The Presbyterian Review.

Vol. XIV .-- No. 29

TORONTO, JANUARY 20, 1898.

\$1.50 per Annum

The Presbyterian Review.

Issued RVERY THURSDAY, from the office of the Publishers, Rooms No 20, 21, 23, 23 Abordsen Block, South-East corner Adelaide and Victoria Streets, Toronto.

TERMS, \$1.50 per annum.

All communications for either Business or Editorial Departments should be addressed PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW, Drawer 2464, Toronto, Ont.

Publishers and Propriotors: THE PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW CO., LIMITED. Incorporated under the Great Seal of the Dominion of Canada.

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••	••	THAN, TOURIG WISCUS	nzie, D.A., Urangovino.	
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Toronto, Jan. 20, 1898

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The past week has witnessed events of more than usual interest to the Church in Canada. Chief among them has Great is Diana of been the deputation to the Government the Corporations. of Ontario in relation to the Lord's Day Act Amendment, and the subsequent withdrawal of the Bill by the Ministry. The deputation consisted of advocates of the Amendment, representing the Lord's Day Alliance, and of opponents to that measure, representing various corporations-railways, breweries, blast furnaces, etc. The latter raised a hue and cry which not inaptly reminds a contemporary of the scene at Ephesus when the silversmiths clamoured against the Gospel preached by Paul, fearing it would wipe out the trade in silver shrines. The Diana of the corporations is influential in Ontario and the appeals of her interested votaries received an attention more respectful than their merits warranted.

The extreme position assumed by the corporations was nothing short of ridiculous. The indignation affected was absurd. The empty threats given utter-Threats and Mutterings. ance to were impertinent, and the patience of the ministers under the down-pour of unseemly tirade was simply surprising. For down-right audacity commend us to such corporations. The world and all that it contains was created for their exclusive use. Man was made to be their slave, without rights, liberties or privileges From the scope and application of the moral law they have been excluded, and it would be preposterous to suppose that a mere Provincial legislature should enact laws that would place them on a level with ordinary individuals. The dictatorial tone fits such supremely endowed people while loming it in the haunts of ignorance or oppression, but that it was affected before the Government of Ontario shows the

lengths to which effrontery can go. We do not for a moment include in this condemnation all who were present, for with the lawyers were estimable citizens who must have blushed for those who, for the moment, were their colleagues.

The corporations, mostly all, spoke by the mouth of their lawyers, and to that fact, of itself, objection need not be here taken. But the statements made Frivolous and baffle comparison as to irrevelancy and Irrolovant. silliness. It must, at least, have been humiliating to the legal profession to find men of standing at the bar, resort to arguments before ministers of the crown, which, if used before a jury of street sweepers would be an insult to their intelligence. The most of their contention was worse than frivolous; it consisted of mock-heroics on such subjects as the personal liberty of cooks and shoe-blacks, plagiarized from the columns of a morning paper, an almost incredible performance on the part of Barristers and Queen's Counsel. The one or two serious points raised, such as that by Mr. Wood, were readily and easily met by the explanation that the proposed amendments would not apply to works of necessity. It would have been strange had not the poor working man been dragged into the argument. He has done duty for corporations too often to be cast aside in a discussion on Sabbath observance. The curious aspect of the case is that corporations whose interest it is to get seven days work a week out of the employee, can get men to argue that "all work and no rest " is what the workingman needs and desires. If Sunday cars must be run, it is for the working man, if freight trains or a blast furnace be kept going on Sabbath, it is in the interest of the working man. No matter how often the unfortunate working men deny the assertion, up it comes again at the first opportunity. It is high time working men should insist that this nonsense should cease.

Two elements entered the discussion which more than any others are to be regretted. The Government was threatened if it dared pass the Amendment. The The Liberty of the Subject. Lord's Day Alliance was described as composed of bigots who would deprive the subject of his freedom of thought and of his constitutional liberties. The duty of a deputation is to lay its views clearly and respectfully before the Government. But the corporationists went far beyond this and presumed to speak threateningly for the country. The country repudiates the sentiments expressed on its behalf, without authority, for the record is, that at the public meetings held in the Province, yea, at political conventions, the substance of the Amendment, has been unmistakably approved of, and in the impending campaign the country will again voice its opinion in the same way. As to the liberty of the subject being imperilled by the bigotry of the Lord's Day Albance, the liberty of the working man would be a thousand times safer in the keeping of the bigot of the Prayer Meeting than in the custody of the soulless corporationist and capitalist. The liberty which the Alliance would resist is the liberty enjoyed now by corporations to compel their employees to work on Sunday, and as to bigotry, it consists in the thesis that corporations should not have privileges and rights superior to those