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EASTERN GENERAL AGENT.

MR. WALTER KERR—for many years an esteemed elder of our Church—is the duly authorized agent for THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN. He will collect outstanding accounts, and take names of new subscribers. Friends are invited to give any assistance in their power to Mr. Kerr in all the congregations he may visit.



TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17, 1886.

THE attention of all interested is directed to the announcement in our advertising columns that the meeting of the Home Mission Committee, Western Section, will be held in this city, in St. Andrew's Church lecture room, beginning Tuesday, March 30, at nine o'clock a.m.

IN a recent lecture Joseph Cook threw some fresh light on the conflict between capital and labour in this paragraph:

In another generation, if you are a rich man in this, your children may be poor; or, if you are a poor man in this, your children may be rich; so that I claim here a right to utter the whole truth in support of the just demands of both wealth and labour. The extension of the suffrage and of Republican institutions in modern times, the abolition of privileged classes, the overturn of the right of primogeniture, the opening of careers to talent have made society mobile; men go up and down; and when property is widely distributed, and distributed in a different way from generation to generation, it is very difficult to maintain class prejudices from period to period, making them hereditary feuds. It is to be hoped that our Republic never will have permanent classes, either wealthy or poor. The mobility of American society, and of all society governed under Republican fashions, is the best ground of hope that justice will be done both to Dives and to Lazarus.

Mobile is good. Society is almost as mobile in Canada as it is across the lines. The son of the superintendent of a street car company may be a driver forty years hence. The son of a driver may then be the superintendent. Similar changes may occur in any department of industry. Such being the case, we should try to treat each other with generosity. No man knows where or what his own boy may be forty years hence.

THE present is always a time of considerable anxiety to the best friends of the Church. The accounts will soon be closed for the ecclesiastical year, and no one knows how the balances will stand. There may be an encouraging surplus or a discouraging deficit. No one can tell until the balance is struck. Congregational reports are also coming in, and until they are examined it is impossible to know what progress has been made during the year. Has our membership increased? If so, to what extent? How do the figures compare with those of last year? These are questions that press heavily upon the minds of all who have the interests of our beloved Zion at heart. On the whole, we are of the opinion that the past year has been one of fair prosperity. We may be mistaken, but we think we are not. Even supposing the figures are not in all cases what we would like them to be, there need be no discouragement. Moral and spiritual results can never be fully expressed in figures. There is no power in arithmetic to describe the work of the Spirit. Figures are at best but an approximation to the truth. Still we would like to see the figures foot up well. If any of the Schemes are behind there will be a splendid opportunity for some rich friends to wipe out the deficit before the Assembly meeting. There is often a fine opportunity of that kind between the first of April and the beginning of June. The hour generally comes about that time, and the man sometimes comes too. If the hour should come this spring we hope to see the man put in an appearance.

THE advocates of female suffrage might borrow a good "point" from the working of the Presbyterian system of church government. One of the arguments against female suffrage is that it would lead to discord in families. It is contended that husbands and wives would quarrel about their favourite candidates, and that the peace of the domestic hearth would thus be endangered. This is John Bright's strong argument, and it was used in the Local Legislature the other week by a number of members with considerable effect. Women vote in the Presbyterian Church, and have done so for many years in some of its branches, and we never heard of one solitary instance in which their voting led to trouble in the family. They vote for elders, deacons, managers and ministers, and it is not by any means probable that husband and wife always vote the same ticket. In fact, it is well known that they sometimes do not so vote. It might be urged that people are not so deeply interested in ecclesiastical matters as in matters municipal and political, and that therefore there is less probability of friction. Those who reason thus do not know anything about the matter. The typical Presbyterian woman takes a much more lively interest in her church affairs than she will do in politics for a century to come. Friction arises more easily in church affairs than in affairs of any other kind. But the fact remains that women vote regularly for elders, deacons, managers, ministers and all other church officials, and their ecclesiastical franchise has never been known to cause any family trouble. Even if it did produce a little friction in a few isolated cases, who would think of saying that no Presbyterian woman should be allowed to vote for her minister or elder?

THE conflict between capital and labour waxes fierce. It rages in the United States and England, and Canada is becoming familiar with the contest. In the earlier struggles capital always won, because capital was always organized. Labour is now organized, and can better maintain its rights in the struggle. The difficulty is often the old one of drawing the line, and saying where the rights of the one party end and the rights of the other begin. No thinking man now denies that skilled or unskilled labourers have a right to combine for the promotion of their own interests. The crucial point is to say just what and what not they have a right to do when combined. The workmen in the famous McCormack works in Chicago had a serious difficulty the other week. Mr. McCormack fully admitted the right of his men to combine and strike if they wished to do so; but he stoutly denied that they had a right to dictate to him in regard to employing non-union men in his works. He drew the line there and closed his workshops. Substantially the same problem led to the stoppage of the street railway system in Toronto last week. The employees of the company thought they had a right to join the Knights of Labour if they wished to do so. Most people think they had. But the company think they have a right to dismiss any man who joins the Knights of Labour. Probably both are theoretically right in their contention. By what process of reasoning can it be shown that the men have no right to join any lawful combination? On the other hand it might be difficult to show that the company have no right to dismiss them for so doing if they think proper. The one thing clear is that society cannot hang together if everybody insists on carrying out his individual rights to the fullest extent. We must all yield a little or have anarchy. What the world needs is more of the spirit of the Gospel.

ONE of the first duties of every good citizen at the present time is to keep cool. Several burning questions are up on which discussions may easily arise not at all healthful to the body politic. Home Rule for Ireland, the hanging of Riel and the conflict between labour and capital are topics that require careful handling in a country like ours. In regard to the first question, we cannot see why anyone has a right to assume that Mr. Gladstone intends to dismember the Empire and crush the Protestants of Ulster. As regards Riel, we counsel moderation of feeling and language. We were among those who thought that on the whole the Government did right in not commuting Riel's sentence. We did not come to that conclusion without being quite aware that a good deal could be said on both sides. Many friends whose opinion we highly value came to a very different con-

clusion. A hundred years hence historians will come to different conclusions. What every good citizen should now avoid is everything that tends to create race and religious antipathies. We cannot as Canadians afford to keep up race prejudices. Our young country is peopled with a score of nationalities. There are a dozen nations represented on every street, and half a dozen representatives of different countries tilling the soil on nearly every concession. If Canada is to prosper we must have peace—not peace at any price, not peace at the expense of principle; but we know of no reason why we should not have peace now so far as Riel is concerned. If those of us who are not Frenchmen were Frenchmen some of us would feel just as hotly about the hanging of Riel as some of the Frenchmen do. Anyway Riel is no more. Let us study the things that make for honourable peace. There can be no national prosperity if we are to be engaged in everlasting war with our French fellow-citizens. And be it remembered many who are not Frenchmen think it was wrong to hang Riel.

MONTREAL CENTENARY OF PRESBYTERIANISM.

The opening sermon in connection with the centennial celebration of St. Gabriel Church, Montreal, was preached by the Rev. Principal Grant, of Queen's University. He selected as the topic of discourse: "I speak concerning Christ and the Church." It was an able, comprehensive and charitable discourse. The Venerable Dr. Wilkes preached an excellent and appropriate sermon in the afternoon. The pastor, the Rev. Robert Campbell, M.A., occupied the pulpit in the evening. He gave a most interesting history of the congregation's formation and progress down to the present time. It is matter for regret that space limitations prevent more copious extracts than the following:—

The story of the progress of Presbyterianism from the 12th of March, 1786, the day on which the Rev. John Bethune first began a regular service according to the forms and practice of the Church of Scotland, up to the present time, is in reality the story of the advancement of Montreal from a small walled town to the great and beautiful city which it has become, gradually spreading over the whole island. The growth of our cause has kept pace with the growth of the community. This church had a strong hold of the religious, social and public life of Montreal, at least during the first fifty years of its existence. Its founders and early supporters gave it a status of great influence. A century ago, as now, the Scotch merchants constituted a very important section of the population of the city. They ranked with the foremos in enterprise and wealth. They were, indeed, the leaders of society. Many of them were Highland gentlemen of high degree. It is not easy to realize it; but it is nevertheless a fact that some of those who were present at the organization of that first congregation, in a room on Notre Dame Street, on the 12th of March, 1786, had as youths been actually engaged in the fight at Culloden, in 1746; and not a few of them were the children or descendants of those brave men who stood by the side of Prince Charlie on that fatal field. After Canada was acknowledged as a British possession, the brave soldiers who had achieved its conquest, many of them Highlanders, men of the Black Watch and 78th, a Frazer regiment, were offered a home in it, as many of them as chose to remain. A large proportion of them elected to stay in this country, and had lands assigned to them, while not a few of the officers became residents in Montreal, and took service with the lately organized North-West Fur Trading Company. These were the men that gathered around Mr. Bethune, who was a Highlander like themselves, so that the commencement of Presbyterianism in this city is linked with the romantic period of Scottish history.

On the 2nd of April, 1792, the lot was purchased for £100, and in six months the church was completed at a cost of about £1,000. It was opened for worship on October 7, 1792. The property was vested in ten trustees, five of whom I have already named. The other five were William Stewart, Alexander Hannah, Alexander Fisher, Thomas Oakes and John Empey. I may make another remark just at this point. There was from the first such a commingling of elements national and ecclesiastical, in the proprietorship of this church that promise was given of great catholicity of sentiment. In addition to the McKenzies, Frazers, Henry Grant, Moncur, Finlay, McGillivray, Schaw, Auldjo, McKinlay, the Logans, Ogilvy and Li Jy, and many other Scotsmen, Benaiah Gibb, John Gregory, John Molson, Thomas Oakes, Thomas Busby, J. A. Gray, James Woodrich and Dr. Blake were Englishmen; Thomas Sullivan, Andrew Todd, John McCord and John Naigle were Irishmen; Messrs. J. Mittleberger and J. J. Dehl were Germans; while Jasper Tough, Jabez De Witt, Zabdriel Thayer and Abigail Curtis his wife, J. W. Northrup, with Hephzibah Thurston his wife, and Azenath, his son, with numerous others of a later date, as clearly were from New England. The well known display of religious hospitality on the part of the Recollet Fathers took place also during Mr. Young's régime. Their church was placed at the disposal of the Scotch Presbyterians in 1791, as it had been in 1789 at the service of the English Episcopalians; and on the 18th of September, 1791, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered in it, according to the forms of the Church of Scotland. The "Society of Presbyterians," as they were then called, continued to occupy the