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TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18th, 1888.

CLUBBING ARRANGEMENTS.

Canada Presbyterian, \$2, and Life of Rev. Walter Inglis, \$1, both, \$2.
 Canada Presbyterian, \$2, and the Weekly Globe, \$1, both, \$2.
 Canada Presbyterian, \$2, and the Weekly Mail, \$1, both, \$2.
 Canada Presbyterian, \$2, and Dr. Gregg's History of the Presbyterian Church, \$3, both, \$4.
 Canada Presbyterian, \$2, and The Rural Canadian, \$1, both, \$2.

THE watchword of the American Presbyterian Church for the present year is "A Million for Ministerial Relief." The amount of the permanent fund for the support of aged and infirm ministers is now \$365,538 and the Church proposes to add to this amount \$1,000,000 during this centennial year. That the million will be raised is as certain as any future event can be. When the entire sum—nearly \$1,500,000 is raised and invested, there will be at least one Church in the world in which a minister can look forward to old age without being tortured with the fear that declining years will bring increasing poverty.

AN exchange says:

Some of our Churches go half their time without a minister, first, because they cannot find one that they like; second, because they do not find one who likes them; and third, that there lacks a mutual attraction.

Many Churches go without a minister for a long time mainly because they have no definite idea of the kind of minister they want. Name six of the best men they have heard out of fifty, and they cannot give any definite reason why they did not call one of them. They were good men and the people liked them well enough, and their sermons made a good impression, but — All that comes after "but" simply means that the congregation did not know very well what it wanted.

PROFESSOR McLAREN concludes an able and finely-toned paper in *Knox College Monthly* on "Terms of Communion in the Presbyterian Church" with the following just remarks:

We think that it may be safely said that it is in every way wiser and more Christian, instead of expending our ingenuity in lowering the terms of communion to suit abnormal or perhaps imaginary cases, to devote our skill and strength to the work of patiently instructing the erring, so as to bring them to the acknowledgment of the truth. The admission as communicants of those who avow principles clearly dishonouring to the person and the work of Christ is a source of contamination, and therefore of weakness to the Church, and a wise and faithful Session will not hesitate to exercise the authority with which it is clothed to prevent such a disaster. After all, the great safeguard against the admission into Church fellowship of those who err in fundamentals, is the faithful preaching of the truth. Where the doctrines of our standards are habitually preached with clearness and power, few who are not in substantial sympathy with the preaching are likely to desire a place among the communicants, and perhaps still fewer, if admitted, will continue to feel at home under such ministrations.

IF in the spring peace is maintained in Europe it is the unexpected that will happen. Present signs point to the early outbreak of a gigantic war. The Russian war party are in a fair way of having their sanguinary hopes gratified. The Czar is staggering under the responsibilities of the situation. Discontent, smouldering conspiracy, student-uprisings and plots against his life are distracting in the extreme. Then the traditional Muscovite policy, the Pan-Slavic movement, favoured by the official classes, urge the Emperor of Russia to take a decisive step in

some direction. To all appearances he is making extensive preparations to strike a formidable blow at Austro-Hungary. The complications to which such a movement will give rise it would be hazardous to conjecture. Meanwhile diplomacy is acting as a stop-gap to protract tension till the time best suited for Russian interests is reached, and for the purpose of discovering an ostensible pretext for a conflict for which the gigantic and ambitious northern Power has long been preparing. It may be that all Europe will be ablaze before the dread conflagration is extinguished. One thing, the Divine Arbiter of all human destinies will overrule the ambitions of men and nations for the inbringing of that reign of righteousness for which Christians everywhere devoutly pray and the overworn millions profoundly sigh.

THE trial of election petitions has disclosed the fact that the disgraceful custom of bribery is not yet extinct. The evil has been so long continued and has become so inveterate that it is difficult to extirpate. One hopeful indication is the promptness with which exposure and punishment have followed conviction. So long as it is considered safe to spend money in the purchase of votes, the traffic in that commodity will continue. When the men who are blind to the enormity of political venality discover that it does not pay to purchase a place among the honourable body of legislators, they will cease to seek promotion by such means. When free and independent electors discover that the sale of their votes is a punishable offence they will be unwilling to run the risk of detection involving various unpleasant consequences. In England, the law against bribery and corrupt practices has been made so strict, and its enforcement is so certain, that a custom which has long disgraced political life has almost disappeared. It is of no importance to which party the briber or the bought belong. Let the law against the crime be rigidly and impartially carried out, and purchase of a seat in Parliament will no longer continue to be publicly condemned but secretly practised. It will be discontinued altogether. Till then, we need not look for self-respecting representatives nor upright government.

OUR neighbour, the *Mail*, has of late been giving a considerable amount of space to correspondence on Christian Union. The discussion has taken a turn which does not savour much of either Christianity or unity. One writer, said to be an Evangelical Episcopalian minister, declares that "Methodism is the synonym for all that is tricky in religion and morals." The Methodist Church he calls "a wretched schism which, by a blasphemous travesty, they call a Church of God." "The 'chapel' is the 'free and easy' where every Jack can find his Jill, and where religion and worship have been turned into a roaring farce." Of course this bitter attack calls forth a large number of replies. Another writer, evidently of the same school, pours a little imbecile venom on what he calls the "sects." And thus the work of promoting Christian Union goes on from day to day! What most of these writers mean by Christian Union is simply outward, organic union—such a union as might be formed between two insurance companies or two railways. It never dawns on their minds that there may be Christian Union without organic union—union of spirit and purpose without union of ecclesiastical machinery. Many good men doubt whether the Head of the Church ever expressed a desire for organic union, such as the average talker and writer about union means. What the Churches need to bring them nearer each other is a great outpouring of the Spirit. As godliness and earnest work increase, idle talk about union of names and machinery always decreases.

THE *Christian at Work* would like to know what means some of the managers of New York daily journals use to gauge the tastes of their patrons when serving out news. The same question is occasionally asked about journals not quite so far away as New York. Suppose an eight-page morning paper gives a page to sporting news, ought we to conclude that the manager thinks that one-eighth of his readers are sporting men? The *Christian at Work* puts it in this way:

What law of supply and demand, for example, does a paper observe that devotes one-half, and, at times, two-thirds of its space to police doings, murders, scandals, divorce

trials and prize-fights? Is it fair to presume too that the number of readers who are interested in news of this character bears the same proportion as here indicated to the general reading public? We should be sorry to think that it did. If we accepted the newspaper standard of public taste as the true one we should have to believe that a good half, at least, of the people care more for the silly and disgusting gossip of the bar-rooms than they do for wholesome reading or real and legitimate news. In some cases, such as that where a leading morning paper of this city recently devoted one whole page to an account of a brutal prize-fight in France, we should have to believe that at least a fourth part of the reading public was made up of that class known as toughs and bruisers, those being the only persons who care anything about reading of prize-fights. If we applied the same standard of measurement to another daily paper of this city which published a double number in order that it might give the full details of a filthy affair in London we would have to conclude that it found its chief constituency in places of even a lower character than bar-rooms. No other class than the most vicious and depraved could have had any interest in the obscene and disgusting stuff thus paraded in print.

As a rule Canadian journals are clean, but during the "season" some of their managers seem to be under the impression that their readers are intensely interested in base ball and other games. Even now "crack" base ball men divide the honours with Mr. Chamberlain in the matter of space in some journals.

DRIFTING FROM THE CHURCH.

AN important part of congregational work is to keep hold of those within its pale. Office-bearers and private Christians are becoming more alive than formerly to the necessity of active aggressive effort to reach with Christian influences those living in the neglect of religion. Many and varied are the commendable efforts to gather in the young and the estranged. An increase, not a relaxation, of effort to extend the blessings of the Gospel to those without is what the conditions urgently demand. The Church of Christ cannot without guilt look on and say "Am I my brother's keeper?" Activity in outside work will not excuse remissness within. There are complaints that while the Churches are making yearly gains in membership there is a steady loss in the drifting away of others who are losing interest in its services and associations. This is said to be the case with the young especially. The extent to which this is true may not easily be determined. Complaints are no doubt often exaggerated, and when they are made with frequency many are disposed to accept them as true and well founded. When, however, due allowance for exaggeration is made there is sufficient coming within the range of ordinary observation to justify inquiry, to stimulate watchfulness and the adoption of means to counteract the drain on the Churches, which is silently and constantly continuing.

People struggling with adversity, unless their religious convictions are well founded and their faith is strong, are sometimes tempted to withdraw from Church attendance. Several such are rediscovered by city mission labourers, while no doubt many drift away and are lost sight of. Those who have to battle with adverse circumstances find their means curtailed. They cannot dress sufficiently well, neither are they able to contribute as they were wont to do. Their feelings of self-respect are sensitive, and they imagine that the sympathies of their Church brethren toward them are chilled. Whether caste prejudices are getting into our Churches or not may be an open question, but that many imagine such is the case is beyond all doubt. Neither is it questioned by any one conversant with New Testament Christianity that social inequalities should find no place where the Christian brotherhood meet to worship God.

Others may disappear from the Churches from less worthy motives. Bent on having their own way, and finding that their personal desires meet with little or no encouragement, they withdraw, and seek what to them is more congenial society. This fortunately is not a numerous class. They are not frozen out; they simply retire.

Perhaps, the larger number who absent themselves from attendance at Church services are to be found among the ranks of the young. Most of them have attended Sabbath school, and may have entered the Bible class, but their attachment to the Church has gradually relaxed. Attendance has become so irregular, that when it ceases altogether, it occasions but little surprise. Other associations are formed, wholesome restraints are weakened and evil influences come nearer and grow more powerful. Suppose that a