

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

BE SUBSCRIBED IN ADVANCE.

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, Proprietor.

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Edited by Rev. Wm. Inglis.

TORONTO, FRIDAY, AUGUST 27, 1880.

BRANTFORD YOUNG LADIES' COLLEGE.

WE are pleased to notice that, as will be seen from an advertisement in another column, since the issuing of the annual calendar the Board of Directors of the Brantford Young Ladies' College have made a reduction of twenty-five per cent., in the regular fees, to the daughters of clergymen. We have no doubt but that this reduction will place the superior advantages afforded by the institution within the reach of many who would otherwise be deprived of them.

The French and German languages are placed under the charge of Miss L. L. Heydenreich, and these languages will be spoken as well as taught in the College.

We also understand that the Rev. D. D. McLeod, of Paris, takes charge of classes in Natural Theology and Evidences of Christianity.

PRESBYTERIAN STATISTICS FOR 1879-80.

THE amount of labour bestowed by the Committee upon the preparation of the statistical and financial returns, as published in the Minutes of Assembly, must have been very great, while the care and skill displayed throughout are evidently in correspondence. Statistics are proverbially dry reading, yet no one who really takes an enlightened interest in the progress of the Presbyterian Church in Canada will be inclined in this case so to characterize them.

It is to be regretted that so many as 106 congregations have not sent in any reports. This will give about seven-eighths of the congregations and nine-tenths of the entire strength of the body as so far supplying the desired information. There does not seem to be any reason whatever why every congregation and preaching station should not send in all the necessary returns. What can be done by some could be accomplished with equal ease by all, and it is not creditable, therefore, that there should be so many defaulters where it is so desirable there should be none. Whether returns are favourable or the reverse they ought to be made. The interests of the Church in general require that they should be, and the best interests of the congregations will also be subserved by the directions of the Assembly being complied with to the letter. Where blanks are left the worst will always be suspected.

The entire number of pastoral charges, settled and vacant, is 740, and of ministers 659. The regular charges of these ministers comprise 1,350 churches or stations, thus giving to each more than two upon an average. In some districts the average is nearly three to each minister; in others about two.

One hundred and forty-two churches or stations have been formed and are being wrought which are not under regular ministerial oversight. It is to be hoped that at no distant day many of these will be regularly settled.

The number of families reported was 63,843, giving a population of 300,000.

The number of members on the rolls of Kirk-sessions

is given as 107,871, of whom the greatest number is in the Presbytery of Toronto; the second in Hamilton; the third in Guelph; the fourth in Montreal, and the fifth in Picton.

During the year 10,748 were added to the fellowship of the Church, and 7,129 removed by death, etc., thus shewing a net increase of 3,519. The number of baptisms during the year was 9,837.

In these 740 charges there were 4,125 ruling elders; 8,574 Sabbath school teachers, and 83,265 scholars.

The accommodation as reported would seat 273,420 persons, but the columns which give these returns are very imperfectly filled up.

There are 283 missionary associations, which surely is a disproportionately small number when it is borne in mind that every congregation ought to have some means for systematically calling forth the liberality of the people for the extension of Christ's cause in "the regions beyond."

The number of manses provided by the congregations is 383, while in seventy-nine other cases the congregations rent houses for the accommodation of their pastors. In the course of the year eleven manses and twenty-six churches had been built and a few others improved or remodelled.

From the financial returns we find that stipends from all sources to the amount of \$539,794 had been promised. The "arrears" amounted to \$19,100. Only five Presbyteries had none, viz.: Brockville, Whitby, Lindsay, Paris and Maitland.

The Committee complains of the careless and imperfect manner in which the financial returns are made up and the apparent desire to conceal any fact which might have the appearance of reflecting unfavourably upon individual congregations. As much as \$350,771 have been expended on churches and manses, while as a whole, for strictly congregational purposes, the sum, for the year, came up to \$928,198. The total contributions to the schemes of the Church amounted to \$138,816. To this has to be added a further sum of \$70,082 for purposes not otherwise specified. This makes the whole income for the year to amount to \$1,162,154, an increase of \$51,774 over last year.

The Presbytery of Toronto heads this sum with \$136,876, while Montreal comes second with \$108,549.

The highest average per family and communicant is in the Presbytery of Newfoundland where it amounted to \$62.96 for each family, and \$40.68 for each communicant. The next is Toronto which stands \$35.54 per family, and \$16.97 per communicant. The lowest average per family is \$3.88, and per communicant \$4.80.

It is to be hoped that next year the returns will be complete in every respect so that a full and reliable view may be had of the condition and progress of the Church in all its borders, and that this may be continued from year to year with undeviating accuracy, and shewing continually a satisfactory rate of progress and improvement.

RELIGION AND POLITICS.

IT is too often thought a mark of superior piety and superior refinement to take no interest in the political action either of the country in which one's lot is cast, or in that of the world at large. Feeble and foolish people are every day found posing themselves in the character of agnostics as far as politics are concerned just as others assume the same role and affect the same superiority in matters of religion. They wish it to be believed that they have no interest in such things, that they are totally unacquainted with all the particulars, and that they are so ignorant because they are too refined to meddle with what is so irredeemably vulgar, and too pure to come into contact with what is so evidently vile. They leave politics to the wicked and the unprincipled, and "exercise themselves" only "unto godliness." In all this there is some thing exceedingly feeble and unhealthy, with at the same time a very evident admixture of Phariseism and grimace. Instead of religious persons having nothing to do with politics, we know of none who ought to have more; none who ought more earnestly to strive for the laws of heaven being reduced to practice in all the details of life on earth, so as to render the present brighter and purer and better, more like what it ought to be, more like what it will be when that state for which Christians say they long shall have become an established fact. The people in Canada cannot in

general be blamed for such neglect. Here and there a few weaker brethren talk foolishly about having nothing to do with "dirty politics," but on the whole it is very different with the great mass of the people. Perhaps the usual phrase about there being more politics to the acre in this country than in any other which could be mentioned is after all not so far from the mark, and ill will it be for the general interests of the community when it is different. If the politics of a country are "dirty" the people have themselves to blame. If they are noble, politics also will be noble, and vice versa. In a free country the person who pleads ignorance of politics proclaims his own disgrace, and he who boasts of such ignorance only glories in his shame. The base, the ignorant and the unprincipled rejoice when religious and intelligent men assume the position and character of mere onlookers, but the best interests of the country suffer, and the penalty comes in due time in the shape of personal loss and national injury if not absolute ruin. A man ought to be ashamed of himself who says that he never meddles with politics, for he who possesses the franchise and boasts of never having cast a vote is little else than a criminal. He is doing his duty neither to himself nor to his country nor to his God. He proclaims himself unfit to be a citizen of a free country. He repudiates his obligations and strips himself of his privileges. He is doing his best to pave the way for arbitrary rule or for popular confusion; to realize his own prophecies and more than make good his oft repeated fears. We have in Canada some Presbyterians of this type, though upon the whole they are comparatively few, and we should hope are always becoming fewer, for the religion which will be injured by taking an interest in all the social and secular concerns of the community must be of a very feeble, unhealthy description, and not very well calculated either to help individuals in living or to sustain and comfort them in dying. What shall be the particular form of political opinion or what the course of political action it is not for us to say. Thoughtful, intelligent and conscientious men may differ very materially on such points, but so long as they are thoughtful, intelligent and conscientious the ultimate decision will not be very far astray, and in any case neither so injurious nor so disgraceful as if they had folded their hands and as far as they were concerned allowed everything to drift.

RELIGIOUS OPINIONS A BAR TO SECULAR OFFICE.

A GOOD deal of discussion has been going on of late over the question whether or not a Protestant can with propriety or safety vote for a Roman Catholic candidate for municipal or Parliamentary office. We had hoped that the time for this discussion had gone by and that all had come to the natural and common-sense conclusion that every individual candidate for public trust of any kind had to be judged according to his own individual merits, upon what was known of his own character and what could be ascertained of his particular antecedents, and not from any general conclusions which others might draw from his religious opinions or from the character and conduct of some of his ancestors or co-religionists. We take it for granted that the argument of those who refuse in any case to vote for a member of the Roman Catholic Church is based upon the fact that many of the theological authorities of that communion hold that faith ought not to be kept with heretics and that these heretics ought not to be tolerated in any well regulated state. Such persons urge that as toleration to certain opinions is not allowed by Roman Catholics when they have the power, so the same amount and kind of intolerance should, when opportunity offers, be displayed by Protestants in their turn. Does it follow? Are Roman Catholics right in holding by such persecuting and intolerant principles in religion, or are they wrong? If the former of course they are to be imitated and approved of. If the latter, it is equally clear that they are to be condemned and their example repudiated. But all Protestants have been for ages declaring in every variety of language that these intolerant opinions of the Roman Catholic Church are as contrary to right reason as they are condemned by the Word of God. Can it then be either proper or becoming, in any possible circumstances, for such to do the very thing they have so strongly condemned in others? Many a Protestant, we cannot but acknowledge, is a great deal