

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

\$2.00 PER ANNUM IN ADVANCE.

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TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 8, 1883.

OUR good neighbour the "Guardian" concludes that the "Believer's Meeting" held in Niagara a few days ago was "under the control of Pre-Millennial Calvinists." This conclusion may be correct, but it should be distinctly understood that no Calvinistic Church is responsible for the utterances of the speakers at that meeting. They gave their own views on the questions discussed; gave their own exegesis of passages of Scripture, and supported their theories by their own arguments. Whether scriptural or unscriptural, wise or otherwise, the positions taken by the speakers were taken and defended by them as individuals. The Presbyterian Church of Canada delegated no one to represent it, and is not responsible for what any one said there. The Presbyterian Church of the United States was not represented in the strict sense of that word. A minister in either church may or may not hold Pre-millennial views as he thinks proper. If a number of ministers and others in both churches held such views, there is no reason in the world why they should not meet in Niagara or any other place and discuss them. The meeting may have done good to the majority of those who attended it, but we are absolutely certain that few Biblical scholars would endorse the exegetical use made of many passages of the Scriptures by some of the speakers.

In a recent work on "Extempore Speech," there is a very interesting letter from the present Premier of England, giving his views on the best method of preparing speeches. After stating that the public men of England are so much engrossed with public affairs that they have little time to study oratory, the Premier says:

"Suppose, however, I was to make the attempt, I would certainly have found myself on a double basis, compounded as follows: First, of a wide and thorough general education, which I think gives a suppleness and readiness as well as firmness of tissue to the mind, not easily to be had without this form of discipline. Second, of the habit of constant and searching reflection on the subject of any proposed discourse. Such reflection will naturally clothe itself in words, and of the phrases it supplies many will spontaneously rise to the lips. I will not say that no other forms of preparation can be useful, but I know little of them, and it is on those, beyond all doubt, that I should advise the young principally to rely."

According then to the first parliamentary orator of the world two things are essential to good speaking, "a wide and thorough general education," and "the habit of constant and searching reflection" on the subject of discourse. It strikes us that this would not be a bad recipe for the making of sermons. Of course the Homiletical professor must go much more into details than the Premier has done; but without these essentials really good speeches or sermons are an impossibility.

A religious journal on the other side of the lines throws some new light on the discussion about the alleged "famine of ministers," by declaring that there is none. That statement certainly has the merit of striking the nerve of the question in very few words. Our contemporary asserts that the only "famine" is a lack of proper machinery in the Presbyterian, Baptist and Congregational Churches to bring unemployed ministers and vacant congregations together. There is much truth in this view of the matter. If these churches had machinery that would put suitable ministers in empty pulpits, the famine would not be seriously felt. We have no "famine" in Canada as yet, but our lack of the proper machinery has been felt for years and is a greater grievance now than at any former time. Probably there never was a meeting of

a Supreme Court in any branch of the United Church at which the question of bringing "probationers" into contact with "vacancies" was not discussed, and apparently we are as far from a satisfactory solution as ever. Our best men have wrestled bravely with the problem but in vain. Must we conclude that the difficulty is inherent in the system, or shall we continue to hope that some man may yet come to the front who will devise a plan by which suitable preachers wanting settlements and congregations wanting pastors shall be brought together in less time and at less expense than at present.

In a whining article, commending "earnest, plain, preaching to the conscience," a contemporary puts this conundrum: "How often does Paul supply the text, and Plato or Shakespeare the teaching?" How often does Paul supply the text? Quite often. As a source of supply Paul is good. How often do Plato and Shakespeare supply the teaching? Not very often. We have attended church with commendable regularity for many years, but we have yet to hear the first quotation from Plato. Probably the clergy around our contemporary's headquarters are deeply read in Plato, but over here in Canada we don't think the besetting sin of the profession is spending too much time pining over the pages of the great philosopher. As regards Shakespeare, we don't think he supplies very much raw material for sermons. If preachers quoted from the myriad-minded poet more frequently, their sermons need be none the less earnest and plain, and they would probably touch the conscience more than they often do. Next to the Bible no book deals more powerfully with the conscience than Shakespeare. A knowledge of Shakespeare is a good education in itself. The fact is, a certain class of writers have got so much in the habit of saying commonplace things about "plain, earnest" preaching that they drivel away about sermons without knowing what they say. How many evangelical ministers have failed because they spent too much time studying Shakespeare?

HIGH PRESSURE.

MODERN life is exposed to a searching light. No event of the least consequence can transpire anywhere but the civilized world hears of it within twenty-four hours. Crimes and follies that reveal the wickedness and weakness of human nature are recorded without the shadings that a kindly and charitable disposition would sometimes dictate. This publicity in many instances has its advantages. It serves as a warning and a deterrent. Only when the disgusting and loathsome details of debasing immorality are narrated with the same minuteness with which the story of a boat race is told, is the moral sense shocked. The day's record of crime and immorality is dreadful and saddening enough to induce people to believe that the age is degenerating, not advancing. It is not that the reign of evil is extending so much as that its working is laid bare to the gaze of all. The frequency of suicide within the last few years has come to be a subject of remark. This has stimulated inquiry as to its predisposing causes. These are varied. Unquestionably one is the eager rush of modern life. We are fast approaching the state of things playfully pictured by Thomas De Quincy. People, he said, no longer walked, they rushed with feverish haste in their daily pursuits. The time might soon come when that gait would be too slow. Walking would be exchanged for a trot, and by and by men would run about their business affairs as people rush to a fire.

This is but a physical expression of the restless spirit that drives men in business and social life. The eager anxiety to amass wealth is devouring the best and noblest elements of many a man. The demon of fashion drives many victims with relentless energy to the brink of insanity or despair, because they cannot equal or surpass the material splendour in which the fortunate few can indulge. Life at high-pressure is one of the causes of the many cases of suicide now occurring. We may not in the altered conditions of existence, be able to follow very closely the ancient advice, "hasten slowly;" but it is evident that for our own good we ought to hasten slower than many are disposed to do at present.

A recent case of suicide emphasizes the dangers attending a too restless ambition. Senor Barca, the Spanish ambassador at Washington, ended his life last

week with a revolver. He was to all appearance in circumstances of great comfort and happiness, and the cause that led him to commit suicide was involved in obscurity. He was rich, happy in his home life, and had attained to a position of honour and influence, and yet existence seemed to him unendurable. At all events his lifeless body was found in his room with a bullet in his brain. It was clear that the shot was fired by his own hand. An explanation has been suggested which may be true or it may not. It is said that he was urged by the ambition of his family to aspire to the place he so recently occupied. Before he reached success many difficulties had to be overcome. It was only after toilsome effort that he obtained his much-coveted diplomatic post. The strain was too great, and a brain disordered by labour and anxiety led to the commission of the act that caused his death. A noble ambition may degenerate into a merciless tyrant driving its victim to his own destruction. Science and common-sense counsel the attainment of a sound mind in a sound body. St. Paul said to an intending suicide, "Do thyself no harm." A Godfearing life, obedience to the laws of health, and loving our neighbour as ourselves are excellent antidotes to the suicidal mania. An inordinate ambition is one of the cruellest taskmasters of the age.

"KILLING NO MURDER."

WHEN James Carey, implicated in the Phoenix Park murder, was arrested and put on trial for his participation in that cruel and dastardly crime, he turned Queen's evidence. His testimony was used for the conviction of his fellow-conspirators. Had his evidence been unsupported, it is certain that the jury would have failed to convict the accused. So many of the circumstantial details were verified by independent testimony that no doubt was entertained that the real facts of the terrible tragedy enacted on the 6th of May, 1882, were at last revealed. However serviceable to justice the informer's tale may be, from the moment it is uttered he ceases to receive respect. Popular sympathy has no place for the approver. Sometimes it will be lavished in most eccentric fashion on those who have been convicted of revolting crimes, but the informer is by universal consent excluded from the range of human pity. In Ireland at present he is looked upon as the basest of all traitors. No wonder that many Fenian sympathizers regarded Carey with the deepest hatred. He brought to the light of day the existence and code of the Invincibles. All felt that, go where he might, he carried with him the brand of Cain. Revenge would follow him to the ends of the earth, and now the news has come that he has been killed by the assassin's bullet.

There is a class of Irishmen who have not taken the slightest pains to conceal their savage exultation at the wretched informer's miserable fate. In the city of Dublin on receipt of the intelligence that Carey had been shot, bonfires were kindled, bands paraded, and riotous demonstrations of delight were indulged in utterly unworthy of civilized humanity. Ebullitions like these perplex and bewilder the many friends that wish well to Ireland. Past wrongs in Irish legislation have been freely admitted. Substantial measures for their redress have occupied a large share of attention in the Imperial Parliament. There is an evident desire to secure justice for the Irish people. Side by side with these, outrage and assassination and lawless terrorism have done much to alienate the sympathies of people who were disposed to give a favourable consideration to Irish grievances.

The relations of the political parties in the United States have done the Irish movement little good. Numerically Irishmen are a power in American politics. Both parties vie with each other to secure the Irish vote. American journals give a prominence to Irish opinions far beyond their value to the people at large. Journalists cater more for Irish sentiment than for that of any other nationality. This is done for no other reason than to induce the Irish to vote for the party they represent. The tone of the American press in relation to people of all other nationalities is very properly that they should assimilate with the American people and build up an homogenous nation on this continent. Why make an exception of the Irish? Many Americans now hold the opinion that this course has been too long pursued, and they fear that they may live to regret it.

The murder of Carey and the feelings with which it has been regarded by some betray an obvious confu-