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The Canada Presbyterian.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, MAY 8th, 1889

IF the hundredth part of what the New York journals say about the inauguration festivities in New York is true President Harrison must have wished himself at home teaching his Bible class. It is a pity that men who act like swine are so often allowed to spoil public celebrations.

MR. GLADSTONE'S tribute to Mr. Bright suggests to a New York paper the question, Who will pay a similar tribute to Mr. Gladstone when he has gone over to the majority? Perhaps the right reply would be nobody. Mr. Gladstone is the last of his school. The best effort of the "business talker," who plumes himself on his direct business style bears about the same relation to Gladstonian oratory that the "simple talk" of the exhorter who "just talks to the people" bears to the preaching of Dr. Chalmers.

IF Parnell is correctly reported, he furnished a painful illustration the other day of the fact that a man can do himself more harm in a few minutes than his worst enemies can do him in years. He admitted, the report says, that he had made a false or grossly exaggerated statement to the House of Commons a few years ago for the purpose of producing a certain effect. That admission did the Irish leader more harm than all the forgeries of Pigott and all the thunder-bolts of the London Times. Nobody can injure us so quickly or so seriously as ourselves.

THERE are various ways of doing pastoral work. One of the clerical founders of the Third Party told a public meeting in Toronto the other week that he does his in this way:

I am sorry I have not done any organizing for the New Party, but in my pastoral visitation I talk up New Party—I make it a part of my pastoral work; and my determination is to work it on that line, and every legitimate line that I can. (Hear, hear.)

Professors of Pastoral Theology should make a note of this new method. Were Hugh Miller alive now he could not say that a pastoral visit often consists of an hour's gossip with a short prayer tacked to the end of it.

COMMENTING on Sir Charles Russell's great speech the *British Weekly* says:

A speech more skilful, more laborious, more possessed of the true quality of eloquence has hardly been heard in this generation, and it ended as it could alone fitly end, in something very like a burst of tears. It is indeed marvellous that Sir Charles Russell, who is so perfectly at home in the law court, should be practically no force in Parliament, easily surpassed by many men who have had no legal training and little practice in public speech.

It does not by any means follow that because a man can speak well in one place he can speak equally well in any other place. Great lawyers are often great failures in parliament and on the platform. The best preachers often make poor appearances in church courts and some men who take the lead in church courts can scarcely preach at all. Every man to his work. It is a great matter to be able to do even one thing well.

THE fifty-sixth annual meeting of the Upper Canada Religious Tract and Book Society held in Association Hall, this city, last week was in the best sense of the term a most successful one. True the attendance was not very great, but it was to a large extent representative. The different churches were well represented on the platform and in the auditorium. The Anglican and the Baptist, the Presbyterian, the Methodist and the Congregationalist fraternized in a cordial and Christian fashion that was pleasing to see. Viewed only as a representative gathering, however, it was not quite

perfect—so few things in this world are. The ladies present far outnumbered the sterner sex, and the young men were in a decided minority. The excellence of the institution, its careful and judicious management, the catholicity of its character and the admirable work it is doing, entitle it to the warm sympathy and support of the Christian community. It has, however to be borne in mind that so many and so varied are the claims on the interest and attention of the citizens that the attendance, in the circumstances, might be considered rather encouraging than otherwise. The fact is that modern church life and our social life generally are almost strangled by organizations. It is just possible that over-pressure in this direction will tend to a reaction in favour of individualism. The arrangements of the meeting were excellent, and well carried out. The speaking was within reasonable limits, and above the average in quality. The good work accomplished by the society and its renewed prosperity are blessings for which the Christian community should be sincerely grateful, and their gratitude can easily find expression in increased support, to enable the society to extend its operations. Since his appointment as secretary, Dr. Moffat has rendered excellent and efficient service.

THE sale of Knox College is, we judge, a pure matter of business, and should be dealt with on purely business principles. The building is scarcely old enough yet to have many sentimental considerations connected with it. The principal question is, Would it pay to sell? At first blush, and without any special examination of the question we should say it would pay well to sell and rebuild. Assuming that the present property would bring about \$300,000, and that a site could be obtained in the Queen's Park at a nominal figure, we fail to see how the transaction could be an unprofitable one for the Church. Presbyterians have as good a right to a free site in the Park as the Methodists and Baptists have,—that is they have no right at all, but if free sites are the order of the day, there is no reason why they should not have one. If a site can be obtained in this way, a quarter of a million might be expended on a new building, and if there is anything over let it be used in making additions to the library. The present building cost, we believe, in round numbers, a hundred and twenty thousand dollars. It is a fairly good building, but too small. A much larger and better one can be erected for a quarter of a million. If the Church is to keep a boarding house for students, it should be large enough to accommodate all the students who wish to board within the walls. Of one thing, everybody may rest assured,—the present site will not be sold for a cent less than its value. If the worthy citizens of Toronto, who reside in that neighbourhood, want a park, they are quite able to pay for the luxury. What the late Hon. Mr. Baldwin, intended to do with the property is neither here nor there in the matter. What he did do was to bequeath it to a relative, and that relative sold it to the Church and was paid for it. In a few years the property will be in the very centre of the city, and may be worth half a million. Churches are not famous for making good bargains, but the man who bought this property made a good one. No doubt the College Board understand that, and will govern themselves accordingly.

WHATEVER others may think of the orthodoxy of Dr. Marcus Dods, of Glasgow, his own congregation are more than satisfied with his teaching. A few days ago they presented him with \$5,000 to defray the expenses of a six month's holiday. In an address signed by every elder and deacon in the congregation the following tribute is paid to his pulpit work during the past twenty-five years:

We gratefully acknowledge the kindness and Christian courtesy which have always characterized your intercourse with us, your ready sympathy with every endeavour to further the best interests of the congregation, and the wise and patient regard to every man's opinion on subjects which came up for deliberation, so that between yourself and the office-bearers the utmost peace and harmony have all along prevailed. Your pulpit ministrations have been to us matter of unspeakable profit and delight, and by your lucid, faithful and earnest statement of Gospel truth, we have felt that you were giving us not merely professional expositions, but your convictions, your solemn judgment, on the great matters belonging to Christian faith and life.

We are fully convinced of the immense influence and value of your teaching, in which, with a loyalty to truth, a wide sympathy, and an unaffected charity, you have sought to win men to a consideration of the claims of Christ, and have always set before them a high ideal of Christian character.

We consider ourselves highly privileged in being associated with your ministry, and sincerely hope that the advantages we enjoy may be long continued.

With his usual frankness Dr. Dods admitted that a

minister needs an occasional "demonstration" for the following reason among others:

Now they would allow him to say that the profession of a minister was a very humbling one, and he needed occasionally—say once in a quarter of a century—some demonstration of this kind. Ill-natured anonymous letters and venomous carefully unsigned articles in provincial newspapers affected one not at all. He was a very thin-skinned man through whose skin these little stings penetrated. But it was a most humbling experience to remember on Monday the points you ought to have made on Sunday; to meet with an intelligent layman and to have him congratulating you on teaching a doctrine which you thought you had finally disposed of in your sermon; to preach and do your best for five-and-twenty years, and find at the end of it your church half filled half the day.

These humbling experiences come in the lot of every minister, but few have such a comfortable offset put in against them as Dr. Dods.

RUSSIAN DESPOTISM.

IF vast territory, large resources, a gigantic army, a tolerable navy, a largely-developed railway system and complete governmental centralization could make a powerful nation, then Russia is one of the most formidable powers on the face of the earth. It is confessedly a powerful nation. The policy of all European powers is more or less shaped in view of Russian conditions and suspected intentions. Its extension to the Pacific coast on the East and the construction of a trans-continental railway leave no room for doubt that all northern Asia is now in her grasp. Neither can it be doubted that her determination to push southward is as firm and unshaken as it was when she encountered the English and French allies in the Crimea. Her forces are now massed on the southern frontier, ready for any eventuality. It is Russian ambition mainly that renders all Europe one vast armed camp. The fear of Russian aggression induced England to secure control of the Suez Canal and get possession of Cyprus. Russian ascendancy is the primary cause of the large increase of the British navy that has been recently resolved upon. To the apprehensions caused by the magnitude of the Russian military power the triple Alliance is due. Doings and resolves at St. Petersburg are of great interest to all the nations of Europe. Russian designs are pursued with a restless energy and a sleepless vigilance. No complication, however great, no national disturbance, however apparently trivial, escapes the notice of the Russian Government. Its agents are industriously occupied in the smallest of the Balkan States, and among the wandering tribes of Asia, just as her diplomatic representatives are ever on the alert at European courts.

While it is true that Russia is formidable to all European States, she is not free from ominous internal weaknesses. She is the most despotic of all the existing great powers. The father of the present Emperor at one time seemed anxious to extend a degree of freedom somewhat consonant with modern ideas. He liberated the serfs, and seemed disposed to make their condition in other respects more tolerable. This, however, was intensely displeasing to the oligarchic nobles who were determined to prevent the curtailment of their feudal powers and privileges. He paused in his progress, and by so doing provoked the resentment of the Nihilists, who waited for the opportunity when they could bring their murderous bombs into play. The awful crime of assassinating Alexander II. can in no sense admit of justification, and as a consequence it retarded the advance of freedom, and has only more firmly rivetted the shackles of the common people, whose life is little better than one prolonged misery. Freedom as understood in constitutionally governed countries is unknown. Bureaucratic rule prevails over all, down to the minutest conditions of existence. Personal liberty is hampered at every turn. The peasant cannot leave his commune on a journey of a moderate distance without special permission. His taxes, onerous in imposition, are made still more burdensome by the rapacity of dishonest officials. The right of public meeting and the right of petition are so circumscribed that they are practically valueless. The press is under the most rigid censorship. Personal liberty is at the arbitrary disposal of a suspicious official. A man may be kept in solitary confinement for years without knowing the cause of his seizure or being tried before a proper tribunal, or, it may be, a refined young woman is deported to Siberia with all the accompanying horrors that such a forced march implies, for no other reason than that she or mayhap only some of her relatives are suspected of sympathizing with revolutionary doctrines. The power of Russian repression is great, but in the human soul there are still greater forces of resistance. Unless relaxation of despotic sway comes soon, the day is certainly approaching when