be drawn up setting forth the results of the theological progress, and doctrinal development in the past two or three centuries.

The statements of the Confession about reprobation, election etc., do not satisfy him. While the sovereignty of God is sufficiently emphasized, he thinks human freedom is not so fully developed as it might have been; and while the Divine Ruler is the central personage, there is a failure to set forth that Ruler's Fatherhood and Infinite Love as fully as these are taught in the Bible. He believes in the Divine decree, in one grand comprehensive plan of the universe, in which nothing is left to chance or haphazard, but he can never forget that He who decrees and plans and governs is his Father. God is Love first, and Sovereign second.

Rev. Mr. McFarland does not favor revision at all, especially in the way proposed. He endorses and approves of the Confession. He thinks it teaches nothing but what is taught in the Bible. He would continue to insist on subscription to it by ministers and office-bearers. He does not think too much emphasis is given to the Sovereignty of God as compared with the emphasis given to His love. He thinks the place to begin is with sovereignty of God, and believes all the difficulty arises from the fact of ignoring too much the sovereignty of God, and that there would be no trouble in regard to revision if the ministers would place before them this basal truth. The expression of God's love is, he holds, in perfect accordance with his sovereignty.

Rev. Mr. Bruce thinks the Confession has come to be used in a way different from what was intended when it was framed. It was not intended as a matter of subscription by every person and in every particular for membership of the church, but as a general and somewhat full statement of the great doctrinal views held according to the Calvinistic system; and it has now come to be presented or is supposed to be presented as a form of belief in every particular by communicants.

He does not favour revision, as he thinks it would be difficult to point out where radical changes can be made in the removal and denial of any doctrine contained in it. And yet he would like to see a simpler statement, in which might be set forth in briefer form the knowledge of truth necessary to an intelligent expression of faith, and giving greater clearness and prominence to certain doctrines which are felt not to have relative prominence in the Confession. Its statements about reprobation, election etc. are, he thinks, too severely out-lined, perhaps, yet he believes the real difficulty is that men attempt to push to logical consequences according to the grasp of human reason the mysterious truths of

revelation, and their extreme desire to complete a theological system of assertion or negation.

In asking subscription to the Confession by ministers and others, he would have it presented with explanations. For himself, he holds the Confession in profound esteem, yet he has never felt that anything but the word of God itself, as he is able to understand it is his guide and light. The difficulty has come from putting the Confession of Faith or any other such document in a position where perhaps it should not have been placed.

It will be noticed that all the ministers whose views we have summarized above, with the exception of Rev. Mr. McFarland, while desiring to retain the Confession in its present form, as a historical document, favour either a simpler statement for present use, or notes explanatory of the statements of the Confession which are not in accord with the christian thought and faith of today. Dr. John Hall, of New York, took like ground in the discussion in his Presbytery, a few days ago, and suggested a foot-note explaining the portions which he thought were wrong interpreted. Dr. Crosby very aptly said,—"The only objection I have to Dr. Hall's proposition is this—that it places the love of God in a foot-note." And the foot-note suggestion was defeated.

This whole discussion very clearly indicates the drift of the christian thought and feeling of the time. When our fathers, while reverently acknowledging the sovereignty of God, took their stand in advocacy of the fatherhood of God, and began to declare His love for all men and His offer of salvation to all, and to insist on human freedom and responsibility, they were not very favourably regarded by many religious teachers of the time. But the great truths for which they stood, and sometimes suffered, have been steadily making their way, till they are now generally, indeed almost universally, acknowledged. They not only have full warrant in the word of God, but they meet and satisfy the sense of justice divinely implanted in every human breast. Jesus says: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." Blessed truth! Let us all rejoice that it is being believed and preached more and more.

To all the friends of the denomination we are looking to help along the "Intelligencer" branch of their work. It is not ours alone; it is theirs and ours. "We are laborers together."

Science, Sense and Salvation.

The benefits bestowed by science on this age are beyond question. Intelligence is deeper and broader; the world richer, and every branch of knowledge the gainer. Enlarged knowledge, in truer modes of thought, and a better understanding of the world in which we live are among the fruits of science. The old dread of science is passing away, and a wiser spirit prevails. The provinces of science and of religion stand out with greater distinctness, and the purposes of each are better understood. The alarm and conflict among religious teachers raged, years ago, around geology; that has passed, and the purposes of Revelation have been more clearly brought to light.

Students of Scripture and students of science have learned from each other, and both have been benefited. The battle now is around biology, and that is waning. Evolution "has played many parts," and now by consent of "men who know" the "missing link" is not without science. Science has come to a gulf and apart from Revelation it cannot be bridged. Common sense insists that the non-living cannot originate the living; that creation involves a Creator. What common sense declares, science affirms. Prof. Stokes: "I prefer resting in the statement of a special creation, without prying into its method." Prof. Lionel S. Beale: "There are many, and I myself am one, who maintain most strongly that no man of science has yet shown the vestige of a reason for the inference that the living springs from the non-living in obedience to physical laws or physical action." Prof. Huxley: "The present state of knowledge furnishes us with no link between the living and the non-living." Author of "The Unseen Universe": "All really scientific experience tells us that life can be produced from a living antecedent only." A recent declaration of Prof. Hackett, is to the same effect. Thus science, common sense, and revelation are at one as to "origins."

But what has science to say as to salvation? An answer will be found in these words of Mr. J. A. Froude spoken recently in an interview with a representative of the Pall Mall Gazette: "At first undoubtedly I was much carried away by the earnestness and romance of Tractarianism, but Carlyle was too strong for me in the end. He influenced me entirely. Carlyle, you know, was intensely religious; in spite of all science, he was never shaken himself. Remember this, a man of genius is tired of always breaking down. He wants to find Truth, not fault. Take Goethe, for instance; he was thoroughly constructive. But nowadays it is all disintegration. Science will not do humanity much good, in these matters at all events. It won't construct. It doesn't touch human nature. It is quite outside of it. Science only deals with generals, but religion goes to the heart of the individual; and so I feel that on this basis religion is absolutely impregnable against all the assaults of science. * * * Religion is a sense of responsibility to the Power that made us; Conscience and Intellect could not grow up in us had not the Supreme Being possessed them in a far greater degree first. I do feel so strongly that we are not the mere accidental products of matter. We are here with intention, by purpose, although we may apparently have been left too much to ourselves. You may take my word for it, however, that all that is grand, sublime, of benefit to the race, has come out of Faith and not out of scepticism. Scepticism never did any grand or noble work."

—T. H. Siddall.

General Religious News.

—Chicago has forty-two Congregational churches.

—There has been great revival in Nevada, Mo.; 130 conversions.

—After a Honolulu revival, 1,000 joined a temperance society.

—Portland, Oregon, a city of 60,000 population, has forty-nine Christian churches.

—Switzerland has 1,162 Sunday-schools, with 5,459 teachers, and 84,000 scholars. Sweden has 3,340 Sunday-schools, with 15,000 teachers and 220,000 scholars. Austria has 140 Sunday-schools, 312 teachers and 4,519 scholars.

—Twelve hundred converts have been baptized in the Baptist mission in Russia in the past two years. The mission is principally among the German colonists in South Russia. There is also a successful mission in Roumania and Bulgaria.

—There are 1,150 Baptists in Hungary, all connected with one church in Buda-Pesth. There are only two Baptist ministers in the country, but they have baptisms every Sunday. The prospect is very encouraging.

DENOMINATIONAL NEWS.

REV. JACOB GUNTER is no better. He is confined to his bed, and is, doubtless, growing weaker. He has the comfort and support of the Divine presence.

REV. E. B. GRAY has not had very good health since the beginning of the year. Part of the time he has been kept at home. He is now better, however. He preaches at Charleston and Bridgewater Centre, and though there is no revival to report, there is an encouraging interest in the regular services of the churches.

REV. JOHN PERRY is at home for a few days. He intends to return to his charge at Campo Bello this week.

REV. GIDEON SWIM intends going to Nova Scotia this week to see his father and mother who are sick.

FIVE POINTS, A. Co. The meetings being held at Five Points by Rev. A. C. Thompson are encouraging.

FROM REV. T. S. VANWART. — I write to you from my sick room. I was taken ill on Sabbath 19th January. The next morning Deacon Wright, of Upper Millstream, kindly drove me home. I have not been able to go from home since; but under the careful treatment of Dr. Burnett my health is improving, and I hope (D. V.) to meet my appointments on Sunday the 16th. The people here have been very kind to us since we came amongst them, and especially so during my illness. The churches of this pastorate seem willing and ready to do what to them seems right. We are hopeful of better days. I am expecting to do something for our paper as soon as I get out among my people.

T. S. VANWART.

LOWER PRINCE WILLIAM.—A number of the members and friends of our Foreign Mission Society held a concert in the church on Sunday evening last, the 2nd inst. The evening being fine the church was well filled. Bro. J. W. Smith presided, being assisted by Bro. Chas. Lounabury. The programme consisted of readings, recita-

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Feb. 6th, 1890.

FROM REV. J. A.

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