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## The Canada Presbyterian.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11th, 1889

THERE was a slight mistake in the make up of our editorial notes last week. A gem from Spurgeon was introduced as part of the camp-fire musings of the patriarch of the *Interior* while the musings of the patriarch were credited to the great London preacher. A slight mishap like this keeps us from feeling lonely in a world where everybody makes occasional mistakes.

MR. JUSTICE FIELD, who was recently assaulted in California, when asked if he would carry arms for his protection, gave the following sensible reply:

No; I do not, and will not, carry arms, for when it is known that judges of courts are compelled to arm themselves for defence against assaults offered in consequence of their judicial action, it will be time to dissolve the courts, consider the Government a failure, and let society lapse into barbarism.

One of the ways of keeping society from lapsing into barbarism is to enact a law preventing all men from carrying arms except officers of the law. Our neighbours would do well to pass Mr. Blake's Act against carrying lethal weapons and enforce it.

THE *Christian-at-Work* is of the opinion that:

At every gathering of clergymen in Classis, or Presbytery, the Synod or Assembly, or elsewhere, the great question ought to be: How can we reach the outside unevangelized parents and children of our own localities?

Most undoubtedly that question should be kept in the foreground at every gathering of clergymen and Christian laymen too. But how often does any one hear it discussed? It takes the Church courts nearly all their time to care for those who are inside. If the Church were more aggressive and made more determined and persistent effort to reach those outside perhaps those inside would not need so much attention.

THERE are two Courts of Appeal in the United States to which a criminal may resort after being found guilty of a capital crime. Moralists, jurists and other men who ought to know contend, and have long contended, that justice is often defeated by appeals made to these higher tribunals. The court of last resort is often not reached for years after the offence is committed and is forgotten. There is no appeal in England from a capital sentence, and many prominent men are contending in favour of establishing one. The system that is thought by many to defeat justice in America would it is contended, promote the ends of justice in England. The wisest and best men differ on almost all human questions, and the moral is not to be too dogmatic about anything human. Men who talk as if there are not two sides on any question, don't as a rule know even one side.

THE Scientists have come and gone. Toronto never welcomed such a large and distinguished body of men at one time. They left favourable impressions behind them and no doubt the majority of them went away well pleased with their visit. The scientific men had scarcely left when the practical men began to come. Toronto is fast filling up with the crowds who annually visit Canada's great fair as the daily papers call it. We shall not do anything so foolish as compare the importance of the work done by the people who visit the fair with the importance of the work done by the Scientists. All kinds of workers are needed in a world like ours. Let us be thankful we have all kinds. Of course bread and butter are indispensable, but science helps immensely in the production of good bread and butter. As we say good-bye to the scientists we extend a hearty Presbyterian welcome to the practical men.

DR. VANDYKE, arguing in favour of a modified revision of the Confession of Faith, declared that though it is the common faith of Presbyterians that salvation is sufficient for all men, adapted to all men, and freely offered to all, yet the Confession makes no such statement. In reply Dr. Roberts quotes the following section:

Man by his fall having made himself incapable of life, by that covenant (i.e., the covenant of works), the Lord has pleased to make a second, commonly called the covenant of grace; wherein he freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them faith in Him, that they may be saved.

The *Christian-at-Work* thinks this section does not meet the objection, because it is not said that the Gospel is offered to all sinners, but "unto sinners." As a matter of fact is the Gospel offered to all sinners? Is it offered to the millions of heathen who never heard it?

THE *British Weekly* says that Canon Liddon prepares just twelve sermons a year. Some of our contemporaries are of the opinion that a preacher who has a month to prepare a sermon should prepare good ones, especially if he has no pastoral visiting to do. We doubt very much if a preacher who works for a month at each sermon and never comes into personal contact with his congregation can prepare as useful sermons as one who spends much less time at his desk but keeps himself in touch with the wants and troubles of his people. John Hall is a better preacher than Canon Liddon and he says that after a week's absence from home he cannot get himself into a proper frame for his Sabbath work until he makes a few pastoral visits on Saturday afternoon and in that way gets a vivid sense of what the people need on Sabbath.

DR. CUYLER writes most interesting letters from Scotland to his favourite religious journals. He preached in McChyne's Church in Dundee and attended the funeral of Dr. Horatius Bonar. Of the funeral service he says:

The service was in his own church—the Chalmers Memorial Church on the Grange Road—and it was so sweetly simple that it was confined to the reading of two chapters of Scripture and the offering of two prayers by Dr. George Wilson and Principal Cairns, of the U.P. Divinity College. The most touching part of the service was when the crowded assembly arose and sang Dr. Bonar's beautiful hymn:

Angel voices sweetly singing,  
Echoes through the blue dome ringing,  
News of wondrous gladness bringing;  
Ah, 'tis heaven at last!

After the service I went around to the house and stood before the oaken coffin—covered with white flowers—in which slumbered the veteran whose voice had passed into the harmonies of Paradise. Just opposite to his church door is the entrance to the famous Grange Cemetery, in which are buried the mightiest men of Modern Scotland. Dr. Chalmers and Hugh Miller lie there close together; Alexander Duff, the king of missionaries, is not far off; and on the other side of the grounds lie the eloquent Guthrie and the sweet-spirited William Arnot. Scores of other eminent ministers slumber near them. Dr. Bonar was not laid in that cemetery, but down in the family plot in the old Canongate burial ground, near the ancient home of John Knox.

A thoughtful, devout man could scarcely stand in McChyne's pulpit or visit the spot where Chalmers, and Duff, and Guthrie, and Arnot, and Miller sleep their last sleep without asking himself if the graveyard is not richer than the church. Dr. Cuyler does not say whether that question occurred to him or not, but we venture to say it will occur to more than one reader of the foregoing extract from his interesting letter.

## THE MINISTER'S WIFE.

THE fierce white light that beats upon a throne by no means confines its beating to enthroned kings or to rulers generally. There may be occasional inconvenience in the luminous effulgence of which public life is the centre, but in the main it is well that men rule in the light of day. Those that hate the light are not usually the most exemplary and beneficent rulers. The light that falls on ministerial life and its accessories may not be so brilliant as that which encircles a throne and its occupant, it is, however, as intense and as steadily directed. The criticism to which ministers are sometimes subjected is not always the outcome of the profoundest wisdom and thoughtfulness, yet such criticism may be about as inevitable as mosquito bites in summer time. The sensible minister will not complain even of the unreasonable and paltry grumblings of the chronic fault-finders. He will hear all that is directly addressed to him and act in accordance with his best judgment. People would not pick at their ministers if they did not feel an interest in them.

It is not, however, on the position of the minister in relation to the popular opinion of his neigh-

bourhood that at present we intend to speak. The minister's wife comes in for more than her share in the liberal measure of criticism that generally prevails. The position she occupies is a coveted one. There are always numerous candidates for it, and no amount of hardship and suffering seems to have much of a deterrent influence on those who long to be mistresses of the manse. The position is certainly one of honour and usefulness and one to which the best educated, the most accomplished and refined may laudably aspire, but how often have bright dreams been shattered when the reality has turned out so differently from the attractive ideal! Like the ministry itself, the position of a minister's wife has its prosaic and mundane as well as its spiritual side, and it has resolutely and squarely to be faced. Disenchantment is not confined to any sphere or condition of life, but how different sometimes is actual manse life from that in which by fond anticipation and inexperience it has been pictured.

The minister's better-half occupies an anomalous position. Her life is in a measure public, yet she has no official recognition. She is not called and inducted into office by constituted authority. She receives no salary. She is no more amenable to presbyterial supervision than is any other member of the Church, and yet much is expected of her, and if she does not come up to the undefined and elastic requirements of unwritten law in her relation to the congregation, then she will be tried by an irresponsible jury and perchance condemned by a self-constituted court. There is no use in inquiring too closely into the causes of the persistent and too often unfriendly animadversions levelled against the minister's wife. They are to be found in human nature, imperfectly regenerated, and a kindly and more generous attitude can only come with a more fully developed Christian life and feeling.

But, it may be retorted, is not the minister's wife often to blame for the cold and harsh way in which she is sometimes judged? No doubt of it. Every minister's wife—whatever he may personally think—is not an angel. She has, no doubt, weaknesses incident to humanity; she may in fact be at times a little perverse, but then she lives in a glass house all the time. Domesticity in its perfection is hardly possible in a manse—for the manse belongs to the congregation, and they have a right to its supervision. And yet if the life of the average church member were as much exposed to the public gaze as that of the minister's wife, would there be no room, if one were disposed, to find the least fault?

Though her home-life may not have a very high fence around it, the minister's wife nevertheless has home duties that demand her intelligent attention. If all our homes were well ordered, Christian households, the occupation of half our social reformers would be gone. Ordinary providential laws are not suspended in ministerial families, and they need all the care, the Christian training and example they can get. Such, however, are the exacting demands of modern "work," that many a Christian mother has to make severe sacrifices, and that sometimes with serious misgivings, as to whether they be such sacrifices as God approves. All women are not equally gifted for the same kinds of work. One minister's wife may be of an unobtrusive and retiring disposition. She shrinks from publicity and cannot therefore preside with "the accustomed tact and ability" which the occasion demands. Of course, for this inability to make a good public appearance, a degree of censure must be meted out. Another minister's wife may have had peculiar advantages in training for extra-home duties, and temperamentally she may be gifted with faculties for leadership. These will not shield her from adverse remark which may possibly be provoked by the positive elements with which she is endowed.

Does the average minister's wife receive anything like the credit she deserves for the frugal management of her home, for the ingenious shifts and expedients she has to practise in order that with the slender resources at her disposal, she can throw around her home the air of comfort and hospitality the great majority of manses are able to make? Does she deserve no sympathy and admiration for the cheerful and happy bearing, under worrying cares and anxieties, she is able to maintain! Many unaccredited heroines can be found living quiet, peaceable and beneficent lives in the manses throughout Canada, and there is no reason why their burdens should be made heavier by the pangs which unreasonable fault-finding has in its power too often to inflict. The excellent services rendered by minister's wives throughout the Dominion are not tabulated in statistical returns, but they are very real all the same, and will doubtless be recognized by Him who does not overlook the cup of cold water given to the least of His little ones.