

## THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN,

— PUBLISHED BY THE —

Presbyterian Printing and Publishing Company

(C. BLACKETT ROBINSON),

AT 5 JORDAN STREET, - TORONTO.

TERMS: \$2 per annum, in advance

ADVERTISING TERMS:—Under 3 months, 10 cents per line per insertion, 3 months, \$1 per line; 6 months, \$1.50 per line, 1 year, \$2.50. No advertisements charged at less than five lines. None other than unobjectionable advertisements taken

## 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, MAY 11, 1887.

A BILL has been introduced for the repeal of the Scott Act. The mover and seconder represent ridings of counties that have adopted the Act. There is just one thing about this attack that we admire, and that one thing is the straightforward, above-board way in which it is made. Hitherto assaults on the Act have, for the most part, been made in a sneaking manner. If an attempt is to be made to repeal or change the Act, by all means let it be made in open daylight so that everybody can see what is going on. A vigorous discussion of the whole question, when the question is squarely before the House, cannot do harm. If the Scott Act cannot bear discussion, then it is of little use, and may as well be repealed. What the public want is an honest presentation of the facts on both sides. Is the Act doing good, or is it not? Should it, or should it not, be re-adopted in those counties in which it was passed nearly three years ago? We do not believe that a majority in those counties are willing to go back to a license law.

THE Presbyterian Church of the United States raised \$780,000 last year for Foreign Missions. Of this splendid sum the Woman's Board contributed over \$248,000. Truly this is magnificent giving. We don't wonder that our staid old contemporary, the New York Evangelist, has to relieve its pent-up feelings by a quotation from one of the Psalms. Human compositions are all very well for ordinary occasions, but when over three-quarters of a million comes in for Foreign Missions, an orthodox man has to go to the inspired odes for something to express his feelings. We extend our hearty congratulations, and, though making predictions is a very uncertain kind of business, venture to say that the sum will soon be up to one million. And yet there are people who say that Calvinism is dying—or dead—especially in the United States! President Lincoln was once told that General Grant was drinking heavily at the front. "Tell me," said the President, "what kind of liquor Grant takes, so that I may send some to the other generals." Tell us the manner in which Calvinism is dying in the United States, so that all the other Calvinistic Churches may begin dying too.

MANY and severe have been the denunciations of what is called orthodox bigotry. It seems to be forgotten by those who delight in denouncing the bigotry that some orthodox people display that their weapons can easily be turned against themselves. The man who boasts about his liberality in religious matters is not unfrequently the most illiberal man in the community. The so-called free-thinker is quite often the first to refuse freedom of thought to others. This point is well put by Mr. E. A. Whipple, a prominent Unitarian on the other side of the line:

If there can be anything more hateful than the stupidest forms of superstitious bigotry, it is the intolerance of the heterodox bigot, who makes intellectual assent to certain negations the test of religious character. An illiberal "liberal" Christian is one of the most exasperating of all fanatics; for his fanaticism is based on what he calls his reason, and he ignores every fact of deep religious experience.

Bigotry and narrowness are unlovely enough in anybody, but they are specially hateful in a man who plumes himself on his liberality, and denounces other people for being narrow and bigoted. A so-called "liberal" in religion is sometimes the bitterest of fanatics, just as a howling Radical in politics is sometimes a hide-bound Tory at heart.

It is very desirable, in the present state of public opinion, that the action taken last week by the Presbytery of Toronto on the overture from the Session of Cooke's Church should be distinctly understood. The Presbytery was asked to make a new term of communion, and refused to do so. To enact, or ask the General Assembly to enact, that no one in any way connected with the liquor traffic can be a member in full communion with the Church is to make conditions of membership that Christ Himself did not make. The Presbytery simply refused to go beyond the Scriptures in laying down terms of communion. This refusal will be judged differently by different persons. A man who has no regard for the Scriptures would probably say the Presbytery's action encourages drunkenness. A man who considers the Church of God as much the same kind of organization as a temperance society, and who looks upon God's Word in much the same light as he looks upon the constitution of any man-made society, can see no reason why the terms of communion might not be changed. A man who takes the Scriptures as the only infallible rule of faith and practice, and who believes that Christ, and Christ alone, has authority to make the conditions on which men should come to His table, will certainly say that the action of the Presbytery was scriptural, and, because scriptural, right. There was no other course open to the Presbytery, nor is there any other open to any Church or Church court that takes God's Word as its only guide.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN may be a clever writer and an eloquent speaker, but he has very little judgment. Were he a well-balanced man he would not come out here to attack the Governor-General for alleged harshness to his tenants. It has not been shown that Lord Lansdowne is a harsh landlord. He may be unfortunate enough to have harsh agents, but even that has not been shown. Anyway, we Canadians have nothing to do with Lord Lansdowne's private affairs. Turning the Canadian people against him would accomplish no good purpose, even if it could be done. And Mr. William O'Brien cannot do it. Lord Lansdowne is not allowed to reply to Mr. O'Brien, and the Canadian people will not turn against any man until he has had an opportunity to defend himself. Mr. O'Brien has no common sense. We will soon know how many Canadians there are who are just as senseless as Mr. O'Brien. Every man who interferes with him so long as he does not break the law, every man who attacks him, or tries to prevent him from speaking, may be written down as having as little sense as Mr. O'Brien himself. Let him come and go in silence, as Bob Ingersoll was allowed to come and go. We should be sorry to see it proved that we have any considerable number of people in this country whose upper stories in the common sense department are as poorly furnished as Mr. O'Brien's. If any number of people succeed in proving that they have as little sense as Mr. O'Brien, and have at the same time none of his ability, they will not do themselves a kindness.

It must not be assumed, because the Presbyterian Church refuses to make total abstinence or any connection whatever with the liquor traffic terms of communion, that it is less opposed to the drinking customs of society than any other. As a matter of fact, there are comparatively few persons engaged in the liquor business in the membership of the Church. The mode usually adopted by Sessions was well stated by Professor McLaren, in the Presbytery of Toronto, the other day. The Professor is thus reported:

Rev. Dr. Macdonald said he would find it very difficult to remain a member of any Church which added to the scriptural terms of communion. If they could find in the Scriptures any authority for adding the condition of total abstinence, or the condition of not engaging in the liquor business, then by all means let them add such conditions. He thought they should use moral suasion and argument on members of their Church who were so engaged, rather than such harsh measures as this proposed. That was the plan he had adopted during his twenty years' pastorate, and it had been generally successful.

That is the plan usually adopted by Sessions, and when faithfully and kindly carried out it nearly always succeeds. And, by the way, it requires much more grace and good judgment to work on this plan than to carry out harsh measures. Anybody can sit in a Session, and draw his pen through a name? or refuse an application for membership. To convince a man's judgment and conscience that he ought to change his business or his conduct is a much higher and better kind of work. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred the man thus dealt with will change his business, or withdraw from the Church if he is in it, or his application if he is not in it. In either case the end is gained. There is generally a way of doing these things without making terms of communion that Christ never made.

## CHRISTIAN UNION.

THE question of a larger and more comprehensive union of Evangelical Churches than any yet achieved is gradually coming to the front. The tendency toward unity of organization is becoming broad and deep. There is every appearance that the growing sentiment in favour of such a movement will continue to advance. As to the principle of a united Christendom, there is no real difference of opinion. Against the duty and desirability of such a substantial unity of faith the most inveterate sectary has not a word to utter. The closing up of the Christian ranks for the conquest of the world is acknowledged to be exceedingly desirable. The essential oneness of the Christian Church is generally conceded, and that the visible manifestation of its unity forms a part of our Lord's most solemn intercessory prayer is devoutly recognized by every Christian heart. Christian union in the abstract is accepted without dispute, and among the various branches of the Church the spirit of unity is receiving practical recognition. The perception of truth and the recognition of duty are not such difficult accomplishments as some are disposed to imagine. The difficulty lies in bringing truth into action, and making duty, not inclination and prejudice, operative in the affairs of every-day life. The discord between belief and practice finds crystallized expression in the proverbs of many peoples.

The significance and hopefulness of the present tendency toward the reunion of Christendom appear when it is noticed that it is not confined to any one section of the Christian Church. It finds a more or less cordial response everywhere. It gives no indication that it is the outgrowth of narrow and selfish fears, natural in the case of Churches that are losing ground, which in hope of preserving their vitality are prepared to welcome absorption rather than extinction. The great historic Churches, hitherto almost exclusive in their claims, and fully conscious in their apparent security, are taking a prominent part in urging forward a movement in which vast possibilities are involved. Using the terms in an ecclesiastical, not in a political, sense, the most conservative branches of the Church as well as the most radical are vying with each other in their encouragement of a movement in favour of Christian union.

The happy results following the incorporating unions, that in recent years have been accomplished, have added intensity to the desire for a larger consolidation of the Churches. In the earlier days of the Secession Church in Scotland the tendency for a time was in the direction of minute division and subdivision, till some in facetious mood were disposed to accept the early history of that branch of Presbyterianism as a fair illustration of the divisibility of matter. In due time, however, conscience without losing tenderness gained in enlightenment, and Christian charity began to be more potent than pragmatical suspicion, and in time small Churches coalesced, until now Presbyterian Scotland is represented by three distinct organizations. Successive efforts have been made to bring these more closely together, and in all these Churches many are sanguine that the time is not far distant when the barriers now separating them will be removed. Here, in Canada, experimental union has wrought most satisfactorily. Old people have their early recollections and kindly memories of the section of the Presbyterian Church to which in earlier years they belonged, but it would be hard to find the expression of a preference for a return to the former