

The Canadian Spectator.

VOL. I., NO. 22.

SATURDAY, JUNE 1, 1878.

\$2.00 PER ANNUM.

CONTENTS:

THE TIMES.
ENGLAND AND THE UNITED STATES.
RUSSIA AND ENGLAND.
THE TEMPORALITIES FUND OF THE PRES-
BYTERIAN CHURCH OF CANADA IN
CONNECTION WITH THE CHURCH OF
SCOTLAND.
THE ENGLISH COUNTY COURTS.
"THE CAD."
TEN THOUSAND MILES BY RAIL.

THE THREE FISHERS AND THEIR VOTARIES
—A FANTASTICAL LEGEND.
A PSALM OF MONTREAL.
PARABLES OF THE TIMES.
CORRESPONDENCE.
THE MILL OF ST. HERBOT, BY THE
AUTHOR OF "PATTY."
CURRENT LITERATURE.
MUSICAL.
S.C. S.C. S.C.

THE TIMES.

It looks as if we are to have some pleasant picnics here and there in the country before the general election, in order to prepare the public mind and help it to make up itself when the time shall have come. Mr. Costigan and Dr. Bernier have challenged the conflict in Victoria County, N.B.; Sir John Macdonald and the Hon. Mr. Cameron have addressed the electors of East York at Yorkville, and the Premier is about to strengthen the Liberal mind of the working-men of Toronto. The last named thing of the near future we are glad of, for Mr. Mackenzie will doubtless call together the mass of working-men, without distinction as to party, and tell them how near their interests lie to his heart, and how much better they can live under the flag of Free Trade than they could under the rag of Protection. He will, of course, make a new speech for the great occasion, and will forget, it may be allowed us to hope, to draw the contrast—so often drawn by his masterly hand—between the working-men now and those of the time when Abraham lived in Egypt and the Pyramids were being built. Some of his audience may call to mind that Abraham can scarcely be quoted as having lived in Egypt, and that the Pyramids had been built at least some months previous to his unfortunate visit there. But if the Prime Minister will let Abraham and the Pyramids alone, and fairly discuss this question of what is called a "national policy," showing how Free Trade will develop the resources of the country more surely and more safely, he will do something of real value to himself, to his party, to the working-men and to the whole country.

An English writer has ventured to write an article in the *British Quarterly Review* on "The First Ten Years of the Canadian Dominion," which shows some knowledge of the country and the work done in it. We are glad to see this and accept it as promise of the time when England shall think a little more of Canada. The *Quarterly Reviewer* is fairly accurate when he deals with Canadian history, giving credit to Sir John Macdonald for the prominent part he played "in getting the new ship of State fairly off the stocks"; also in his estimate of the mischief wrought by the Hon. George Brown, to which, jealousy of Sir John was the inspiration. But he (the *British Quarterly Reviewer*) is not so near the truth when he speaks of the present position of things, for he says: "The temper of political discussion, both in the House of Commons at Ottawa and throughout the Dominion, gives too much reason to fear that politicians are again settling into two factions, separated by no principle except the common conviction of the desirability of office." That is pardonable in an Englishman, for he is not on the spot. He does not understand the great, the sublime principle which separates the Liberal-Conservative party from the Reformers. It is a principle, says the *Toronto Mail*, "on which the future of this country depends; it is a principle so vital that if the opponents of the national policy could keep power we might write 'Ichabod' over this young and potentially great country; for its glory would depart before it well got on to the advanced hours of morning." We are moved—we are convinced—by the beautiful poetry and pathos of the *Mail*. What a dreadful thing to have no "national policy" and no glory of the Lord—all gone before we "had well got on to the advanced hours of the morning." The Conservatives and the glory of the Lord; the Liberals and Ichabod; who can hesitate? It is a question of future or no future; of heaven or—a Liberal Government.

We welcome with much pleasure the able and eloquent address of the Rev. Baldwin Brown, the Chairman, for the current year, of the

Congregational Union of England and Wales. Mr. Brown's subject is, "Our Theology, in relation to the intellectual movement of our times," and it is discussed with a wealth of historical learning and a breadth and comprehensiveness of view which leave nothing to be desired. People in England are evidently not afraid of facing the vast questions of theology and of life. And there are clearly many among them who have a perfect confidence that the Christian faith is able to bear all the intellectual and moral strain put upon it by this inquisitive and restless age. Mr. Brown is one of these. He affirms the main positions of a creed which may be called evangelical and even theologically conservative, but he discusses the great questions of the relations of theology to physical science, and to social changes, either in progress or near at hand, with a thoroughness and fearlessness that we find wonderfully refreshing. On one thing Mr. Brown is emphatic. He is dead against the proposal of meeting the exigencies of the time by closer or more stringent theological definitions. He believes that the truth can take care of itself, or rather that God will take care of it. He rejoices in the comparative liberty of his own denomination, and would extend rather than contract its freedom. Some of the members of the Union had held a meeting or "conference" with others, outside their own body, to consider whether the terms of communion between different Churches would not bear a little widening. They had been severely criticised for doing so, and it was understood that the Committee of the Union were about to propose a string of resolutions affirming the essentially "evangelical" basis of the Congregational faith. Mr. Brown, though in the chair, declared his regret at this policy. Nobody, he said, had questioned the evangelical sentiments of the Union. The question raised was not whether evangelical sentiments are true, but how far evangelical people may hold communion with other people, and that would decide itself by the experiment. People who had no affinities would not long remain together, so that the true cure for laxity of views is intensity of spiritual life. The resolutions were afterwards introduced and passed, notwithstanding the Chairman's expressions of disapproval, and the Congregational Union has solemnly affirmed—what nobody doubted—its own orthodoxy. But Mr. Brown's admirable address cannot be cancelled. It remains, and will continue, one of the noblest pleas for perfect liberty of thought delivered to any ecclesiastical gathering for many years. We wish that some church assemblies on this continent could be induced to consider it. They might then learn, before they have driven all the inquiring and honest intellects away from their communion, how great a mistake it is to stamp out free discussion like a malarious disease, and to wrap the Christian faith in swaddling clothes, as though it were a sickly child to be killed by a breath of fresh air.

The debate on the resolutions of the Committee followed the Chairman's address, and was ably sustained. Among the principal speakers were Dr. Mellor, Mr. Wilson, Dr. Parker, Mr. Allanson Picton, and Dr. Dale. Mr. Picton's speech was an earnest and pathetic plea for toleration and evidently made a deep impression on the meeting. Altogether, the effect of the debate was to make it evident that the time is gone by for crushing down the investigation of religious problems *vi et armis*. Every day makes it more clear that those churches, and those only, will hold their position and make progress in a time like ours, which provide the freest scope for thought in combination with the most devout intensity of the religious activities.

The Presbyterians are getting into trouble all the world over. The Scottish heresies are no sooner put down than questions arise in America affecting the position of time-honoured creeds. Before the General Assembly, now in session in Pittsburg, has been brought a resolution to expunge from the Apostle's Creed the sentence, "He descended into hell, on the ground 'that it is offensive as an unscriptural interpretation.'" Dr. Patterson, who moved the resolution, said he was actuated by a desire to support the Creed; that he would not press his motion, but had brought it forward just "to relieve his conscience." He was supported by Dr. Loyall Young, who said, in his opinion, three classes of Presbyterians desired to retain the clause. "One class cared nothing about it, and never used the creed; another class were opposed generally to changes in Church standards; and a third class were those who wished to glide toward Episcopacy. The Doctor could find no other class to mention.