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The Canada Presbyterian

WEDNESDAY, JULY 5TH, 1893.

The Universalist, Unitarian, and Roman Catholic papers of the United States, are not satisfied with the decision in the Briggs case. Had the verdict pleased them, the members of the Assembly might very well spend their summer holidays in examining their consciences.

Britons in general, and Canadians in particular, felt proud, a few weeks ago, when a portion of the British fleet eclipsed everything in New York harbour. We had scarcely stopped shouting "Britannia Rules the Waves," when the pride of the Mediterranean fleet went to the bottom with four hundred souls on board. It is never well to get too glad about anything in this world.

The brilliant writer of Current Events, in the Queen's Quarterly, has a theory to account for Dr. Douglas' speech on Methodist representation in parliament and in the courts. The theory is that the venerable and eloquent Doctor was not in earnest, but simply meant to satirize the assumption that the French Canadians and the Irish Catholics must be represented in the Dominion Cabinet. If the venerable Doctor is fond of a joke, this theory is probably correct. How the old man eloquent of Canadian Methodism, must have laughed inwardly as he read the ponderous articles of the journals that took him seriously!

Apart from the violation of the Fourth Commandment, the opening of the World's Fair on Sabbath, is a brazen, palpable fraud. The managers received millions from Congress, on the distinct understanding that the Fair should be open only on six days of the week. As soon as they received part of the money, and felt reasonably certain of getting the whole, they broke their agreement, and opened the gates on Sabbath. Unless commercial integrity, and national honour have died out in the Union, something will yet be done to wipe out this national disgrace. Trampling on the Fourth Commandment does not justify trampling on the Sixth.

One of the disadvantages of having a little money in this country, is that your neighbours are almost sure to consider you a millionaire. Knox College suffers, at the present time, from having an endowment. Even some of her oldest and best friends think the institution needs no annual collection. The fact is, the endowment never came near meeting the current expenses, and never was expected to do so. At the time the endowment was being raised, sensitive voluntary consciences were satisfied by the assurance that money would still be needed from year to year. There never was much danger that the institution would be made independent of the yearly offerings of the people, and it certainly has not been.

As the years roll on, new difficulties arise in connection with our Church work. The last is the shrinkage in the income from investments. Money has no such earning power now as it had a few years ago. It is not as easy to make good investments now as it was once, and the rate of interest has come down so far, that the fall must soon seriously lessen the income of the Widows' and Orphans' Fund, the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund, the revenue from College

Endowments, and of all Funds that invest money. In all human probability, money will never again have the earning power in Canada that it had a few years ago. Local capital is constantly increasing, and Loan and Investment Companies are bringing in any amount of money from European markets. There is no remedy for the shrinkage in our revenue, but to increase the endowments, or the annual collections.

A week or two more of factious opposition on the one side, and Irish violence on the other, may lead thoughtful Canadians to ask whether, after all, the Commons of England is so much better than the Commons of Canada. The Home Rule Bill has been read a second time, and that used to mean much in the mother of parliaments. It is absolutely certain to be thrown out in the House of Lords by a large majority. Viewed from any standpoint, the prolonged factious opposition seems senseless. There are no front rank men in the Canadian House of Commons, that ever made greater fools of themselves than Balfour and Chamberlain are doing every night in the English Parliament. Factious obstruction, is a miserable kind of a political game at any time, but against a measure certain to be killed at its next move, such tactics ought to be beneath a British statesman.

Were the matter not so serious, it would be amusing to notice how quietly a grave church court can pass away from a matter it does not want to see, and how eagerly it seizes on anything that suits its taste. The other day it came out, in the Toronto Conference, by way of the Statistical Report, that there has been a falling off in the membership, to the number of 714, in the Toronto West District, and that the increase in membership in the whole Conference was only fifteen. The brethren struck out the clause on the decrease, and Dr. Sutherland was the only speaker who cared to say anything about the fifteen. The General Assembly was honestly told by Dr. Torrance that there was a drop in our total revenue and a serious decrease in the average of giving per family and per member, for some of the schemes, but the Assembly did not give the matter ten minutes consideration. It would, perhaps, have given ten days to a heresy trial, without a moment's hesitation. Now we submit that the ostrich policy never did a Church any good. There is nothing to be gained, but there may be much lost by ignoring facts and figures.

While other good Presbyterians have been thinking, and speaking, and corresponding about a Presbyterian Magazine, Queen's has launched a quarterly. We cannot say that the old University has taken time by the forelock, because so much time has been spent considering this matter, that the forelock has disappeared. No. 1, vol. 1, of the Queen's Quarterly, is a very creditable production. Publishers, editors, and everybody that ever helped to "get out" a new publication of any kind, knows how difficulties accumulate around the first number. The names of about a dozen learned gentlemen are given as editorial committee, business committee, and business editors. The names are all right, but we must be excused for saying that, the success of the venture will depend a good deal on the amount of "instinct" that they may happen to have among them. Mr. Gordon Brown used to select men and pay them according to their "journalistic instinct." There is, we presume, a "Quarterly," as well as a journalistic instinct, and we hope a good measure of it may be found in some of the gentlemen who have started the Queen's Quarterly. The twelve pages of criticism on "current events," is worth much more than the price of the Quarterly. All the articles are good, but the writer of "current events" gives undoubted evidence, in every line, that he is an old hand at the business. Success to the new venture say we.

The torture, trial, and acquittal of the unfortunate young woman at Fall River, charged with the murder of her father and step-mother, has given rise to some useful discussion on the duties of a public prosecutor. We have written the ugly word torture deliberately, because the rack and the thumbscrew were trifles compared with what that unfortunate young woman must have suffered from newspaper reporters, detectives, "marshals," and all the other people who want money, notoriety, or a clew. People who have some sense of justice are asking whether a public prosecutor, representing the commonwealth in the United States, or the crown in British courts, is under any legal or moral obligation to use his ingenuity in trying to send innocent people to the gallows, just because a grand jury, perhaps, a stupid one, may have found a bill against them. The Christian at Work comments in this way on the manner in which the counsel for the State conducted the case: "Here were men who knew what justice required in the way of proof; they knew that proof was not to be had—must have known it, trained in the law and accustomed to weigh evidence, as they were. But not a moment did they pause, but on they sped in their awful work of hurrying, if possible, a woman to the scaffold who had committed no crime nor wronged a living soul. Can Humanity stand calm before such a situation? Can Christianity justify it? Does the law require it?—then so much the worse for the law. Perhaps our system of jurisprudence is not quite so perfect as has been supposed."

Humanity should not try to stand calm before such a situation, and Christianity, instead of justifying it, should denounce it everywhere and always. The Christianity of The Interior—a most excellent kind, by the way—leads it to say this about the aforesaid District Attorney:—"As his deadly coils of logic were twisted around her, and his venomous words shot into her soul, the people looked upon him as being at heart what he sought to prove her to be, a murderer; and even the impartial judge would not trust the case to the jury without first unwinding and breaking those coils, and putting his shield between her and the assault. The instincts of justice and humanity may always be depended upon to manifest themselves, where an accused person is prosecuted in a spirit that savours of malice." The instincts of justice and humanity are trustworthy enough in most cases; but if the judge happens to be a man who assumes that every prisoner is guilty, said instincts have little opportunity to operate. If there is no appeal to a better court, the instincts might easily fail to save an innocent man's life.

FRENCH EVANGELIZATION.

This is another of the great religious undertakings of our Church, and one carried on, as is well known, under great difficulty, in the face of a highly organized and disciplined mass of superstition and ignorance. As in every such case, progress has been slow, but still there is progress. A large share in this work has, in the providence of God, fallen into the hands of our Church, and faithfully and patiently has it been carried forward by the committee having charge of it for the Church. "Fifty-five years ago," says the report, "there was not a known Protestant French Canadian." Now work among our French-speaking fellow-countrymen is being done in New Brunswick and Ontario, but chiefly in the Province of Quebec. One pastor and two missionaries labour in N.B.; two pastors and four missionary colporteurs are at work in Ontario, and the remainder of a total employed of eighty-nine, are to be found in different parts of Quebec. The work is conducted by the agencies of pastors, missionaries, missionary colporteurs and teachers, engaged in preaching, teaching in day and Sunday schools, house visitation, reading and selling the Scriptures. Thirty-seven congregations and mission fields, with ninety-six preaching stations,

were supplied last year. Connected with these were six hundred and ninety Protestant families. The average Sabbath attendance was about twenty-seven hundred and fifty, of whom nearly one quarter were Roman Catholics. One hundred and ninety-two united with the Church, making a total membership of nine hundred and eighty-four. Two new fields were occupied. The people contributed about six hundred dollars. Twenty-five mission day-schools and four night-schools were attended by eight hundred and thirty-three scholars, of whom three hundred and eighty-three were from Roman Catholic homes. One hundred and sixty-eight pupils attended the schools at Pointe-aux-Trembles, of whom eighty-seven were the children of Roman Catholic parents. One hundred pupils attended Colligny College, Ottawa. Fourteen French students prosecuted their studies in the Theological College, of whom two graduated and have since been licensed.

The results so far are thus stated in the report:

1. In a growing intelligence and appreciation on the part of the people of evangelical truth, and corresponding giving way of prejudices.
2. In the desire, tacit or avowed, to break away from ecclesiastical authority and domination.
3. In the thousands of Roman Catholics who read prescribed literature.
4. In the fifteen hundred pupils attending Protestant mission schools.
5. In twelve thousand Canadians of French origin who attend evangelical places of worship in Canada.
6. In the twenty-five thousand French Protestants who have gone to the United States.
7. In the fact that fifty-five years ago, there was perhaps not a French Canadian Protestant, to-day there is one for every sixty-seven of the French-Canadian Roman Catholic population in Canada and the United States, giving one to every hundred and two in Canada.
8. In the election of French Protestants to chief municipal offices, and their holding the balance of power in three counties, as was shown by the last election in the Province of Quebec.

The Pointe-aux-Trembles schools for the education especially of the youth of the Roman Catholic families who may desire it, and especially to give them a knowledge of the Word of God, have been long and favourably known to the Church. Increased accommodation has been provided for this work and the claims upon it also increase. Great vigilance is exercised in the admission of pupils and in the oversight of their studies. Hundreds have already gone forth from these schools thoroughly indoctrinated in the knowledge of divine truth, and many former pupils are to-day filling important positions all over the country, but especially in Quebec. It is not too much to say that to these and other schools and means for reaching and instructing the young, must the Church look in a large measure for ultimately leavening the whole mass of Romanism and emancipating its slaves from its fetters. During the last session twenty-one young men and women were converted to Christ, made open profession of their faith, and several of them expressed their desire to devote their lives to missionary work. Colligny College, situated in Ottawa, and also the property of the Church, under its efficient management affords the means of giving a good education to young ladies in French and English, besides other accomplishments, and does away with the necessity which many Protestant parents imagined themselves under, to send their daughters to Roman Catholic institutions. We regret to have to state that the ordinary receipts furnished by the Church for this work were \$2,210 less last year than in the previous one, and but for a balance on hand would have left the committee in debt.

Our Church is now well equipped for this work, and as every possible consideration of religion, philanthropy and patriotism calls upon her to prosecute it in faith and hope and confidence of ultimate triumph, we would earnestly commend it, and those engaged in it, to the liberal support, to the prayers and sympathy of the whole Church.