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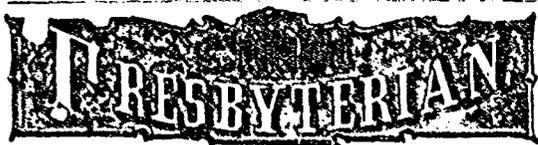
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C. BLACKETT ROBINSON,  
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TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19, 1884.

THE advocates of co education for Ontario may find quite a number of precedents across the line. At the last census there were in the United States about two hundred colleges open to females on exactly the same terms as to males. The ladies were eligible for matriculations, scholarships, lectures and degrees. We have no knowledge of the standing of many of these institutions, but whatever advantages they conferred on males they willingly offered to females. Besides these two hundred in which the system of co-education exists, there are three colleges for females in which the standard is said to be as high as in any college in the Union. Just how much force these facts would have in favour of co-education in Ontario we cannot say. Some of our very conservative people might contend that the existence of such institutions in the States is a strong reason why we should not have them. We have heard people reason in that way about other matters. Young ladies who have to earn their own bread, and who wish a good education to enable them to do so would not be likely to take that view.

We respectfully suggest to the Assembly's Committee on Statistics the propriety of adding a column showing the number who united with the Church on profession of faith. There was such a column a few years ago. Why was it removed? As the statistical returns are now prepared it is impossible to ascertain the real number added to our membership during the year. Additions by certificate in most cases simply mean that the holder of the certificate has moved from one congregation to another. This does not show the real increase in the membership of the Church as a whole. If fifty members move from Toronto to Hamilton the congregations in Hamilton may gain fifty but the Church gains nothing. What we ought to be most anxious to know is how many unite on profession of faith. By ascertaining this we then can tell at least approximately, the number who are brought to a saving knowledge of Christ. The duty of preparing statistics in this way would be a good exercise for our sessions as they would then have brought before them in a tangible way the real progress or want of progress in the work committed to their hands.

YEARS ago when Canada was young, business was for the most part transacted on an annual basis. Farmers sold their produce once a year. Merchants sold their goods at a year's credit. Everything was done by the year. The great bulk of the people handled money but once a year. Now everything is changed. Farmers in all the old parts of Ontario can sell something, if they choose any month in the year. Merchants, especially in cities and towns, never think of giving a year's credit. They may be compelled sometimes to wait several years, but the waiting is of necessity rather than of choice. Monthly, weekly, or at most quarterly payments are the rule in all centres of trade. There has been a revolution in business but most unfortunately the revolutions did not extend to church business. The yearly system is still kept up in a great majority of congregations. Now the plain, unvarnished fact is that this yearly system is the bane

of our finances. The difference in many cases between congregations in the matter of giving is that the liberal ones pay by the week and those not so liberal by the year. Many a man thinks a sum large when paid by the year that he would be ashamed to name when divided by fifty-two. If the question put by the office-bearers was "How much can you give per Sabbath?" instead of "How much can you give a year?" a revolution would soon take place in the matter of giving.

THE Synods will soon meet. We hear of no "burning questions," no appeals that are likely to take much time, no vexatious business of any kind. So much the better. But let no one say "There is no business." The real business is always there. The vital work of the Church is always before every court. A day at least should be spent on the State of Religion. A seditious might well be given to Temperance, another to Sabbath observance, and a third to the Sabbath school. The communion is usually dispensed we believe at the meetings of Synod in the American churches. Might it not be a good thing to dispenze the communion at our Synod meetings? If not, why not? If a Synod is a spiritual court why not keep the spiritual element as much as possible in the foreground? Is it not a desirable thing to conduct all such meetings in such a way that ministers and elders may return to their work refreshed and invigorated? The meeting of a Church court should be a spiritual tonic to all its members. Unfortunately it would be too easy to call up meetings of Synod and Assembly that had the reverse effect upon the majority present. If the pastors and elders return to their work discouraged, chafed, irritated and with a consciousness that their time has been lost or worse, the meeting has been a failure in one important feature. Let the great vital concerns of the Church have their proper place at these Synod meetings and no one will say, "Synods are useless—there was no business." There is ample business.

#### BIANCED LIBERALITY.

WHATEVER abstract opinions may be entertained as to the relations of Church and State, the only practical method of supporting the cause of religion is that which depends on the intelligence, affection and good will of the people. The current of opinion, growing in force and volume every day, is in this direction. To many this may seem the most desirable, because they believe it to be the Scriptural course; to others it may be a matter to be deplored. In any case it is what modern society is coming to. Men may protest against it; they may seek to obstruct the movement that will result in assigning Church and State two distinct spheres of activity. These great co-ordinate powers will have mutual relations. Their tendencies may sometimes coalesce, they may sometimes diverge, but the relation will in the future be in nowise a pecuniary one. Though in particular instances the issue remains, and for a time may remain undecided, there is little doubt as to the ultimate result. The principle enunciated by Count Cavour, a "Free Church in a Free State," will be the condition of modern national existence. On this continent at all events the separation of Church and State is complete, and however vigorous the efforts made in the past to secure their alliance in Canada, they belong to a finished page of our national history.

It is easy to see that the cause of religion has gained largely from the severance of the tie that does so much to hamper the cause of Church extension and the various forms of Christian activity. However much some in these days may affect a haughty ecclesiastical exclusiveness, all sections of the Christian Church are on a level so far as privilege is concerned. The State as such—it may be otherwise to some extent with politicians—knows no distinction between the Prelatist and the Primitive Methodist. They enjoy the same tolerance. Every branch has what it is justly entitled to—a fair field and no favour.

The Church in Canada depends on the voluntary liberality of its people for the maintenance of its ordinances, sustaining its efforts to supply the means of grace to destitute localities, engaging in benevolent and philanthropic work, equipping and maintaining institutions for the training of its ministry, and meeting all legitimate obligations. This dependence in the past has not been misplaced. The stream of Christian liberality has been constant and is steadily

becoming broader and deeper. In this one department of Christian activity we have a striking evidence of the power of faith working by love.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has no reason to make general complaints of the want of liberality on the part of its members. The amount of work done, the churches built all over the land, the educational institutions established, the missionary enterprises at home and abroad, and many other schemes of a religious and benevolent nature originated and ably sustained by her pecuniary aid are evidences that in the grace of liberality she is no laggard.

Failure to perceive and acknowledge this would be ungrateful and unjust. Another gratifying circumstance remains to be mentioned. The past year, the winter now closing especially, has not commercially been so prosperous as those that for some time preceded it, yet from many published congregational reports there has been no appreciable falling off in contributions to the cause of religion. In most cases there has been an increase, all the more noticeable because of the less favourable conditions of business generally.

In this respect as in others the most devoted congregation, as well as individuals, would be the first to say, We have not yet attained, neither are we already perfect. In every congregation there is still much room for improvement. There is one point that may now be specially mentioned. Even in those congregations most deservedly famed for their liberality as in all others, there are a few on whose shoulders the heaviest part of every burden rests. It is found desirable that a contribution, commensurate with the congregation's ability, should be given for some specific object. The men of good will, who are known to be prosperous, are first applied to. They give handsomely. The claim is addressed to all others in turn, but the aggregate is disappointing. It comes short both in expectation and in what is required. The first givers have again to be appealed to and for the honour of the congregation they have to give again. Perhaps it does not hurt them very much, but it is an injury to others. Not a few it is to be feared systematically shirk their financial obligations to their church. It is an ascertained fact that those whose share of this world's goods is comparatively meagre are often far more liberal and better principled givers than are some others more favourably circumstanced. The principle of the division of labour in this particular ought to be more systematically applied. The result would be as gratifying as it would be wonderful. The church would have an overflowing treasury. She could do abler and better work than she has yet done. The outward prosperity would be the least of it. There would be an access of spiritual receptivity and power. In the matter of evenly-distributed liberality there is a present call to the churches to excel in this grace also.

#### THE GOSPEL IN FRANCE.

THERE is a general disposition to look upon the religious condition of France as if at present it was peculiarly discouraging. The desperate attitude assumed by anarchists, the blank atheism too often allied with the utterances of Communism, the indifference to all but the most gross materialistic conceptions of life generally prevalent, seem to many very disheartening in the immediate outlook in France. The determined war against the Romish Church waged by Paul Bert and those who think with him clearly testify that Catholicism has well-nigh ceased to be a controlling force in Paris at least.

These the most obvious considerations, do not adequately describe the existing conditions of religion in France. There are other and more hopeful elements that enter into the calculation. The singular success that has attended the McAll mission clearly demonstrates that, even so far as the lowest strata of French social life is concerned, the Gospel is still the power and the wisdom of God. Where the wild and anarchic diatribes of the political demagogue were listened to, the glad tidings of spiritual help and life have found the most willing hearers. None the less gratifying is the fact that the words of Christ the Saviour of men have been welcomed, not merely as a grateful novelty, but, that they have an abiding place in the hearts and exert an elevating power over the lives of the denizens of Montmartre and Bellevue, and the numerous toilers in the factories of Lyons. The blessed results of the McAll mission are at once a con-