

**THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN,**  
— PUBLISHED BY THE —  
**Presbyterian Printing and Publishing Company**  
(C. BLACKETT ROBINSON),  
**AT 5 JORDAN STREET, - TORONTO.**

TERMS: \$2 per annum, in advance

ADVERTISING TERMS:—Under 3 months, 10 cents per line per insertion; 3 months, \$1 per line; 6 months, 1.50 per line; 1 year, \$2.50. No advertisements charged at less than five lines. None other than sectionable advertisements taken.

**EASTERN GENERAL AGENT.**

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, DECEMBER 9, 1885.

SUBSCRIBERS to THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN would confer a favour by forwarding by postal card the names and addresses of friends not now receiving the paper to whom it will be sent free by mail till the close of 1885. This offer is made with the view of interesting members of the Presbyterian Church who are unacquainted with the character and objects of the paper and to induce them to become subscribers.

It is now easily seen that both parties made a serious blunder in pushing the question of Disestablishment to the front in the present political contest in England. Both parties seemed to think that the question was a good one for party purposes and both have burned their fingers by handling it. The Conservatives have no doubt gained a good many seats by the cry "The Church is in danger." For the time being, the cry has served them a good purpose; but by making Disestablishment a leading political issue at this election, they have made it a political issue for all time. The average life of a Government in England is only about four years. In less than five years a Radical wave may sweep over the Empire, and if Disestablishment is a political issue now, it must be one then. The result is easily seen. The party now defeated—if they are defeated—by the Church cry cannot, when flushed with victory, be expected to keep their hands off the Church. On the other hand, Mr. Chamberlain and his friends did not display much tactical wisdom in pushing the Church question to the front. Many Liberal Churchmen left the party and went temporarily over to the other side. There is nothing gained by rushing on a reform in advance of public conviction. It is not by any means clear that a majority of Englishmen wish the Church disestablished and disordered at the present time. The thing will be done, but it cannot, perhaps should not, be done hastily. There is one way, and only one way, by which the crisis may be put off for perhaps a hundred years. Let the Church display more zeal, more piety, more activity, at home and abroad than the Dissenters, and Disestablishment may not come for many a year. Piety can keep the Establishment in existence much longer than the politicians.

FOUR weeks hence the duty of electing their local rulers will devolve upon nearly all the men and a considerable number of the women of Ontario. We have no sympathy with the sickly kind of piety that keeps a man from the polls. Religion that will not stand the strain of making a cross upon a piece of pasteboard behind a screen is not worth much. That type of piety may do for a Plymouth Brother, but it is not manly enough for a solid Presbyterian. The charge that a Christian mingles with the world when he votes is cant, miserable, hypocritical cant. This world belongs to Christ, and who should have more to say about its government than Christ's people? We mingle with the world when we do business of any kind. Those men who cant about mingling with the world are just as ready to make money out of the world as any other class. As a rule, we believe every Christian man should vote. The franchise is a trust, and we are responsible for discharging the duties arising out of this trust as well as out of any other.

Is shirking the duties arising out of a trust evidence of superior piety? It was not so formerly in the Presbyterian Church. One cannot always find the best possible man to vote for; but if an elector cannot vote for the best he can usually help to kill the worst, and that is always something. In a town of five or six thousand people we find ten or a dozen churches pointing their spires toward heaven. Most of them are filled with Christian voters. In the council chamber of that town we find some good men but perhaps the majority of them are scallawags, ward politicians of the baser sort. Did the Christian people of that town do their duty on the first Monday of January? Not they. Are they doing their duty toward their own children when they allow such men to occupy high places in the community? Decidedly not. Our advice is vote for the best man without regard to nationality, politics, creed or any such considerations, and even if you cannot find a candidate quite to your choice, vote and help to kill a worse one.

A CORRESPONDENT, who calls himself "A. B.," writes to the *Globe*, saying that he feels the desire for strong drink overcoming him and asks what course he ought to pursue. Our contemporary gives some very sensible advice, and among other things tells "A. B." to become a total abstainer at once, to put himself under the guardianship and, if necessary, under the restraint of his friends, to keep away from places of temptation, and if he can afford the expenditure, to go to an inebriate asylum, if nothing else will do. Another correspondent suggests a more excellent way, and does so in language so appropriate and patriotic that we cannot refrain from quoting a part of his letter. His remedy is the only effective one:

I would just like to tell "A. B.," and others who may be in a similar position, that there is a remedy, a sure remedy, that I never knew to fail, and as one who has suffered to some extent from the same disease, and it has cured me. If necessary, I could produce many others who are ready to witness that they were saved from a drunkard's grave by the same power. This cure is to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour, and if you will only let Him, He will deliver you, and make you a new creature, with new desires, new aims, and a hatred of those things which ruin men for time and for eternity. He has saved thousands of poor drunkards. Let no one despair, for He says still: "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

In these days when so much is said and written about other remedies, we have often felt that there is some danger of forgetting that the only all-sufficient remedy for drunkenness and every other sin is Christ. The best way to make a drunkard a sober man is to make him a new man. Good laws are good as far as they go, and shall always have our earnest support; but it is our duty all the same to constantly remind men that the only remedy that never fails is the Gospel of God's Son. Many a time have we thought during the past year or so that if all the men in Ontario who worked for the Scott Act were earnest in their efforts to apply the only efficient remedy for sin, Ontario would, perhaps, need no other. We must, however, deal with society as we find it. Good laws should be sustained and better ones agitated for, but let us never forget that the only remedy for fallen and weak human nature is Christ.

A GOOD deal of misapprehension exists in regard to the action of several clergymen of Toronto, who appeared in the County Court the other day in an appeal against a decision of the Court of Revision. The law exempts clergymen in charge of congregations from paying taxes on their incomes, as it exempts judges and civil servants. The gentlemen who appealed were, for the most part, professors and ministers, doing other kinds of Church work. The question at issue was whether a professor or minister doing any kind of work for his Church comes within the exemption law. The merits or demerits of exemptions had nothing whatever to do with the appeal. The question was the interpretation of the statute and that alone. If any exemptions are to be allowed it is very difficult to see why a pastor drawing \$4,000 should be exempt, and an agent of the Church or professor should be compelled to pay taxes on a salary of half that amount. Of course, the appeal could not be allowed to pass without the usual amount of abuse being dealt out to the appellants by that section of the local press that never feels so happy as when throwing dirt at the clergy. The appellants did not make the law nor did they ever ask that it be made. They do not resist its repeal, nor do they care a brass farthing if it should be repealed to-morrow. What they did, and all they did,

was to ask the County Judge to say whether they come within the provisions of the Act. Surely that was not a very serious offence. They do not resist the payment of their taxes; they merely ask his Honour Judge McDougall to say whether, as the law stands, they owe the city anything. If his Honour decides that their cases do not come within the exemption provisions the taxes and costs will be promptly paid. For more than a quarter of a century Toronto has been the worst governed city in the Dominion. "Jobs" of the most unsavoury kind lie along its municipal path with the regularity of milestones. Toronto is the only municipality in the Dominion that has tried to get up an agitation in favour of taxing churches, and everything and everybody connected with them. It was quite in accordance with the fitness of things that the desire to tax everything ecclesiastical should spring from the same municipal source as the "Burned Contract," and a hundred other jobs. More than once have we said that in our opinion it would be better to abolish all exemptions. That, however, is an entirely different question from the one now before the County Court.

**AGED AND INFIRM MINISTERS' FUND.**

AT the last meeting of the Presbytery of Toronto, Mr. J. K. McDonald, one of the Conveners of the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund, appeared to plead on behalf of this important but much-neglected Church Scheme. It is one that does not apparently occupy a prominent place either in the affections or the business of the Church. Each Scheme has its relative importance, and it is not claimed for this particular one that it should have a place in the front rank, neither should it, like a poor relation, come in as if by sufferance at the end. In the last annual report submitted to the General Assembly by the Convener, Rev. James Middlemiss, it is almost plaintively said:

The Committee would, therefore, once more earnestly urge the Assembly henceforth to appoint that the congregational collection for the Fund be made on a day for which no other collection is appointed, and thus remove a prevailing impression that is prejudicial to the interests of the Fund. They would also most respectfully suggest that the Assembly, besides commending the Fund to the liberality of the Church, would place its own interest in the Fund beyond all question by setting apart a time for the thorough consideration of all matters connected with it. For they cannot but think that the hurried consideration of the Annual Report, after repeated postponements, which has been the usual treatment of it, is fitted to prejudice the Fund in the estimation of the Church.

It can with confidence be affirmed that the members of successive General Assemblies are not indifferent to the success of the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund. They wish it well, and they always say so; but in the press of imperative business something has got to be sacrificed, and this is usually one among the slaughtered innocents. Appearances certainly justify the inference expressed in the annual report.

Mr. McDonald's action in bringing the matter to the timely notice of the Toronto Presbytery merits commendation. His speech was Christian, sensible and practical. He said no more than the circumstances of the case fully warranted. Coming from a layman, his words in this connection have additional force. In this and similar matters laymen can do more effective work than ministers. However much the latter may rise superior to a not unbecoming sensitiveness in pleading for what relates to their own order, they cannot help being hampered by the feeling that some of those they are addressing are only saying: "Ah! I see, you are speaking for yourself." Now, a successful business man, who can speak to the people in a practical, business-like way, feels no such restraint, and his plea is, in most instances, judged on its merits. The Presbytery of Toronto took up the matter promptly, and appointed a committee to apportion to the respective congregations the amount expected from that Presbytery. The Scheme has also been ably advocated by Dr. McDonald, of Hamilton. If the various Presbyteries throughout the Church bestow a little care and take timely action, the respected Convener of the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund will be able to present a more hopeful and encouraging report than ever he has been able to do in the past.

It is not a great sum that is required to place this Scheme in a satisfactory condition. A little systematic effort is all that is required. When the case is fairly placed before the people, their sense of justice, not to speak of generosity, will at once assent to the reasonableness of the claim presented to them.