

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

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C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, *Proprietor.*
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TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21, 1882.

THE members of the Assembly's Foreign Mission Committee (W. S.) may expect to be convened for a meeting in the beginning of July—probably on the 5th or 6th of that month.

THE Baptist Publishing Society, recently formed for the purpose of issuing religious publications, has purchased the "Canadian Baptist." This Society begins its work on a solid financial basis, the Hon. Wm. McMaster having contributed \$30,000 to its funds. The entire net profits realized are to be devoted to home and foreign mission work.

THE "Evangelical Churchman" publishes some statistics which throw a flood of light upon the effect of High Church teaching and practices. The diocese of Ontario, as every one knows, is the High Church diocese *par excellence*. In this diocese the "Churchman" alleges that ten thousand Episcopalians went over to the Baptists and Methodists in ten years in search of the simple Gospel. Probably they did right, but it strikes us that they should have stayed in their own denomination, and compelled their clergy to preach the Gospel or leave.

THE Moderator made a good point in his opening address when he said:

We have no "burning questions," so-called, before us, nor defections from the faith, nor differences of opinion upon mere matters of law and order, that so often arouse men's passions and cool the flame of piety within the soul. The really burning questions of this Assembly are the extension of Christ's kingdom at home and abroad, the better equipment of our colleges, and the spread of vital godliness in our land, until Jerusalem is made a praise in the whole earth, and He shall come whose right it is to reign.

And these should always be considered the "really burning questions." The State of Religion at Home, Missions, Home and Foreign, and College work are the principal matters, and these are before every Assembly. It is most humiliating to think that the "Organ Question," or "the Hymn Question," or an appeal case, or even a heresy trial should ever be looked upon as surpassing in interest or importance the great vital questions named.

ST. JAMES' CATHEDRAL in this city is moved to its centre. His Lordship the Bishop of the Diocese has been trying to select a successor to Dean Grasett, in a way that does not meet the wishes of the congregation. The people are of the opinion that they should have something to say in the matter themselves. In fact, they seem to be about half Presbyterian in their views on the question of selecting a spiritual adviser. No system of choosing a minister is perfect, or anything like perfect. Our Methodist brethren are going home from their Conferences this month. Some are well pleased with their appointments, and some are the reverse. Some circuits are pleased with the men sent to them, and some are the reverse. The real question is, What plan works best on the whole over a long period of time in the different countries in which Episcopalianism, Congregationalism, Methodism and Presbyterianism exist? Good and very bad pastorates have been found under all these systems. In practice our own system is far from perfect; perhaps if we knew other systems as well, we would think some of them still farther.

THE members of Assembly from the Maritime Provinces did a handsome thing when they elected Dr. Cochrane Moderator. We have not the figures before us, but we think it highly probable that the Maritime Province brethren were in a majority at the

opening of the Court. Though Dr. Cochrane was nominated by a very large majority of Presbyteries, most of them were in the west, and western delegates could not get to St. John until Thursday without leaving the previous week. Under the circumstances, it is possible that our Eastern friends might have secured a strong vote for an Eastern man, had they been disposed to put one forward. Predictions were made in the West that an Eastern man would be elected, though Dr. Cochrane was nominated by 21 Presbyteries, and no other candidate had more than five. It gives us much pleasure to say that the men down by the sea showed that there was no ground for such predictions. Dr. Cochrane's election was moved by Principal McKnight, and seconded by Mr. McLennan, both of whom had been nominated by Presbyteries. The thing was handsomely done. Now let us hear no more about "East" and "West."

THE number of members who take part in Assembly debates is small; the number who join in the debates after the meeting is over is not so small. We have occasionally been pained to hear of members going back to their congregations, and saying all manner of harsh things about the Assembly business, more particularly about the management of the funds. A member who sits dumb in the Assembly while he thinks business is not being properly done, and then goes home to grumble about among the people, does that which is morally wrong. Why not speak out at the right time? If you think the Mission Funds are not being properly managed, speak out like a man and a Christian, and have the matter put right. It is not British fair play to attack a Convener or his Committee behind their backs. If you believe any of the Colleges are mismanaged, stand up like a man and say so in the Assembly, face to face with the men who manage these institutions. Why wait until you get a thousand miles away from the only place where a remedy can be applied? It is hard enough to raise Mission and College Funds now, without members of Assembly whispering insinuations among the people. Speak out. If you have anything to say, say it in the right place.

THE ESTABLISHED AND FREE CHURCH ASSEMBLIES, SCOTLAND.

THE Established Church Assembly met on the 25th of May with the usual solemnities. There was the *levee* at Holyrood, and afterwards the procession through streets lined with military to the Assembly Hall. The church bells were ringing, military bands played, and the guns of the Castle fired a royal salute. The retiring Moderator thereafter preached before Lord Aberdeen, the Lord High Commissioner, and then Professor Milligan, of Aberdeen, was elected Moderator, and duly installed. After that came the speech from the Throne, which was responded to by the Moderator, and when all these ceremonies were concluded some formal business was transacted.

On Friday the Colonial Committee's Report was presented by the Convener, Dr. W. H. Gray. It described the range of operations under the care of the Committee in India, Cyprus, South Africa and America. The Reports on Indian Churches and Education were also presented.

In the Free Assembly Mr. Moody gave a telling address on Temperance. He said:

What were they going to do with those men who were taking the pledge in Scotland; for if they did not reach out a hand now and stand by them they would lapse and become worse than ever? Could a man honestly advise one of these men who had been months and years in the gutter to go to a church where the minister advocates moderate drinking? Honestly, before God, could they do it? It was a solemn question, and it was a question he had put to himself in Glasgow over and over again. Here they had got hundreds of these men, and some of them had not been sober on a Sabbath for a year; but now they were struggling up into liberty, coming out of captivity, getting their feet upon a rock, and God was putting a new song in their mouths. Would they put these men into churches where the ministers advocate moderate drinking, and thus tempt these men? Not long ago a man was reclaimed, and he was going to live away from the city, and his minister wrote to another in the place to which he was going, telling him how he had been reclaimed. The minister invited him to his house, and put wine before him. He tasted, and the result was that man went right down. If a man who had been a slave to it was reclaimed, let him once touch drink again and down he went. A great many men whom he had met here eight years ago had fallen. One or two ministers had gone down, and had been put out of their high calling, and now they were poor, miserable, drunken wretches. He used to think and say, preach the Gospel, and do not take the pledge; and to-day he would keep holding up Christ's gospel, but, at the same

time, he would say let a man take the pledge and let him stand firm to it. He did not believe this world was to be reached by drinking ministers. If it was to be reached and reclaimed, they had got to deny themselves. The Master denied Himself, and let them deny themselves. They talked about moderate drinking being a higher ground, but, oh! they should put it away altogether for Christ's sake; put it out of the way of the men who were reclaimed.

The report on Foreign Missions showed that the Free Church had now employed in different parts of the world sixty ordained or medical missionaries, and 526 native evangelists, etc. In India alone there were 325 Christian workers, with nineteen organized native churches and 1,286 communicants, while there were 10,000 under Christian instruction. In Kaffraria there were seven principal stations and forty-three branches. In their two educational institutions they had 500 pupils, and in their elementary schools 2,000. They had sixty native teachers, and between 2,000 and 3,000 native Church members in full communion. There were two native pastors, fifty native elders, and as many deacons.

The motion of Principal Rainy, to the effect "that the Assembly does not judge it necessary or expedient to take any action" about Dr. Bruce's supposed heresy, was carried by 357 to 144. Both the Principal and Sir Henry Moncrieff, who seconded the motion, declared that they saw no ground in Dr. Bruce's book for judicial action.

In reference to the use of instrumental music in public worship, the beginning of the end has come. Dr. Begg's motion to make no concession was summarily set aside by a majority of 211. The motion which ultimately carried was one appointing a committee to consider and report to next Assembly how the application for liberty should be dealt with, in consistency with the principles of the Divine Word and the Standards of the Church. At the same time, the proposal to give such liberty at once received the support of 202 votes.

The Rev. George C. Cameron, of St. John's Church, Glasgow, was elected Professor of Oriental Languages in the New College, Aberdeen, in room of Dr. Robertson Smith.

POLITICS AND "THE PRESBYTERIAN."

WE have received two letters of friendly but very vigorous remonstrance on account of our having, it seems, lapsed into "party politics." In these letters it is very strongly asserted that the "usefulness of THE PRESBYTERIAN is gone," and that a large number of our readers will stand "no such nonsense." We could not at first understand what we had been doing, or wherein consisted the heinousness of our offending; but after carefully reading over our last two or three numbers we found that we had said that a great deal of lying was current in political warfare, and that Christian men were unworthy of their high calling, and of their position and privileges in a free country, if they did not seek by every means in their power to purify the political atmosphere, and to choose as their representatives men of honour, integrity and uprightness. We said further that character was far more to be sought for in those to whom were to be entrusted the affairs of the nation, than mere smartness or the ability to pronounce with readiness the shibboleth of contending political parties. Surely saying this has not irretrievably wrecked the usefulness of THE PRESBYTERIAN. If so, we are far sorer for our readers than for ourselves, for if to say all this be to be vile, we are perfectly willing and ready to be yet more vile. We are, however, afraid that Mr. Hay's address to the electors of Central Toronto has had also a good deal to do with the rising indignation and the dismal prophecies. Now, let us say a word about that address. In the first place, it was a matter with which we had nothing whatever to do, and one about which, as part of the publisher's business, we knew nothing till the paper in which it appeared had been issued. Secondly, we don't think that it was such a frightfully bad thing after all, the more especially as it was inserted at full advertising rates, and was sent us, we believe, as an ordinary advertisement in the ordinary way of business. We have no doubt that, had the "other side" done the same thing, a like course would very readily have been followed.

We have, in fact, been very careful as to the kind of advertisements inserted in our columns, and claim no possible credit for having refused what would have brought in hundreds—aye, thousands of dollars. But after carefully reading over Mr. Hay's address, we cannot see that there is anything in it so very iniquitous,