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TORONTO, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1882.

SEVERAL communications, reports of Presbytery meetings, etc., are unavoidably held over for want of space.

ANOTHER department has been added to the varied table of contents in THE PRESBYTERIAN, which will doubtless prove acceptable to subscribers. The column of GOSPEL WORK will be carefully conducted by an esteemed minister, who is well qualified to make this portion of the paper both interesting and useful to all our readers.

THE annual statement of the Ontario Industrial Loan and Investment Company appears in other columns. It is a very gratifying report, as well as a remarkably successful exhibit, considering it is only the first year of the company's existence. Prudent and judicious management is sure to tell, and the future of this young company promises to be one of steadily increasing prosperity.

OUR readers in this city will be glad to learn that Dr. W. M. Taylor, of New York, is expected in Toronto on the 19th of this month, in connection with the annual missionary services of the St. James' square congregation. Dr. Taylor will preach in the morning and evening of that day, and will, along with Mr. Robertson, the Missionary Superintendent of the North-West, address the meeting on the evening of Monday. It will be remembered that Dr. Taylor preached on the occasion of the opening of St. James' square Church sermons which will not soon be forgotten.

MR. J. L. MORRIS, counsel for the Presbyterian Church in Canada in the Temporalities Fund case, has received a letter from London which confirms the view taken by him on receipt by telegraph of the first intimation of the Privy Council's decision. The letter states that but two points were decided in the case: (1) That the Quebec Act is held to be unconstitutional, with the costs against respondents; (2) that the Privy Council expressly declined to decide whether the present Board is a body properly constituted under the Act of Incorporation. Mr. Morris appears to be satisfied that the Dobie party has gained nothing but the costs, the decision simply restoring the matters in question to the position in which they were on the day of the Union, without giving the anti-Unionist minority any control of the funds or granting their prayer to debar Union members from participation in the same.

A FIERCE light beats on the school question from the gloomy walls of the Kingston Penitentiary. A visitor who sees the seven hundred convicts march past instinctively exclaims, "Oh, what a number of boys and very young men!" Yes, there they are, scores of them, about twenty years of age—many below that age. Did the State do its whole duty to these youths when it taught them the three R's in its schools, but said nothing to them there or anywhere else about the consequences of wrong-doing? Dare any one say that if the schoolmaster had enforced the truth, "Be sure your sin will find you out," as frequently and

as fully as he explained problems in arithmetic and algebra, that all these boys would be wearing a convict's garb? The law practically excludes from our schools the book which says "Thou shalt not kill," and then hangs the man who kills! That may be wise legislation for a Christian country, but no intelligent heathen would say so.

"SHALL the Bible be used in our schools?" is not a clerical question. Some years ago a large number of the best journals in Western Ontario made a rigorous demand that "morality" be taught in our public schools. The causes that led to this demand were painfully suggestive. A large number of crimes had been committed in an incredibly short time by young men. These crimes were mainly breaches of trust, embezzlements, till tapping, cooking accounts, and other offences which shewed that the youthful offenders had not clear ideas on the question of "mine and thine." An alarming crop of these crimes made our brethren of the broadsheet call for moral teaching; and well they might. Of course they did not all use the phrase "Bible in the schools," but that was exactly what they meant. Is there any better code of morals than the Decalogue? Is there any better guide for human life than the Sermon on the Mount? Whatever a good man's theory may be in regard to the Bible in schools, the sight of a lot of youthful criminals on their way to prison is very apt to make him ask if society has done all it should for these lads in handcuffs.

In a letter to the press, Mr. McMullen makes a practical suggestion in regard to the use of the Bible in our public schools. As the law now stands, the Bible is out of the schools, with a "local option" of putting it in. Mr. McMullen says, let the law put the Bible in and the "local option" put it out. The plan is feasible. If not, why not? Why should not the Government of a Christian country say to the people, "We believe the Bible should be read in our public schools, but if the people of any section feel hurt because their children read the Bible every day, these people may put the Bible out of their school." We don't believe there are twenty sections in Ontario that would hold a school meeting and deliberately resolve to shut the Scriptures out of their school. Many who never read the Bible themselves, who never darken a church door, would be glad to have their children instructed in the Scriptures. Let the Legislature enact that on a certain day the Bible shall be used as a text-book in every Public School in Ontario, the sections that don't wish the Bible used being permitted to say "no." We don't believe a dozen would give a unanimous "no."

THE action of the last General Assembly in regard to the use of the Bible in our public schools need have no effect upon that question in Ontario. Our friends in the Maritime Provinces had just closed a lengthened agitation on the subject by a settlement which they thought satisfactory. It would have been ungenerous, perhaps unjust, to them to have reopened the question. At all events, that was the view which the Assembly took of the matter. The people of Ontario have an undoubted right to act for themselves. Let the Synods of Toronto and Kingston, and Hamilton and London, make a decided move at their meetings in April and May. The meetings of the other ecclesiastical Parliaments take place in June, and any action taken by our Church can be followed up by the other leading denominations. It is said by some that the denominations will not agree upon the question. Well, if the spiritual guides of the people cannot agree upon such an important matter, procedure must stop. If ministers, elders, lay delegates, class leaders, and other prominent Christians will not take such united action as will put the Bible in our schools, infidels and agnostics cannot reasonably be expected to do so.

THE GREAT NORTH-WEST.

THERE can be no doubt about its being in every way likely that the emigration to the North-West this spring will be far greater than ever it has been before. There are reports from all quarters to the effect that many are making preparations, and are ready to leave as soon as the season opens. Not a few of the congregations in Ontario will in this way,

at any rate for the time, be seriously weakened, both in numbers and resources. This, however, is no reason why continued and increasing efforts should not be made to follow with the Gospel those who are making their home in that wide, fair land of mighty possibilities and unbounded hopes. It will only be for a few years that help will be needed in the older districts, and even in many of the new there is every prospect of a numerous and prosperous Presbyterian population being fully established after a comparatively short period of pioneering work. Already some of the congregations in that region are not only meeting all their own expenses, but are extending a helping hand to their brethren in the newer districts. These in their turn will do the same, and thus the work will go on, and those who help and those who are helped will alike rejoice together. We know that it is somewhat discouraging for congregations not very large, and not very wealthy at any rate, to have some of their best members leaving, and then that it should be expected that those who remain should lend a helping hand in supplying ordinances to those who were doing well enough where they were, but wanted to do better, and therefore put themselves beyond the sound of the church-going bell. But hard and trying as this in some cases may be, it is dutiful all the same, and in the discharge of duty there is always a great reward, and there ought to be an ever-present joy.

The Rev. James Robertson, the Superintendent of Missions in the North-West, is at present visiting the Churches in Ontario, in order to deepen the interest in the evangelistic work going forward in that land to which apparently all eyes are turned. He will shew very clearly, we doubt not, the duty of the Church in the circumstances. Presbyterians are notoriously by far the majority in a great number of localities. The opportunity now presented, if allowed to pass unimproved, will never return; and if, on the other hand, those who "remain at home" do anything like their duty, a comparatively short time the Presbyterian congregations in the North-West will be the largest and the most liberal to be anywhere found in the Dominion. The blessing will be felt from Newfoundland to Vancouver's Island, and instead of any having to mourn over congregations enfeebled or resources crippled, there will be increased vitality and spiritual joy "all along the line."

It would be noticed in last week's PRESBYTERIAN that some \$24,000 had already been raised as a fund for assisting in the erection of churches and manse throughout the North-West. The aim is to make this fund at least \$100,000. This can be done—we do not say easily, but quite certainly—if all God's people in our Canadian Church "have a mind to the work." It requires but a long, strong and united effort to put this matter successfully through, and we sincerely hope that Mr. Robertson may see it fully accomplished before the time for his return to the scene of his regular labours.

THE SOCIAL EVIL.

WE have more than once expressed, in a manner sufficiently frank and full, our views on what has been called the "social evil," as well as on the best and most efficient means for its present abatement and its final and permanent destruction. We have no sympathy with those who speak of this evil as in any sense either necessary or ineradicable, and we are fully persuaded that it would be an intimation of things going increasingly wrong should it ever be legalized, in order, as is alleged, to its being somewhat restricted. It will be a sad day for our country when the confession is put upon the statute book that this form of iniquity must be recognized as something which the law declares to be not wrong in itself, if only it is managed after a certain prescribed fashion. But while we say this, we must at the same time reiterate our conviction that mere legal pains and penalties can go comparatively but a short way in bringing this particular form of iniquity to a genuine and satisfactory end. There are certain sins which are too subtle for earthly law to make great headway against, and this, we believe, is one of them. Far be it from us to say that law should not do its best, or should not be called upon to do its best, for the suppression of such a crying sin and wrong. Society is bound to protect itself, by every instrumentality within its reach, against this and every other form of wrong-doing. But after all has been said in this direction that can be, it remains evident that moral agencies are in this