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## The Canada Presbyterian.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, MAY 22nd, 1889

THE appellants in the Galt heresy case write a letter to the *Globe* in which the following sentence occurs:—

We gratefully acknowledge the general Christian courtesy and fairness of the members of the Synod at the late investigation, and if a satisfactory result has not been reached we admit that it is from no lack of time and painstaking on their part.

Men who have lost their case do not usually leave court in such good humour. This happy ending in the Synod, so far as feeling is concerned, is no doubt largely due to the wise, dignified patient and kindly way in which the appeal was dealt with. If all judicial business could be entrusted to men like Drs. Caven, McLaren, Reid and others who took part in issuing this case ecclesiastical litigation would not leave as many scars as it oftentimes and even difficult cases might be issued without anybody going over to the Methodists.

COMMISSIONERS to the General Assembly, who are likely to be asked to draw up reports might do a worse thing than paste the following in their hats. It is the advice given by the *Interior* to the chairmen of committees in the General Assembly of the American Church, now in session in New York.

A good rule for every chairman, in preparing a report, is to dispense with preliminaries, avoid all glittering generalities, state vital facts without bias, draw conclusions or offer advice briefly, reject all temptation to laboured argument—and then stop. Such a report will be received with applause; better still, with understanding.

These rules are certainly good, so good that none but a man skilled in drawing up reports could use them. Still a high ideal is a good thing even when it is not always reached. Most deliberative bodies might also improve the literary character of motions and amendments without incurring the charge of being word brokers. Just how many motions and amendments are put into decent dress by long suffering secretaries and clerks the world can never know.

ARCHDEACON FARRAR closed a sermon on John Bright the other day with the following eloquent sentences:—

We have lost him; and may God make us mindful to follow all that was good and all that was noble in his example! We have lost him, and may God raise others like him to our needs! God give us men! A time like this demands great hearts strong minds, true faith, and willing hands—

Men whom the lust of office does not kill,  
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy,  
Men who possess opinions and a will,  
Men who have honour, men who will not lie.

—above all, men who are true Christians as well as eminent politicians, men who can live pure lives, as well as make able speeches, men who, whatever their mistakes or their limitations, yet fear God, and do righteousness, and therefore, whatever they may be called, are acceptable with Him.

Well, Gladstone is a man of that kind. The lust of office does not kill him, the spoils of office cannot buy him, he certainly has opinions and a will of his own, he is a man of honour and does not lie; he is a Christian, lives a pure life, fears God and does righteousness, but about half the electors of England would turn him out of parliament if they could. A majority of about seventy, composed of Liberals and Tories, keep him out of power. "God give us men," is a very appropriate prayer but when he does give good men sometimes the gift is not valued highly.

THE *Christian-at-Work* is strongly in favour of candidating and thinks that in preaching as candidates ministers are required to do nothing more than men in other professions do every day:

Here is a part of the discipline of life to which men in all other professions and trades are subjected; and why should

the minister refuse to take his share? Everywhere else outside of the pulpit, places of usefulness are sought—sought by personal application, by letters of introduction, by calling in the aid of friends, and by exhibiting a record of good work done. Merchants, lawyers, doctors, mechanics, have often to try hard to obtain a commanding position; and often, too, they have to endure whatever humiliation and disappointment there may be in failing to get the position they aim for.

The comparison made between lawyers and doctors seeking business and preachers in search of a call is not happy. Who ever heard of a lawyer addressing a jury in presence of four or five hundred prospective clients in order that they might see how well he could conduct a case. Is there a respectable lawyer on the face of the earth who would exhibit himself in that way? When did any doctor treat a patient in public in order that the public might see how skilfully he could prescribe? Candidating may be the right way or the wrong way but certainly it cannot be defended by analogies drawn from other professions. The thing it resembles most is the effort made by a public man to get a seat in Parliament, or some other representative body. He, too, is a candidate.

THE descriptive report is not an American idea, as many suppose. The editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* says:

My idea of a good report is this: Whatever the meeting, whatever the incident, the report, written in simple, familiar, even colloquial language, should be lucid, terse, almost dramatic in its form and intensity; that every point of importance, and only points of importance, should be conveyed in the briefest language, and to these points of importance there should be wedded language and ideas which would make the whole article piquant and picturesque, so that the reader of the journal might be almost compelled to read it even against his will. For these reasons I am dead against any longer life being granted to the old stereotyped form of framing reports of public meetings. The report of the future will be more of a picturesque panorama, a microcosm of the speeches and resolutions, no suggestive incident being omitted, and the spirit of the proceedings, down even to its undercurrents, being clearly and decidedly delineated.

It will be seen from the foregoing that the editor's idea of a good report is one written mainly to interest readers. The speaker is almost ignored. His most important points are to be given, but there must be "wedded language and ideas which make the report piquant and picturesque." But supposing the speaker were neither piquant nor picturesque. He may be exactly the reverse, but the report must be readable. That is the main point. The stenographer of the future must be a descriptive writer. The journal of the future will pay more attention to the million who buy papers and read them than to the one man who speaks. If the public want very much to know what he says, he will be taken *verbatim*, but not otherwise. We should like to see one of the dailies try a first-class descriptive report of the next meeting of the General Assembly.

THE Chicago *Interior* thinks our contributor Knoxonian displays "sound sense" when he contends that a movement in favour of organic union must come from the people, and work upward, if it works at all. The *Interior* says:

Knoxonian, writing in THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN on some problems of perpetual motion—such as how to prepare and deliver sermons, how to dispose of the pews, how to fill vacant pulpits, etc.—adds the problem of organic union to the list. This union idea is being agitated to some extent over the border, as was disclosed by a correspondent of the *Interior* recently. We remember that it was proposed by an Episcopal body two or three years ago, debated by a joint meeting of Presbyterians, Methodists, and others this year, in Toronto, and then held open to await the results of further prayer and Conference. It appears to us that Knoxonian is right, in classing this among the movements which can never be brought to a definite result, by the methods at present adopted. "Any union movement," he declares, "even if desirable, to be successful must begin with the mass of the people and work upwards. When the body of the people are ready and anxious for union, union will come, if ever, and not till then." This is sound sense, we verily believe. When the laity of the churches begin to feel hampered by denomination boundaries, and astonish the pastors by asking for the frequent holding of union or fraternal services, and for the common use of compromise forms of worship and statements of doctrine—when that occurs, something in particular is liable to happen. How is it in Japan? Did not the preachers there have it forced on their attention, that the people in Presbyterian and Congregational churches were anxious to coalesce, and could see no reason for continued separation? We answer, Yes; and hence arose the plan of union in Japan. In a similar way, if at all, must come about a union of Christian denominations in Canada, or in the United States.

The energy and liberality displayed by the people, especially by Methodists and Presbyterians in building churches, endowing colleges and doing various kinds of denominational work shows, we think, very clearly that whatever mere talkers may be saying, the people who are doing the work and paying the money are not giving the slightest attention to questions of Union.

## TORONTO AND KINGSTON SYNOD.

THE popular impression that a Synod is more of a formal than a real necessity to the completeness of Presbyterian organization was not borne out as a result of the meeting at Bowmanville last week. By most who were in attendance it was reckoned one of the best meetings held since its formation. Certain it is there were no expressions of disappointment heard from those who commented on the proceedings. Presbyteries manage to do excellent work in the interests of the Church, and now that they have increased in number much that was formerly neglected or overlooked is now attended to. The supervision of congregations and mission stations is much more complete and effective than it was in earlier days. There can be no doubt that Presbyterianism suffered much from the want of opportunity and the limitation of resources unavoidable in its earlier history in Canada. There are whole sections of country where in early days Presbyterians settled for whom no ordinances were provided by the Church of their choice. They felt it to be their duty, and rightly to avail themselves of whatever services were within reach. Thus many who to-day are active workers in other churches owe not a little of their usefulness to the advantages received from the church they did not leave but which virtually left them.

It would be ungrateful and unjust to the memory of the pioneer Presbyterian ministers, some of whom remain but a large number have fallen asleep, to imply that they were negligent. They laboured with a zeal, energy and self-forgetfulness, amid difficulties, discouragements and privations that cannot be surpassed. They laid the foundation for the prosperity that now characterizes the Presbyterian Church wherever it has been planted. The old Presbyteries have been able to consolidate the congregations under their care and to meet all requirements as they arise. The more recently formed Presbyteries have done a praiseworthy work in providing the supply of ordinances in hitherto neglected localities and done much to advance the interests and influence which the Presbyterian Church is fitted to exert.

Synods have been able to contribute their share to the more complete organization of the Church's machinery. It may be that all that was expected from them has not been fully realized. In judicial cases it may be that parties are sometimes unwilling to accept Synodical decisions as final, yet numbers of such cases are settled satisfactorily without going further. In such cases as find their way to the General Assembly, they are all the more satisfactorily disposed of because of the consideration and sifting they have received in the intermediate court. Their merits have been fully canvassed, and all their bearings are more properly understood. The Synod also affords an opportunity for the discussion of those questions that from time to time engage popular attention, and thus to some extent help to shape public opinion from a Christian standpoint.

What may now be considered as an inseparable adjunct of the Synod is the Conference on practical Christian work that usually precedes its regular meetings. That such conferences can become eminently helpful and profitable, none who attended the one at Bowmanville can reasonably doubt. The arrangements previously made, the subjects chosen for consideration and the speakers appointed evidenced wise and judicious management on the part of those entrusted with shaping the work of the Conference, which throughout was admirably managed. The work was well apportioned, the speaking was apt and stimulating, and, what is not always attained, it was admirably well-timed. No one transgressed by indulging in profuse and protracted verbosity. The subjects discussed were of the most practical kind. From certain remarks made, it is clear that solicitude for the maintenance of that essential part of home religious life, family worship, was not mistimed. Decision for Christ, claims of the Sabbath school, development of the working power of the Church, pastoral visitation, foreign mission work, and the animating spirit and power of all religious activity were themes that properly engaged the attention of the Conference, and the fervour that their consideration evoked was a hopeful sign of the earnestness of purpose by which the members were animated. Excellent as the Conference was, there is an obvious improvement that can yet be made. The speaking should not be confined almost exclusively to the ministry, as is the present practice. The fault is not theirs, for there was more than one direct appeal for the eldership to speak out. The actual condition of the Church would be more fully understood did the elders take a more active part in the Church courts. The opening sermon gave the key-note to the