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O. BLACKETT ROBINSON, MANAGER.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15TH, 1896.

THE year 1896 has begun with more rumours of war than any year for a long time. After all the war may be confined to the politicians, the jingoes and the newspapers. So may it be.

IT is all very well to talk about "Presbyterian back bone" but there are a good many Presbyterians who haven't back-bone enough to say that the institutions of their own Church have the first claim on their liberality.

THE youthful Emperor of Germany has no earthly excuse for being foolish. His parents and grand-parents on both sides have been eminent sensible people. The young man should take his British Grandma's advice and conduct himself with propriety.

THE Washington government proposes to hold the Turkish government responsible for the loss of American life and property in Armenia. That is right. No doubt the President can beat the Turk in court but the Turk can easily beat the President on the execution. The real fight comes on the execution.

IN three months the Board of Knox College will be expected to name two professors for the institution, and in less than six the General Assembly will be asked to appoint them. We cannot recall an instance in which the Church seemed so far from having its mind "made up" in regard to an important matter so near. About all that one can safely say is that Dr. Munro Gibson would be unanimously and enthusiastically appointed to one chair if he would take it. It is to be hoped that next June may not find the Church as unprepared as last June did.

TO Canada belongs the honor, if honor it be, of producing an entirely new political situation. The situation is thus described by the veteran Premier of the Dominion:—

"There have been many occasions upon which Ministers of a Cabinet have resigned their portfolios and have broken up governments, but there is no precedent that I have been able to discover nor have those who are learned in the law or who have made constitutional practice their study been able to put their finger upon a single instance in which a Cabinet apparently united met Parliament and placed an address affirming the principles and policy of the Government in the hands of her Majesty's representative, and then, after having asked for an adjournment of three or four days, in the interim, or between the time of the delivery of the address and the assembling of Parliament again, that seven members, or, in fact, any portion of the Cabinet have sent in their resignations."

His Excellency the Governor General does not approve of such "innovations" in constitutional government and intimated to the Premier that he had better reconstruct and go on with the business foreshadowed in the speech from the throne. It seems to us that the veteran Premier has been cruelly treated by his "bolting" colleagues. "Bolting" was bad enough; but the time at which it was done, and the reason given for doing it, made the act many times worse. Surely these ministers who left the government knew all about the Premier's ability long before they took office under him. Sir Mackenzie's grey hairs and life long services to the country deserved different treatment. But what is the use in talking about gratitude in Canadian politics. In the matter of treating their leaders meanly the Liberals had better look to their laurels.

THE Herald and Presbyterian says:

There was once a man so kind and accommodating that "he would lend to anybody, even though his own notes went to protest." Some Presbyterians are built on his model. They will give to anything that asks, even though their own churches and other institutions suffer. Undenominational schools bleed them for large amounts, while our own schools cry in vain for even a little help. That is shamefully true of Canada as well as of the United States. There are few subscription lists for "anything" on which you may not see Presbyterian names for large amounts while our own colleges are in debt and some of our own Home Missionaries scarcely have the necessaries of life.

ARMENIAN SUFFERERS' FUND.

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THE CHURCH AGENT AGAIN.

WE have no desire to unnecessarily agitate this subject, but the letter of Mr. J. K. Macdonald upon it in our last issue calls for more attention than could then be given to it. There is a vagueness in his complaints as to our treatment of it which, in the case of one who, when he wishes, can both write and speak so pointedly as Mr. Macdonald can, is disappointing. We could have very much wished that he had been more explicit. The injustice which he complained of as done to himself, and the error we fell into in inadvertently stating that Rev. Dr. Reid's letter was to him instead of being to the chairman of the Finance Committee, have already been explained and set right. He charges us with "failure to state the facts in regard to the action of the General Assembly, and with failure clearly to apprehend just what the Assembly did do, as well as what it did not do"—that is, we understand, in the appointment of a successor to Dr. Reid. The facts in the case are set forth in the minutes of the General Assembly, in plain language, and if we are mistaken in understanding that it appointed Rev. Dr. Warden to be successor to Rev. Dr. Reid, that it gave him time to consider his decision, and that in view of his pledge to see that, pending his decision, no injury should arise to the Church in the case of Dr. Reid becoming unable for the duties of his office, and in that event the Church would look to him for their proper discharge and even hold him responsible for this,—if that is failing to clearly apprehend what the Assembly did, and saying so is failing to state the facts, then we confess we do not understand the meaning of plain English. Not only so but we know, for we have taken pains to find out, that many who were members of the General Assembly and present at its sessions, men of long experience and ample knowledge, have, like ourselves, failed clearly to apprehend just what the Assembly did do, as well as what it did not do in this matter.

We regret that Mr. Macdonald felt himself called upon to charge us with making "unfortunate insinuations of wrong-doing" on the part of the Advisory Board. We were certainly innocent of the least intention to make any insinuation, for the simple reason that we had nothing to insinuate. Besides, insinuation is a cowardly proceeding.

As a result of all this Mr. Macdonald charges us with having "placed before our readers a view of the case not in accordance with the facts, and which is calculated to do great injustice to the members of both the Advisory Finance Board and of the Finance Committee, and may result in possible injury to the Church." The "case" is, we understand, what the Assembly did in the appointment of Dr. Warden, and what the Advisory Board

and Finance Committee have done in the emergency which has arisen. Our view of the case as to what the Assembly did we have already given, and we still contend that it is in accordance with facts.

As to what the Advisory Board and Finance Committee have just done, what we stated was this (1) That, admitting the mistake into which we inadvertently fell, the chairman of the Finance Committee received a communication from Dr. Reid, asking on account of growing infirmities to be at once relieved of the work and responsibilities of his office. (2) That a joint meeting of the Finance Committee and Advisory Board was called to take into consideration what course should be adopted in these circumstances. (3) That there was before the joint meeting the offer of Dr. Warden previously made to Dr. Reid, to assume at once the duties of his office and relieve him of all work and responsibility, and thus redeem his pledge given to the Church to see that, in case of the very emergency which has arisen happening, no interest of the Church should suffer. (4) That this offer was not accepted, but that other arrangements were made, not yet made known to the Church, which is wondering why Dr. Warden does not enter upon the work to which it appointed him. That is, so far, the view of the case which we placed before our readers, and we ask Mr. Macdonald to say plainly if the things we have just mentioned are not facts.

We also placed this view of the case before our readers: that the Finance Committee and Advisory Board in taking such action as they have done, did what they were not empowered to do. The duties of the Finance Committee are explicitly stated in the Assembly Minutes, p 49. The Advisory Board was named after the appointment of Dr. Reid's successor, and in immediate connection therewith, so that in the opinion of very competent judges, it is not entitled to take any action whatever until the new agent enters upon office and calls it together, for it may be noticed by consulting the Assembly Minutes as a sort of intimation of this, that while every standing committee has a convener named, this Advisory Board has not. Inasmuch, also, as, from its very name, its duties are advisory, naturally the one entitled to call this Board together is the person with whom they were to advise, not the convener of the Finance Committee or Mr. J. K. Macdonald, who, we suspect, has failed clearly to apprehend in this case what the Assembly did do in appointing him on this committee. If we are right in these opinions, shared in by many others, and if our statements as to what the Finance Committee and Advisory Finance Board have done are correct, we fail to see what injustice has been done either of these bodies by stating the facts to which exception is now taken. If we are wrong it should be easy to show that we are.

We are also charged with "conveying the impression that injustice has been done by the Board and Finance Committee to Dr. Warden." We do not for a moment doubt Mr. Macdonald when he says that "no member of either would willingly do him an injustice." Men often unintentionally do injustice, and whether or not injustice has been done in this case, is a question on which there will be a difference of opinion. Frankly, in the circumstances, we think there has. No one will at least deny that Dr. Warden will be put to great inconvenience, and the Church to possible loss, by his being prevented, as he has been, from taking up until April 30th this work to which the Assembly appointed him, and having in a few weeks to prepare and have in readiness for the meeting of the General Assembly important and voluminous reports, as well as all the other business which the agent has to bring before the Assembly.

More light was asked for and a little has been given, some of it of a kind that will be a surprise to the Church. The Church learns in this round about way that Dr. Reid sent a letter to Mr. Jeffrey, Convener of the Finance Committee, that he was communicated with by means of a small committee, and that through that committee it was made known to the joint committee that certain statements were being prepared for the Advisory Board, whose existence as yet is a matter of doubt, and that the work of the office was being carried on by those whom Dr. Reid had appointed. What arrangements have been made we are not told. We think it a pity and a mistake that any secrecy should be observed in this matter. In our humble