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MR. WALTER KERR—for many years an esteemed elder of our Church—is the duly authorized agent for THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN. He will collect outstanding accounts, and take names of new subscribers. Friends are invited to give any assistance in their power to Mr. Kerr in all the congregations he may visit.



TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 1886.

THEY are a sturdy and whole-souled race down by the sea. The healthful Atlantic breezes give tone to body and mind. This healthfulness is apparent in the moral and religious activities of the Maritime Provinces. The Pioneer Presbyterian paper in the Dominion, the Halifax Witness, with characteristic cordiality, extends its New Year's greetings to contemporaries. For ourselves, these we most heartily reciprocate, and wish the Witness the continued and increasing prosperity which by its fidelity to principle, enterprise and ability it so richly deserves. This is how it takes up its parable: The Presbyterian Witness being the oldest Presbyterian periodical in the Dominion it becomes us to wish our younger friends of the press the compliments of the season—a "Happy New Year," "many returns," and so forth. And most heartily do we wish them all—the youngest as well as the oldest, the weakest as well as the strongest, a very prosperous future. The oldest of our Presbyterian contemporaries is THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN, of Toronto, a journal which is highly creditable to the enterprise of its publisher, Mr. Robinson, and to its editor and brilliant corps of contributors. We regard THE PRESBYTERIAN as an "institution" which the Presbyterian Church could not spare.

DR. PARKER has this to say of the religious press:

It is a pulpit on the wing—articles are sermons, and reviews are spiritual monitors. There is a ministry of the pen as well as of the voice. . . . It is the assistance which, in many respects, the ministry needs more than any other; but if the ministry would receive it, the ministry must recognize in every Christian editor a fellow-labourer in the great cause of Christian education and moral progress, and must cease to think of the religious press as other than a colleague and friend. We pray for preachers, missionaries and teachers. Why should we omit from our supplications brethren whose influence is immeasurably wider, in whose power it is to give the Gospel a universal hearing?

All true, no doubt; but, though we have attended church with praiseworthy regularity for many a year, we never heard a petition offered for the editors of religious journals. We have heard political editors prayed for occasionally, several times in a tone which seemed to indicate that the good man offering the petition had very little hope; but we never heard a petition offered for the editor of a church paper. Put this is not all. We have read with great delight many of the prayers that Dr. Parker publishes in volumes of sermons, and we have never yet seen a petition there for an editor of any kind. There may be some such petitions, but we never saw one, and we have read many of these prayers with great delight. Evidently Dr. Parker's theory in this matter is better than his practice.

THE Christian-at-Work does not display its usual wisdom in making this remark:

The politician devoted three hours to reading the President's message, and the next Sunday, attending church, complained of the length of the pastor's forty-minute sermon. So we go.

Yes, but the comparison is not a fair one. The President publishes but one message a year, and the preacher delivers over one hundred sermons. If you count prayer meeting addresses he speaks to the same people over one hundred and fifty times. If the

President published one hundred messages a year very few people would use them for anything but waste paper. Not one man in ten thousand would think of reading them. We have heard similar observations made in this country, and quite frequently by ministers. A good brother often proves the depravity of our age by saying that men will listen to Mr. Blake or Sir John Macdonald or Sir Richard Cartwright two or three hours and complain if a sermon is over half-an-hour in length. No public man in Canada, or anywhere else for that matter, can deliver one hundred and fifty political addresses in a year, and have any audience at all. There would not be a soul present in three months. Christian men, and especially Christian ministers, should not belittle the preaching of the Gospel by such comparisons. The only kind of public address that men will continue to hear and pay for all the year round is a sermon.

THE Presbyterian ministers of Chicago have taken a step which may lead to very marked results in that city. A few weeks ago they met, and spent two days in prayer. A week later on, they spent another day in devotional exercises. Last week they met with the office-bearers of their churches, and, at the close of a day spent in prayer they partook of the Lord's Supper together. The object of each meeting was preparation for their work and prayer for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Most respectfully do we ask if occasional meetings of this kind would not be a great improvement on the ordinary ministers' meeting, and also on the ordinary convention? We are certain it would. Even supposing no direct benefit came to those engaged, the moral effect on the people under the pastoral care of the ministers could not fail to be of the best kind. Few men who have any regard for religion at all are so hardened as not to be moved by a knowledge of the fact that their pastors are spending days in prayer for them. Even men who care little for preaching are often touched when prayed for. We have long been of the opinion that frequent meetings of a distinctively spiritual character would help ministers very much and increase their influence. The average meetings of a Church Court unfortunately have too often the opposite effect. Conventions are of little use except where very few of them have been held. Is there not room for an occasional meeting of ministers for distinctively devotional purposes?

LAST week the citizens of Toronto were asked to say at the polls whether liquor should rule the city, and they answered with a most emphatic "no." Somebody put the point at issue very well at the close of the contest when he said: "Even if a man does take a glass of beer he does not want beer to rule." Toronto is not quite so whiskey-ridden as a good many people supposed. No doubt the traffic has immense influence, but it is not omnipotent. A majority of the people may or may not be in favour of prohibition; but a most undoubted majority of them are opposed to making whiskey king. The reputable dealers made common cause with the worst elements in the city, and the people rose in their might and buried the combination under a majority of nearly two thousand. Had the respectable dealers pursued a different course the result might have been very different. They would have nothing to do with the people who wished to reduce the number of licenses. Mr. Macdonnell and Mr. Milligan could scarcely get a hearing at a meeting called to discuss the license question. The traffic would be satisfied with nothing less than the crushing of Mr. Howland. He was not crushed to any great extent. The abuse heaped upon ministers and others over all this Province by two or three paid agents of the traffic did more to carry the Scott Act in many counties than almost any agency we know of. The conduct of some of the liquor men in this city did quite as much to elect Mr. Howland as his committees. All we need to ripen public opinion for prohibition is to give a certain class of liquor dealers a chance to display themselves.

We have not read anything for a long time more humiliating to a Canadian than the statement made by so many journals that the ladies who voted last week at the municipal elections were not insulted in the polling booths. How did the writers and their friends expect that these ladies would be treated? Are deputy returning officers, scrutineers and other persons doing duty at the polls such bores or such black-

guards that it was expected the ladies would be insulted when they came to vote? Is a polling booth such a sink of ruffianism that a female voter ran a great risk by appearing there? Evidently a considerable number of people thought so. The simple statement that the ladies were not insulted implies a most humiliating reflection upon the men who take part in elections. It is gratifying to know that the worst thing that happened to the ladies who voted in Toronto was that a large proportion of them were sworn. In all conscience, this of itself was bad enough. Let us be thankful, however, that nothing worse happened in the Queen City. In this city of churches—the capital of the Province—this city of colleges—the seat of the law courts and what not—let us be thankful that in this city ladies that pay their taxes, and are allowed by law to vote, were permitted to do so without being insulted by the men who take part in our civic elections. How thankful the ladies should be that they were not maltreated under the shadow of our temples of justice. Civilization and Christianity are doing a great deal for Toronto. A woman can actually vote in this capital without being insulted! Is there any other city in the world in which women are treated so handsomely?

PRESBYTERIANISM IN JAPAN.

IT is not many years since an eminent minister of another denomination asserted that Presbyterianism was congenial to Scotchmen and people from the North of Ireland, but that it was unsuited for Canadians. The sayings of great men are not always the crisp embodiment of wisdom. Time has not verified the good man's remark, and events since in Canada and elsewhere have shown conclusively that Presbyterianism is not necessarily affected by national temperament, nor by geographic limitation.

The remarkable results following missionary labour in the Japanese Empire bear testimony to the fact that as a system of orderly Church polity Presbyterianism is of world-wide application. The wonderful movement now progressing in Japan affords matter for deeper thankfulness and hope than the adoption of a mere ecclesiastical system is fitted to occasion. To bring the natives to a life of faith in Christ Jesus is one aim of all missionary enterprise. Other evangelical denominations beside the Presbyterian have had their zealous labours abundantly blessed, and in this Christians of the various Churches have reasons for joy and thanksgiving.

The Rev. Henry Loomis, agent of the American Bible Society at Yokohama, sends a most interesting communication to the New York Independent in which he gives an account of the Third General Assembly of the United Church of Christ in Japan. The meetings were held in Tokio, in a large hall originally erected by those who desired to oppose Christianity. Large numbers attended the various meetings. There were sixty-one representatives present.

The proceedings, as reported, bear a close resemblance to those of any other Assembly in Canada, or anywhere else where similar meetings have been held for generations. The retiring Moderator preached the opening sermon, and the Rev. Mr. Oguc was elected to the chair. He is a graduate of Rutgers College and the New Brunswick, N. J., Theological Seminary. Mr. Oguc, it is stated, presided with great tact and dignity. The churches represented at the Japanese Assembly were formed through the labours of the American Presbyterian, Reformed (Dutch) and the Scottish United Presbyterian missionaries. Forty-four organized congregations were represented at the Assembly, comprising an aggregate membership of about 4,300, an increase of seventy per cent. since the last meeting two years ago.

The first Protestant congregation organized in Japan is named the Kaigan Dori Church. It was formed at Yokohama with twelve members, in March, 1872. Its membership is now reported as 237. This congregation during the last two years contributed about \$1,200, a little over \$4 per member, a good illustration of the zeal and liberality of the converts.

Another encouraging feature of Christian work in Japan is the fact that a vigorous and devoted native ministry is being educated. There is a theological seminary at Tokio with thirty-six young men preparing for the work of preaching the Gospel to their fellow-countrymen. At the Assembly meetings a plan for evangelistic work was carefully matured, and