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## EDITORIAL NOTES.

THERE is a certain amount of opposition to Mr. Jury in East Toronto, on the ground of his religious belief; or rather, upon the ground of his alleged total want of religious belief. This plea has been openly put forward, not by the illiterate and ignorant, but by persons of education and (presumable) intelligence, who appear to suppose that in setting up such a cry they are rendering an essential service to the cause of religion. In a contingency like this, no journal professing to be conducted on independent and enlightened principles can afford to keep silence.

WITH Mr. Jury, as a member of a political party, this paper has no present concern. Whether he is a Grit or a Liberal Conservative is a question which for us has no particular significance. But of Mr. Jury as a man, a member of society, and a candidate for Parliament, we claim to hold, and to have the right to express, one or two distinct and positive opinions. These opinions are so strongly held that they amount to heartfelt convictions. They may be expressed somewhat after this fashion. If Mr. Jury's political principles are unsound or pernicious; if they are dangerous to the common weal; if he is personally stupid or unprogressive; if he conducts his business in a dishonest or disreputable manner; if his private life is dissolute or impure—any or all of these circumstances, if clearly established, would afford more or less justification for opposing his return. But a man's religious belief stands upon a different footing. It is a matter lying entirely between himself and his Maker. Generally speaking, it is a thing altogether beyond his own control. It has nothing whatever to do with his eligibility to sit in the legislature, any more than it has to do with his fitness to travel by rail, to occupy a comfortable dwelling-house, or to break stones upon the highway. If a man applies for authority to preach the Gospel under the direction of his spiritual superiors; if he asks for employment as a city missionary; if he seeks to be

appointed a member of the synod, the presbytery or the church conference: in all such contingencies as these, an enquiry into his religious belief becomes eminently right and proper. But the question has no right to be asked, or even taken into account, in the ordinary business of everyday life, with which religious belief has no necessary connection. One might have supposed that Macaulay's presentation of this argument more than fifty years ago had been so entirely conclusive that any subsequent reiteration of it would not be called for. "Nobody," he wrote, "has ever thought of compelling cobblers to make any declaration on the true faith of a Christian. Any man would rather have his shoes mended by a heretical cobbler than by a person who had subscribed all the Thirty-Nine Articles but had never handled an awl. Men act thus, not because they are indifferent to religion, but because they do not see what religion has to do with the mending of their shoes. Yet religion has as much to do with the mending of shoes as with the budget and the army estimates"—or, Macaulay might have added, with the ordinary and legitimate duties of a member of Parliament. The man who, in this year of grace 1887, raises the question of the religious belief of a candidate for Parliament is at least half a century behind his age. Most certainly he has no right to enrol himself in the ranks of Liberalism.

WHAT are the material facts with regard to Mr. Jury? So far as we have been able to learn, he is an advanced, but by no means an ultra Radical in all matters, whether religious, political or social. He is neither a Socialist nor a visionary. He believes in reforming the constitution, not in overturning it. As compared with some trusted members of the Reform party, his political views may almost be called moderate. Of his perfect sincerity in all matters nobody appears to entertain the slightest doubt. He is no scoffer, and does not go out of his way to proclaim his views to the multitude. That he is bright and intelligent, with all his wits about him, and that he can render a reason for his opinions, no one who has talked with him for five minutes will venture to deny. He is known as an honourable, enterprising man of business, whose word is his bond, and whose private life is unimpeachable. All these things his opponents are compelled to admit. How about the private lives of those whose voices are raised the most loudly against him? Will they bear the test of minute investigation as well as his? We trow not. There is an old proverb about those who dwell in glass houses, and there are certain persons who might do worse than bear this proverb in mind.