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## The Canada Presbyterian.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16th, 1891.

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THE spirit that underlies ecclesiastical exemptions, clerical discount, and a number of other financial arrangements not any too dignified or Christian is precisely the same that refuses decent remuneration to every man that works for the Church in its collective capacity. The ruling idea is, get every thing as cheap as you can. Keep down the price of your coat below its value and the salary of your secretary below what his services are worth. Cheap John is King. It is high time to enquire if that spirit is the spirit of the Gospel.

THE glowing description of the meeting of the Free Church Assembly given by Dr. Burns in the last issue of the *Presbyterian Journal* almost creates the impression that a visit to that Assembly is about as good a thing for a minister as a post-graduate course. The genial Doctor was on his native heath and he immensely enjoyed being there. His paper bristled with interesting facts and happy suggestions has, we are certain, given pleasure and profit to many readers. By the way, why does not Dr. Burns use his pen more frequently? He always writes just the kind of thing people like to read.

THE Highlanders who settled in Kildonan near the beginning of the present century held meetings and conducted services for nearly fifty years before a minister was sent to them by the Canadian Church. Is there any reason why, as Principal MacVicar suggests, other mission stations might not imitate their example at least for a short time? If there is so much difference between Presbyterians moving from Ontario to the North-West and those who moved there from Scotland that whilst the latter can conduct services for half a century, the former cannot keep together six months, there must be something radically wrong about Ontario Church training.

STUDENTS, probationers and all workers in the Gospel field know how hard it often is to get honestly earned money out of too many congregations and mission stations. The sum promised is small and getting it is like drawing teeth. Can the Church complain without playing the part of a hypocrite? Is there a professor or an official of any kind in the service of the Presbyterian Church today drawing anything like a generous salary? Can congregations and mission stations be expected to rise above the liberality of the Church to which they belong. To their honour be it said some of them do. Were the inconsistency not so painful, there would be grim humour in the act of a man who complains sadly about his own income and then votes regularly to keep everybody as poor as himself.

IT is not a little strange that amidst all the methods suggested for stamping out corruption at elections no one ever suggested the punishment of the creature who sells his vote. The buyer may be punished but the seller goes free. The process was reversed under the Scott Act. The seller of liquor was punished and the buyer was treated as innocent no matter how much he had done in the way of provoking the sale. It puzzled many an unsophisticated Canadian to understand how the

consumer who stands on one side of the counter on Sunday and buys liquor could be innocent while the man who sold liquor on the other was a criminal. It puzzles many a one now to understand why the man who sells his vote for a couple of dollars should be considered innocent while the man who buys it is punished as a criminal.

SOME of the New York Churches, instead of following the migration of the people to the up-town districts, are making up their minds to remain where they are. The reason they give for this course is that while the changes in down-town localities might seem to justify removal, the population becoming more dense urgently requires the Gospel and all the benefit Christian effort can confer. The congregations that come to this decision are doing a wise thing. They are seeking to do all the good they can among classes of the people who require the helpful influences of practical Christianity. The wealthier sections of great cities can easily provide for the maintenance of religious services, but it is in the districts inhabited by the toiling masses that special efforts are most needed. These New York Presbyterian Churches have made up their minds not only to remain in crowded but now unfashionable neighbourhoods, but to adapt their services to the special needs of the people among whom they seek to minister.

WE are sorry to notice a slight disposition on the part of some Presbyteries to hesitate in the matter of appointing a permanent secretary for the Foreign Mission work. We cannot think of one solid reason why there should be a moment's hesitation. Those who know most about the details of the work believe the time has come when a change should be made, and surely their opinion should have more weight than the opinions of men who never gave the matter an hour's serious consideration. It goes unsaid that the work could be better done by one who gave his whole time and attention to it than by any minister or other man who had other pressing daily duties to attend to. But that is not all. The Church has no moral right to ask any man's work for nothing. The Bible says the labourer is worthy of his hire and he is just as worthy of it when a mission secretary as when a pastor. The Church has no right to ask something for nothing.

THE farmers of the Dominion have no conceivable excuse for advocating political union with the United States. The Government of Canada is in their own hands and they can have whatever tariff arrangements a Parliament elected by themselves can make. They are in an overwhelming majority in all parts of the Dominion except British Columbia. How long could the representatives of the few cities of Ontario stand out against the counties if the counties were united in favour of any fiscal policy? Not a month. We do not know what proportion of farmers are in favour of political union, nor is it easy to fix the proportion in any locality or of any class. The figures given as the result of the vote at the Woodstock meeting varied. The one thing clear as the sun at noon-day is that the farmers may rule this country if they wish to do so. Why should a farmer advocate revolution until he has tried every constitutional remedy for our political ills? If farmers want reciprocity why not say so? They can control any Government. Their majority can make and unmake Governments. Why not use the remedies at their own doors if they, as a class, are suffering wrongs?

THE unexpected has again happened. While many were fearing a war of tariffs with the United States, actual tariff hostilities have broken out between the Dominion and Newfoundland. The old flag floats over both combatants and gives equal protection to the Canadian who shuts out Newfoundland fish and the Newfoundlander who discriminates against good Ontario flour. As the old flag is free trade it must be getting ashamed of both parties in the squabble. Mr. McKinley has always stoutly denied that he had any unkind feeling towards Canada when framing his tariff, his only object being to protect American agriculture. Our Newfoundland neighbours, however, make no secret of their feelings towards the Dominion. There is grim retribution in the fact that at the very time too many Canadians were encouraging a tariff war with our neighbours across the line, our first real difficulty should be with a sister colony. Should the Ameri-

can Government discriminate in favour of Newfoundland products, several industries in the Maritime Provinces will be in a bad corner. The manner in which the Newfoundlanders fought out their difficulty with France shows that they are a people of extraordinary nerve and pluck. Our Government would do well to remember that they are not dealing with half-breeds this time.

IN the last issue of the *Presbyterian College Journal* Principal MacVicar handles with his usual vigour a point we were keeping for some lively discussion when the Presbyteries get to work on the Summer Sessions problem. Everybody has been calling for help for the Home Mission field in winter. What Principal MacVicar would like to know and what we intend to ask several times before spring is that these good people should be urged to help themselves and help each other. The Principal says:—

In every station where a missionary cannot be placed one, two or more godly men, resident in such places, should be chosen and appointed to conduct religious services on the Lord's Day. This can be done by the Superintendent of Missions, by Presbyteries and neighbouring ministers. There should be little difficulty in finding a considerable number of persons qualified for such appointment. I argue this from the fact that we have been often told that the Churches in the old provinces have been deprived of many of their best members and office-bearers by the exodus to the North-West. This I presume is true, and should prove spiritually helpful in the way suggested. We have also been admonished in eloquent terms to look after our own people in the North-West. Is it not opportune just here to say a word in favour of these people looking after themselves and after one another? In neglecting this form of Christian effort we are falling away from the practice of the Church in apostolic days, and from the practice of many of the ablest and most successful missionaries in the Foreign field. We read that when a great persecution arose against the Church which was in Jerusalem, "they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles." It is noteworthy that the apostles, the specially chosen witnesses and preachers of Christ, remained in the Holy City. But this did not arrest the word of God or the publication of the Gospel, for "they therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word" (Acts viii. 1-4, Revised Version). Is it then an innovation, something wholly visionary, and not likely to be fruitful of any good, to urge Church members, east and west, to follow this primitive example? The truth is that multitudes of professed Christians are destitute of true peace and spiritual power because they regard themselves as mere receptacles of truth, and do nothing to propagate the Gospel. They ignore the plainly-revealed fact that they should be living epistles known and read of all men, that they should let their light shine before men, and not put it under a bushel. Is it not too much the settled conviction of many that the minister or missionary alone is to be the burning and shining light of the parish or mission field? Christ says: "The good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom" (Matt. xiii. 38); but the opinion is now current that the minister and Sunday school teachers are to sow all the seed that is to issue in a rich spiritual harvest. This is a great practical heresy; and we shall never achieve true success till we come back to the Master's creed and the methods of working exemplified by Him and His apostles.

It is a great practical heresy, but the Church takes no notice of heresies that are merely practical and affect nothing more than its own welfare. Should Principal MacVicar or any of his colleagues be guilty of heresy in regard to the sayings of any alleged "father" who died a thousand years ago, he would no doubt soon hear about it, but the souls of our living children on the prairies is a matter of less consequence than the sayings of our progenitors.

## SABBATH STREET CARS.

THE spasmodic agitation for the running of Sunday street cars in Toronto has broken out once again. The arguments advanced *pro* and *con* are much the same as on former occasions. The conditions have not materially changed since the last spurt subsided. The city has not to any great extent enlarged its boundaries, and no new evidence has been adduced to show that the running of cars on the Lord's Day would be particularly beneficial to the best interests of the entire community. Nobody has been able successfully to show that Toronto has not been remarkably prosperous in the past, even though its public streets have been undisturbed by the jingle of the horse-cars on the Sabbath. It is urged that because other cities and even small towns permit the running of Sunday street cars, therefore Toronto should be like them in this respect. Why is not stated. When business is suspended, as it wisely is on the first day of the week, the demand for transit is not so great as on other days. It is not needed for the business that has six lawful days as its own.

But the advocates of the secularization of the Sabbath are profuse in their expressions of sympathy for the welfare and recreation of the working-man. Were the street cars run on Sabbath he could