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The Canada Presbyterian.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23rd, 1891.

SHOULD the report of Balmaceda's suicide receive confirmation and the accounts already published prove true, it is evident that he has not made an edifying end. The explanatory notes he has left behind go far to confirm the general impression that he was ill-fitted to preside over the national destinies of the Chilean Republic. Great men are great under all circumstances; they instinctively do their best under all conditions. The true hero is heroic in adversity as well as when carried on the crest of the wave of prosperity. The man who takes his own life knows not how to die. The discarded President of Chili may have apprehended the worst had he fallen into the hands of his victorious foes, but that is a poor justification for what is in reality a cowardly act. Suicide, preceded by a whining note, can hardly be regarded as a dignified ending, however much Balmaceda's misfortunes may have made him a fit object for commiseration.

IT is easy to indulge in sweeping denunciation of the politicians and officials who have been found out in Ottawa and Quebec. A much more profitable exercise for many people would be honest self-examination, followed by penitence and better lives. Would the practices that have come to light have been possible if the people of Canada held as high views on moral questions as they should hold? Is there not too much reason to fear that the rottenness at the top of the tree is caused at least in part by rottenness at the roots? Who sent these men to Parliament? Are the electors who sent McGreevy to Parliament any better than McGreevy? It is an axiom in politics that the majority of the people are always properly represented. It is cheap and easy to denounce a few Frenchmen hundreds of miles away who did not cover up their tracks successfully. If any good is to be done the people must be taught over all the Dominion to distinguish between an honest man and a rascal.

THE Pope is evidently taking a deep interest in the labour question, even enduring great bodily fatigue to show his personal desire for a peaceful solution of the problems that are perplexing thoughtful men everywhere. Following up his recent encyclical on the subject, he has been granting audiences to deputations of French workingmen who have thought it worth while to go on pilgrimage to Rome. The Pope has said some good things both in his encyclical and in his addresses to the pilgrims who have been granted audiences. It is no easy matter for a man who has attained to a great age, and who is popularly believed to be on the brink of the grave, to speak for over half-an-hour to a large assemblage, but that is what the Pope is reported to have done last week. It is apparent that the venerable head of the Roman Catholic Church has an eye to the main chance. He wishes it to be popularly believed that help can only come from that Church. He puts it, of course, that religious and moral influences alone can bring about a proper adjustment of capital and labour, but then he assumes, and wishes others to assume, that the Church of Rome and religion are convertible terms—an assumption that in these days makes a large draft on human credulity.

BREAKING up his camp in one of the Northern forests of the Union, the veteran editor of the *Interior* muses in this way:—

I suppose I will have to go back and take part in the revision discussion—and other debates. If we could have all such questions matters of consultation rather than of controversy and adroit management, it would be pleasant, but it is not pleasant to have to encounter the usual weapons and tactics of strife. I do not object to a direct encounter with any man for my ideas of right, but in these public matters, and

especially in ecclesiastical matters, a blow struck is like a shot fired; it will hit and hurt where you do not want it to. A controversy over truth is sure to degenerate into a fight for victory, and its glory—and whether "all things are fair in love and war" or not, in a conflict for victory all moral considerations are disregarded.

There is much truth in the foregoing, and the truth is never felt so keenly as when one is about to move from the "sweet peace and simplicity of God's world into the struggle and cunning of man's world." We venture to say that many of our clerical readers will sympathize with the editor who almost dreads going back to Chicago. What a glorious organization the Church of God would be if all the ecclesiastical politicians who scheme for place and fight for victory could be driven out of it. What a glorious thing ministerial life would be if a minister had nothing to do but preach the Gospel and visit his parishioners.

THERE is no use in denying the fact that the people of Canada are in part responsible for the scandalous revelations that are disgracing the Dominion. From time immemorial public men have been fleeced by societies and organizations of one kind and another. The moment a man is nominated for a seat in Parliament a dead set is made on him and he is made to bleed at every pore as long as he has a seat in Parliament or is trying to get one. We have heard of public men who refused to be nominated months before an election because they knew that as soon as nominated the bleeding process would begin. Few of our public men are rich. Many who enter public life in fairly good circumstances are financially wrecked in a few years. Even Churches are not behind in asking the member for the riding for a subscription. We do not vouch for the facts because we do not know what the facts are, but we have often heard that the Methodists and the Roman Catholics are the foremost and most persistent in making demands for money upon members of Parliament and other public men. This practice should be stopped at once. Men who serve the public should not be impoverished and then tempted to recoup by doubtful or dishonest Methodist means. If we are to have clean politics and clean politicians let the reform begin with the people themselves, especially with professedly religious people.

SOME of our contemporaries are saying rather hard things about the pulpit because ministers do not denounce the wrong doing brought to light at Ottawa and Quebec. One journal has been counting up the number of sermons preached against the political sinners, and out of the thousands preached every Sabbath in the Dominion can find only twelve against "boodling and boodlers." We quite agree with those who say that the pulpit should do its share in the reform which we hope is about to take place. To do reform work well, however, the pulpit must begin at the foundation—must begin with the people, and when a large majority of the people are right Ottawa and Quebec will soon come right. Is there any difference morally between the municipality or constituency that barter its votes for a railway or canal, or post-office or custom house, or public work of some kind, and the Government official who takes a commission for a purchase he makes from a manufacturer? The one uses his official position to make money, the other barter the highest privilege of a Briton for material gain. Yes, we want reform, we must have it or die nationally, but real reform must begin at the roots. The people must be toned up morally, and when the people despise dishonest gain our rulers will soon learn to avoid dishonest practices. To do any good the pulpit must begin with the people—the fountain of power in this country.

FROM many of our exchanges we learn that pastors are returning from their vacations and beginning work with renewed vigour. Practically the real work of the Church begins in towns and cities at the first of September. Circumstances over which the most earnest pastor has no control make it impossible to keep all the machinery working during the heated term. The workers go and for a time the work has to stop in part. This should be a good Church year. God has favoured the country with a bountiful harvest. Business of all kinds promises to be fairly good during the coming autumn and winter. Now let Christian people show their gratitude by doing their best possible work for Christ. In one respect the gospel minister has an immense advantage over every other man who works for the good of humanity. There may be room for doubt as to the best fiscal policy, there may

be doubt as to the best means to bring about moral reforms, there may be doubt as to the best form of government for the people, but there never can be any doubt that the people need the gospel. Whatever else they need they must always need preaching. There never was a time when they needed the gospel more than now. A genuine revival of religion would soon put an end to our political scandals. What Canada needs most is the gospel well rubbed in. Let us have it from a thousand pulpits

IT is singular how long barbaric customs survive amid advancing civilization. Anything more barbarous than the settlement of personal disputes by means of a duel is scarcely conceivable. True, many of these encounters for the vindication of personal honour are utterly farcical, but occasionally some one is either seriously hurt or killed. It is reported that a member of the Italian Chamber of Deputies and a colonial governor have had a serious encounter with swords and both have suffered somewhat severely in the conflict. The dispute that could only be settled by blood was occasioned by an enquiry into the manner in which the governor conducted the affairs of his office, and the deputy was a member of the Committee of Inquiry. The encounter was apparently more severe than modern duels usually are, but it appears to have been successful. The seconds were apparently satisfied that the honour of the respective combatants was vindicated, when they no doubt shook hands all round and the gallant and right honourable gentlemen will doubtless henceforth treat each other with the utmost deference and respect. But it is difficult for some people to understand how a question of fact or even a matter of opinion can be established or refuted by the superior fighting qualities of a successful duellist, and that the defeated contestant is wholly in the wrong. If the so-called code of honour sanctions such things it is evident that in character it is heathen and not Christian.

SORROWS unknown to most men come upon a really earnest and conscientious minister of the Gospel, and the more earnest he is the more he feels them. Preaching his farewell sermon the other day to his congregation in Chicago before entering upon his studies as professor in Union Seminary, Dr. Worcester said:—

The eight and a-half years that I have spent here as your pastor have gone like Jacob's seven years spent for Rachel. Those seven years seemed like a week for love of her. To me it now seems but a week since I preached my first sermon to you, and now I have preached my last. In the years that I have spent with you I have had no higher ambition than to help you to see Christ, to bring you to trust Him as your everlasting Saviour and to trust Him as your abiding friend. I am only sorry as I look around that I see so many to whom I have preached Christ, who will not be persuaded to know Him better.

That sorrow is felt by every Gospel minister worthy of the name. Nothing saddens his heart like looking at men, often kindly, generous, lovable men, who year after year refuse to take the Saviour as their friend and trust Him. The sorrow is often mingled with amazement. One wonders why men so attentive and respectful cannot be induced to take that decisive step and declare for Christ. A sensitive minister sometimes blames himself when the fault is not really his. There are many causes, any one of which may be at work. The only thing a minister can do in such cases is to labour on hopefully and prayerfully, and in God's time he may see even those who have for many years refused accept of salvation as it is offered in the Gospel.

THE CANADIAN CRISIS.

THE eyes of the Canadian people will this week be eagerly directed to Ottawa. The keen discussions now in progress will be watched with more than usual interest. The deliberate utterances of our public men on the painful disclosures made in the Committee of Privileges and Elections are of the utmost consequence just now. The tone of attack and defence will be carefully considered and all thoughtful and patriotic observers will try to grasp the principles that underlie the debates. The question before the Canadian people, with which their parliamentary representatives have to grapple, is of more importance than attaches to ordinary debate. The political significance of the discussion, not without importance to intelligent people, is of far less moment at the present juncture than the ethical aspect of our public affairs. It is because of the moral bearings of the questions now exciting our legislators to fever heat that the Canadian people are so deeply interested and so solicitous that the