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TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 1885.

COMMENTING ON our recent references to remarks made in the House of Commons by some members when petitions against the Franchise Bill, signed by ministers and others were received with derisive shouts, which we have seen subsequently assuaged by uttered in a jocular mood, our wide-awake contemporary, the *Glasgow Christian Leader*, takes occasion to say: "We are glad to see the chief Canadian organ of the Presbyterian Church speaking out on the subject as becomes a representative of the communion of John Knox."

"KNOXIAN" is a writer of rare accuracy. Both his opinions and statements of fact may be unhesitatingly accepted, but the best of men and the most expert writers may make an occasional slip. Our distinguished contributor has deviated slightly from his habitual painstaking correctness in treating the College Question. The paragraph relating to Manitoba College needs revision. It was not established two years ago at London. It was in existence long before, having been founded some years previous to the Union of 1875. The London Assembly's action was the appointment of one of the men most competent in the Church to fill the office of Principal and Professor of Theology. The appointment was made, as "Knoxian" remarks, with most delightful unanimity. As time rolls past, there is not likely to be any lessening of the appreciation of the Assembly's wisdom, or of the fitness of the appointment then made.

THE *Globe* has published Riel's diary for about a month prior to the taking of Batoche. It is largely made up of ejaculatory prayers, alleged revelations from the Spirit, expressions of trust in God, and pious phrases of various kinds. His capacity for using devotional language is simply marvellous. There was always something mysterious about Riel; but the publication of this diary makes him a greater puzzle than ever. Undoubtedly he is a fanatic, but he is a fanatic and something—what more it is difficult to say. Some would, no doubt, say a saint, some a lunatic, and many a hypocrite. Saint, lunatic or hypocrite, he is a man of considerable culture and literary ability. His object in writing this diary, could it be known, would throw considerable light on his character. If he wrote it simply for the purpose of making capital among his countrymen to help him in his trial he is a shrewd hypocrite. If the entries are genuine expressions of his feelings as the crisis was coming near, he is certainly a unique character. Fanatic is hardly a strong enough term to describe him, if his diary is honest, and lunatic is too strong. A lunatic would not be likely to write with such grace and point as he writes every day for over a month. On the whole Louis Riel is a queer compound.

DURING its last session the Manitoba Legislature passed an Exemption Bill which makes it practically impossible to collect money in that Province. The Bill has retroactive clauses which in effect wipe out the debts of Manitoba people. Of course the Bill created a sensation in financial circles, more especially among Ontario bankers and manufacturers who have been doing business in the Prairie Province. Meetings have been held and a deputation waited upon the Ottawa Government the other day and asked that the Bill be disallowed. Sir John Macdonald is reported to have said that the Bill is a vicious piece of legislation. The Minister of Justice is of the same opinion. In fact every business man outside of Manitoba condemns the Bill. And mark, the thing condemned in the Bill is its retroactive clause. Everybody says the Legislature had no right to make a law cancelling existing contracts and breaking faith with creditors. Now why do not the same men reason as fairly about the Scott Act? The wine and beer clauses inserted by the Senate are just as gross a breach of faith with the counties that passed the Scott Act as are the retroactive clauses of the Manitoba Exemption Bill with the bankers and manufacturers who have debtors in Manitoba. Why condemn retroactive legislation in Manitoba and enact retroactive laws in the Senate at Ottawa?

AN amusing and instructive incident occurred the other day at an *alumni* dinner at Harvard University. James Russell Lowell, the popular ex-minister to England, and Vice President Hendricks were the chief speakers. Mr. Lowell was in his best vein, and told what he and his audience considered a first-class joke at the expense of the Chief Justice of England. He said that he happened once to sit beside the Chief Justice at a public dinner and that his Lordship, who is a fine speaker, gave him some instructions on public speaking. Among other things Lord Coleridge told him that a "speaker should always prepare his anecdote." The audience laughed convulsively at the idea of an orator like Lowell receiving such instructions. A moment afterwards Lowell related a political anecdote that made the Republicans present cheer vociferously and the Democrats grow black as a thunder cloud. He made the very mistake that he and his friends thought it specially absurd that any one should tell him ought not to be made. Lord Coleridge was right. There is no part of a speech an orator should be more careful about than "his anecdote." In a mixed audience it is almost certain to hit somebody. Not long ago a member of the Legislature of Ontario lost his seat through an after dinner anecdote. Quite likely he is not the only one that suffered in the same way. Anecdotes are about the only part of a speech that many people remember, and if they hurt they are sure to leave a scar if not a wound.

THE *Pall Mall Gazette* is publishing a series of papers on the immorality of the upper classes in England that have shocked the English-speaking world. The revelations are sickening—horrible in the extreme. Localities are mentioned in detail, and though names are not mentioned facts are given which leave little or no doubt as to the persons meant. Efforts are being made to stop the publication of the papers, but the *Gazette* hurls defiance at its assailants and dares them to go into court. There is no reason to doubt that the horrible revelations are in the main true. Of course, the usual question comes up—should such horrible revelations be published even if true? It is affirmed that one or more of the Archbishops, Mr. Spurgeon, Earl Shaftesbury, Mr. Samuel Morley, M.P., and other representative men favour publication. Spurgeon undoubtedly does, and is doing something in the same line himself. Two classes are strongly opposed to the action of the *Gazette*—good men who think that the end does not justify the means, and immoral men who love the deeds of darkness on which such an awful glare of light has been thrown. It seems to us there is but one question to solve: Is the good that is undoubtedly being accomplished by exposure greater than the evil caused by exposure? If so, then exposure is a duty, a terrible duty it may be, but still a duty. The charge that the *Pall Mall Gazette* is merely getting up a sensation to increase its sale is not worth considering. That may be and very likely is true; but it does not affect the horrible facts revealed. Altogether the exposure is very saddening.

A VERY considerable amount of interest has been excited by what is called the "Kansas prayer case." A jury in one of the courts in that State retired to consider their verdict. One of them was a praying man, and asked his fellow-jurors to unite with him in praying for help to enable them to come to a proper verdict. They did so, and the party that lost the case has moved to have the verdict set aside on account of the prayer. He alleges that though there can be no objection to private prayer for light, undue influence might be exercised by public prayer. One long accustomed to pray, it is alleged, can play upon the feelings and judgment of his fellow-jurors in this way. It seems to us that everything depends on the kind of prayer offered. If the prayer contained arguments in a direct form or by implication for either side, it certainly would be out of place and improper; but if it were simply an earnest request for light and strength to discharge a most solemn duty, nothing could be more seemly and proper. Indeed, one can imagine few places where prayer is more fitting than in a jury room. Here are twelve men met to deliberate on a matter that concerns the property, reputation, liberty, or even life of a fellow-man. Their verdict may send a fellow-creature to the penitentiary or gallows. They have the terrible power in certain cases of sending a human being into the presence of his Maker. We can scarcely imagine how a man could begin to consider a case that might send his fellow-man to the gallows without asking help from above. If jurymen prayed more their verdicts might not be so iniquitous and absurd as they too often are.

**THE SUMMER VACATION.**

SOME people are industrious while others are constitutionally indolent. Good, earnest diligent work has positive attractions for many, and they need no sharp incentive to keep them to their task, while everywhere are to be found those who would gladly resign labour if only their necessities would permit. A fair share of work is every man's privilege, and if labour is sometimes regarded as a curse, idleness is a curse much greater. Those on whom rests the pressure of more work than they can well undertake may occasionally grumble at the hardness of their lot, but patient toil comes to be recognized as an undisguised blessing. In all spheres of activity honest work, be it of hand or brain, is one of the elements of happiness.

Constant relentless toil from year's end to year's end, however, is something to which no mortal can become reconciled. Just as in crowded towns and cities there must be grateful breathing spaces such as public parks, so in the dull monotony of toil there must for the worker's benefit be brief periods of rest and recreation. The occasional holidays come as a benison to the weary toiler. So the sacred rest of the Sabbath, not to speak of its precious spiritual privileges, is an inestimable boon to toiling humanity. He is no sincere friend to his kind, who from covetousness or for his own selfish gratification would seek to deprive the humblest artisan of his inalienable right, the unbroken rest of the first day of the week.

In the summer time when the thermometer reaches the nineties, the most indomitable worker begins to feel languid, and draws mental pictures of the quiet and peaceful country district, where the leaves rustle in the refreshing lake breeze, or of ocean beach with its ever changing light and shade, and the varying music of the sea as the sparkling wavelets beat upon the shore. It is then that the migratory instinct becomes strong.

The minister of the Gospel, as well as others, feels strongly the necessity of a brief respite from his arduous and responsible duties. The ablest and most robust mind needs change and recreation. This is now generally recognized, and the churlish growl of former days if not altogether silent has become so subdued that it is almost inaudible. Most congregations now cheerfully grant their pastor an annual holiday, and several generously make such arrangements that his trip shall not be such a drain on his limited exchequer that worrying care spoil his enjoyment. It is admitted that the minister like other men requires a vacation; but it is doubtful if it is as generally understood that a brief respite is essential to his ministerial success. As he moves about among his people, he seems the happiest of men; he is earnest and sedate as he appears in the pulpit, at the prayer meeting; he is sad, sorrowful and sympathetic when he visits the