

INTERNATIONAL LESSON SCHEMES

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The Canada Presbyterian.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31st, 1892.

THE President of the Grand Trunk Railway, at present in Canada, is reported to have said the other day in an interview that Mr. Blake is unknown in England, that he has made no impression over there, and that he should have remained at home where he is known and respected. That is all very well as the big talk of a railway magnate, but this same railway magnate ran for a seat himself, and got beaten by a majority about the same as the one that elected Mr. Blake—something in the neighbourhood of 2,000, if we rightly remember. The *Illustrated London News* says Mr. Blake is the most conspicuous of the new members.

ENGLISHMEN manifestly believe that age and experience count for something in public affairs. The majority of the members of the new Government are well advanced in years. Mr. Gladstone is eighty-three, Mr. Mundella is sixty-seven, Lord Kimberly sixty-six, the Marquis of Ripon sixty-five, Sir William Harcourt the same age, Mr. Fowler sixty-two, Lord Spencer fifty-seven and Sir Charles Russell fifty-nine. Even in Canada and the United States experience counts for a good deal when money is at stake. It is only when matters pertaining to their souls are at stake that people even on this side of the Atlantic want a very young man.

At a meeting of the Free Church Constitutionalist Party, held at Inverness under the presidency of Rev. M. Macaskill, it was unanimously resolved to form an Association of the Party, including two ministers and two elders from each of the Presbyteries in the Synods of Moray, Ross, Sutherland, Caithness, Glenelg and Orkney and Shetland. From these will be chosen seven ministers, and the same number of elders, to form a committee, which will meet in September next to consider the plan of campaign. In the meantime it was agreed to have the Declaratory Act, and the resolutions adopted at the Inverness and Glasgow Conferences, together with an explanatory statement, translated into Gaelic, and circulated among the people in the North and Western Highlands and islands.

THE Presbyterian Church is not the largest numerically in the United States, but it is, perhaps, the most influential. The four gentlemen who have an eye on the White House are Presbyterians, and many of the most influential jurists and other public men belong to the Presbyterian Church. Presbyterianism is strongly represented in some of our Provincial Legislatures and Governments, but it has for years been an unknown quantity in the Dominion Cabinet. In fact there is no Presbyterian in the Dominion Government unless John Haggart happens to be one. The present Chief Justice of Nova Scotia was a Presbyterian, and so was the Hon. David Laird and a number of others, but they disappeared long ago. For years the Dominion Government has been almost exclusively Episcopalians and Roman Catholics. Presbyterians, however, generally come out ahead if you give them a little time, and in all probability a stalwart Presbyterian of the very best type will preside in Rideau Hall and open the Canadian Parliament. When the Earl of Aberdeen comes to represent Her Majesty, we venture to hope that he will put an end to the expensive tom-foolery that has been carried on in Rideau Hall for many years.

COMMENTING on the recent strikes, an esteemed contemporary on the other side of the line says:—

If organized labour is to command the sympathy of the country it will need not only to assert its respect for law, but also to take active part in vindicating and upholding it. It will need to expose and bring to punishment those who break the law—whether union or non-union men. Strikes when necessary will have to be conducted upon the basis of every man's solemn obligation to obey and uphold to the utmost the law of his country regardless of considerations of self interest or profit. When that principle is recognized, labour organizations, when contending for the rights of their members, may expect and command the sympathy and assistance of all just men.

That is all right, but is the standard not put rather high? How would it go with the municipal authorities of New York and Chicago, for instance, if they were asked not only to respect the law, but to take active part in vindicating and upholding it? It is hardly fair to ask a labour organization to show more respect for law than is shown by men who make and administer laws.

THE *Interior* has this to say on a vital point:—

No action of the Assembly was more important than that appointing a committee of conference with other denominations regarding weak Churches in rural districts. Our present policy is fast bringing down the whole living of the clergy to a scale of about \$600 or \$800 a year. Such a policy for the next fifty years will be suicidal. It will result in giving us a body of clergy without libraries, without the possibility of educating themselves or their families properly. The multiplication of feeble Churches means unavoidably the multiplication of a feeble ministry which must lose the respect of the community. If we as denominations insist upon having weak Churches, we must be content to have weak preaching, weak for lack of nourishment. There is no alternative.

True. There is no alternative. As Dr. Guthrie once put it "poverty in the manse will soon reproduce poverty in the pulpit," and poverty in the pulpit must eventually destroy the Church. The Church whose ministers have no libraries is not far from its end. In these days of numerous societies too many people forget that Jesus Christ ordained that preaching is the principal means for the conversion of the world.

DURING the recent general election in Great Britain, many ministers of different denominations took a very active part in the political conflict. As a consequence, several of them are, no doubt, wishing that they had not been so energetic. They have had to submit, more or less gracefully, to the comments and criticisms their actions have evoked. Some people hold that ministers should keep themselves aloof from active participation in election contests, while others contend that as citizens they have an undoubted right to exercise the privileges of their citizenship. In Scotland, where the disestablishment question held so important a part in the election campaign, it was but natural that ministers of the Church of Scotland should feel deeply. For this reason they were unusually active, but the result showed that, beyond a reduction of majorities in some instances, the gain was far from being commensurate with the effort put forth. In Ulster ministers were also deeply interested in the election, but as they were mostly in accord with the sentiments of their people, there was no great disposition to find fault with them. At a recent meeting of the Reformed Presbytery in Belfast, the members passed a vote of censure on a brother for addressing a political meeting. It would seem that it depends very much on what side a minister is politically, whether his opinions are meritorious or censurable.

EPIDEMICS are now better understood than they were in former days. Cholera is still as much of a scourge as ever, but its progress does not impress the popular mind, in intelligent communities at least, with that vague dread, productive of panic, and forming a predisposing cause for the spread of the disease, which accompanied its former visitations. It is pre-eminently a filth disease, originating in pilgrimages to Mecca, and to religious shrines in India. The positive disregard of the commonest sanitary laws provokes a terrible punishment. These filthy pilgrims carry infection with them wherever they go. The overcrowded portions of European sea-port towns are weak spots on which the deadly disease first fastens, and the mortality is swift and extensive. Though cases, imported from Hamburg, have been reported in Great Britain, there is not much possibility, at this advanced season, for the spread of the disease there this summer. Still, it may break out next year, and it is within the range of probability that it will reach this continent next season. Meanwhile the public authorities are alert,

and they may be relied on to do all in their power to prevent the ravages of this fell scourge. Cleanliness, which is next to godliness, is an indispensable requisite for personal and domestic safety. The observance of the laws of health is at all times a duty, especially so when pestilence threatens.

THE English Presbyterian Church has been for some time past dealing with a peculiar case of discipline. The Rev. G. McGuffie, minister of Etal congregation, in the Presbytery of Berwick, got into difficulties with a portion of the membership. The quarrel had grown in bitterness as time went on. At first the Presbytery endeavoured to restore harmony, but was unsuccessful. The case ultimately came before the Synod, and commissioners did their best to solve the difficulty, but failed. It appeared then, after the congregation had been divided, that the resignation of the pastor was necessary to save it from disaster. To this Mr. McGuffie would not listen. He was warned that if he persisted in his opposition to the decision, of the commissioners, he would be suspended. Still he was obdurate. In due course, so far had matters gone, that he was deposed for contumacy. He continued to hold the fort, and kept possession of the church. The Presbytery has now resolved, it is said, to intimate to Rev. G. McGuffie, of Etal, that unless he complies with the resolution of the Presbytery, whereby he was deposed from the ministry of the Presbyterian Church, legal steps will be taken for the recovery of the church and the manse at Etal. It is thought to be likely that the case will go to the Queen's Bench. Such proceedings do not impress outsiders as evidence of the continuance of brotherly love. Pure and undefiled religion is not advanced by these unseemly contentions.

CLERGYMEN and Church Courts are often charged with a weakness for making a great fuss about small questions and fine distinctions. Statesmen usually get credit, often much more than they deserve, for being large-minded men who take broad generous views of men and things and by no possible chance ever get down to anything small. The relations existing at present between us and our next door neighbour throws some light on the theory that statesmen and their questions are always large compared with the problems discussed by narrow-minded persons. Under the treaty of Washington fish was to be admitted into the United States free, but the American statesmen taking a broad, comprehensive view of international questions taxed the cans that contained the fish. Small fruits were to be admitted free to Canada, but our statesmen not wishing to be behind the statesmen of the great Republic in breadth of view taxed the baskets that contained the peaches. Freight passing through the Welland canal paid a toll of twenty cents a ton, but our Solons thought they were not violating even the spirit of the treaty by handing back eighteen cents of the twenty to shippers who transhipped their cargoes at a certain Canadian port. To make things even, the statesmen of the Republic have levied three-fifths of a cent on every bushel of grain passing through the "Soo" canal. It now remains for the statesmen of Canada to add half a cent more to the rebate. When this is done the theologians of both countries, if tempted to discuss small questions, will think of the fish cans, the peach baskets, the three-fifths of a cent and the half cent, and never again touch a small issue during the term of their natural lives.

UNLESS some wise man comes forward with a feasible plan for the settlement of disputes between labour and capital, the end on this continent must be civil war. In fact, a state of affairs not distinguishable from civil war has already existed at Homestead and Buffalo. Had the firemen, or locomotive engineers or both, joined the strike at Buffalo, no one can doubt that the end might have been bloodshed on a large scale. We have had fair warning in Canada to avoid the causes that exasperate workingmen. One of these causes is vulgar display and loud swagger about millions. It is a common thing in some city restaurants over there to point to certain seats and say that so many millionaires sit in them every day for lunch. One of the ways of describing a marriage or social party is to say that so many millions were represented at it. Clergymen are blamed for toadying to the rich; and, no doubt, some of them are guilty of that meanest and most contemptible of clerical habits. Whilst the so-called pastor may be shunning the poor and