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## The Canada Presbyterian.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11th, 1891.

THE attention of treasurers of congregations is specially directed to the advertisement appearing in another column in which Dr. Reid urges the importance of prompt transmission of all contributions for Home Missions and Augmentation. In order that all contributions to the schemes of the Church should be correctly reported, it is absolutely necessary that they be in the treasurer's hands before the date definitely fixed for closing the books. Compliance with the request would save much trouble and inconvenience and be satisfactory to all concerned.

WHILE speaking in the most favourable terms of the religious interest which Moody has recently created in Boston, a writer in one of the religious journals says:—

I am thinking to-day that while this confidence in Moody has not been misplaced, it might fittingly be extended. We may unconsciously lean upon the agency and overlook or underestimate the Great Power behind it. Just now, while we need John the Baptist's harrow of repentance to go all over the land and break up the clods of the valley, we also need a baptism of faith in God, a great rain coming down out of heaven and watering the sowings so varied and frequent.

Leaning upon the agency and overlooking or underestimating the Great Power is one of the besetting sins of the Church at the present time. Underneath the morbid craving for a man that will attract and draw there is too often a practical ignoring or at least belittling of the Spirit's power.

THE relation of the theological seminaries in the American Presbyterian Church to the General Assembly will be certain to receive attention next May when the inaugural of Dr. Briggs comes before the Supreme Court. It appears that one of the seminaries—Auburn—is not under the control of the Assembly at all. A friend of the institution writes to the press saying that Auburn reports to the Assembly the election of professors as a matter of courtesy, but they do not report such election as subject to the action of the Assembly, either of approval or of disapproval. The day may come when the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada will feel deeply thankful that the Church has full control over its theological seminaries. To have a man teaching theology for the Church over whom the Church has no control is not a business-like arrangement, to put the matter on no higher grounds.

DR. BRIGGS, of the Union Seminary, New York, bulks more largely in the press of the American Presbyterian Church, and perhaps in current conversation in Presbyterian circles, than any half-dozen ministers of the Church. And why? Simply because Dr. Briggs delivered a lecture in which he said that the divine authority of Scripture lay in the "concept" not in the style or sentences or words. Besides this it is alleged that the general tone of the lecture was such as to lessen our regard for the authority of God's word. All this and a good deal more may be true, but there must be five or six thousand ministers in the Church whose work is of much more importance than the alleged heresy of Dr. Briggs. Why do we always give the doubtful things so much more prominence than we give to actual work. It is pleasant, however, to notice that several of our American contemporaries positively refuse to load down their columns with controversy about Dr. Briggs. They assume that the General Assembly can attend to the Doctor if he needs any attention and that their readers want to know something about what is being done in the Church outside of Union Seminary. They are right.

IN a report of the annual congregational meeting of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, given by a London journal, we find the following sentence: "During the past twelve months there had been a very great decrease in the weekly Sunday offerings, and the number of members who paid for sittings had also considerably decreased." Had this occurred in the congregation of a much lesser pastor than Spurgeon there would have been ominous wise looks and head-shakings and whisperings of failure all through the congregation. Would-be leaders would throw out dark hints about "a change." Some of the beloved sisters would suggest "a young man." The financial managers would look serious, and solemnly say: "Something must be done." All would probably agree that the minister was mainly to blame. Nobody, however, blames Spurgeon for a decrease in revenue and in the number of contributing members. Great men are always much more leniently dealt with than smaller ones.

THE paper published by the Hon. Edward Blake last week explaining the reasons why he retires, we hope merely for a time, from political life cannot fail to make a powerful and perhaps far-reaching impression on the public mind. Mr. Blake is the first jurist in the Dominion and one of the first in the world. In any Parliament or court in the world he would stand in the front rank. He is a distinctly clean, high-minded, patriotic man. There is not a stain on him personally, professionally or politically. The literary work of his paper is the highest of its kind. In two or three brief paragraphs he arraigns the N. P. in terrific style. Apart from the merits of the case the paragraph on the alleged effects of the N. P. is well worth study as a work of art. There is nothing in Junius or Macaulay that surpasses it. In two or three columns the great jurist labours hard to show that the commercial policy of the Liberals would necessarily lead to political union with the United States, towards which destiny the distinguished gentleman thinks the N. P. is also bringing us. Having read with great interest what Mr. Blake has to say against both policies, and having admired the manner and spirit in which he says it, one feels like saying: "Now, Mr. Blake, assuming all this to be so, *what do you suggest yourself?*"

PRESBYTERIANS everywhere and many outside the Presbyterian pale will learn with deep regret that the Rev. Mr. Macdonnell has been compelled to stop work and start on a long holiday tour. The rev. gentleman's general health was, we understand, satisfactory, but there were symptoms of voice failure which made a rest highly desirable, if not absolutely necessary. For many years the esteemed pastor of St. Andrew's has been a hard worker. Besides doing the work of one of the largest congregations in the city, he has ever been ready to help his brethren in any part of the Church if at all able to do so. His efforts on behalf of the Augmentation Fund are known to every Presbyterian. In the fight to keep the wolf from the door, the poorer Presbyterian ministers owe more to the help of Mr. D. J. Macdonnell than to that of any living man. He has always done a full share of work in connection with the Home Mission Committee and other branches of Church activity, while the charities of his own city have ever found him a generous helper. Mr. Macdonnell is, in short, one of the men who sustain the Church—not one of those who are sustained by it. Without office or official connection of any kind, he has by the sheer influence of capital all-round work kept himself in the front rank of the ministers of Canada. Every reader of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN will join us in wishing the esteemed gentleman a pleasant health-giving tour, a safe return and many more years of good work in St. Andrew's.

MANY a time and oft have we heard the very cream of Presbyterian congregations say that raising money by indirect methods for congregational purposes never pays them, for they have to do all the work and then pay more than their share of the money towards the entertainment or whatever it may be. The theory that by indirect means money is obtained from those who would not otherwise give it holds good in some instances but not by any means in all. The *New York Evangelist* sums up the case against using indirect means for congregational purposes in this vigorous style—the point to be proven being that the indirect method does not pay the people who do the Church's best work:—

It is a financial blunder, for they pay two prices for what they get; it is a social blunder for they give unskilled labour to provide those social pleasures which skilled labour constantly provides all ready to their hand; it is an ecclesiastical blunder, since it brings Church methods into disrepute; it is a religious blunder, since it directly tends to thwart those religious interests which are to them most precious.

The best opinion seems to be that the ordinary revenue of a congregation should be paid directly by the people but that it is quite proper and reasonable for Ladies' Aid Societies, Woman's Missionary Societies, Mission Bands, Young Men's Associations and various other organizations connected with congregations to raise money by lectures, concerts, socials and other means that may be useful and enjoyable apart from financial considerations. It is quite easy for wealthy people to condemn all kinds of indirect means to raise money. If the daughter of a man who has hard work to keep the wolf from the door does not help to raise money for missions in an indirect way she cannot help at all. Hundreds of the very best Christian people can give work of some kind who cannot give money. Should the Church refuse them the privilege of doing what they can? The statement so often made that the legitimate use of indirect means to raise money for any purpose injures the spirituality of the Church is not proved by the facts. Raising money for the support of Gospel ordinances by indirect means—depending on indirect ways for ordinary revenue that the members and adherents should pay every Sabbath—would soon injure and ultimately ruin any congregation, but the raising of money by societies for temporary or outside purposes is an entirely different thing. As a matter of fact the congregations, dead almost beyond hope of recovery, are those that have neither Ladies' Aid nor Woman's Missionary Society, nor Mission Band, nor Christian Endeavour, nor Young Men's Society, nor any other organization that wants to raise any money indirectly or any other way.

### THE WESLEYAN CENTENARY.

ON the 2nd March special services were held in London of a most interesting character. They were held in City Road Chapel, where near the same spot a hundred years before John Wesley finished his earthly life. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord" is true of every life that so ends, but in the case of John Wesley the added declaration is more conspicuously visible than it oft-times is: "their works do follow them." Great as was the good accomplished by that earnest and fervent labourer and of those associated with him in the work of the Gospel, possibly few who mourned his death could imagine the vast and beneficent results that have flowed from his life-work. It is one of the marvels of a marvellous century.

One of the chief incidents of the London celebration was the unveiling of a finely-sculptured monument of the founder of Methodism. It stands in front of the City Road Chapel. Eminent men took part in the ceremony. It is significant that one of the principal addresses—not inaptly described as an oration—was delivered by Archdeacon Farrar, representing a section of the Church that at the beginning of the movement was decidedly hostile, and in many places in England is not even now over-friendly to another branch that has done so much for the evangelization of the masses all over the world. Dr. Farrar's address was large-hearted, appreciative and comprehensive. It bears no trace of a narrow sectarianism, of which he is wholly free. This is satisfactory, not so much as an evidence that the Established Church of England has distinguished sons who can find it in their heart to say kindly things of their Nonconforming brethren, but as an evidence of that expanding charity which is in accord both with the spirit of primitive as well as nineteenth century Christianity.

The erection of a monument to the memory of John Wesley verifies another New Testament statement: "Ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, if we had been in the days of our fathers we would not have been partakers of them in the blood of the prophets." It was no sentimental persecution that John Wesley had frequently to face in his day. Oftener than once he was in personal danger from the fury of the mob. When churches were closed against him he took to the fields and the highways, and there, with as much decorum as in the finest edifice, preached the glad tidings of salvation. No power was able to silence his testimony. Now his name is enrolled among the spiritual heroes who have left an indelible impress on the religious history of the world.