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TORONTO FRIDAY JAN. 24, 1873.

TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

The Ontario Parliament has continued in session during the week, with the exception of Thursday before last, when our legislators took a holiday and went to Brantford, to visit the Blind Asylum, and, we were going to say, to have a champagne dobauch. We shall not use that word, though it does appear curious, and, we must add, disgraceful, that on all such public occasions wine seems to flow so freely. Our legislators may try to persuade themselves that it is the right and gentlemanly thing to have always a good supply of intoxicating liquors to grace all social gatherings, whether of a political or benevolent character; but they are sadly mistaken. The great mass of the most thoughtful and most intelligent of the community hold a very different opinion, and don't think any more of those who fancy themselves leading men, and who, if they don't get drunk in order to show their liberality and benevolence, yet give the sanction of their public example to the drinking habits of the day, which are blasting so many characters, and laying desolate so many homes.

The discussions in Parliament have been chiefly in connection with the "Speak Now" scandal, of which every one has heard. The Opposition has shown a great want of tact and prudent management in making so much of that incident. We dare say there was a good deal of wire-pulling at the time when the fate of the Patent Combination was trembling in the balance, and perhaps Mr. Wood's conduct at that time was calculated to raise very bitter feelings among his former associates, but there has never been the slightest evidence to show that either Mr. Blake or any one in his name "approached" Mr. W. so long as he was in office, while the way in which the miserable scrap of paper has been used has been discreditable in the extreme to all concerned. Respecting Mr. Cameron as we do, his conduct in this matter all through, has been little short of infatuation.

We cannot say, however, that the Cyprian situation has had as little ground for their attacks on the management of the Crown Lands and the general conduct of the Commissioner. That any Minister should put 5,000 square miles of territory under license as timber limits, without ever consulting his colleagues or Parliament, and under such lame pleas as has been urged about the danger of bush fires, the stealing of logs, and the near prospect of a railway passing through the district, may well make even those who are no politicians think seriously. How the danger from fires is to be obviated, or the stealing to be any more kept in check, by handing over the region to lumberers, we cannot see; while if a railway is run through the region in two or five years, it is evident that the value of the timber to the lumberers will be doubled or quadrupled, so that the country might just as well as not have had the advantage of the difference.

A very excellent measure has been introduced, by which it is proposed to deprive habitual drunkards of all control of their property till such a time as they can show, to the satisfaction of a judge, that they are reformed. It is also proposed to punish with very heavy fines all who during the time any one is so "interdicted" shall either give or sell him any intoxicating liquors.

We are also glad to observe that Government has promised to abolish the tax of \$6 for marriage licenses, so soon as a scheme has been matured which will effectually guard against clandestine marriages and their attendant evils.

From the latest advices from Scotland, it appears that the Rev. Dr. Wallace, of Greyfriars, Edinburgh, the successor of Dr. Robert Leo, and the broadcast of the Scotch broad school, has been appointed by the Crown to the chair of Ecclesiastical History in Edinburgh University, much to the disgust of the Evangelicals, both within and without the Church.

The Pope has issued a lengthened allocution, of date the 22nd December, 1872, addressed to the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church. As usual, this "infallible" document is chiefly taken up with howling the evil times and evil tongues in which the lot of His Holiness and the venerable brethren addressed has been cast. He mourns over the "persecution" from which the Church is suffering, and denounces very heartily the conduct of the Italian Government for proposing to interfere with the religious orders, and even to appropriate some of their treasures to the uses of the State. In a very helpless way 'His Infallibility' cries out against this threatened "robbery." The German Empire and the conduct of its ruler, also fills the heart of the Holy Father with anxiety and alarm. If Bismarck would only allow the Jesuits to have all their own ways better citizens could not be had! Then Switzerland is going all wrong, and even Spain, that used to be so faithful, is no better than one of the wicked. The Armenians about Constantinople are still worse, and the Sultan of Turkey is shamefully working into the hands of those reprobates. Altogether, the Pope takes up his parable and writes what might be styled a long chapter of a new Book of Lamentations. He has comfort, however, in the Cardinals and Bishops, and sincerely hopes that in due time all will go right. We think so, too, but not exactly in the way that Pio Nono anticipates.

Troubles and dangers are on every side, and the one so called infallible man utters his cry, sends forth his denunciations, and furnishes up his anathemas, but this great reading and listening world takes it all with remarkable coolness, nay, seems to heed the solemn utterances, protests and appeals, no more than if they were the unsorted and incoherent outpourings of a toothless scold.

FAILURE OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONS.

It is one of the "signs" of the present day that the London Times has broken ground against Christian Missions to the heathen: declaring that they have turned out palpable and universally recognised failures; that the true missionaries from Britain are the soldiers, sailors, and traders, that carry among heathen nations their worse than heathenish morals and manners, and create an impression against the religion they profess that no subsequent arguments of really religious men can overcome; and that, accordingly, the best thing the Christian people of Britain can do is to confine their evangelistic efforts to their own people in their own country, and try to convert the heathen at home. All this is simply what was to be expected from the Times, and from those whose sentiments it represents. It is not true that modern Christian Missions have been a failure, nor would there be any likelihood of more being done for the heathen at home, if nothing were attempted for the heathen abroad. The conduct of many professed Christian English and others is, no doubt, as scandalous as can well be conceived, and exercises a widely injurious influence. But for the presence of missionaries, however, it would be still worse. 'Begin at home' is an old, old story which the godless, the greedy, and the indifferent have been repeating for the last eighteen hundred years. As a matter of fact, those who have done and are doing most for the heathen abroad, have always been those that have done most for the heathen at home.

There are people in Canada who have the same idea as the Times, and they will be found as will the writers in the Times to be just those who do least for the heathen near at hand, as well as nothing for the heathen afar off. Paul did not stay either in Jerusalem or any other place, till all the heathen there had been converted. He had quite a different idea of duty from what those who take the Times as their exponent either hold or embody. It is at the same time true that the comparatively languid and limited efforts which Christians make for the spread of the Gospel, both at home and abroad, give too much ground for the scoffing objection and the contemptuous jeer. 'The children of this world are wiser than the children of light,' for what they really believe in they set about with all their might, sparing neither trouble nor expense till it be secured. Well for Christians if in their missionary undertakings they would do the same thing.

FIFTY YEARS OF RELIGIOUS JOURNALISM.

Many of our readers are acquainted with the name of the Rev. Dr. Prime, of New York, and have no doubt read more or fewer of his works. They also know that that gentleman has for many years been the conductor of the New York Observer, one of the oldest religious newspapers in the States, if not the very oldest. That paper has just entered upon its fifty-first year, and Dr. Prime gives a very interesting account of the rise and progress of the enterprise in the first issue of the present month. The original prospectus is reprinted, and we are apprised that the principles there laid down are those to which the conductors still adhere.

Before the first number was issued letters were published from seventeen of the leading ministers of New York, endorsing the project of establishing a religious weekly paper in that city. Of these seventeen, two only are now living, viz: the Rev. Drs. Spring and Cox. How things were managed by the original proprietors, the Messrs. Morse, may be seen from the statement of Dr. Prime, that "with their own hands they performed every service of which they were capable, sometimes wheeling the hand-cart to the post-office with the papers which they had folded and directed." At the outset, in their "office" was a boy who has never been in any other employment from that day to this, and is now, and has been for some years, superintendent of the printing department of the paper.

In fact the added remark is evidently correct, that "no journal ever started with less capital and more enterprise." Of the editorial course, it is with truth said that "in all these fifty years it has never contained a line that was not published with the design of making the reader wiser, better and happier, and if it has succeeded in this purpose, its conductors, the dead and the living, have their reward."

The personal reminiscences of Dr. Prime in connection with the Observer, are very interesting. His first letter under the now well known signature of IRENEUS, was published on the 7th of April, 1823, and he began to write in the office as one of the editorial corps in the spring of 1840; from that time to the present, except during two years' absence, scarcely a week has passed without his having "written from four to twelve columns" in the paper; "taking five columns as the average, and thirty years as the time, the amount is 7,000 columns, and as a column makes about four pages of a 12mo volume, the whole would be equal to seventy-eight volumes." Besides this regular editorial work, "Ireneus" has written and published during odd and leisure hours, "thirty-five volumes of books, "most of them anonymous;" and to these "must be added about one hundred and fifty articles contributed to magazines, reviews, etc., all of them anonymous." If these writings were reduced to volumes "the seventy-eight would easily reach a hundred," and, with the thirty-five added, we should have "one hundred and thirty-five books, large and small, produced in thirty years." This "presents a faint idea of the amount of work that may be done in thirty years by steady perseverance in the pursuit of one's duty."

For a good while the Observer had a severe uphill struggle, indeed it took a good many years before it reached the paying point. By and by, however, it weathered the storm, and now, and for many years past, it has been a handsomely paying property, as well as a mighty influence for good among a large class of not the least intelligent people in the States.

Since the establishment of the Observer, religious journalism in the States has made remarkable progress. Every religious denomination, even the smallest, has one or more such papers, and they are conducted with an amount of energy, and supported with a degree of liberality of which we in Canada as yet know almost nothing. As a means of influencing the community for good the religious people of the Dominion have not as yet come to estimate the press at its true value. Whether individuals believe it or not, it is still the fact that the press of our day, secular and religious, is the great educator of the people—greater, perhaps, all things considered, than the pulpit and school combined. The religious community must, then, bear in mind that it has not to make the choice of 'Press' or 'No Press,' but 'The Press, cold, secular, unchristian and anti-christian,' or, 'The Press, earnest, religious, actively and persistently advocating the cause of truth, purity, honour and righteousness.' Who shall tell the amount of good accomplished by this one paper—the Observer—during the past fifty years? or who would say that Dr. Prime could have exerted anything like the wide extended influence as pastor even of the largest and most prominent congregation in the Union? Yet many thought that he took a wrong and retrograde step when he devoted himself exclusively to journalism, as though he could not be a preacher of righteousness as effectively by his pen as by his voice. Of course, in Dr. Prime's case, this was even more noticeable than in some others, as his voice had greatly failed him before he took that step which alarmed especially his old father, who wondered what would become of his unfortunate son, as he never knew that he was fit for anything but preaching.

Mormonism is not flourishing in Great Britain at present. In 1851 there were about 280 Mormon places of worship in the British Isles, with an attendance of some 17,000, and within the circle of the London Conference there were forty branches, with a gross total of 2,450 adherents. There are now only 1,078 members within the circle of the London Conference, and during the last year seventy-five conversions were reported within the limits.

CHINA.

We are favoured by the Rev. Alex. McKay, M.A., of Elmira, Ill., with a letter from the Rev. George L. McKay, our Missionary to China, from which we make the following extracts:

I am here in the Northern part of Formosa, and without attempting a description this time, I will simply state that I am 190 miles away from the Missionaries in the South, and through this whole region there is not as yet a baptized member, save one, I brought with me from the South. This is a dark, unbroken field where thousands and thousands are going down to everlasting woe, without hearing of the blessed name of Jesus who came to seek and save the lost. I am not getting the BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN, but would like to receive regularly an American paper, i.e. a good one. I don't know how I could arrange for one, beginning at the New Year to come. In other words I am at a loss to know how I could remit the money.

There is not a Post Office in Formosa, still letters and papers come regularly, whenever a steamer or sailing vessel comes from Hong-Kong, Swatow or Amoy letters and papers are given to the Consul and he sends them around.

I preached in Chinese, Sep. 22, for the first time, although after studying two months, I began to explain parts of the blessed Gospel of Jesus. I am not lonely for the Lord is very good and gracious unto me, and Jesus is ever faithful to His promises "go ye into all the world," and lo, I am with you always." He is, blessed be His ever glorious name.

THE INTERNATIONAL SCHEME AND INFANT CLASSES.

In last week's lesson, we gave a specimen of how the teacher may become acquainted with his little child, show them that he is interested in them; and as a consequence, interest them in him and in the lesson. The value of this personal interest in each child is not to be overestimated.

It is almost impossible to call a daily roll as in another class, but you should have an alphabetical list, and from memory you can mark most of them. For example, after the opening exercises you might say, "Now fold arms, and sit quiet for three minutes, till I see who are not here to-day." Then you can run down perhaps half your list in that time, and at some other time do the same thing to get the rest.

First I want to see how many remember the lesson we had last Sunday. A few minutes should always be spent every day in calling that to remembrance.

Now are you all ready? Well look at the board while I write down this word

BAD.

When are men and women and boys and girls bad? Why are they bad when they swear? (Teach the 3rd Commandment). Why are they bad when they steal? (8th Commandment). Why are they bad when they tell lies? (9th Commandment). Why are they bad when they say to their mothers or fathers when asked to do anything "I don't want to," or "I won't!" or run away without doing it, (5th Commandment).

A little boy last Sunday got a cent from his mother to put in the Missionary box, but when the box came round he let it pass and kept the cent in his pocket. Now what was that doing? Why was it stealing? Because his mother had given it to him for the Missionary box and not for himself. What else was it doing? Why was it telling a lie? Because when he let the box pass without putting his cent in, it was just the same as saying that his mother don't give him anything to put in.

Now do you remember who, we said, from last Sunday's lesson was bad? Cain. Well, if Cain was bad, what do you think his children would likely be, James? Yes there were a great many men and women and boys and girls after Cain, but they were all bad, and got worse and worse year after year until there were a great many thousands,—more than you ever saw in your life.

The men quarrelled, and swore, and drank, and fought, and the women were just as bad. The boys and girls told lies, and grew up to steal, and would not obey their fathers and mothers. Now, who do you think was watching all this; hearing all the bad words and seeing all the bad actions? Remember, then, that God sees and hears all you do and say.

God told them they were doing wrong, but they paid not attention. Remember God is telling you not to do wrong or speak wrong. If you have ever said bad words, or done naughty things like these bad people, remember God know it all. But we will see now what God did to these people for doing these things.

If you will all get your money out very quietly, we will take up the Missionary money. (Two boys might be appointed to collect it). A hymn might be sung.

Now for our lesson again; notice the word I am going to write on the board:

FLOOD.

What kind of people were we talking about? Who heard all they said, and saw all they did? Do you think it would be right of God to let them go on doing wrong; and making themselves worse men and women and boys and girls every day? No. God is a holy God, and a just God, and punishes sin. He had warned these wicked people for a long time; but they would not hear, and so God punished them by sending a flood to destroy them.

John, did you ever see it rain hard for a whole day? And didn't you see the whole streets covered with water? But I know

you never saw any rain like the rain God sent upon those people for their wickedness long ago.

It began to rain one day very hard, and at the same time great fountains of water burst out from the ground, just as if a great hole with water rushing out of it should appear in the middle of the street out there. It rained so hard and so much water ran out of the ground, that all the ground was covered with water before night and was so deep that all the hens and pigs and sheep and cows and horses, and every thing that couldn't climb were drowned. The men and women had to run up stairs for the lower rooms were filled. And it rained harder and harder all night long, and all who lived in small houses ran up into the big ones, and every one who couldn't get on a high house, or a high hill, or climb into a high tree was drowned.

And the next day it rained harder than ever, and the highest houses and the highest trees were all covered, and all that were in them were drowned. But some got on high hills and as the water got deeper they went up higher, thinking that the rain would soon stop; but they were all drowned.

Tommy, what month is this? February. How many days is it since Christmas? 40 days. Now think what a long time it is since last Christmas day, and yet at that flood it rained for forty days and forty nights. What a dreadful rain it must have been. And the water was so deep that it covered over all the houses, and trees, and churches, and the very highest hills, so that every man, woman, boy, and girl that was wicked—and every bird and beast was drowned. Just think what a fearful thing it would be if all the houses and church steeples in this city should be covered with water, and we were all drowned before next Sunday. (The foregoing, if the teacher be able to do it, and sustain attention, may be gone over without questions. If not, keep up attention by sharp questioning. Always keep in view one object—to impress upon their minds that all this evil was on account of evil doings; and sent directly by God.)

Now, how would any of you try and save yourself in such a flood as that? In a boat? In a ship? Well supposed you tried that. I suppose a great many of them tried that. But it did not do any good for you see the rain came on so quickly that they had not time to prepare anything to eat. How long do you think that flood lasted? Why it lasted us long as from now till next Christmas, and how could they be able to live that long even if they had all got into ships.

Now don't you think it would be very strange if any one was saved alive from such a flood as that? And yet some were saved, but they were very few, and they were saved in a very strange way. If you are very quiet, I'll tell you all about it. Who do you think was the only one able to save any one in such a dreadful time? Yes, God sent the flood and he alone could save any one from death by it. How do you think those who were saved by God would feel towards him? If you are ready I will write the names of those whom God saved on the board. And I want you to learn them and tell them to your Fathers and Mothers when you go home.

Noah and his wife, Shem and wife, Ham and wife, Japheth and wife.

Now who were they? How many were there? Why do you think God saved them? These people did not swear or steal or lie or break the Sabbath Day, but they loved and worshiped God and you see God did not forget them.

And now I know you are anxious to hear how God saved these 8 persons. Well he did it in this way. A long time before the flood God came and told Noah about the flood; and told him to build an Ark or large ship, about times as long as this school room, and 5 or 6 times as wide. So Noah went to work and hired a lot of men to build the Ark. And God told him to store away in it all kinds of food enough to do him for all the time the flood would be on the earth. And the Ark was finished. It was very large, had 3 stories and had a great many stalls and cages in it for God was going to put 2 of all kinds of beasts and birds in it with Noah and his family. Wouldn't it be a splendid sight? When all is finished you can see the long procession going in at the door of the Ark (Draw the shape of the Ark on the board.) There is Noah and his wife and Shem, Ham and Japheth and their wives all standing at the side of the door, and all the beasts and birds are going into the Ark. There is the lion and the bear, and the horse and the cow, and the tiger, and the camel, and every one of the beasts. Of some there are 2, and of some there are 7, but all are marching into the Ark quietly, for God has brought them all to Noah. And when the last beast goes in, Noah and Shem and Ham and Japheth and their wives go in after them, and God shut the door and would not let any one else in. Then the rain came down, the flood was upon the earth, and all that was not in the Ark died. But as the waters got deeper and deeper, the Ark floated and God took care of it. And when every thing was dead on earth God stopped the rain and dried up the water, and one day the Ark touched ground on the top of a high mountain. Then God opened the door of the Ark, and let them all out. And what do you think was the first thing Noah and his family did when they came out of the Ark? They kneeled down and prayed to God, and thanked him for all this great goodness to them. Now let us do the same thing for all his goodness to us.

TEACHER:

The annual soiree of the U.P. Church, Cambray, held on New Year's Day, was a decided success. Much regret was expressed that the Rev. J. R. Scott, minister of the church, was unable to be present on account of sickness.