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The Canada Presbyterian.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 9th, 1892.

A THANKSGIVING service which consists in looking at a sham battle is a greater sham than the battle.

IT would be interesting to know if Sir Adolphe Caron, late Minister of Militia, ever sanctioned a military parade that seriously interfered with services in any of the Catholic Churches in Quebec.

THANKSGIVING DAY across the lines is mainly a national holiday. The President issues an annual address, often very ably written, calling upon the nation to thank God for His mercies. A large number of the people give thanks by indulging in such amusements as they hanker after. Is that the kind of Thanksgiving Day we want in Canada?

WE have done fairly well in imitating the worst American institutions without copying their Thanksgiving Day. We have a high protective tariff, the gerrymander, bribery wholesale and retail at elections, senseless hatred of foreign flags and a number of other things that many of our neighbours are trying to get rid of. Supposing we try to display a little originality in the matter of thanksgiving?

WE respectfully but firmly call the attention of the Ontario Government and of the Minister of Agriculture in particular to the fact that it has been stated in a respectable journal and repeated in another that at the fair recently held in Woodbridge, a village a few miles from Toronto, the ground was so covered with gamblers that the Lieutenant-Governor and his lady could scarcely drive through the crowd. Is that statement true or untrue? The Hon. Mr. Dryden will no doubt enquire.

SOME years ago devout minds throughout Christendom were shocked by the language of an American Methodist divine, who declared that "if Jesus Christ made alcoholic wine at Cana He was an impostor and a fraud." Are those divines who allege that Jesus Christ quoted from untrustworthy Old Testament writings not doing precisely what the American divine did, though perhaps in a less repulsive way? The insult to our Lord in both cases comes from making a theory outside of the Bible and then bringing it to the Bible to get it under-pinned with texts.

AMBITIOUS men who think that political honours are the main thing in this life might well give heed to the following, which we clip from the *Christian at Work*—

When on Friday last the stricken occupant of the White House put his dead away he must have thought as little of "the pomp and glory of this world" as the poet tells us the great Woolsey did at his fall. What to him then were the

lofty eminence, "the power to dispense sweet favours," the glory of occupying the most exalted position of all potentates? How little must have seemed to him the strifes of politicians, the coursing of partisanship, the cries that came from the political contest,—the glorifying or the jeering, the shouting, the parades, and all the fanfare of a great public contest.

There are days in store for most of us when the "shadows we pursue," as if they were matters of overwhelming importance, will do as little for us as the cries of the Presidential contest could do for Benjamin Harrison when he stood by the open grave of his beloved and accomplished wife.

THE Council of the Evangelical Alliance has issued its annual invitation for a week of united and universal prayer to begin on January 1, 1893, and to close on January 8. Great encouragement for the observance of the week of prayer is found in the fact of the remarkable achievements of grace during the century which has elapsed since William Carey, the famous Baptist missionary to India, urged the Church to attempt great things for God, and expect great things from God. The programme suggested for the 1893 services is: January 1, sermons on "The Exalted Saviour's Gifts for Men;" January 2, "Humiliation and Thanksgiving;" January 3, "The Church Universal;" January 4, "Nations and Their Rulers;" January 5, "Foreign Missions;" January 6, "Home Missions and the Jews;" January 7, "Families and Schools;" Sunday, January 8, sermons on "The Promised Outpouring" and "The Plain Command."

THE withdrawal of Union Seminary from the General Assembly of the American Presbyterian Church and the probable split of that large body are terribly disheartening. With the largest Home Mission field in the world to work, with foreign missionaries in almost every clime, with the deadly forms of European poison working in the streets of every large city, with the labour problem and the negro problem and the liquor problem to solve, surely our neighbours could find some better work to do for the Lord than splitting their Church. Years of strife may come, and the strength that should be given to the Lord's work may be spent in fighting one another. A terrible responsibility rests upon the man or men who began this trouble. There is no more dangerous enemy than the man who wantonly throws firebrands into the Church of Christ and then laughs at the conflagration he has made. May heaven keep the Canadian branch of the Presbyterian family peaceful.

AS we go to press the ballots are being counted in the Presidential election. Whatever the result, there is one feature of the contest that may well make every decent American citizen proud. From first to last the four candidates have conducted themselves as model Christian gentlemen. Not a sentence has been uttered by one of the four that might not be read with profit by any boy in the Union. Some of our religious exchanges say that most of the front rank men who have been taking part in public discussion have also conducted themselves in the most respectable manner imaginable. The contrast between this campaign and almost any previous one is marked. How account for the improvement? That is easy enough. The four candidates are Presbyterians. No doubt immense sums have been spent improperly, but that is the work of the machine. This time the dirt is at the bottom.

THE opening ceremonies at New Victoria the other week were conducted with that practical sagacity which is a characteristic of Methodism the world over. To begin with, the "distinguished stranger from a distance," who sometimes fails to turn up at the last moment, and sometimes when he does turn up turns up nothing but himself, was conspicuous by his absence. Ontario men were asked to open the institution, and they did their pleasant duties well. If nobody made a speech that will live in history, everybody who took part said some good pleasant things. Canada is not without men in every walk in life who are capable of doing noble things, but few, if any, nobler things have ever been done in this country than the giving of \$40,000 by Mr. Massey to the institution. As everybody knows, Mr. Massey was strongly opposed to the removal of Victoria to Toronto. Any liberal rich man can give large sums if he gets his own way, and some give perhaps because they have had their own way. Mr. Massey was badly beaten in trying to get his own way, but he put down his splendid gift all the same. All honour to Mr. Massey. May his kind rapidly increase.

IF we rightly remember, Sir John Macdonald was at first opposed to the present method of appointing a Thanksgiving Day. Soon after Confederation he told a deputation that the plan might not work well as the Dominion was so large that while a day of thanksgiving might be suitable for one part, a day of humiliation might be the right thing for another. Perhaps the astute Premier saw some difficulties ahead; possibly Quebec as usual was making her influence felt. Whatever may have been Sir John's reason, the system has not worked well in Toronto, mainly because the Government, through the Governor-General, appoints a day of Thanksgiving and then sanctions a military review and sham fight along side of the churches in which the Thanksgiving services are to be held. Now, let us have one thing or the other. Volunteers cannot give thanks to God, in their churches and engage in military parades at the same time. The review and the sham fight may be good things, but we submit they are not a Thanksgiving service. If the review and sham-battle are of more importance than giving thanks to God, then call the day review day or sham-battle day, but don't call it Thanksgiving Day and then hold a review on it that keeps people away from their Thanksgiving services.

IT is more than time that something effective was done to put an end to the gambling that disgraces country fairs every autumn. The reports that come from many directions about this evil are enough to make any respectable Canadian ashamed. Can it be possible that the local managers of these fairs rent stands on the fair ground to gamblers of various grades in order to increase the revenue of the society under whose auspices the fair is held? If the local managers have not enough of moral back-bone to put down and keep down gambling with a strong hand, there is one way in which they may be made to feel that it is their duty to hold a clean fair or none at all. Each society, we understand, receives an annual grant from the Government. Let the Government say in unmistakable terms that no society that tolerates "fakirs" of any kind will receive a cent of the people's money. This country is overrun and cursed by a lot of lazy semi-criminals who prey upon society and live without labour. The Hon. Mr. Dryden, the Ontario Minister of Agriculture, is a good man and a Baptist, and we respectfully ask him to give his attention to this matter at once. That gambling should exist in dens where it cannot easily be reached is bad enough, but that it should in any form be tolerated in open day at a county fair is a burning disgrace to the country.

THE *Christian at Work* has this to say of the Presidential campaign:—

Two important phases of the campaign just closing are to be noted. The first of these is the disappearance of the attempts to win votes through hurrah processions with their noisy demonstration, popular excitement, high-pressure enthusiasm finding vent in brass bands, drum and trumpet fanfare, boisterous parades by day and torchlight processions by night, with campaign songs, barbecues, and other methods of entertainment. All this has passed away,—at least it is all made conspicuous by its absence from the present campaign: to many the relief from all this fanfare is a grateful one. The second noteworthy characteristic of the present contest is its freedom from personal abuse and detraction, and the general prevalence of hearty good-will. With the characters of both the distinguished candidates above reproach, with the hearty respect that each has for the other, and with the evident fact that personal abuse does not make votes and that the great mass of the people have no relish for scandal, the conduct of the campaign on both sides has in the main been manly and dignified; indeed to such an extent has this been carried that frequently prominent men at public meetings have graced the platforms of their opponents. This is as it should be.

Yes, it is as it should be, and may the pleasant innovation continue and extend to all countries in which elections are held. Just why people supposed to be civilized, and many of whom profess to be Christianized, should make the selection of their rulers an occasion of alarm and disgust to decent citizens is one of those mysteries of modern civilization not easily explained. Surely the highest duty of citizenship might be discharged in a becoming manner.

THANKSGIVING DAY.

TO-MORROW many will assemble in their respective churches to join in thanksgiving services to God the giver of every good and perfect gift. The propriety of holding such services no one who believes that God lives and loves whom He has created for His service and glory would think of questioning. Reverence and devotion are not the