

## INTERNATIONAL LESSON SCHEMES

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## The Canada Presbyterian.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2nd, 1892.

THE discovery that some of those who are howling for the destruction of Mercier had some of his boodle in their pockets, would be quite in keeping with the trend of Quebec politics.

IF Columbus could have looked down through the centuries and seen the Presidential election over the way and the Mercier trial in Quebec he might have hesitated before setting out on his exploring expedition.

THERE is some absurdity in the fact that when our Canadian jingoes are threatening to annihilate the United States, over a hundred representative Canadians, many of them members of Parliament, are, or were a few days ago, in Chicago, helping to open the Columbian Exhibition.

METHODISM was well to the front in Toronto last week. The opening ceremonies at New Victoria were full of life and promise. The building is a splendid one and reflects great credit upon all the parties concerned in its erection and equipment. Success to the New Victoria, say we.

ASSUMING that it was a good thing to move Victoria to Toronto, and whether it was or not is no business of ours, but assuming that the move was a good one, we say Dr. Dewart deserves more credit for the step than any other living man. Had it not been for his stalwart fight in the *Guardian* and in the General Conference, that noble pile would not now be standing in the Queen's Park. It would be nowhere. Honour to whom honour is due.

GOOD men everywhere will learn with profound regret that Union Seminary has severed its connection with the Presbyterian Church of the United States. Dr. Briggs and his inaugural have caused no little trouble and the end is not yet. The callous manner in which some men of the Briggs stamp can chuckle over the pain and confusion they create in the Church of God, raises the question whether at heart they are not enemies of both God and His church. No man who has the spirit of Christ will needlessly or wantonly wound the feelings of any follower of Christ.

WHEN preparing the Sabbath school lesson for last Sabbath, some of the teachers must have sympathized deeply with Barnabas because he had no telegraph by which to send despatches to the Jerusalem press. How much better he would have succeeded in Antioch if the local papers had puffed the work steadily, and the dailies of Jerusalem had published telegraphic despatches under sensational headings about the great revival in Antioch. But we forget. Perhaps Barnabas did not know how to write a "local" about himself or even how to get a despatch about himself over the wires dead-head.

REFERRING to the "insolence, irreverence, assumption and presumption" of the destructive critics the *Interior* says:—

If those men have no personal use for the Bible, we say, why do they not let it alone? Nobody is seeking to force it upon them. If a fellow should come into the street in front of

our home and begin to stone the windows and say that he could throw stones and smash glass, and did it because he liked to, that explanation would only accelerate the swiftness of the grip upon his throat. Such is our feeling, and we are safe in saying is the general feeling.

True, but if those men let the Bible alone they would have no chance to pass as superior persons and look down patronisingly on the uncultured clergy who are not "advanced." Nor would they enjoy the delightful privilege of showing that their fathers and mothers, now in heaven, were fools?

IT is not for a moment to be supposed that Cleveland and Harrison approve of the conduct of their supporters in spending millions on the Presidential election. It is inconceivable that an elder of the Presbyterian Church sitting by the bedside of his dying wife could sanction such infamous tactics. From all we have known of the private life and public spirit of Grover Cleveland of late years, we should say that bribery is utterly repulsive to him. The fact is, elections in the United States and largely in Canada are under the control of the "machine." Candidates and local men have comparatively little to do with them. The machine raises the money and sends its agents into the constituencies to do the infamous work. Of course a considerable number of the people are waiting for the agent. If the people had a decent amount of morality and public spirit they would kick the boodle-dispenser soundly and carry him out of the county on a rail.

IS there not a tendency in Ontario at the present time to put theological learning in the back ground? There is so much said about High Schools and Collegiate Institutes, and literary institutions of various kinds, about university courses, university degrees and university honours, that people may be tempted to ask whether there is anything taught in a theological hall that anybody need care about learning. Eloquent speeches are made about the manner in which the University of Toronto is "buttressed" by Knox, Victoria, Wycliffe, St. Michaels and we know not how many other institutions. Dr. Gregg in his short history does not tell us that Knox was founded, equipped and endowed to "buttress" any other institution. There was very little said at the opening of the New Victoria about the part the institution is to take in training Methodist preachers, though there was a great deal said about some other work that it is expected to do. Should the day ever come when theological learning has to take a back seat and apologize for its existence it will be one of the worst days the Church ever saw.

THE following paragraph, clipped by the *British Weekly* from the volume of Dr. Cairns' recently published sermons, might make not a few people on this side of the Atlantic think seriously if they are capable of any such exercise:—

We thrust publicity on many events that flourish better in the shade, and God ere long restores them to it. The man who has not a biography or frequent notice in the newspapers has lived in vain. What a rebuke to this insatiable hankering after endless publicity is the severely simple record of the life of Jesus Christ! We thus see that the true fame is God's approval, that it is enough for us to live "as in our great Taskmaster's eye," and to say, "Surely my work is with the Lord and my judgment with my God."

Dr. Cairns, or to use the name often used by his thousands of friends, John Cairns, was no doubt a great, good and learned man, but there were some things he did not know. He did not know how to "thrust publicity" on himself. When about to leave home on a preaching tour he was never known to send an associate press despatch saying that he was going to start, and then another saying that he had started, and a third informing the world that he had arrived, and a fourth announcing that he had preached to admiring thousands with great acceptance. He never used the wires and the press to tell the world about the number of converts he had made, and even if he had been betrayed into that species of so-called evangelistic work, we may be sure he would not have doubled the number and counted in children four or five years old. John Cairns was a really great man, but some people on this side of the water great in nothing but brag could easily give him "points" on publicity.

THE following note has been received from Rev. D. J. Macdonnell:—

Allow me a word of comment on your remarks on Thanksgiving Day in your last issue. I agree with you largely as to the impropriety of "calling a day of sporting and pleasure a national Thanksgiving Day." What I object to is your attack

on Sir John Thompson in this connection. You write as though the Presbyterian Church had entered into "negotiations" with Sir John Thompson and had endeavoured to "arrange" this matter in a better way, and that these "negotiations with Catholic converts and ultramontanes" had proved to be "a poor business" for the Church. Now, so far as I am aware, the Presbyterian Church has had no dealings whatever with Sir John Thompson or with any other member of the Government regarding this matter. The violation of Thanksgiving Day was not even included in the extraordinary list of abominations reported to last General Assembly by the Committee on the State of Religion. I submit that it will be time enough to advise the churches "to appoint a day of their own" after the churches have approached the Government on the subject and have failed to secure what they consider desirable. Meantime it is unjust to taunt those of us who intend holding service on the day appointed by the Government as preferring, "the lead of Sir John Thompson and Caron to that of their own Church."

The one thing that strikes the Christian community as incongruous is the appointment on the advice of the Cabinet by the Governor-General of a day of public thanksgiving to Almighty God for His goodness, and members of that Cabinet sanctioning the holding of military reviews and sham fights on the same day. As ostensible head of the administration the acting Premier comes in for his share of public criticism. Would it not be better if Thanksgiving Day is to be selected for church services and military displays, that neutralize each other, the Church should seriously consider what her proper duty and responsibilities are in the circumstances?

HENRY WARD BEECHER once advised a young friend to keep out of New York, because room and work were very scarce there, and funerals and graves very expensive. Mr. Thomas Kane, a worthy elder of Chicago, has been giving some excellent advice in the columns of the *Interior* to people who have some idea of moving into that city. We need a Thomas Kane in Toronto; or, rather, we did need one badly two or three years ago. He is not needed so much now. Not long ago there was a rush of people from all parts of Ontario to the Provincial Capital. Some of them had money and some had not. The moneyed men put their surplus largely into suburban property, and the men who had no money divided up the work and the bread of the skilled and unskilled labourers already in the city. In short, Toronto had a boom, and a boom is an unmitigated, unveiled curse to any community. Goldwin Smith coined the neat truthful phrase that there is no use arguing against a mania. The mania for rushing into cities is just as unreasonable as any other. It goes unsaid that Ontario would be a better Province and Toronto a better city if a large proportion of the people who rushed in a few years ago had remained in their own towns and cities and used their capital there instead of building empty houses with it in the suburbs of Toronto. That fact is fairly evident now; it will be more evident before next spring. Of course a city like Toronto should grow, but the rest of the Province should prosper proportionally along with it. It is all very well to say that Melbourne and some Ontario cities are larger in proportion to their rural surroundings. We are not living in Melbourne, and the conditions that exist there do not exist here. It will not help a Toronto man with his margin on real estate wiped out to know that Melbourne is a large city.

## ECHOES OF THE COUNCIL.

DISTANT echoes of the Pan-Presbyterian Council are still heard. Delegates on their return to their respective homes have been reporting what took place and have been giving their impressions. It is not surprising that words of commendation respecting the success of the meetings, the great interest awakened, and the cordiality with which the members were received in Toronto, have been freely uttered. Some of the delegates have not been altogether satisfied, and little side controversies have sprung up. It is significant that the keenest of these have arisen out of phases of the Higher Criticism movement. This is one of the burning issues of the time that the Council preferred to avoid. It is a movement with which some of the delegates were more or less in sympathy, and which a great many more view with dread and anxiety. Dr. Pitzer, of Washington, was desirous of getting a resolution passed affirming the belief of the Council in the inspiration of the Scriptures. It was so worded that keen discussion was inevitable, and a harmonious decision on the basis of the resolution was well-nigh impossible. Dr. Caven, as Chairman of the Executive, saw this at a glance, and, since a deliverance on a subject so important that failed to express