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TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14th, 1888.

THE *Globe* makes a mistake when it says that "Harrison will be the first Presbyterian President of the United States." Cleveland is a Presbyterian, and the son of a Presbyterian minister. One of his sisters is the wife of a Presbyterian Foreign missionary, whose children the President educates in the best schools of the United States. When Grover Cleveland was a mere lad his father died, and, rather than allow his widowed mother to draw on the Church fund for support, he stopped his law studies and earned money to keep her comfortable. It is a thousand pities that a man who began life so well should have been betrayed by party politicians into such questionable methods as proposing retaliation and giving British representatives their passports. Harrison is an elder, and has marked success in teaching Bible classes. Whether he can resist the exigencies of party politics remains to be seen. It is assumed by many politicians that he will prove soft clay in the hands of Blaine. Quite likely Blaine thinks so, and the wish is no doubt father of the thought. The Indiana elder may yet show that he assimilated enough of the Shorter Catechism in his youth to prevent him from being soft clay in the hands of anybody. So may it be.

REFERRING to a painful disturbance in one of the Toronto Churches, the *Mail* asks the following sensible questions:

Would it not be well for those concerned to cease writing to the newspapers, and to take the case at once to some competent Church tribunal? What is gained for the cause of truth or decency by the publication of rejoinders and surrebuttals in which one Christian calls another a liar and the other replies that the first is a thief?

Would it not have been better for those concerned if the writing had never begun? What is gained for the cause of truth or decency by the publication of interviews and reports of meetings in which Christians charge each other with the sins referred to? Would it not be better for all parties concerned to allow some competent Church tribunal to investigate the case *before* discussing it in the newspapers? If a man is denied justice by a competent tribunal and has exhausted all reasonable means to obtain his rights he is perfectly justified in appealing through the press to the great tribunal of public opinion. But surely beginning with the press and increasing and intensifying the difficulty by writing up both sides is not the best way to arrive at satisfactory judicial results. So long as people like to read such matter, just so long will newspapers publish it. If Christian people were so thoroughly ashamed of Church "rows" that they would not read reports of them there would soon be no reports.

THE Methodist Church finds itself face to face with a much more important and far-reaching question than that of University Federation. Behind that issue lies the question whether the church is ruled by its supreme court or by a minority of that court. If the minority rules, there is no sort of sense in taking a vote on Federation or any other question. If the minority rules on the Federation question, why not on any or every other question? Church government becomes an impossibility and voting a farce, if after a vote is taken and a question decided, the minority overturns the decision of the majority. Whether Victoria University is, or is not, moved to Toronto,

is a question of educational policy, whether the decision of the Supreme Court of a Church is obeyed is a question of principle. Some of those who are trying to defeat the Federationists are, if we mistake not members of stationing committees. No doubt they think that the congregations in Listowel, Simcoe, Hamilton, and other places that kicked against the stationing committees, and refused to take the ministers assigned them, did wrong. No doubt they would condemn the people in these congregations for not bowing respectfully to the decisions of the stationing committees. While condemning the people for not abiding by the finding of these committees, they themselves are trying to thwart the decision of their Supreme Court on one of the most important questions that has come before it for years:

OF all the questions that perplex Christianized countries the question of text books in Public Schools seems to be the one on which agreement among good men is the most difficult. The Roman Catholics of Boston raised quite an excitement lately about the account given of Tetzel and his sale of indulgences, in Swinton's history—the text-book used in the Boston schools. Of course a large majority of the Protestants believe that Swinton gives a correct account of the indulgence business. Professor Fisher, of Yale, Dr. Duryea and others equally prominent take the opposite view and dispute the accuracy of Swinton's history. The *Christian-at-Work* has a pronounced squint in the same direction. 'Twas ever thus. The Catholics are a unit, and because a unit have things a good deal their own way. Protestants are divided and their divisions are often a source of weakness. It would be just as difficult to bring all the Protestant ministers of Ontario to one opinion in regard to the use of the Bible in our Public Schools as to induce the Roman Catholics to give up their Separate Schools. As a rule Baptist and Congregationalist ministers are opposed to giving religious instruction in Public Schools. Some Presbyterian ministers hold the same views. Even among those who believe in having the Bible in the schools there is a considerable difference of opinion as to *how* it should be used. Agreement seems an impossibility at present. Our Catholic neighbours can always agree on what they want.

IF there is but one man in America who feels disgusted at political dodges, that man must be Grover Cleveland. He gave his country good government for four years. His administration was without a stain. He made an honest attempt to carry out reforms in the civil service. He is undoubtedly an able man. Three months ago he enjoyed the confidence and esteem of nearly all reasonable and good citizens in the Republic. He stood well in England. Perhaps nine out of every ten Canadians would have voted for him. A few weeks ago he entered the lists with the lowest of the politicians, and began to adopt their methods of warfare. To catch the Fenian vote, he proposed retaliation upon Canadian commerce, and sent Lord Sackville his passports. A few days before the election, it became painfully evident that he was ready to do almost anything to convince the Irish Fenians that he disliked England as much as the Republicans pretended to dislike the old land. Over the whole continent went the cry "Cleveland is no better than the rest of them—he is a mere politician." No one can say that had he kept along the high and honourable course to the end he would have succeeded at the polls. But we all know that had he been defeated with the record he had three months ago, he would have gone down enjoying the respect of the English speaking world. He stooped to miserable electioneering methods, and the methods did not save him at the polls. More's the pity that a good, clean, record should have been spoilt at the end. No doubt the Democratic National Committee know how it was all done.

SHODDY IN THE CHURCH.

DR. CUYLER, besides being a powerful and popular preacher and an active participant in philanthropic work, has also the pen of a ready writer. Scarcely a week passes but some, if not several contributions from his hand make their appearance in the columns of a newspaper, or the pages of a magazine. The popular pastor of Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn, is no ordinary man. In fertility and ver-

satility he has few equals living. Not many men can talk in the pulpit and through the press every week for many years, without occasionally giving his hearers and readers not a little that is attenuated and commonplace. Though there is no suspension of nature's laws in Dr. Cuyler's favour, he succeeds in a marvellous degree in writing fresh and thoughtful papers that breathe a fine Christian spirit; and that cannot fail in being influential for good to the many readers who look with delight for the thoughts that emanate from the busy brain and the words that flow from the active pen of Theodore Cuyler.

In one of his latest contributions Dr. Cuyler says some plain and much needed things on the subject of extravagant living. That this has become a grave peril to existing society and a menace to a healthy and progressive Christian life, few who look around them with intelligent eye and who can look within their own personality with average acuteness of self inspection, will care to deny. The indiscriminate censure of Fashion is as old as civilization and will likely endure without intermission while the world lasts, but Fashion will continue to exercise her sway over men and women with a degree of tyranny that only they themselves can determine. In all past ages of the world's history extravagant living has claimed its victims, and in spite of all that moralists can say, preachers urge, and the keenest satire of the cynics, this evil will continue to make human lives miserable and failures frequent during ages to come. You cannot kill extravagance as you can stamp out a contagious epidemic. The race of fools is in no danger of extinction, and the line of folly goes on unbroken. One generation of them comes as its predecessor departs. The procession of Fashion's votaries is endless. The extravagant living of this age is not a new thing under the sun, but its general extension and the approbation, spoken and tacit, with which it is now regarded is somewhat of a novelty, and a feature characteristic of the age in which we live.

The same absurd race for social precedence is visible everywhere. In Canadian rural districts, the old substantial dwelling that has sheltered the hardy and industrious toilers for many years must be replaced by something better, more commodious, more modern. This particular farmer who, as the result of his thrift and industry, can well afford it, sets about the erection of a new dwelling. This stimulates a neighbour, whose circumstances have been less favourable, to rival and surpass if possible the new abode which he sees going up in his vicinity. He carries out his intention, but has to pinch for it for years to come. Then the other neighbours follow suit. The whole district is certainly improved and property is enhanced in value. The improvements have given profitable employment to workmen, so that even this eager rivalry is not altogether an unmitigated evil. But once this kind of competition has been begun, it only seems to drive people faster and farther. Dress and equipments of all sorts come within its range. Much that is more precious than silver and gold is sacrificed to outside show. The passion to make the best appearance possible takes possession and continues to drive men down the inclined plane. The same thing in the same or different forms is equally apparent in towns and crowded cities. People in the race of life are driving faster and more furiously. There are tremendous sacrifices made merely for the sake of appearance that much of what is intrinsically best in human life is stunted and ready to die. Life is rushing in many instances at a pace that kills. Many know and feel and acknowledge this, but fashion imperiously and relentlessly drives them onward. To fall out of the race is supposed to mean that they would be trampled under foot. To pause means extinction. The moral and material failures, too often ending in downright criminality, constantly occurring bear emphatic testimony that there are deadly influences inseparable from the overzealous pursuit of wealth and position.

Dr. Cuyler uses no exaggeration when he says "the Church of Christ is cursed with 'shoddy' when it ought to put on the beautiful apparel of humility and holiness." That a measure of responsibility rests on the Church because of prevailing extravagance is only too apparent. True, the teaching of Scripture gives no countenance to prevailing follies, nor is the pulpit silent as to the comparative value of worldly wealth and the true riches, yet there are many in all the Churches who take these things as right and proper, as fine and correct sentiments, but not for practical