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The Canada Presbyterian.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9th, 1889.

AN opportunity is now given to unionists who never attend any Church to express their deep regret that Dr. McLaren should have shown that organic union is not promised in the Scriptures.

VISITORS at the opening of Knox College last week were greatly pleased to see Dr. Reid apparently enjoying better health than he has enjoyed for years. The venerable gentleman seems to be renewing his youth. Long may he be spared to help to guide the affairs of the institution with which his name has been so intimately and so usefully associated from its earliest days.

AN American gentleman who heard Dr. McLaren preach at the sea-side some years ago made this sensible remark at the close of the service: "I was just thinking that the student who comes through that Professor's hands haint no excuse for being a fool." The orator who, at a tea meeting or elsewhere, makes John xvii. 21 apply to visible, palpable, organic union of the denominations "haint" no earthly excuse now for distorting that verse.

DR. McLAREN was happy in his remarks about an ideal Church. Alongside of the ideal Church he drew a pretty picture of an ideal man, and said that "both would probably come at the same time." Perhaps the ideal woman may put in an appearance at the same date, and she may be escorted by the ideal preacher, the ideal professor of theology, the ideal editor, the ideal politician, and several other ideal people. Amiable dreamers who talk about ideals seldom work any part of their system except the imagination. They rarely put their hands to anything useful.

ONE of the best tests that can be applied to a sermon, speech or lecture, is the number of sentences or paragraphs that have sufficient merit to do service apart from the connection in which they stand. Dr. McLaren's lecture stands that test admirably. You can find a dozen things in it that do good work where they are and yet they could be taken out and made equally useful in a dozen different connections. The exposition of John, 17th chapter and 21st verse, struck the very nerve of the subject the professor was discussing but it would stand alone or fit into any place that a learned and sound exposition was needed.

FROM a Scottish contemporary we learn that at the induction of the Rev. Mr. Robertson, formerly of Stonehaven, where he gained considerable notoriety, into the pastorate of the McCrie-Roxburgh Church, Edinburgh, the Rev. Thomas Crerar, of North Leith, preached the sermon. Mr. Crerar is a brother of the Crown Attorney of Wentworth County, Ontario. The preacher reminded Mr. Robertson of his predecessors, among whom were Dr. James Hamilton, of Regent Square; Dr. Topp, of this city; Dr. Walter Smith, Mr. Gregory, of Anstruther, and Mr. John McNeill. Mr. Crerar in his sermon made this sensible remark:

"It was well for them," he said, "to cultivate not too much their own peculiarities, but to cultivate the thing they had in common with all great and good men who had advanced the kingdom of God. Whatever came, they should be natural. Preachers should try to deliver themselves of their message in a manner worthy of the high and holy and dignified Book from which they took their lesson."

OCTOBER 21 and 22 are to be observed as days of special prayer for Sabbath schools. The following topics are suggested:

1. The Sunday school teachers of the whole world, that they may increase in their knowledge of the Word, their love

to the children, and their earnest desire for their spiritual welfare. 2. The senior scholars, that they may be preserved from the dangers to which they are exposed, and speedily brought to decision for Christ. 3. The junior scholars, that they may, early in life, be brought to listen to the Saviour's gracious words: "Suffer the little children to come unto Me." 4. The officers of our schools, that they may be wise in counsel, energetic in action, and examples in all good works. 5. The Sunday school unions, and other organizations seeking to promote the efficiency of teachers, and the prosperity of the schools, that they may be successful in all their efforts. 6. The Sunday school mission on the continent of Europe, that it may rapidly extend its influence, and contribute mightily to the overthrow of the superstition and infidelity which so largely prevail. 7. The Sunday schools in connection with missionary societies all the world over, that they may increase and multiply, and help to bring about the period when all shall know the Lord, from the least unto the greatest.

The seasonableness and suitability of the topics presented as subjects for earnest and concerted prayer will commend themselves to all interested in this important part of practical Christianity.

THE band of Free Church ministers who took part in the Disruption controversy is now small, and is being gradually reduced. Only a few weeks ago the well-beloved Horatius Bonar entered into rest. One of his life-long friends, the Rev. A. N. Somerville, D.D., took part at the funeral services, the last public act performed by him. Now the beneficent life-work of this evangelist minister is ended, his course is finished. From active, loving service he has passed to his reward. He died of heart disease at his home in the Hillhead suburb of Glasgow, on the 18th ult. Dr. Somerville was, with the Bonars, an intimate friend of Robert Murray McCheyne, of Dundee, and like him, was saintly in his life and earnest in his work. For many years Dr. Somerville was pastor of Free Anderston Church, Glasgow, but sympathizing deeply as he did with all evangelistic effort, he latterly devoted himself almost exclusively to this special kind of work. His first visit to Canada was in 1846, which he revisited in 1876, and was present at the General Assembly of that year. He has visited India, Australia and South Africa, and several parts of Eastern Europe, everywhere meeting with a cordial welcome and being the means of effecting great good. His name will be lovingly remembered, and the recollection of his beautiful Christian life and self-denying consecration to the service of Christ and its blessed results will long continue.

IT is customary to express regret at the publicity that congregational troubles invariably receive; it is more to be regretted that church troubles so frequently occur and that in general they present so unedifying a spectacle. They are not indigenous to Toronto, but it seems that Toronto has had fully more of such unseemly exhibitions than she is entitled to. The latest has occurred in the Western Congregational Church. For some time there has been not a little unpleasantness which has now to all appearance, reached its culmination. The pastor, the Rev. A. F. McGregor, has been faithful and laborious and is highly esteemed by the religious community generally. For some reason that has not yet appeared he has not been acceptable to some of his membership. As usual with such factions they have been very zealous. They had reached the conclusion that the pastor's dismissal was the only cure for the congregation's disorders. In almost all congregational disagreements the sacrifice of the minister is supposed to be the only complete cure. The result, however, in this instance was different from anticipation. Instead of the motion to dismiss the pastor being entertained a motion was passed dismissing the objectors from the fellowship of the congregation. Whether this heroic measure will restore harmony remains to be seen. A divided church cannot prosper, and those who promote discord incur heavy responsibilities. Good men who pray for the peace of Zion are not usually found among those who seek either to rule or ruin the congregations with which they are connected.

OUR readers will thank Dr. McLaren for his exposition of the petition of the intercessory prayer, that has been marred and mangled on a thousand platforms.

When we turn to Christ's prayer in John xvii. 21, we discover no petition that all Christians may be united in one visible society. The words run, "That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me." As we examine the prayer itself this conviction grows upon us.

It is a prayer, as we gather from verse 20, for all Christ's believing people then in the world, and "for them also which shall believe on Me through their word." It is a prayer which is presented expressly for all believers, from Christ's day to the end of time. There is no reference to an external society made up of all sorts of men. It includes none but believers.

What is asked on their behalf does not include the organic

unity of the visible Church. No one imagines that the meaning is, that they shall be one in stature, colour, or nationality. No one believes that they shall be one in learning, mental powers, or general culture.

Why, then, should we suppose that they must be one in the profession of faith which they make, the sacraments they enjoy, or the ecclesiastical government under which they live? Such a meaning must be put into Christ's words from some other source before it can be extracted from them. The language clearly points to a unity of a very different kind: "As Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they all, may be one in Us." It cannot be supposed that this unity can be realized in all the members of a visible society which includes both believers and reprobates. Reprobates who are acknowledged by Bellarmine to have a place in the Church, as defined by him, cannot be one in the Father and the Son. Judas Iscariot and Simon Magus were not in the company for whom Christ here prays, and did not share in the blessing sought, but they were both members of the visible Church.

The petition is often quoted at union meetings of one kind and another as if it referred to visible organic union and that alone. Sometimes the dear brother who quotes it in that way may be found during the following week giving effect to his union sentiments by enticing the weak sheep of neighbouring flocks into his own congregational fold.

THE Nonconformists of London held a meeting in the City Temple—Dr. Parker's Church—to express their sympathy with the dockyard labourers, after they had gained their point. Judging from the report in the *British Weekly* it was a peculiar kind of meeting. The first speaker, Mr. McArthur, M.P., was vehemently applauded when he expressed his regret that the meeting had not been held long before. He thanked John Burns Burns, we believe, is an infidel leader—and Cardinal Manning for what they had done for the starving men. The next speaker did not mend matters by trying to apologize for the very secondary part Nonconformists had taken in the battle. He said that ministers must have holidays, and many of them were out of town, a softish kind of observation which was met by a cry that "Manning was not." The Rev. John McNeill suggested that the ministers should unburden their consciences by preaching next Sabbath on the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. Hugh Price Hughes scored a good point with the audience by candidly admitting that the Nonconformists were caught napping. While honouring Cardinal Manning he felt a pang that to him should have fallen the honour of mediating in the battle. Dr. Parker seemed to be on the fence. He remarked that a "dock labourer is not necessarily a hero or a saint, and a dock director is not necessarily a heartless blackguard." All that is true, and it is equally true that the conscience of England was on the side of the starving dockmen. It is also true, as Mr. Hughes remarked, that a great opportunity was lost. The *British Weekly* declares that even the sympathies of capitalists were with the men. Our contemporary also says, "It is not the case, as has been frequently alleged, that the majority of the East-end labourers are Roman Catholics, but the general remark is that it would not be wonderful if that were to happen now."

THE JESUIT QUESTION AGAIN.

SEVERAL events during the past week have revived a certain degree of interest in the popular agitation connected with the Jesuit Estates Act. The resolutions of the Quebec Protestant Council of Education touching the disposal of the \$60,000 allotted by the Act to that body for the promotion of higher education in the Province, mark a new and distinct phase of the absorbing question. It was up till lately heroically declared that the grant would be declined, since its acceptance could not fail to be interpreted as a condonation of the \$400,000 grant to the Roman Catholic Church and the Jesuits. In the estimation of the Council, however, the proper thing for them to do is to signify their willingness to receive the sum apportioned them on certain conditions which they specify. As yet, however, no reliable and explicit version of the reasons that led to this conclusion has been submitted to the public, but the fact remains that they have in a formal manner signified their intention to accept their allotted share. As was to be expected this has called forth energetic protests from various quarters, the Presbytery of Montreal having been clear and outspoken in this respect. It has been hinted that any institution which participates in the benefits derivable from the gift will be in bad odour with their wealthy friends, and will in consequence suffer financially. This is prophetic.

Another circumstance that has brought the Jesuit question into prominence is the recent visit to the west of the Hon. Wilfrid Laurier in company with Mr. Fisher, M. P. for Brôme. The leader of the Opposition has won for himself a splendid repu-