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The Canada Presbyterian

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, MANAGER.

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One almost trembles to think what might have happened if the Italian warship, *Etna*, had steamed out of Montreal harbour last week because no salute was fired. Many countries have been frightened by the arrival of a fleet, but Canada nearly suffered by the departure of one vessel. We had a narrow escape.

There are few ministers in the Presbyterian Church less likely to speak unadvisedly with their lips, as our old friend, Dr. R. F. Burns would say, than Professor Scrimger, of Montreal. All the more pity, we think, that the learned professor said anything at the meeting of the Presbytery of Montreal last week about the newspapers that indulged in low, coarse, shallow sneers at what they call heresy hunting. Journals of that class like to be noticed by men of the character and standing of Professor Scrimger. The only person their sneers injure is Professor Campbell. The proper treatment for a Canadian journal that apes the semi-profane style of the American "reptile" press, is silent, dignified contempt.

The Montreal Presbytery have agreed upon the form of libel, have declared it relevant by a majority of 15 to 2, and by this time it has probably been served upon Professor Campbell at Yoho, Muskoka. The proceedings in the Presbytery have so far been characterized by moderation, dignity and Christian courtesy. So far as we know, Prof. Campbell is on the most friendly terms personally with his co-Presbyters, and the duties that devolve upon them in this matter must be all the more painful on that account. One scarcely knows which to pity most, the professor of twenty years standing, who appears at the bar, or his brethren who have to try him on a most serious charge. Let us all hope and pray that the painful business will end at the next meeting of Presbytery.

The thing chiefly to be feared in regard to the unfortunate case now pending in the Presbytery of Montreal, is that the minds of the people may be taken off their Church work and unduly fixed on this particular case. No one who understands Canadian Presbyterianism, has any doubt that the standards of the Church will be maintained and her laws faithfully carried out. No one, we hope, has any doubt that Prof. Campbell will receive even-handed justice from any tribunal before which he may appear. Whatever difference of opinion there may be in regard to the wisdom of beginning the proceedings—and there is some difference—on that point in the Church—not that they have begun, every true Presbyterian will say, let the case be continued and issued in a manner that will bear the scrutiny of the ecclesiastical world. Let the people go on with their work, avoid clamour, and trust the courts of their Church, and all will be well.

The member who struck the first blow in the British House of Commons is a graduate of Oxford, and most of those who assisted him, are what is called "educated" in the sense of having taken a university course. This last outbreak of ruffianism in high places, was not required to show that a university course

does not necessarily make a young man a gentleman. Too often we hear universities and colleges blamed for the conduct of their graduates. A graduate acts like a fool, or an ass, or a ruffian, and thoughtless people pounce upon the college he "went through," and lay all the blame upon the institution. The backwoods idea that a college can do everything for its students, should be given up. Canada is old enough now to be done with that delusion. The sooner it dies the better for all our educational institutions. Theological seminaries are often blamed for not making good preachers out of impossible material.

The question of running Sunday cars in Toronto, has been pretty well threshed out. Little more that is new can be said at public meetings. The duty of the hour is to perfect the organization for bringing out the whole vote against the attempt to introduce the Chicago Sabbath. Speeches are well enough in their way, but it is the ballots that will count on the evening of polling day. Nothing should be taken for granted in the way of organization. Nothing should be left to chance. So far as possible, every arrangement for taking voters to the polls, should be made perfect. Votes are sure when they are polled and not a moment sooner. The friends of the Sabbath should take a lesson from election managers in campaigns of another kind. These astute and experienced gentlemen assume that organization is more than half the battle. No cause is so good that its friends can afford to dispense with proper means for carrying it at the polls. None is so bad that good organization cannot mightily help it.

Has there not been enough said about the position taken by Canada at the World's Fair? Everybody in the world who knows anything about wheat, knows that "Manitoba hard" is the best wheat in all creation. Everybody who knows anything about cheese, knows that Ontario can beat the Yankees in that product any morning before breakfast. The man who does not know that in certain lines, Ontario is one of the best countries in the world, cannot have that fact pounded into him by any amount of newspaper writing. What is the use in everlasting harping on the fact, that we make a good appearance at the great show? We never intended to make anything else. We made a good appearance in Philadelphia seventeen years ago. We can make a good appearance anywhere. Is it not a little childish—a little colonial, to talk so much about our appearance? The man who does not know that Ontario is one of the best countries in the world, has a great deal to learn.

The old howl about "clerical domination" is again heard. Citizens of Toronto opposed to Sunday cars are said to be "priest ridden." The last time this cry made itself heard was during the Scott Act agitation. Men soaked in whiskey, men who could scarcely pass a bar-room without going in, if their lives depended on the passing, denounced the friends of the Scott Act as priest-ridden. They, of course, were free. Everybody who knew them, knew that they had been rum-ridden for years, but still they put on a bold face and shouted "clerical domination," "priest ridden." It is exactly so now in Toronto. The veriest slaves of every malign influence that is trying to destroy the quiet of the Sabbath, are the loudest shouters about clerical domination. Even if the question were one of being ridden, most decent men would rather be ridden by such citizens as Principal Caven and Rev. D. J. Macdonnell, than by a soulless bargain-breaking railway corporation. What in the name of common sense are ministers of the Gospel for, if they should not take an active part in the discussion of moral and religious questions. Can anybody name a question in which it is more clearly the duty of a clergyman to take part, than that of remembering the Sabbath day to keep it

holy. What would any man of average honesty, not to speak of piety, think of a minister who was ashamed or afraid to protest against what Principal Caven is reported to have very properly called "an infamous attack upon the Sabbath." Does any man deserve a place in the pulpit who can connive at Sabbath desecration? The most insulting, as well as most stupid part of the attack that is being made on the Toronto clergy at the present time, is the assumption that because they are ministers they should take no part in the campaign.

THE SUNDAY STREET CAR STRUGGLE.

The meetings which have been held recently in the Horticultural Pavilion and in other parts of the city of those opposed to Sunday street cars, have been thoroughly representative of all classes, and have given a powerful impetus to the movement. The addresses made at them have upon the whole been good, those at the Pavilion notably so; fair in spirit, and because fair, and able as well, they have been forcible. The following are some of the points which have been especially emphasized.

The advocates of street cars persistently seek to make it appear that the Sabbath is a Jewish institution, and therefore we are under no obligation to observe it. The falsity of this contention has been exposed unanswerably by Rev. Principal Caven, and the true basis on which it rests, its universal authority, and its beneficent design as regards the whole human race, clearly and forcibly insisted upon.

The bearings of the street car question upon labour were made very plain, not by clergymen, who, although their work brings them into close and constant contact with working people, are not supposed to know anything about this aspect of the matter, but by men who are either themselves at work every day, or are, or have been closely connected with labour as employers. The utter hollowness of the pretence made by those who advocate Sunday street cars, that they are forcing on this question solely in the interests of the working man, has been mercilessly exposed. Allowing that in some cases, this is done honestly, but in ignorance, arguments, facts and experience were brought to show that, the real interests of the working man as regards the length of the hours of labour, are conserved by the observance of the Sabbath as it is now amongst us. It is freely said by those who ought to know that it is a matter of the very greatest consequence to the Company whether they succeed or not. They do not take into consideration the comfort of the citizens or the wisdom of taking them to the parks for Sunday pleasure. They simply want the five cents. The Railway Company, as everybody knows, looks upon the question purely and simply as a financial one. It is money they are after, and more money.

It has also been shown that, apart from all other considerations, this most important question was now to be considered and decided, whether the citizens of Toronto are to retain the government of it in their own hands, or whether it is to be handed over to the tender mercies of a company, which on other grounds altogether, is charged with being greedy, unscrupulous and overbearing. This itself is a most important and far-reaching question for the citizens to consider and settle once for all. The struggle becomes keener every day. Under the guidance of the Lord's Day Observance Society, with the co-operation of the Churches and many earnest and influential ladies, those opposed to street cars are being thoroughly organized for work, and the other side is following their example. An appeal has been made for the money needed to carry on the campaign which has been forced upon those who are determined to maintain our Sabbath quiet. Surely this will be forth coming to the full extent needed. This will supply one important test how far those who profess to love and

prize the day of rest, really do so. Let our faith now show itself by our works.

One most important matter in this whole agitation is that there seems to almost no safeguard to secure an honest vote. Had those who advocate Sunday street cars been desirous or willing for fair play, for a full, true and earnest expression of the opinion of the city, they would at once have conceded to the proposal to defer the vote until January. Their unwillingness to do so of itself justifies the fear that an honest vote will not be obtained, and that they rely upon the chances they have as things are to carry the day, if not by fair means, at least by some means. Let all who love fair play rebuke and repel this attempt to carry a great and sweeping change without every possible precaution on the side of justice and righteousness. The treatment of the question and the arguments and reasons urged against the change, have been by their fairness, moderation and force, in striking contrast to the course pursued by the loudest and most persistent advocate in the city for it, while the secular press upon the whole has been fair and candid. The Sunday street car organ to make up for the lack of better arguments, persistently strives to set class against class, the working class, its pets for the time being, which also it would like to make its tools, and the tools of the street railway company, against those who can afford to hire on Sunday, or who do it at least, whether they can afford it or not. The clergy are especially obnoxious to it. As on all such occasions they are freely charged with attempting to coerce their fellow citizens, with intermeddling, with inconsistency, with bigotry, and when very hard up for a worse charge, with hypocrisy. All this is a note of distress, and plainly enough indicates the dearth of really sound argument and reason. The charge of hypocrisy, one need not condescend to notice. It is a strange thing that the clergy should be the only class, according to this champion of freedom, which cannot be allowed the privilege of having an opinion, and that while the advocates of street cars may freely use the press and platform to advance their ends, it is an impertinence for the clergy to use either. As for coercing their fellow citizens, everyone who knows the Protestant clergy of Canada and the Canadian people, knows that it is both ridiculous and false. Yet they are gravely warned to mind their own business, as if by becoming a minister of a Church, a man thereby ceases to be a citizen and to have any rights as a citizen. It would be for the good of the country did all our clergy at the proper time and in the proper place, make a more manly and patriotic assertion of their rights as citizens than they do. This is just a time for them to speak out and act in every manner legitimately within their reach. Did they keep silence, those who are now most ready to charge them with intermeddling, would be the first to reproach them with unfaithfulness and cowardice.

There are two classes who may be depended upon to vote, those keenly for, or keenly against the change. The decision really in a great measure lies with those who are too easy or too indifferent to take the trouble to vote, or who are ignorant and do not care to become enlightened on this very important matter. Public meetings, personal appeal, and the circulation of literature bearing upon the subject, should be pushed with unflagging zeal and diligence, so that everyone may as far as possible be aroused and no vote be lost when the time comes to poll it, because this class has been left unreached and unmoved. The advocates of street cars who were at first all confidence are much less so now, and if only the measures which have already been taken are zealously and without pause, pushed on, there is good reason to hope for a second and unmistakable triumph for the success of a struggle which shall retain for Toronto what may justly be regarded as one of its greatest blessings, a Sabbath restful from labour and of quiet for worship.