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TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12, 1887.

**SPECIAL NOTICES.**

ATTENTION is invited to the following very liberal combination offers: THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN and *Weekly Globe* for \$2.00; THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN and the *Rural Canadian* for \$2.00; THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN and the *Weekly Mail* for \$2.00; THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN and the *London Advertiser* for \$2.00; and THE PRESBYTERIAN and Dr. Gregg's "History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada," for \$4.00. These combinations will prove most advantageous to our readers; and that such is being generally recognized is evidenced by the large number of new subscriptions and renewals daily received at this office. Might we respectfully request our readers to draw the attention of their friends to these offers?

OUR SABBATH SCHOOL PAPERS for 1887 will be unusually attractive to young people. Already arrangements are perfected for illustrations for the coming year. Why send your money abroad when you can do better at home? Our publications comprise the following: SABBATH SCHOOL PRESBYTERIAN, GOLDEN HOURS, EARLY DAYS. The latter is published twice a month, and is intended for the infant class. Specimen copies free to any address.

LESSON SCHEMES, especially prepared for Presbyterian schools, now ready for mailing, 60 cents per 100 copies.

WE have to bespeak the forbearance of friends. It will be impossible for us to enter all the new names in time for this week's issue, or give proper credit to old subscribers who have already renewed. By next week we hope to overtake arrears of work caused by the very large additions to our subscription list during the past ten days. Our hearty thanks are hereby tendered to kind friends who have sent us in lists of names; and we venture to ask readers who value THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN to invite their friends to subscribe for 1887, and thus benefit others, while at the same time extending the circulation of their favourite periodical.

WE respectfully suggest to the religious journals on the other side of the lines that before writing anything further on the points at issue in the late Ontario election they take some means to ascertain the facts. The *New York Observer*, and the *Evangelist* of the same city, would do well to take the hint before giving their views of the situation at any length. Just fancy a journal of the character and standing of the *Evangelist* quoting from the *Springfield Republican* what it evidently believes to be a correct description of the points at issue. What does the *Springfield Republican* know about our schools that the *Evangelist* itself might not know? Now that the struggle is over anything absurd said by our neighbours, under misapprehension of course, cannot have any effect on public opinion, but such things have one most pernicious effect. They lead thoughtful people to say, What is the use in paying any attention to what you see in a newspaper? That is said about secular newspapers every day, and any intelligent Ontario man reading some of our religious exchanges from across the lines would say it about them too. It is not in the interest of journalism that such questions should be asked.

THE battle between the Chicago and Cincinnati editors—elders both of them—about the functions of the ruling and teaching elder is drawing to a close.

Who won? That's the question. The last thing we read about the Chicago elder is that on a recent Sabbath he stood up before his congregation, and made a most successful appeal for aid to the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund of his Church. The elders of that city are now making a special effort for this fund. Seeing that Brother Gray is a moving spirit in this good work, and seeing that his speech made the collection four times as large as usual, we move that Brother Gray, of the *Interior*, be Moderator of the next General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States. Any Canadian reader of the *Interior* will be most happy to second the motion. A man who can quadruple a collection in aid of an Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund deserves to be Moderator of any court. We have all seen clerical Moderators who never quadrupled a collection. In fact, we have seen some Moderators who never could raise a collection worth speaking about. The men who do the Church's work are not always the men who receive the honours.

THE article on the public reading of the Scriptures by Dr. Kellogg, published in these columns the other week, has produced some interesting discussion. The old question comes up, Should the minister accompany the reading with comments? A good deal depends, we should say, on the minister's ability to make comments. If he has the faculty of making brief, terse, suggestive observations that open a fresh, crisp, rich field of truth, or suggest a good train of thought, by all means let the observations be made. If, however, the commenting is merely saying a few goody things about each verse or paragraph the less of it the better. Dr. Willis used to say that a running commentary which consisted in giving word about with the inspired writer was the poorest kind of pulpit exercise. Something depends too, we should think, on the nature of the passage read. A plain narrative passage may have its exquisite beauty marred by throwing in remarks that break the continuity. Something also depends on the elocutionary powers of the reader. An ordinary passage read with proper emphasis, inflections and pauses is already expounded. The proper reading of a passage brings out its meaning and force very much better than a commonplace exposition. The one thing to be aimed at is to have fervent, spiritual worship from the very beginning of the service. The thing to be fought against is the idea that praise, prayer and the reading of the Scriptures are merely introductory.

THERE is a terribly suggestive article on American cities in the last number of the *Homiletic Monthly*. In three years one-fourth the entire population of the United States will be massed in cities. Such being the case, one naturally asks, What is the moral tone of these cities? The reply is easily given. New York has a saloon to every 125 of the population, Chicago to every 179; Cincinnati one to every 124; and Brooklyn one to every 250. The saloon controls the ballot boxes in these great cities, and these cities will constitute one-fourth of the entire population three years hence. There is not, says the writer, an element in American life so threatening as the rum element which is entrenched in the cities. It will throttle the nation, if it be not put down. The most appalling fact, however, is thus stated: "The Church is fast losing ground relatively as to population, and actually as to its hold on the masses, and its restraining and evangelizing influence on the whole community." In Brooklyn, the City of Churches, "statistics prove that the Church instead of keeping pace with the increasing population, has fallen so far behind that its relative strength to-day is tenfold less than it was three decades ago." These facts and many others teach a lesson to Canadian cities and towns. Let the Church vigorously resist the beginnings of the evils that are throttling the American cities. Let there be no parleying with the saloon, the Sabbath newspaper and the other forms of evil that are threatening to wreck the Republic. The time to grapple with them is not when they get a hold.

THE late election might be made a means of grace to thousands of people in this Province. In fact, a Provincial revival might grow out of it. The revival would come on this condition: Let every unconverted man who talked about the whole Bible during the contest sit down, and prayerfully read the Bible until

the next local election comes round. This alone, we believe, would bring about a Provincial revival. A man would not read the Bible long himself in the proper spirit until he began to discover that the book is a good one for family reading. If he never had family worship, he would soon set up his family altar. Reading the Bible privately and in his home, he would soon discover that the Bible says a good man should keep the Sabbath and attend church. If formerly a Sabbath breaker, he would soon, under the influence of constant Bible-reading, keep the Sabbath and attend the house of God. In fact, constant, prayerful reading of the whole Bible, or even of the Scripture Selections, would soon make a revolution in this country. We never heard or read of a general election ending in a revival of religion, but, positively, if all the men who spoke about the Bible during the late contest would sit down and read it prayerfully, we might have a great Provincial awakening as a result of the late discussions. One thing is very clear. Any man who spoke about the whole Bible during the contest, but, now that the contest is over, never reads it in his family or privately, or never attends the house of God or keeps the Sabbath, lays himself open to the terrible charge of having used God's Holy Word for purely electioneering purposes.

**THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.**

AMONG the institutions that in the present century have grown out of the expansive and progressive tendencies of the Protestant Churches, the Evangelical Alliance occupies a prominent place. It may be that it does not at present evoke the enthusiasm it did in the earlier years of its progress. This certainly does not arise from diminished interest in the main objects for which the Alliance was instituted. Never before was there a spirit of greater amity between all sections of the Evangelical Church than that now existing. To the influence of the Alliance much of that harmony and brotherly kindness is due, and the spirit of cordiality now so plainly visible may justly be regarded as prophetic of a yet larger realization of that unity of believers which Christianity unmistakably inculcates. One reason why the Alliance does not evoke the enthusiasm which might be expected is that Christian agencies have been so largely multiplied within recent years that they tend to distract. The energy and devotion hitherto concentrated on one or two objects are now diffused amongst many. There is in fact a division of labour, and properly so, in the Christian fold as well as in the industrial world. While all this is sufficiently obvious, it remains that the Evangelical Alliance has a strong hold on the interest, prayers and affections of the Christian people.

An illustration of this was afforded by the annual meeting of the Toronto Branch of the Alliance, held in the Metropolitan Church last Friday evening. There was a large attendance, representing every section of the Evangelical Church in the city. The Hon. Mr. Mowat, president of the branch, presided, and, in brief terms, expressed his satisfaction with the work done by the Alliance, making reference to the subjects suggested for intercession during the Week of Prayer. It was only natural in the circumstances that he should refer to what he considered an important omission. Many classes are made subjects of special prayer, but politicians are overlooked. Several years ago in the Assembly which the honourable gentleman leads, a somewhat lively debate occurred. A man in the speaker's gallery felt greatly disturbed, and began berating politicians to the stranger seated next him. The latter rejoined, "Do you ever pray for them?" "Pray for them" was the response, "They are past praying for." Whatever abstract theories some may hold on that matter it will generally be conceded that politicians are not past the need of being prayed for. One reason assigned by the Premier was that some were so ardent in politics that they would not scruple to do things in their political capacity which they would scorn to do as private individuals and business men. He thought, and most will say rightly, that the public conscience needs enlightenment in this respect.

Principal Castle gave a rapid but most interesting sketch of the rise and progress of the Evangelical Alliance. In isolated cases both in Europe and America there were large-hearted Christian men who longed for some visible manifestation of the essential unity actually existing in the Evangelical Churches.