

## THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN

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## The Canada Presbyterian

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22ND, 1893.

Politicians who meet Mr. Dalton McCarthy's arguments with the charge of inconsistency should remember Principal Grant's dictum:—One point of difference between a man and a donkey is that a donkey never reconsiders.

The parliamentary critic of a leading London journal says that a certain prominent member of the English house of commons speaks with a wagging head and a voice which alternates between a scream and a gurgle." That kind of criticism might improve public speaking in Canada but the papers that indulge in it would run some risks. Englishmen stand criticism bravely.

The cold dip last week was a blessing in disguise. Had the snow kept on melting as it had been doing for a number of days there would have been considerable loss of property. Many people shrugged their shoulders and said something unpleasant about this awful winter never coming to an end, but the cold dip was a good thing all the same. We don't always know a good thing when we see it.

Deep sympathy will be felt throughout Ontario for Sir Oliver Mowat in the affliction which he has suffered in the death of his estimable wife. Lady Mowat died early on Tuesday morning of last week. Deceased was a model wife and mother, and proved a great aid to her husband in his long and distinguished public career. She was a daughter of the late John Ewart of Toronto, married Mr. Mowat 46 years ago, and leaves two sons and three daughters.

The Commons of Canada did a very creditable thing last week when the members by a majority of two to one, voted down Mr. Charlton's motion in favor of closing the Canadian department of the Columbian Exposition on the Sabbath. That French Catholics who love a Paris Sabbath and allow the church take charge of their consciences should vote against closing our department is natural enough; but that Protestants, yes men who profess to be ultra Protestants, should do so in such large numbers surpasses comprehension.

Does Finance Minister Foster really believe that the crowds who would rush to Chicago every Sabbath if the Exposition were kept open would go there to have their minds elevated in the art galleries and other places in which he says a man might have as near "an appreciation of his Creator as in a church." Would the Sabbath excursion trains bring in multitudes of devoted men and women from all directions anxious to worship God "in the collections of art." Either Mr. Foster believes the crowd would want to worship or he does not. If he believes any such thing, he is singularly innocent for a Canadian Cabinet Minister. If he does not believe it, he should not have spoken as he did in his place in parliament.

The Christain at Work observes that the legislature of New Jersey is "one of the most corrupt and odious legislatures that ever cursed a civilized country." The Commonwealth, our contemporary says, has been sold "into the hands of a pack of thieves." That is plain and strong talk; but it is literally true. This disgraceful state of affairs has been brought about mainly by the apathy of clergymen and other prominent Christain people. They

take no interest in public affairs, but the "thieves" do. By the way is not Princeton in New Jersey? Have our orthodox friends there been so careless about the morals of the Commonwealth that they never use their vote or influence in favour of honest government? It is not well to be so learned, or even so pious, that one forgets his duties to Caesar. The unclean fellows never forget their part of the programme.

The Interior asks this timely question:— "If the theological seminaries are to be used as Redans and Malakoffs belching thunder at each other, would it not be better to make Presbyterian hospitals of them, and go back to the old way of putting our boys under pastors, and letting them learn theology and practical work at the same time. Write the name of a grand preacher from the seminary, and we will write the name of his equal from a pastor's study." There is one other thing you can do—send your boys over here. The colleges on this side combine the advantages of the seminary with those of the pastor's study. Seminaries that belch thunder at one another and graduate students who cannot preach without a manuscript are made worse than in vain. Send the boys to our Canadian theological colleges!

We regret to learn from the Witness that a few days ago only \$3,164 had reached the treasurer of the Augmentation Fund in the Eastern Section. Nine thousand dollars are needed and our friends down by the sea will have to do some lively financing if the balance is to come in by the first day of May. The Home Mission Committee of the Western Section meets next week and then we shall know how we stand in the West. Dr. Reid must close his books on the first of May and we do most earnestly urge our friends to make April a good financial month for the church. Business may not be good and the prices for produce have been low but the sum needed from each member and adherent of the church is certainly not large. The secret of successful financing for the church is something from everybody and that something given in a systematic way.

Mr. Foster, Finance Minister of the Dominion, is reported to have said in the debate on Mr. Charlton's motion to close the Canadian section of the Columbian Exposition on Sabbath that "man makes his own temple and before the beauties of art or in the fields the elevation of his mind might bring him as near to an appreciation of his Creator as in a church." The liberal spirit "claimed the right for men to worship God as they pleased whether it was in the churches, in the fields and woods or in the collection of art, and he was not prepared to say that the parliament should step in and impose restriction." Did Mr. Foster hold these sentiments when he used to pose as a temperance reformer and occupy a pulpit whenever he could get one? In future we hope he will be allowed to "make his own temple," so far as Presbyterian churches are concerned.

The congregation of Erskine Church, Montreal, have purchased a site on Sherbrooke street, at the head of Crescent st., on which to erect their new church. The ground cost \$55,000. The church at present occupied has been sold for \$130,000. A condition of the purchase of the Sherbrooke street site was the raising of \$20,000 in twenty days. Already about \$25,000 have been subscribed, an amount expected to be increased to \$30,000 when the whole congregation has been canvassed. \$4,000 is given by Mr. Warden King; \$1,000 each by Messrs. J. Hodgson, W. Yuile and A. McIntyre; \$500 each by Rev. Dr. Warden, Messrs. P. Laing, J. Brown, Jas. Laing, J. Paton, J. Miller, T. E. Hodgson, etc., etc. The plans of the new church are being prepared. It is to seat 1,250, with an adjoining Sabbath school hall to hold 650. On special occasions the church and school room can be thrown into one. The probable cost of the church with ground, will be in the neighbourhood of \$160,000. It is expected to be finished and opened free from debt in 1895.

Canada is not a first class power; but we have solved problems in church and state that first class nations have failed to solve. Irish Catholics and Protestants live in almost unbroken peace in this country; but in Ireland at this moment, and under the very shadow of the throne, it appears they are preparing to butcher each other. Were it not for the selfish firebrands who wish to make money, or secure votes, or obtain popularity, or place, or power, by fanning the embers of traditional hate, Catholics and Protestants would live together as the best of neighbours in Ontario. We have solved the Indian problem in the North West. Our dusky wards are well cared for and many of them will soon be fairly well civilized. We solved the church and state problem in Ontario. We had two established and endowed churches not long ago. Now we have none, and nobody wants one. It may take a hundred years to bring about the same state of affairs in England. The Presbyterians of the Dominion solved the union problem eighteen years ago. It may take eighteen hundred years to unite the Presbyterians of Scotland. The fact is we have done some good work in Canada; and if our people would cultivate the national spirit and act with a reasonable degree of fairness in politics, we might do much more.

If the political and legal dust that has been raised around the Manitoba School question could be blown away for a short time, fair men would probably ask themselves several questions. Did the government of Canada twenty odd years ago intend to give the Roman Catholics of Manitoba separate schools? Were the Catholics of that Province led to believe that they were getting separate schools? Anybody who remembers the events of '70 and '71 and who knows the astute character of the Catholic prelates who acted for the Catholics at that time must have hard work to convince himself that whatever may appear in the bond, separate schools were not guaranteed to the Catholics of the prairie Province. Grafting the Separate School System on a new Province was certainly a most unwise proceeding; but was the thing done? If done, can we wonder that the Catholics feel somewhat sore when the compact made with them is broken. Of course the Province has a right to change its school law and the highest tribunal of the Empire has declared that the Act by which the change has been made is valid. All the same any reasonable man can easily understand how the Catholics of Manitoba feel hurt if what they consider an agreement made with them by the government of Canada has been broken. The original blunder was in making any such agreement. If they were led to believe that the Manitoba Act secured to them separate schools while strictly construed it does not do so, the proceeding was worse than a blunder. It would have been much easier to have refused separate schools twenty-one years ago than to uproot them now. The idea of establishing two school systems for a few struggling settlers in a new province is as absurd as the practice of starting three or four churches in a small village with scarcely enough of people to support one. Manitoba should never have had a separate school.

## DENOMINATIONAL UNION.

Our esteemed contemporary The Canadian Independent, seems to infer that because he received no letters upon the subject and the Canada Presbyterian has not, as yet, given an editorial opinion upon it. Denominational Union, as between Presbyterians and Congregationalists, cannot be said to have made much headway. For ourselves, we feel that the more valuable and important a thing is, the more careful we ought to be in handling it. We assume that everybody—every intelligent Christian—is in favour of a closer and truer union of the body of Christ, and therefore of all Churches and denominations. The wider union is most certainly in the hands of the men of all the denominations, most competent to deal with it, and the more limited one as between the

two Churches named, has been taken hold of by men certainly not below the average in ability to deal with the subject. The work has not been entered upon in a corner, neither with a flourish of trumpets or overdue ostentation. But, for all that, we think commendable progress has been made since the broaching of the question by the Assembly's delegates to the Congregational Union when both these bodies happily met last June in the City of Montreal.

Ten Congregationalist ministers memorialized the Toronto Presbytery in behalf of a conference on the subject in January. At the last meeting of Presbytery the committee appointed by them in answer to the memorialists, reported two conferences with the Congregationalist brethren, and unanimously recommended that the Presbytery memorialize the General Assembly to appoint a committee with power to confer with any similar committee which might be appointed by the Congregational Union or other competent body on the subject. In answer to an objection raised in Presbytery, it was frankly stated by the chairman of the committee, Principal Caven, that there was no attempt to commit either the Presbytery or Assembly to any action, but only present a request for a committee to confer with the Congregationalists in this matter. Thus far the matter has gone, on the Presbyterian side. Of course we understand that on the Congregational side there has been no action taken by any Church or representative body whatever. That there exists an extensive desire for the union of these two bodies, both among Congregationalists and Presbyterians, there seems little reason to doubt. There have, however, been no conditions of union named by either party, except, it may be, such as exists in the opinions of individual men; and we presume that neither the committee appointed by the Presbytery, nor the Congregationalist brethren with whom they met in conference, have committed themselves to anything beyond the expression of the great desirability of the union of the two bodies on a basis that shall be at once for the glory of God, and for the highest well-Christ.

A most important preliminary step in being of both these sections of the body of this good work is the cultivation everywhere of mutual good feeling and fraternal Christian intercourse between the two bodies. What has already been done cannot but have a beneficial effect. And it is to be assumed that that on both sides has been done from the most honourable of motives. We do not believe that the Presbyterians either have had, or have now, any desire to overshadow by their greater numbers, wealth or possibly their greater influence, the smaller sister denomination. Nor, do we believe that the Congregationalists, on the other hand, desire to gain any sordid advantage, or lower in any way the banner of truth and liberty for which they have for the past two hundred and fifty years so nobly contended.

It goes without saying, however, that notwithstanding the great similarity existing between these two bodies in many respects, grave difficulties stand in the way of their organic union. To instance two; the authority of Presbytery on the one side, and the autonomy of the local Church on the other. As to the way in which the difficulties arising out of these crucial questions on either side may be overcome, we do not now propose to speak. Suffice it to say that we believe that there is such way; and along that way must lie great patience, mutual forbearance, keen insight, and a most Christlike or unselfish spirit and love. Genuine faith and prayer will minister their quota, but a confidence such as Paul had in overcoming all difficulties through Christ, must crown the whole. In the meantime, let all true Christians pray with the head of the Church, that they all may be one even as he and his father are one, though we see not now the way through the sea, or in the wilderness by which he shall lead us to this final inheritance.