



TRUTH FOR THE PEOPLE

OLD SERIES—17TH YEAR.

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LET ALL SHARE!

Every reader and every subscriber to TRUTH should not fail to read our great BIBLE COMPETITION announcement, to be found in the Publisher's Department. As the advertisement has now been out some time, and the middle prize is a fine city residence, the questions should be answered, and with the dollar, sent in at once. We would like some old subscriber to get the residence in question. The middle correct answer of the whole competition will take it. Many other large and costly prizes are also offered, the smallest of which are well worth the dollar, even if the matter of a four months' subscription to TRUTH were left out of the question. You can't help being pleased anyway. Prizes will go to some one. Why not you?

WHAT TRUTH SAYS.

A correspondent writes that the poem, "To Canada," published in TRUTH in April 18th, is not original, as there stated but an exact copy of one written in Hamilton, Bermuda, in 1868, by Lieut. R. Skimmings, of the Goderich Artillery Battery. The manuscript is now destroyed, and it may be that an error has been made in this office in crediting it as original instead of selected.

According to a leading religious journal the numerous and ingenious Sunday-school "helps" may not turn out to be such important religious help after all. Some of them are calculated to make the study of the Bible lesson so easy as that the Bible itself may be dispensed with entirely. A Chicago Methodist minister has recently been delivering himself on the subject somewhat to the following effect: "The plan of furnishing every teacher with a journal and every scholar with a 'leaf' has resulted in banishing all Bibles and Testaments from the Sunday School." The statement may look like a sweeping one, but there are localities where it is literally true, and the number of these localities is larger, probably, than many will think. In view of such facts has not the time come to cry out for a halt in the matter of abundantly furnishing such helps? Ought these helps to be brought to the Sunday School class room at all? It is just possible that these, like many other good things, may be abused.

The Ontario Legislature and the Dominion Parliament have both enacted new franchise laws this year. In both Acts provisions are made for important extensions of the franchise, and consequently the number of qualified electors will be largely increased. The Ontario Government has gone the farthest in lowering the property qualification of the elector, so that actual manhood suffrage is but a few steps in advance. The Dominion Government has, however, taken the longest steps in the way of real

reform by pretty fully admitting the right of female suffrage. Hereafter widows and unmarried women will enjoy equal rights of voting with the men, providing they possess the necessary property qualification. They are compelled to bear equally the burdens of taxation, and are held equally responsible for the observance of the laws enacted, and their right to an equal voice in the election of law makers, so far as the House of Commons is concerned, is now recognized. The wonder is that the Reform Government of Ontario has allowed itself to be outtripped in the matter of reform by the Tory Government of Ottawa. That female suffrage *mus*: come few observing people need doubt, and Sir John displays his usual shrewdness in taking this important step in advance at so early a day. The next thing to do in that direction is to extend the franchise to the married women just as well. TRUTH can see no good reason why a married woman should not be allowed the franchise as well as the spinster. The former has a much greater interest in the selection of good law-makers than the latter—she has the interests of the family at stake, as well as the interests of property.

I regard to the real cause, or the many causes of the present rebellion, too much careful attention cannot be given, with a view to wise and proper remedies. The original settlers of the North-West must be so treated as to leave no real cause of dissatisfaction before it will be a safe thing for isolated emigrants to go in as permanent settlers. A very interesting lecture was given in this city last week by Rev. E. R. Young, for many years a resident missionary in the North-West, who spoke from his own personal knowledge of the people and the country. In regard to the Halfbreeds, he said that few of them were ever very loyal British subjects. Their French forefathers did not owe allegiance to the British owner, but antipathy rather, and their children's teeth are set on edge in consequence. Besides all that many of them have had real grievances of a serious character. The Ottawa Government, in their policy of making large land reservations for the Canadian Pacific railway, and for several of the large land companies, appear to have too much overlooked the resident Halfbreeds. Some of them had been settlers for years on those land reserves, and instead of their rights being respected they were, in too many instances, given notice to quit, or else to purchase their long possessed lands at the regular prices! No wonder that men so treated would be disaffected. No wonder that the friends of such men should be in full sympathy with them.

A good deal of stress is now being laid on the fact that the Indians in the North-West under the influence of the Methodist and other Protestant missionaries remain loyal and contented—that the disaffection appears to be confined to Indians under Roman Catholic influences and the Halfbreeds, who are all adherents of the Roman Catholic church. The subject is a delicate one to refer to, and so the party papers, of both

alides, are much inclined to avoid all reference to this matter. Is this statement a true one? So far as TRUTH can ascertain it is correct. What, then, are the reasons? Here delicate ground is trod upon. There is no use of saying that Roman Catholicism everywhere tends to disloyalty to Britain. Ours is a Protestant government, but many of the Roman Catholics are among the truly loyal citizens. The Halfbreeds are mostly of French origin, and the priests among them are the same. Rev. Mr. Young asserts that many of the priests in the North-West are direct from France, and their tendency, from a national standpoint, may not be above suspicion on that very account. Probably the Church in sending them there had only thought of their teaching and influence so far as the principles of religion are concerned; but it may turn out a matter of grave national importance what may be the effect on the people of the national sympathies of these men.

The whole question is one well worthy of most careful enquiry and serious thought. If an injustice is being done to the Roman Catholic church the wrong ought to be set right; if an injustice is being done to the Government of our land the remedy ought to be patriotically applied. Will our party leaders and party papers show themselves possessed of sufficient backbone to grasp this nettlesome question and fearlessly discuss it? They have shown little signs of doing so as yet. As soon as the love of country rises superior to the love of party, such questions will be carefully considered by men of all parties. In times like these the great need of the country is to have able patriots rather than able politicians.

The cost to the country of the present North-West rebellion will be something enormous. Already the Government have asked and obtained a vote from Parliament of \$700,000 towards defraying the expense of the military expeditions sent out, and there is much reason to fear that even such a large sum will not meet the necessary financial requirements. If anything is left to the public treasury of a round million dollars in the end, the taxpayers may deem themselves fortunate. The loss to the public treasury because of the falling off in sales of public lands, for years to come, will also be a serious item. The loss the C. P. R. will probably sustain, especially in its local business, will be a matter which the public will have to consider some day. It will likely be yet urged as a strong reason for additional public aid in some form.

Our patriotic Canadian volunteers who so nobly stood the battle at Fish Creek last week gave evidence of true courage as well as of true patriotism. Very few of them had ever "smelled powder" before, in the military sense of the term, and yet their bravery and coolness would have done credit to men of mature experience. It is a terrible thing that the lives of some of the noblest young men of our country must be thus sacrificed, and that many other truly patriotic Canadians are maimed for life in

defending our Government against rebellion. Our volunteers have cheerfully sacrificed all home comforts and unhesitatingly placed their lives in jeopardy at the first call to duty. All honor to their patriotism and their pluck! May not our country's interests ever again require such a costly sacrifice.

In view of the terrible work of the last few days in the North West our people should know the reason why all this mischief has been brought about. If the Indians and Halfbreeds have been provoked to this rebellion, even in part, by any fault of the men whose duty it was to represent our country's interests among them, let the facts be laid bare. If our Ottawa officials have been less vigilant than they should have been in looking after those under them let it be clearly made known. Let no false cry be raised to shield the real sinners in this case. It would not be patriotic to screen from the sight of the country anything calculated to afford the necessary information. There is a terrible suspicion that many important facts are being kept back "lest somebody should get hurt." Even one Christian minister has intimated that he is not willing to tell all he knows for this very reason! On the other hand, if the Halfbreeds are purely at fault let them be so punished that a salutary lesson may be taught to them and to their children for all time to come. At all events the rebellion must be stamped out and the agitators must be punished and not paid, lest they be encouraged to incite difficulties at some future day. We ought to know all the facts leading to these troubles in order to know just how far the punishment should go, and on whose shoulders the stripes should be laid.

The chances of war between England and Russia appear to be vibrating in the balance. We have little idea of what a day may bring forth in regard to the important negotiations. It is evident that both nations are reluctant to engage in war, and both appear to be even still more reluctant to recede from the positions they have already assumed. Before TRUTH reaches its readers the rubicon may be passed. The preparations for the very worst are being pushed forward with commendable energy by the British government, but at the same time all honorable means appear to be used to avert the terrible calamity of war.

It does not appear to be a favorable time for either country to engage in a great war of this kind. England has now the Egyptian difficulty on its hands, and the Irish troubles at home to look after. Russia appears to be "honey combed with nihilism," and its national treasury is empty, or nearly so. Yet both are great and powerful nations, and both will be prepared for a mighty conflict should the worst come to the worst. How far the other great nations may be come compromised in the difficulty time alone will tell. As it is the outlook is most serious for a year of bloodshed.