

# The Canada School Journal.

## AND WEEKLY REVIEW.

VOL. X.

TORONTO, MAY 28, 1885.

No 21.

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### The Canada School Journal and Weekly Review.

Edited by J. E. WELLS, M.A.

and a staff of competent Provincial editors.

*An Educational Journal devoted to the advancement of Literature, Science, and the teaching profession in Canada.*

#### —o—TERMS—o—

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### The World.

The number of the paupers in the great cities of the world is appalling. In Paris a census of the indigent is taken every three years. The report for 1883, just issued, shows that 123,324 individuals, or one in eighteen of the entire population, were in receipt of relief from the Public Administration. Yet these figures are a decrease from those of the preceding year.

The question whether Riel shall have a civil or a military trial is just now exciting a good deal of interest. He can, it is said, be tried by court martial only in case it can be shown that he has renounced his birthright as a British subject and become an American citizen. His trial before a civil court would afford the best opportunity for a thorough and impartial inquiry into the state of affairs in the Northwest which led to the rebellion, and the alleged wrongs of his compatriots and other settlers. This would be well for many reasons. Canadians do not want the wounds of this deplorable outbreak to be healed slightly.

Future rebellions must be rendered impossible, so far as fair and considerate treatment of Half-breeds and Indians can avail.

A great event in the history of both religion and literature is the issue of the Revised Old Testament. It is not to be expected that the interest awakened will be so intense as that which followed the issue of the Revised New Testament four years ago. The latter revision involved many changes of text consequent upon the comparison of various manuscript authorities, as well as changes of translation. The changes in the Revised Old Testament are simply changes of translation, no new textual readings being in question. Many errors are corrected, but the familiar expressions are retained as far as possible. The question with bible readers should be one of truth, not of age or associations, and there can be no doubt that the new versions approach much nearer the standard of absolute correctness than the old. Nevertheless, the power of old association is very strong, and it is likely that for a generation or two many will say “The old is better.”

It must be confessed that the Anglo-Russian diplomatic sky is still lowering. The frequent recurrence of apparent hitches in the peace negotiations is ominous. The recent halting of the Guards at Alexandria, on their way home from Egypt, stimulates conjecture, though it may prove to have no connection with the Afghan difficulty. While negotiations are in progress the British ministry can, of course, give no explanations, but it seems almost certain that the extravagance and persistence of the Russian demands is causing trouble. It is difficult too to see how the Czar's ostentatious approval and reward of Komaroff can be easily brooked by the British Government. Still if a basis of peace consistent with English right and dignity can be secured under such circumstances, the British peacemakers will be entitled to all the greater credit.

The controversy between the prohibitionists and their opponents waxes hotter and hotter, but the disputants come no nearer to looking each other's arguments in the face. It is astonishing to what an extent even able writers fight shy of the real issue. To talk about sumptuary laws, refute shallow arguments concerning unfermented wines, quote medical absurdities about unwholesome dieting, or even to point out flaws in the Scott Act, is not to confute the prohibitionists on the main point. No one advocates prohibition as a sumptuary measure; few think it matters whether or not there was such a thing as unfermented wine in ancient India or Gallilee; nor would the question be decided by proving that all liquors are either slightly poisonous, or slightly nutritive. Modern legislation is a practical business. It deals with facts, and seeks the greatest good of the greatest number. Are intoxicating drinks beyond all comparison the most fruitful agent in producing poverty