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C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, MANAGER.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, MAY 30TH, 1894.

THE term "national schools" sounds well, but it should never be forgotten that what a good many people mean by it is schools with every trace of religion "obliterated."

THE correct thing in certain circles now, is to draw a patriotic picture of the Protestant little boy and the Catholic little boy "sitting at the same desk" learning the three R's. Principal Grant thinks it of more importance that some of the old boys should be taught to keep their hands out of the Dominion strong box.

IN an interview with the *Globe*, the other day Principal Grant said that the Decalogue should take precedence over all the questions now agitating the Canadian public. He is old fashioned enough to think that the observance of even the sixth commandment is of more importance than the abolition of separate schools.

MR. ARMSTRONG, the labour candidate in East Toronto, scored splendidly the other day when he said that he did not "believe in taxing churches and exempting gas mains. He did not believe in taxing the light for the soul while exempting the light for the feet." Mr. Armstrong evidently understands the art of putting things and if he is sent to the Legislature may rank a long way above some of the college graduates he will meet there.

LORD ROSEBURY thinks that the ethical element will soon be the prime factor in politics. In a recent speech he said that the supreme test applied to all governments will in the near future be, is their policy a "living and ennobling effort to carry into practical politics the principles of a higher morality." The supreme test applied by too many people in some places on this side of the Atlantic is, the amount of "boodle" the Government is prepared to spend in the constituency.

ONE more river to cross. The heresy trial is past and the next danger is a snarl at St. John over expected deficits. The air is full of angry feeling about alleged extravagance in political affairs and it would be almost a miracle if the contagion did not strike some members of Assembly. The professional economist is having a great time in the state and he may be expected to appear in the church. We earnestly counsel moderation and if possible an attempt to turn deficits—should there be any—into means of grace. If the people can give and will not, we should humble ourselves and confess our sins; if they would pay more but cannot, let us bow submissively to the great Ruler and accept the position assigned to us.

THE *Interior* makes this comment on the picture of the new Moderator of the American Assembly, which it has on the cover of last week's issue:

Dr. Mutchmore's picture on the cover does him no sort of justice. The doctor's face is never at its best in repose. It is at its best when he is breaking the repose of a prayer-meeting or of drowsy elders during sermon-time.

That is the time when any minister's face should be at its best. Those brethren who are at their best in church courts are, as a rule, not much given to waking people up in meetings.

PRESBYTERIANS are sometimes called bigoted; they are often described as narrow and strait-laced. There is no book in the world large enough to contain all the sneers that have been sneered at our iron-clad symbols. There is no politician on the face of the earth that has been slandered as much as the Confession of Faith has been slandered. Strange to say, these narrow, strait-laced people are expected to pay, and generally do pay about two-thirds of all the money that is contributed for charitable and extra-denominational purposes. Your gushing, dear-brother, union-talking man usually takes precious good care of his money. His mouth is more open than his pocket.

THE Moderator of the American General Assembly this year is Dr. Mutchmore, editor of the *Philadelphia Presbyterian*. The Assembly perhaps thought that the turn of the press for the honors of the chair had at last come. Pastors, professors and missionaries have had their share and the Fourth Estate came in fourth. The Free Church of Scotland looked in the same direction for a Moderator last year. Ever since the disruption the chair had been filled by men who were pastors, professors or missionaries and the Assembly chose for moderator a man who had done some good literary work for the jubilee. In his opening speech he stated that he had never written a motion or drawn up an overture, but he made a capital Moderator. Dr. Mutchmore will no doubt do honor to the Fourth Estate by the manner in which he discharges his duties.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

IN view of the approaching meeting of the General Assembly at St. John, there are many things needing to be done by the permanent officers of the church, clerks of presbyteries and synods, and conveners of large and important committees in which their ministerial brethren can render them much needed and most valuable assistance. There is hardly to be found a clerk of any Presbytery or Synod or Convener of any important committee but has to complain every year of the difficulty of getting in good time returns to questions or schedules sent out which are simply indispensable to making up reports which, when made up, to be of any value ought to be as complete as they can possibly be made. The blame for tardy or inadequate returns lies almost wholly upon the ministers of the church. Some are in this as in everything else simply procrastinating in their habits, some are indifferent, and some consider all reports as a bore, and see no necessity for them or at least so many of them, or why they should be called for every year. Whatever individual opinion may be upon the matter, it is evident that the church as a whole, represented by General Assembly, regards yearly returns upon a number of important subjects as necessary. This ought to be sufficient to secure from every minister who is loyal to the church and to his ordination vows prompt, full and intelligent answers to every return called for. It is clear that no church organization as it now exists, can be carried on intelligently and efficiently without taking a comprehensive and detailed survey of all its operations every year any more than a business man can tell how he stands without carefully taking stock annually. This is so plainly the case to every rational mind as not to admit of serious consideration.

It is weeks now since the Rev. Dr. Torrance had to call attention to the tardiness with which returns of a very important kind were reaching him, and we venture to say that even now, after weeks have elapsed, there are still not a few behind. The Rev. E. D. Millar, Convener of the General Assembly's Committee on Systematic Beneficence, made a complaint which we regret was at the time overlooked, of the slowness with which important returns

were reaching him, indispensable to getting his report ready for the General Assembly. At the late meeting of the Synod of Hamilton and London almost every convener of every committee complained more or less of the same thing, and stated that because of it the value of his report was more or less seriously affected. This is emphatically a kind of work which, if worth doing at all, is worth doing well. If not well done, in the sense of being done over the whole church, being done intelligently and in good time, the result sought to be obtained may be almost valueless. It takes not only care, patience and intelligence, but a great deal of time to collate, condense and state succinctly and clearly and present in one view the substance of many views gathered from all parts of the church. Besides making reports valuable by supplying in time full returns, and facilitating the work of those entrusted with them, it would greatly help the business of the General Assembly, to give conveners of committees time and the means of digesting thoroughly the matter in their hands and presenting it before the supreme court in the best possible shape. Let all, therefore, who have to furnish the materials for drawing up important reports make now no delay, but send forward promptly all information asked for, so that every document may be presented to the Assembly in such a shape as shall facilitate its business and enable it to arrive at the wisest and best results.

Besides reports there are returns to remits sent down by the Assembly, all our ministers certainly feel an interest in matters which the General Assembly has thought to be of so much importance as to seek for the judgment of the whole church upon them. But commissioners to the General Assembly would do well to be as far as possible informing themselves as to the mind of the church on subjects sent down, such as, for example, that of the proposed Hymnal, the enlarged powers of Synods, etc., so as to act intelligently when the time for action comes.

The business of the church might also be facilitated and wise conclusions arrived at, if those entrusted with overtures on important matters would, through our columns, before the Assembly meets, make known to the church in few words the substance of such overtures, so that they might be considered so far beforehand by commissioners and the decisions arrived at would not be crude, or made upon the impulse of the moment, but be the result of sober and intelligent thought and conviction.

However much anyone may expect to be helped by hearing such matters discussed surely no wise or conscientious member of the Assembly would desire to go there without giving the important questions which will undoubtedly arise all the consideration before he goes which his time and the means at his disposal for obtaining light upon them will admit of. The judgment of the General Assembly carries with it the weight and authority of the whole church, its legislation vitally affects all her interests, and while the church prays for and expects the guidance of the Divine Spirit, members are not thereby relieved from the obligation of using all the means placed by God within their reach whereby they may qualify themselves for intelligently arriving at the mind of the Spirit and at decisions which will be in accordance with the mind and will of God as revealed in His Word. Such are some of the ways by which preparation may be made for the General Assembly meeting so that its business shall be expedited, and not only expedited but having before it a large body of information and the minds of members being directed beforehand to important matters which shall come before it, the decisions arrived at may be in such manifest accord with truth and righteousness as that they shall command the confidence and carry with them the assent of the whole church.

THE Editor has had a very pleasant call in his sanctum from the Rev. Mr. Wilkie, of Indore, India. The church at large will be gratified to hear that his health has been much benefited by the sea voyage, and he looks forward hopefully to returning in a couple of months. It is disappointing to learn that the health of some of our missionaries now on the field in India is far from being in a satisfactory state.

A TELEGRAM to the CANADA PRESBYTERIAN from the committee in St. John, N.B., making arrangements for the General Assembly, states that many commissioners have made no reply to the circular sent them regarding their intention to be present or not. Those who intend to be present but have not sent word to that effect, are requested to do so by the first mail, otherwise it will be understood by the committee that they are not going, or