

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

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TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 1884.

THE *London Advertiser*, one of the ablest and most influential journals in Ontario, has been making great advances of late. Recently the building was reconstructed and the arrangements of the establishment are as convenient as any in the Dominion. The proprietors have now a Bullock press in running order on which the paper is printed from stereotype plates. It is now an eight-page paper of neat and beautiful appearance. Under the able editorial management of the Hon David Mills, with experienced co-adjutors, the *Advertiser* is a power in the land. The *Guelph Mercury* has also been much improved recently. In addition to its well selected news it discusses with great ability the questions of the day. It is now printed from new type.

If there is any power in ridicule to reform abuses, a happy change in the service of song will soon take place in the churches on the other side that are suffering from operatic singing. An exchange contributes the following spicy illustrations, taken from a lecture that the writer heard delivered by one of the professors of Lane Seminary.—

The tenor begins, "Oh, for a pi— The soprano sings, "Oh, for a pi—" The bass and alto follow suit, and after chasing around singly for a while, in a grand chorus, altogether sing, "Oh, for a pious heart!"

As another example, he gave, "Come down sal—come down sal sal—sal—sal—Come down salva-salva-salva—come down salvation from on high!"

As another specimen: "Oh, for a man—Oh, for a man—a man—a man—Oh, for a mansion in the skies!"

There may be people in the world who would say that shrieking out "Oh, for a pi—" or "Come down sal—" or "Oh, for a man—" is worship, but we hope their number is small. May it become smaller every day.

"A BYSTANDER" concludes an article in *The Week* on religion and politics in this way:—

"Only let a Christian legislator ask himself honestly what St. Paul would have done, and he will not be likely to go wrong."

The principle here laid down is undoubtedly the right one, but the difficulty is in applying it to present political questions. How can a Christian legislator always know how Paul would have voted on any given question? How is the Hon. G. W. Ross to find out how Paul would have settled the knotty problems about the three series of school readers? There are Christian men on both sides in the House of Commons. Some of them no doubt think Paul would have voted for the thirty million loan to the Syndicate. Others no doubt believe that the great Apostle would have opposed that loan with the fiery eloquence and keen logic that he displayed before Felix and Agrippa. Both parties cannot be right. Some fairly good citizens may even suppose that if Paul were here he would be the leader of a political party. The "Bystander" is no doubt certain that he would be a no-party man. It would be a great thing for this Dominion if our public men would take St. Paul for a guide, but the best Christian legislator we have might find great difficulty in determining how Paul would speak and vote on any given question.

WE have always seen of the opinion that it would have been quite as well for the Hamilton Presbytery to have taken notice of the letter of the Rev. Mr. Walker to the *Glasgow Herald* on the climate of this country. We confess to a feeling of satisfaction at finding that the Synod of Hamilton and London came to the same conclusion. After a full hearing of the case last week the Synod, with one dissenting voice, gave this deliverance:—

We sustain the memorial and complaint, and find that while certain statements in Mr. Walker's letters to the *Glasgow Herald* may have been considered misleading by members of the Hamilton Presbytery, nevertheless presbyterial action was not thereby called for; and further, the steps taken by the Presbytery in dealing with Mr. Walker were irregular.

No doubt the Presbytery acted from the best possible motives, but most Canadians have the impression that this country does not need to be defended by Presbyterial action. Some latitude must be given to gentlemen who write for the press in the use of figurative language. There is a large number of Presbyterial editors in this Dominion, and an editor who is a member of the Church, is amenable to discipline as well as a minister who writes correspondence. Perhaps it would be a good thing if some of the editors were "dealt with" occasionally, but we fear there are not days enough in the year to try all the editors that some one might wish "disciplined."

THE *Christian Guardian* concludes a fair and thoughtful article on the Salvation Army in this way:

It is certainly a serious fact that, at a time when much has been sacrificed to unite the resources and put an end to the rivalries of Methodism, practically another Methodist denomination is being organized in this country. In cities there may be work enough to justify their special mission; but in the country villages there is a fair prospect that the waste of resources and the divisions of people of the same faith, which we thought we had brought to an end, is going to be kept up. In these places, the army draws its recruits largely from Methodist congregations, which of course are proportionately weakened. Go into any army fellowship meeting, and you will find the bulk of those who speak are either Methodists, or people who have had a Methodist training.

We fully sympathize with our neighbours in this view of the case. It certainly is a serious act that at the time the union of the Methodist churches is being consummated what is "practically another Methodist denomination" should spring up in this country. The trend of our day is in favour of union and consolidation and this trend is a good one. Following this trend our Methodist brethren have expended much time and labour and not a little money in a praiseworthy attempt "to unite the resources and put an end to the rivalries of Methodism." To do this some of the negotiating churches have yielded points in matters of government which we outsiders had learned to consider as almost vital. More's the pity, if there is still to be a rival Methodist organization. We cannot, however, bring ourselves to believe, that the "army" as at present organized and with its present methods can for any length of time do more than a mere fraction of the work done by the Methodist Church. Without pastoral work, Sabbath school work, missionary work, and the ability to instruct converts, permanent success is an absolute impossibility.

THE INCREASE OF FALSEHOOD.

D. R. ARNOLD was a man who had strong convictions. His moral nature was of a healthy and robust type. As head-master of Rugby School he accomplished a great and lasting good. He steadily endeavoured to develop a healthy moral nature in all who came within the range of his influence. One of his principal aims was to foster the love of truth in the minds of his pupils. Like all true men he considered truth inseparable from the idea of manliness. In this he was correct. The better self in every man assents to it. The highest authority in morals, the sacred Scriptures, teach it. To the casual observer there is urgent need for a deeper reverence for truth-speaking in these days. A higher ideal of personal honour may be one of the requisites of the time. One thing is certain, a far higher practice than now prevails is imperatively required.

Absence of a sacred regard for truth is discernible in every sphere of human activity. In connection with our educational institutions we see discouraging deviations from a proper sense of honour forcing themselves occasionally on public attention. Instances of trafficking in examination papers are within the recollection of readers. Only the other week an occurrence of this kind came to light in connection with an educational institution in Montreal. The shadow of a deep disgrace rests on every one implicated in such dishonourable practices. The young man who would buy his ostensible standing in scholarship or professional competency displays a nature sadly deficient in the first principles of rectitude. There is a fibre of untruthfulness running through his moral nature. What-

ever his temptations may be, by whatever sophistry he attempts to justify his conduct to himself, so long as such ways are not abhorrent to him, he is only a dishonest sham. An honourable position is not purchasable by dishonest means.

In ordinary business life what an amount of bare-faced lying goes on! Human nature no doubt remains much the same through all grades of civilization. As in the days of the Wise Man so in these, "It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer, but when he is gone his way he boasteth." In certain lines it is accepted as an axiom that honesty is impossible. Whether this is explicitly acknowledged or not it is tacitly assumed in other spheres of business besides horse-trading. The seller resorts to many devices. He will put a higher than the selling price upon his goods that a margin may be left for an importunate customer to beat down. The supposed justification of this and other tricks of trade is that people are so greedy and unreasonable that these devices are necessary in the interests of business. Then we have the disclosures which public analysts periodically make. What with the dilutions of milk, and the adulteration of so many articles of ordinary food, no wonder that sickness prevails. When the doctor is called in to prescribe, it has actually been found that even the very drugs have been adulterated. Into the composition of our clothing shoddy enters. The representation of things as they are not is one of the plague-spots of business life. What means the ceaseless internecine feud waged by bulls and bears on the Stock Exchange, but simply that astute schemers may get gain by sharp practice? There is a plentiful lack of truthfulness in the dealing of man with man.

It is well that Justice is blind, otherwise she would injure her eyesight with tears. In order to secure a measure of truthfulness in witness-bearing, perjury is regarded a criminal act. Unfortunately charges of perjury are too frequent in our courts of justice. It may be that in some cases these charges originate in vengeance of feeling, but not in all. There must be in the minds of many who proceed to lay a charge of perjury a strong conviction that even under the sanction of a solemn oath a lie has been sworn to that justice might be perverted. When, as sometimes happens, one witness swears the direct opposite of what was testified to by another it is painfully apparent that both statements cannot be true. The honourable men who preside in our courts of justice see painful exhibitions of human nature, and these not always in the box set apart for persons accused of crime. They are skilled in the knowledge of human nature, and it is a rare instance when they are imposed upon by an untruthful witness. These disclosures of weak and erring human nature make a deeply painful impression. It is a serious, a solemn, an awful thing to profess in the Divine presence to tell the truth and then deliberately to prevaricate and falsify.

It is perfectly obvious that in the present conditions of our political life veracity is not always considered one of its primary virtues. In both of our great political parties there are men of stainless honour and truthfulness—men who will neither speak nor act a lie, in order to gain a seeming advantage. It is equally obvious that the merely professional politician who has come to the unfortunate conclusion that principle has nothing to do with politics, has little scruple in telling untruths for his own or his party's supposed benefit. Does not a little of what goes on under the name of political debate fully accord with Tallyrand's cynical paradox, "Language was given for the purpose of concealing thought?" We cannot have that elevation in our political life for which many long until there is a higher reverence for truth than now exists.

Is the Church in some of her modes of working, say in popular methods in vogue for the supposed promotion of her interests, as regardful of the sacredness of truth as she ought to be? To reflective and candid minds instances will not be wanting to show that undeviating devotion to absolute truthfulness is not always and in every case pursued. Faithfulness to Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life demands the putting away of all lying, and that we should speak every man truth with his neighbour.

It is sad to reflect that dextrous and cunning evasions of the truth are in some minds regarded as praiseworthy rather than otherwise. A subtle and ingenious argument to make the worse appear the better reason is sure to elicit a measure of applause.