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The Canada Presbyterian.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24th, 1890.

MERRY CHRISTMAS and a Happy New Year and many happy returns to our thousands of readers. Friends old and new, THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN shakes your hands and wishes you the best of everything for 1891

THE oldest inhabitant never saw finer holiday weather. Of course we mean the weather up to the time of writing. There may be changes before these lines come into the hands of some of our readers. But the crisp invigorating air and glorious sunshine of the last few days compel us to ask our friends to thank the Giver of all good for the splendid closing days of the year. Talk about the Canadian climate. There were days last week that made a healthy man thank his Maker for the mere pleasure of existence.

PARNELL forcibly reminds one of those men who grieve their friends, wreck congregations, disgrace religion and ruin themselves, and then declare with unctuous tones that they are doing it all for the glory of God and the good of His cause. Parnell is trying to make people believe that he is disgracing Ireland for the country's honour and wrecking Home Rule for the good of the cause. When the Devil gets a firm hold on a man there is no limit to the absurdity of the things the man may try to make his neighbours believe.

ARRANGEMENTS have been made for the appearance of a new serial story in the columns of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN. It will appear under the title of "Bob and his Teachers, a thrilling Glasgow Story, founded on facts." It is from the pen of one of our ministers who has earned distinction as an author. His works on other lines have met with a cordial reception, and his present venture in a new field will, we are convinced, amply sustain the high expectations entertained regarding it. The first instalment will appear soon.

THERE is one reason not often alluded to why Parnell should be driven from public life. His partner in guilt is crushed never to rise again. Why should the woman be punished while the man goes free? Is it British fair play, not to speak of morality, that the one should be expelled from society and the other be permitted to lead a party in the first Parliament of the world—to associate on even terms with Gladstone and other distinguished statesmen? We hope no such outrage on decency will be witnessed in a Christian country. Let even-handed justice be dealt out to both. The woman is punished. Let her companion in guilt be punished with her.

EXCEPT in so far as they can be utilized for future good there is no use in moaning over the mistakes or even follies of the past year. The only man who never makes a mistake is the man who never does anything. The running of a certain amount of machinery necessarily involves a certain amount of friction: the doing of a certain amount of work necessarily involves a certain number of mistakes. The duty of a true man is to press on. So Paul taught when he told the Philippians to forget the things that are behind and press forward toward the things that are before. One of the chief points of difference between an improving man and one that is on the down grade intellectually is that the one on the down grade lives almost exclusively in the past while the improving man uses the past merely to make more of the future.

STRANGE things come out in the most unexpected ways. Mr. Plimsoll's attack on the Canadian cattle trade has brought out the fact that lawyers, doctors, ministers of the Gospel and members of Parliament sometimes cross the Atlantic free as foremen in charge of cattle and after they get on board pay no attention either to the men supposed to be under their charge or to the cattle. Now there is nothing wrong in this arrangement provided the foreman attends to his duties. A doctor might be a very good man to look after cattle. Judging from their conduct in court some lawyers were born to shout at cattle. One or two shouts from them would frighten any bullock into good behaviour. There is no reason why a minister might not make a good foreman. Some of the men to be kept at work might forcibly remind him of some of his parishioners. Some members of Parliament would be far more usefully employed caring for cattle on shipboard than scheming around home. Let these high-toned foremen do their duty and no one can complain.

THE more the subject of missions is discussed the more apparent does the fact become that the principal thing needed is money. The Home and Foreign Mission machinery is fairly good. When any part of it goes out of gear, or does not accomplish the purpose for which it was intended, improvements can easily be made. There is no lack of men for Foreign Mission work. Of course the usual scarcity of labourers is felt in the Home field every autumn when the students return to college, but even that old-standing difficulty may be soon overcome. The plain unvarnished fact is that the Church needs more money and cannot do more work until more money is forthcoming. Tinkering at the machinery or theorizing about new methods of working will not do much good. Once for all, let it be assumed that what the Church needs first and most for missions is more money. To get the money we must have two things—a better way of laying the claims of our mission work before the people, and an outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

PROFESSOR BERTRAND, of Paris, is about to visit this continent with the intent of enlisting the help and sympathy of the American Churches on behalf of the evangelization of France through the Reformed Churches of that land. Theodore Monod, of Paris, has a short letter in the *New York Evangelist* strongly commending Professor Bertrand to the American Churches. He says:—

Had it been possible I would have accompanied Professor Bertrand, as a joint delegate from our Church to yours, and I would have tried to show, from the present state of the public mind in France, as well as from recent experience, that there is a glorious work to be done, and to be done now, not only through independent missions (for whom we have no feeling except of brotherliness and gratitude), but through the united effort of our Reformed Church (to which over 540,000 out of 650,000 French Protestants belong), with the energetic and systematic help of fellow-Christians in other lands.

Dr. Monod is hopeful concerning the prospects of evangelical religion in France at the present time. Popery has a formal hold of many, and infidelity is on the increase. The need of France to-day is evangelical Christianity.

NEWSPAPER publishers should and probably do know that detailed reports of executions are desired mainly by the scum of the community. The vast majority of decent people, especially women, pass them over with mingled feelings of horror and disgust. A managing editor might say to himself: "Now I put in this long report to satisfy the cravings of the most degraded people in society. I know it will disgust thousands of our best readers. I know many will pass over it with a shudder, but of course we must satisfy the scum sometimes." If a newspaper is published to please everybody, and find something that everybody will enjoy reading, this argument is unanswerable. But why stop with the details of an execution? These are horrible enough, but there are other details that might be raked up in a large city even more demoralizing and revolting than the details of a hanging. Why not publish them? They would soon find readers. There is nothing too filthy or too horrible for some people to read. It seems to us that a division of labour in daily journalism must soon come in this country. The decent public will demand a paper that does not give much space to executions and other horrors, and the class that delights in horrors will demand gutter journals that will give them all the filth they want. The line of

cleavage will soon set in, if it has not set in already. Good citizens want a paper that can be put on the breakfast-table with a reasonable degree of certainty that no one there will be made to blush by reading it

WE hear of some municipalities in which not a single candidate is presenting himself for what are called municipal honours. There is nothing remarkable in such a state of things. The only wonder is that good citizens can be found in so many places willing to leave their firesides and their business to serve the public. There is much more patriotism and public spirit in this province than snarling pessimists admit. The whole municipal and educational machinery of the province is worked and on the whole well-worked by men nine-tenths of whom get nothing but abuse for their labours. The Christian people of Ontario may learn some day that their whole duty to the State is not discharged when they have uttered a few pharisaical platitudes about their rulers. If the men who serve the public in local affairs or in a wider sphere are not what they ought to be who is to blame? The people are condensed and reflected in their representatives. If a representative is a boodler the people whom he represents must either be boodlers themselves or must have kindly feelings towards boodlers. If a representative is a black-guard his constituents are either not very clever or they take kindly to uncleanness. There is no escape from these conclusions except on the Plymouth theory that a Christian should not vote or take any part in public affairs. What kind of a country would we have if every Christian acted on this theory? Our Parliament houses and council chambers would soon be filled with fellows like Birchall if no decent man took an interest in public affairs. Good citizens should help to elect good rulers and then help them in every reasonable way to discharge their thankless duties.

IF the State must hang men, would it not be better to try and have the horrible work done in such a way as not to give any kind of people an opportunity to scoff and sneer at the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ? As matters now stand, irreverent people are tempted to say that the surest way of going to heaven is to go by the gallows. A man may live a decent life for threescore and ten years and not have anything like the ecstatic feelings in dying that some murderers profess to have. Men who have lived lives of unalloyed blackguardism and who died a felon's death, sometimes use expressions that Samuel Rutherford or Robert Murray McCheyne would scarcely have used. Heaven forbid that we should say these men are not sincere. We judge no man, and certainly not a man who in a moment is to stand before his eternal Judge. The Saviour who saved the dying thief after the eleventh hour had struck can save any murderer however vile. The crowning glory of the Gospel is that it can save the chief of sinners. All the same we contend that parading the triumphant utterances of felons before the public has a notoriously bad effect. It disgusts decent people and makes scoffers scoff in the most offensive manner. Can we wonder if people sometimes ask what is the use in trying to live a clean, useful life if murderers go to heaven in triumph while the righteous are scarcely saved. If it is the duty of an individual Christian not to let his good be evil spoken of, is it equally the duty of all Christians not to let the glorious Gospel be scoffed at? The remedy is to shut the press out of the gaol yard when a human being is to be put to death. Why should the reporters haunt the cell of a doomed man? Why should any reputable newspaper want to fill its columns with the last words of a murderer or the details of a hanging?

CHRISTMAS.

WHAT new thing can be said about an institution so old as Christmas? Its various aspects have been commented on times without number, and yet the season comes round again with its undimmed brightness, cheeriness and hope. It is, like all the best things we enjoy, old yet ever new. Coming with its gladness as well as with its tender and sacred associations, it receives in all homes, from the highest to the humblest, a hearty greeting. To the little ones it comes with unalloyed joy. For weeks the days are counted till its approach, and the youngsters are inclined to grumble at the tardy movement of Time's inexorable wheels. To the old also the day comes with a brightness all its own. Many illusions have vanished from their minds as completely as the