



TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1884.

"KNOXIAN," our readers will perceive, has resumed his pen. He has modes of thinking and expression peculiarly his own. His contributions will not lack pungency since they are sure to be sprinkled with a due modicum of Attic salt.

WE congratulate our good friend the *Presbyterian Witness*, of Halifax, on its improved appearance typographically. Its chief merits, however, are not merely mechanical. It contains a weekly budget of varied, profitable and timely writing. We are pleased to see tangible evidences of its prosperity and usefulness.

THE fierce Presidential contest which closed last week has its lessons for religious journals and for ministers of the Gospel. To the religious journal and the preacher about to take an active hand in party politics it reiterates the advice of *Punch* to persons about to marry—*Don't*. Several leading religious or semi-religious papers went into the contest in somewhat lively style at the beginning, but did not go far until they seemed sorry. One or two "bolted" from the Republican party and took up Cleveland, but when certain revelations were made about Cleveland's private record they dropped him and did not seem to know very well what to do. The position taken by the *Interior* and other journals is the correct one. A religious journal that takes sides on party questions breaks its contract with its readers. No one in Canada subscribes for a religious journal because he expects it to supply him with discussions on party questions. He goes to the *Globe* or *Mail* or his local paper for his politics. He usually finds a generous supply. He takes his religious paper for another and quite different reason and his publisher has no right to break faith with him. If a great moral question were before the country, of course the religious journals should discuss it, and in doing so they might for the time being find themselves allied with one party and in antagonism to another, but such a case would be exceptional.

It should be remembered that the Ministerial Alliance of Brantford are not alone in their opposition to "church parades" with bands of music. The Presbyterian members of that body have the Supreme Court of their Church behind them in their effort to put an end to that form of Sabbath desecration. At the last meeting of the General Assembly it was resolved, on motion of Mr. Parsons, that the Supreme Court call the attention of the Dominion Government to various forms of Sabbath violation, and among others

By military companies and various other organizations in public parades with bands of music and other demonstrations detrimental to the peace and profit of the day. And inasmuch as these infractions of the divine law of the Sabbath lead to the degradation of public morals and the increase of crime, and to the distress of the consciences and convictions of many loyal and law-abiding citizens—and as they disturb and interfere with the true and proper observance of the Lord's Day, and so far destroy its influence in the land; therefore we, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, respectfully ask that such legislation be secured by the Dominion Government as shall protect this divine ordinance from these violations, and secure to all the people of the land their rights of conscience, with the blessing of Almighty God.

A committee consisting of the Moderator, Principal Grant, James McLennan, Q.C., Hon. Mr. Vidal, John Charlton, M. P., Dr. Moore and W. D. Armstrong was appointed to bring the matter before the Dominion Government. Now let this committee discharge its duty and call the attention of the Dominion Government specially to the Brantford case. We do not believe for a moment that the Dufferin Rifles of Brantford, or the volunteers of Ontario as a body have any desire to violate the Sabbath. The root of the evil is the desire of a few officers to make a display on every possible occasion. If these gentlemen rule the country it is time the people who furnish the funds knew it.

CANADIAN preachers might easily have put an additional "head" in their thanksgiving sermons last week. After saying that we should be thankful for the bountiful harvest, for national peace, for freedom

from epidemic disease and many other blessings, they might well have added: "We should be deeply thankful as a nation that we have had no Presidential election." For months the neighbouring Republic has been in a state of intense excitement. Business of all kinds has been neglected, trade has been demoralized, and an element of uncertainty entered into transactions of every description. It is now assumed by everybody that the "Presidential year" must be a bad year for many kinds of business. Business depression and uncertainty, however, are not the worst. The opening of what one of their own writers calls "the quinquennial sewer" has a fearfully bad effect upon the people. Nor does it affect the people only. The man who goes to the White House at Washington is always painted so as to contrast most painfully with the House by the time he gets there. How can any American citizen expect the world to respect their President elect after reading what half of their own nation have said about him? The difficulty would have been just as great had the other candidate been elected. We believe a large number of the best people in America are disgusted with this Presidential business. They don't exactly say so, but they say the election should not come so often. During the days of uncertainty that pass between polling day and the time that the returns come in, when the great Republic is in throes of excitement, we always feel like shouting

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN!

Let us all be thankful we don't need to elect the head of this Empire or even the head of this Dominion. Electing members of Parliament, municipal councillors and school trustees give us plenty of exercise in that line.

BETWEEN six hundred and a thousand clergymen waited upon Blaine at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, New York, a few days before the election, and presented him with an address. Now no reasonable man, will deny that a minister, who is a tax-payer and a citizen has just as much right to take part in politics as any other man, if he chooses so to do. He should be allowed to judge for himself of the extent to which he interests himself in any given contest. Most ministers simply record their vote. Usually it is unwise to do more. As a rule that much should be done. The miserable Plymouth theory that a minister should not mingle with "the world," by marking his ballot is unmitigated rubbish. Piety that cannot stand the strain put upon it by going behind the curtain and marking a ballot with a little pencil is not worth much. It may do for Plymouth Brethren but it won't do for men. But still we think that the "noble six hundred" who waited upon Blaine might have been better employed. The unwise thing was for six hundred ministers to wait upon him as ministers representing different denominations and congregations. The wily politician soon took advantage of the situation. He said in the second sentence of his speech:

I do not feel that I am merely speaking to the hundreds of men here present. I am speaking to the great congregations and the great religious opinion which is behind them, and as they represent the great Christian bodies, I know and I realize the full weight of that which you have said to me, and of the influence which you tender.

Now as a plain matter of fact no minister has a right to say that he represents his congregation or denomination on a political or semi-political mission unless his congregation or denomination commissioned him so to do. These ministers did not represent their congregations or denominations for undoubtedly many of their people were Democrats. The right way is to vote as a citizen, speak even for the Scott Act, as a citizen, and if your position as a minister gives you some incidental advantages that is nobody's affair.

COLLECTION FOR THE AUGMENTATION SCHEME.

AS will be seen from the circular issued by the Home Mission Committee appearing in another column, the collection appointed by the General Assembly for the Augmentation of Stipends, will be taken up throughout the Church next Sabbath. We commend the statement signed by the convener and the secretary of the sub-committee to the candid and careful perusal of every reader. The great success of the effort made last year is a tribute to the business capability of the Home Mission Committee, and the effective manner in which the scheme was brought before Presbyteries and congregations by those ap-

pointed to advocate its claims. It is worthy of remembrance that fervent appeals were made by the pastors of wealthy congregations, evidencing that their sympathies were fully with their less favourably situated brethren. Nor is less credit due to the congregations who so generally and generously responded to the appeals addressed to them. It was their contributions that made the effort the great success it proved.

A most gratifying feature of the movement is that it has been supported by all sections of the Church. Wealthy congregations have given out of their abundance and even struggling mission stations have given ungrudgingly to raise the sum required to discharge an obligation resting on the whole Church. A large number of those congregations which paid less than the minimum salary have of their own accord without asking a share of the Augmentation Fund, come up to the standard aimed at. Seventy-eight such congregations have come into line themselves. In itself this is a testimony to the fairness and equity of the scheme, which after careful consideration was adopted by the General Assembly. These congregations have set an excellent example to others, and it is to be hoped many more will assume the same attitude of self-support.

Under the most favourable circumstances, however, there will always be a number of congregations who cannot adequately maintain their pastors as they ought in all fairness to be maintained. They are entitled to look to the Augmentation Fund for the help they need. By their action last year the liberal Presbyterians of Canada have said that they shall not look in vain. It cannot surely be that the effort already made was merely spasmodic. Regular and sustained effort is required to place this fund on a satisfactory basis. The sum required to meet all demands as stated by the committee is \$30,000. Surely the Presbyterians in Quebec and Ontario are able without difficulty to raise this amount. The satisfactory maintenance of this Augmentation Scheme will not only bring comfort and happiness to the hearts and homes of ministers who are labouring faithfully in their Master's service; it will bring blessing to the whole Church. It is a much easier matter to throw one's whole soul into his work when he is removed from the heavy pressure of penury. The minister will feel better, preach better, and work more heartily when he knows that the Church is helping to take a heavy load off his shoulders. The hope is generally entertained that the collections will be worthy of the Church, and such as to place the fund in a condition to meet all just demands made upon it.

EVANGELICAL CO-OPERATION.

MR. HOUSTON in his communication of October 29th, slightly mistakes our meaning. We indeed mentioned one denomination and a half merely as an example and not to indicate that we should be willing to co-operate with these alone. We consider that a great point has been gained in conducting missions to the heathen, now that evangelical Churches so far recognize one another as not to interfere with their respective spheres of labour. We simply suggested that this charitable procedure might be introduced into the Home Mission work of the churches, at least to such an extent as to discontinue the formation of small congregations when there is no reasonable prospect of their becoming self-sustaining, at least without seriously weakening neighbouring evangelical congregations. We also indicated that a few of our people dwelling, for example, in a large Methodist settlement, could not reasonably expect us to erect a congregation merely for their convenience, while they could attend Presbyterian services, if they were so minded, at considerable inconvenience to themselves. This is the whole length to which our remarks extended. They were not a speculative, but of an intensely practical nature, and were intended to remedy an evil which occasions much waste of mission money and much disappointment and privation to ministers who may be called to spheres so limited. We said nothing to compromise our loyalty to the doctrine or polity of our Church.

Further, we do think that Mr. Houston makes a great mistake as to a matter of fact when he says: "We must in my opinion, to be consistent, either go or with the proselytizing struggle in which the various churches have been so long engaged with each other, or we must be prepared to make terms with all Christian denominations alike." We are not aware of any such proselytizing struggle among evangelical churches.