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## The Canada Presbyterian.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29th, 1891.

OUT of all sight the best thing written so far on the Briggs' controversy is an article in the *Interior* by Dr. G. P. Hays who calls himself a "very high critic." Adopting the methods of the Higher Criticism he proves conclusively that Dr. Briggs never wrote his own Inaugural address. At all events if the proof is not absolutely conclusive it is quite as much so as any argument ever made by a Higher Critic to prove that Moses never wrote the Pentateuch. A clever writer, proceeding on the lines of the Higher Criticism, could show with some degree of success that Edward Blake never wrote the famous Durham letter.

THE mineral lands in northern Ontario not already sold belong to the people of Ontario. That is a fundamental fact which the good people in and around Sudbury and many others do not seem to comprehend. Prospecting for minerals does not give a prospector any stronger claim to mineral land than tramping through a pine forest gives a man a claim on timber limits. The prospector and the bush ranger are merely attending to business just as all the rest of us have to do. The problem with these mineral lands is to get revenue out of them for their owners, the people of Ontario, without depressing the mining industry. No doubt the people's representatives in the Legislature will be able to solve that problem.

WHILE the difficulty that interfered for a time with the mission work of Rev. D. Macgillivray and Dr. McClure in Honan has been satisfactorily settled, it is to be regretted that members of the American Presbyterian mission staff in the same province have been exposed to similar rough treatment by the natives. Dr. Hunter together with his wife and Mr. Lane have been labouring in Cho-Ning-Chou since last autumn. From a letter written by Rev. J. Goforth to Rev. M. P. Talling, of St. James Church, London, Ont., it appears that in January an excited mob attacked the house where the missionaries lived. Mrs. Hunter and her two little girls tried to escape, but were prevented. In response to her entreaties they were permitted to remain until next morning on condition that they would then leave the place. It seems Mr. Lane is dying of consumption and Mrs. Hunter's health has been seriously affected. There are stern realities to be encountered in prosecuting foreign mission work.

IF the facts are as stated in some of our contemporaries, the Local Option law quashed the other day by Chief Justice Galt has an inner history. It is said that the temperance men were told in effect to draw up a law to suit themselves, and that the drafting was done by Mr. J. McLaren, Q.C., of this city, and the Bill put through the Legislature as he drew it. It is very unlike the Premier to allow laws to pass that way and very unlike Mr. Meredith not to notice Bills that seem to be dangerously near the constitutional line, but still the thing may have happened. Even Homer sometimes nods. Both the Premier and the Opposition leader may have thought that as it seemed difficult to please the temperance people with legislation they should be allowed to try their own hand at law-making. Possibly the Legislature may have had the same opinion. An appeal is spoken of and perhaps it may yet be decided that the law is all right. Meantime the by-laws passed under it are being quashed every day.

IT says very little for our boasted civilization, not to speak of our Christianity, that a large township in western Ontario had to be divided into two

parts by the Legislature the other day because the people quarrelled so badly that they could not work the municipal machinery together. It is a good thing that the heathen to whom we send missionaries do not read Canadian newspapers. To say that one part of the township is French and the other of British origin does not mend the matter. Nearly one-half of Canada is French, and if it is understood all round that Canadians of French and British origin cannot live peaceably as citizens under the same form of government, it is high time we were looking out for some other form of political existence. In the case alluded to we know almost nothing about the merits of the dispute. Supposing the French were wrong in every particular, the case would not be any more hopeful from a large point of view. The fact on the surface is that the French and the British could not get on together. Extend this fact until it reaches provincial proportions, and there is an end to the Confederation compact. Assume that the French of Quebec and the other provinces can never live in peace, and all thoughtful men who have anything to lose must ask themselves what next? If it is a settled thing that men of British and French origin cannot live peaceably under the same flag, it becomes the duty of every patriotic man to look out for some better arrangement.

WHATEVER may be said of the other crops, the crop of election petitions is thriving. To believe that all these protests that are being filed at Osgoode Hall are intended solely or even mainly to purify election contests requires an amount of simplicity and charity not often given to average Canada. There is too much reason to fear that the courts of justice are being used to fight out the political battle that should have ended at the polls on the 5th of March. Of course it is a good thing to put down electoral corruption in all its forms, but that is not the thing aimed at in many cases. One-fourth the members of the Ontario Legislature were petitioned against last summer, but with two or three exceptions the petitions end in—shall we say a fizzle or a "saw-off." The courts of justice were never intended for a political arena, and party warfare in this country, unscrupulous as it often is, never took a more dangerous form than when it entered the halls of justice and tried to fight it out there. With judges making up the voters' lists and judges trying protested elections—judges working at both ends of the contest—it will soon become very difficult for average citizens to believe that there is no politics in the courts. The matter is not mended by the fact that Conservative lawyers are nearly always retained by Conservatives and Liberal lawyers by Liberals. This arrangement is hard on the profession because it seems to indicate that politicians are afraid to trust a lawyer who does not belong to their own party. No doubt the election law was intended for a good purpose, but there is reason to fear that it is being grossly misused.

THERE is one way in which the Church might perhaps economize a little in Home Mission work that we have never seen discussed. It does not by any means follow that a Presbyterian congregation can be built up in every place in which speaking numerically there is room for one. The question is not simply: Are there people enough there to start a congregation. The question is: Are there people enough capable of working the Presbyterian system. Presbyterianism means self-government and self-government in Church or State requires intelligence, self-control, patience and a certain amount of capacity for managing affairs. We could easily name localities in which all the ministers in Toronto could not build up a substantial Presbyterian congregation. No doubt some of them could draw crowds by their preaching but the crowd would scatter as soon as the preacher went home. When left to themselves the crowd could do nothing and people who can do nothing never can be made Presbyterians. Other denominations can make something out of men who have no brains but we cannot. Quite likely the Home Mission Committee always take the quality as well as the number of people into consideration when opening new mission stations. Presbyteries, however, do not always do so. The time has certainly come when Presbyteries should ask whether proposed new fields have material that can be made into elders, managers, deacons and other office-bearers. Without the capacity for self-government stations are of little ecclesiastical use to us. Other denominations can preach the Gospel to them and we can do our best work among people who are blest with brains.

THERE is a good deal of force in a point by the *Interior* the other week in regard to the relative merits of short and long pastorate. Whether the pastorate should be short or long depends very much on what the people want the pastor to do. If the pastor is merely expected "draw" by sensational methods, if his business to get up a "show" of some kind every Sabbath evening, a pastorate of two or three years is long enough. Few men can run an ecclesiastical "show" for more than two years. The crowd accustomed to the display of pulpit pyrotechnics and naturally demand a new showman. If, on the other hand, the pastor is wanted to build up the Church on solid foundations, to bring in the young to gain influence over families, to mould character and improve the quality of the people, instead merely to draw a crowd, a long pastorate is all sight better than a short one, provided the pastor is the right kind of man. Then there are special cases. If a minister is called merely to fill a half-empty church, why should he not leave as soon as the pews are all let? If called mainly to pay church debt, why not go somewhere else when the debt is paid? In both cases the work for which the man was wanted is done. In fact if a minister is called for motives other than the right ones, a pastorate is likely to be short, and no one has the right to complain. Put the pastorate solely on a business basis, and the minister has as good a right to keep an eye on business as the people.

## PROFESSOR ELY ON SOCIAL REFORM

THE problems of social reform and philanthropic work are engaging the attention of all classes of thoughtful men. Those who have made political economy and kindred subjects the special study are taking a prominent part in the discussion of questions that are forcing themselves to the front. It is well amid the angry contentions of those engaged in industrial strife to listen occasionally to men whose interest in these questions is chiefly academic. If the theories they propose and their manner of exposition sometimes lay them open to the charge of being doctrinaires, their thoughtful consideration, disciplined modes of thinking and large acquaintance with facts and principles entitle them to a respectful hearing. They are removed from the bias to which those engaged in the work of practical reform are to a certain extent inevitably subject. Professor Richard T. Ely, of Johns Hopkins University, is well known as a thoughtful, earnest and scholarly man, who for years has devoted his attention to the social and industrial problems now pressing for solution. He therefore fitly opens a series of papers on immediate industrial, social and philanthropic reforms, now appearing in the pages of the *Christian Union*.

Professor Ely starts out with the observation that people have not been sufficiently educated to forecast the effect of their efforts in the direction indicated. The custom has been to remove an evil no longer tolerable by the means readiest at hand, but which may ultimately result in a state of things as bad if not worse than that which has been swept away. Then he lays down the principle that preventive rather than repressive effort is specially needed. Civilization, he says, advances in proportion as we apply the former and render the latter superfluous. A third general consideration he expresses in these terms: All reform to be hopeful must be religious, and consequently we need a reformation of the Church in the direction of social Christianity. Christianity which is not practical is not Christianity at all. Private effort for ameliorating the condition of the helpless and downtrodden has according to Dr. Ely proved ineffectual in the past and must necessarily do so in the future. He instances in proof of his position the condition of England, where to a larger extent than anywhere else private effort has been brought to bear on the growing evils that so afflict industrial communities. These private as distinguished from state agencies have been helpful in many ways, but he considers that the most effective work can only be accomplished by governmental action. He holds that as a general principle it is the function of government "to furnish relief to the needy and help the distressed when a general, widely organized, and long continued or perpetual system of relief is required, and that private effort should be organized with a view to stimulating, guiding and improving public activity along this line. Private effort alone is irregular, spasmodic and unsystematic."

Professor Ely sees no necessity for radical changes on present methods of action. He seeks