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THE DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN,

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C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, Manager and Editor.

Ottawa, Wednesday, Nov. 6th, 1901.

How much of the reading we do is useless, and worse than useless to us. Ask the average man, after he has glanced over the morning paper, what the principal news of the day is, and not one in ten will be able to tell you two items. Try it, if you doubt this statement, and then compute what time and effort has been wasted.

Sabbath Schools are taking stock of the Hells that are offered in their work for next year. Our own publications do not receive fair play. There is a disposition to think that anything gotten up at home is not quite so good as that which comes from a distance. Try our own for a part of the school, at least, and the verdict will be quite satisfactory. They are especially suited for the Canadian Church, and are a credit to the men in charge of them.

We heard a curious explanation of the lack of common courtesy among our people, the other day. It was said that most of us spent the years when character was forming, in the boarding house, where it grew to be the custom to look after ourselves, and to allow others to do the same. The habit became fixed, and when we entered the home life we took this habit as one of our stock in trade with us. Now it has become second nature. There may be something in it.

Home Mission work cannot be escaped. We shall be held responsible for doing it, and it is better to meet that responsibility now than to try to answer the demand why this work was neglected. Dr. Warden asks that where you gave one dollar last year you shall give one dollar and a quarter this year. You can do that, and you will feel the better for it. It is your work, not his. He is only reminding you of the amount, the lowest amount that it will take to accomplish it,

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THE PUBLIC SERVANT.

Perhaps no man is more abused, perhaps few men deserve it more, than the public servant. The time for choosing them is again near, but we are making no effort to seek for the right men. We are listening, with a certain amount of toleration to the pleas of the men who are seeking the public office, and we shall end in voting for the one from whom we hope to receive most, or who will be likely to do the least harm. We admit that there are exceptions to this characterization, but they are painfully few.

Great interests are placed in the hands of the public servant. When these are rightly administered the city takes its place among the most progressive of the day. The city of Glasgow is a notable example. Men are chosen there, and the citizens make it their business to seek out fit men. The man who simply wanted to exploit the public treasury, or to manipulate the public works to his own advantage, is speedily turned down. Only the best men are chosen, and those elected are thus acknowledged to be men of trust and probity.

It is a doubtful compliment to elect a man mayor of one of our cities, or alderman to sit at the council board. On the principle that it is best to set a rogue to catch a rogue it might be considered that the man who obtained the highest number of votes was the man whom we considered best adapted to meet the other men chosen on their own ground, and checkmate them. That might be true were the man elected by the choice of the people. As a rule he is not, but his election has been secured by his own, or by his friends' effort, and simply testifies to the successful organization of their campaign.

Need we wonder that a term of office begun in this way proceeds in the same spirit. The man who has been elected is there to get the very best he can for his own section, for his friends and for himself. He has no time to serve the City, the best that can be hoped is that in guarding the interests of his own section he may chance to serve the interests of the City. The same is true of constituencies outside our cities and towns. The same is true when constituencies are grouped into counties and provinces. City is arrayed against country as we find ward arrayed against ward. If you want anything you must fight for it, and the weakest must go to the wall every time.

Is there a remedy for all this? Beyond a doubt there is, but it is a remedy that not one of us would accept. Were it proposed seriously there would be an indignant protest from Cape Breton to Vancouver. But it is the only practical solution, and will come in time. The work of legislation and the administration of the laws must be left in the hands of the leisured classes. Men who must attend to their own business have not the time to devote to municipal and county and provincial matters, to matters affecting the general public. The man who calls himself a working man, and who offers himself as such, is a man who will not work if he can help it, and who hopes to escape it by securing a snug public berth for a year or more.

Of course such a proposition will raise the cry of an aristocracy, and it will be said

that a democratic people will never submit to the rule of the upper classes, as we are pleased to call the man of leisure. Yet the man who rules with the lightest touch is the man who has been accustomed to rule. The tyro in office is the tyrant in office. It would be infinitely better for our cities and for our country were we, instead of listening to the appeals of the men who have personal interests to serve, and who seek an opportunity by soliciting our votes, to approach a few men of means, and leisure and culture, and place in their hands the care of the public interests during the next year.

Whether Canada shall retain her Christian Sabbath, or see it destroyed by mammon-worshipping people and corporations, depends upon the Christian people of this country—depends on the one hand upon their vigilance and united determination, on the other hand on their indifference and neglect. They can, if they will, compel legislatures and governments and civic and municipal officials and managers of great money making corporations, to understand that they are in earnest in demanding that this Christian country shall recognize and honor the Divine command, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." They can, if they will, speak out so plainly and so emphatically that those entrusted with the making and enforcing of laws, and those who are intent upon secularizing the Lord's day, will be compelled to listen. And they can, if they will, set such an example of faithful observance of the Sabbath as cannot fail to prove a powerful influence in support and defence of the Lord's day. And if they fail to put themselves on record—if they fail to speak out in defence of the Lord's day as they should, if they fail to set a conspicuous example in faithful Sabbath observance, they will be simply playing into the hands of the enemies of the Sabbath. More; will they not be held responsible for their neglect or refusal to take their stand in defence of our Christian Sabbath?

The Women's Foreign Missionary Society of the Stewarton church held its annual Thankoffering meeting in the church parlors. Miss McLean presided and the attendance was most gratifying. Miss McLean conducted the devotional exercises and was assisted by Mrs. Moore. During the afternoon four interesting papers were read by members. Miss Aitchison read "What we should be thankful for as a nation"; Mrs. Kobb, read a paper on "What we should be thankful for as a church"; Mrs. Ardley's paper was "What we should be thankful for as a society"; Mrs. Miller read a paper on "What we should be thankful for as individuals." The thank-offering was taken up and amounted to over \$25.00. The society will elect officers at the first meeting in December.

The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Glebe church at its last meeting decided to organize a mission band in connection with the Sunday School. The object of the band will be to keep up the interest of mission work among children. Mrs. J. W. H. Milne presided.