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The Canada Presbyterian

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, MANAGER.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14TH, 1895.

DURING the recent election in Derry "the infirmity was stormed by the rival parties," and one or two deaths caused by excitement and exposure. Popular government carried on in that way in Ireland or anywhere else savours a good deal of tyranny.

THE Moderator of the General Assembly has received a letter from a lady in South Carolina urging that more be done to reclaim prisoners. She says that in many prisons even copies of the Word of God are not to be had. We think this is not the case on this side of the line at least, but it will do no harm to ask whether things in this respect are quite as they should be even here?

OUR bright contemporary the *Dundas Banner* tells the world that the "Hamilton man" who won the Queen's prize at Bisley is a Dundas man and a member of Dr. Laing's choir. He hails from the home of the Oslers and Lashes and other men who have made Dundas famous. But honestly now, is not young Hayhurst an Englishman? He came out to this country only two years ago!

THE British Privy Council must be a difficult court to address. No sooner has a learned counsel got under way with his argument than one of the law Lords is sure to pull him up with an objection, or a question, or an observation, of some kind. The counsel gets around the obstruction as best he can and sails in again; but he does not go far until another law Lord breaks in upon him and the discussion usually takes the form of a prolonged and very learned conversation between the counsel and the Lords. That style of doing business may be hard on lawyers, but it is a splendid way to bring out the points at issue.

THE one thing clear about the horrible massacre in China is that it was done by a secret society called Vegetarians. The thing not clear, but which must be made clear, is whether the authorities, civil or military or both, were in any way responsible for the acts of the assassins. No doubt a full investigation will be made. It is not pleasant to read that some representatives of the great powers become "Orientalized" by their residence in Eastern countries. Precisely what that means we do not know, but perhaps it means something not very good. The new British Minister for Foreign Affairs has an opportunity to show what material he is made of, and the world will wait with some anxiety to hear from him.

NEARLY every day we have a report of an interview between some enterprising pressman and the counsel for the Commonwealth, or the counsel for the Crown, in the Holmes case. Surely interviewing must be overdone, and the legal profession pretty well stripped of its dignity and usefulness, when lawyers furnish the press with statements about their clients.

SOME of our contemporaries across the line are making a good deal of the rumour that Roman Catholic prelates approached or attempted to approach the Privy Council in the Manitoba school case. They ask what would an American citizen say if a "clerical" should approach the Supreme Court of the United States. We don't know what said citizen would say if that august tribunal should be approached by a "clerical," but when it was approached by politicians in 1876, some citizens said it put the man who had a minority of votes in the Presidential chair. All the world knows that the Supreme Court on that memorable occasion divided on party lines. Our neighbours will not gain anything by comparing their courts with the courts of the British Empire.

A WRITER in one of the magazines tells us that James Gordon Bennett, proprietor of the *New York Herald*, sits down in his library in Paris and examines critically his great newspaper with a twofold object in view. He notes every really good thing and in some way or another rewards the writer; he also notes the mistakes and calls the attention of the conductors of the paper to them. Mr. Bennett's method might be adopted with advantage by many who consider themselves better Christians than he professes to be. Some readers of a paper never see anything but the mistakes. Some people who go to church on Sabbath professedly to worship God look for nothing but the faults which nobody could see if not looking for them. The result is that their souls are lean and their tempers soured.

THE *Herald and Presbyterian* has recently seen the following taken from a private note written by a lawyer, and commends it "as a most profitable and helpful suggestion as to Sabbath reading:"

"I spent last Sabbath out on the farm and there was but one book on the place—no other reading-matter available, not even a Sunday newspaper! Shall I tell you what my reading consisted of that day? I read Paul's letter to the Galatians; his letter to the Ephesians; his letter to the Philippians; his letter to the Colossians; his two letters to Timothy; his letter to Titus; his letter to Philemon; the Epistle of James; the two Epistles of Peter; the three Epistles of John and the Epistle of Jude."

That legal gentleman read far too much for one day. No living man could read all these epistles in a day as they should be read. However the number of people who read too much of the Bible on Sabbath is so small that it is not necessary to say anything more about it.

IN one of his splendid campaign speeches in Newcastle John Morley said:

"Our bill (local option) is a bill, mark you, by which, stand or fall, we abide. I do not believe in Governments and I do not believe in men who bring in bills dealing with great social questions and then say: 'We will drop the bill if you don't like it.' What I say is this—we stand by that bill whether constituencies like it or not. If they beat us, we are beaten. There are worse things in this world than being beaten. If you are beaten in what you know or believe to be a righteous cause which will uplift the condition of the people of the country to which you belong, never mind whether you are beaten or not. I know that is not what is called good tactics. You know that on this platform I have never troubled my head very much about tactics. I have told you what I have thought: I have told you the proposals that I cared for and that I would support; and I shall go on upon that line until you turn me out for Newcastle."

And they did turn him out. The publicans and Home Rulers did the business. After his defeat four Home Rule members sent a telegram of congratulation which, the *British Weekly* says, would not have been signed by any four men in the jails of England or Scotland. And John Morley has for years been the steadfast friend of Home Rule!

AFTER strongly condemning the "undue deference often extended to men of wealth in churches," the *Christian Work* says:

When exhibited by the minister, as it sometimes is, it involves the surrender of "the dignity of equality" which no minister should ever give up. This marked deference is one that is easily perceived by others when indulged in. For example, when the announcement

is made from the pulpit that "Mr. Croesus has kindly consented to address the Sunday school," when no mention would have been made of an address from one in humbler circumstances, or when the announcement is heard from the pulpit that "through the liberality of one whose name it is not necessary to mention" a certain improvement has become possible—and all the church knows the particular one referred to—when such announcements are heard, as they quite too often are, there is seen an exhibition of deference to the man of wealth, a tickling of individual vanity which makes the judicious grieve.

That kind of an "exhibition," unfortunately too common, does several other bad things besides making the judicious grieve. It alienates the poor from the church and leads them and a good many people not especially poor to look upon ministers as obsequious parasites, which some of them are. It makes the man of wealth, if he has sense and he often has, despise clergymen in his heart, and sometimes his contempt for them is not confined to his heart. If there is only one kind of man in the world that should oppose the worship of wealth it is the clergyman. Perhaps the *Christian Work* would give us a word of explanation about that phrase we see every day in the religious press of the United States—"Large and wealthy congregation," "Influential and wealthy congregation." How does the word wealthy always come in, no matter how much the other part of the phrase varies?

THE IMPROVEMENT OF PUBLIC WORSHIP.

THIS subject, which was brought before the last General Assembly of our church and urged upon its attention with much force by Rev. Dr. Laing and others, is one of real importance and in which many take a deep interest. That it is also one which Presbyterian Churches generally are beginning seriously to consider is evident from the fact that, in all the churches of that order in Britain, societies or committees exist, either voluntary or appointed by their Supreme Courts, for the purpose of dealing with this matter. This is sufficient to show that a widespread feeling exists, that something in the way of what is considered to be improvement in Presbyterian public worship is needed and should be attempted. The question will at once arise: What direction should this attempt take, and what means should be used to accomplish it? It cannot take the direction of allowing greater individual liberty to those charged with the conduct of worship, for it is hard to imagine any greater degree of that than now exists. It must therefore, perforce, take the direction of some kind of suggestion, or guidance, or restraint in the exercise of that almost unrestrained measure of liberty which is now allowed.

It will at once be granted, we should suppose by all, that this is a matter which should come under the purview of the Church in its organized capacity, and be to some extent at least, under the guidance of the courts of the Church, that it is one which, because of the direction it may give, and the extent to which it may affect the spiritual life of the Church is eminently worthy of its most serious attention. The evils which may at any time easily arise, if they have not already done so, from leaving so important a matter to individual caprice are too obvious to allow of question. Seeing then, that improvement can only be sought in the direction of some restriction of liberty or guidance in its exercise, what shall that be and how far should it be carried?

A book on this subject by Rev. Alex. Wright, M.A., of Musselburgh, entitled, "The Presbyterian Church: its Worship, Functions and Ministerial Orders," has recently been published, and forms the subject of a lengthy article in *The Presbyterian*, of London, England, and we present some of its statements to our readers, because this subject is now occupying and will in the near future occupy much more of the attention of our church than it has done. The trend is all in that direction.

The book is spoken of in high terms of praise and would no doubt be read with profit and interest by all who are giving attention to this subject. There are two extremes of opinion and action against which Mr. Wright carefully guards; the one that of introducing or recommending anything which, contrary to the whole genius and history of Presbyterianism, would tend in the direction of Romanism or Episcopacy, and the other that of countenancing an opinion which largely prevails, that the use of liturgical forms is a peculi-