

INTERNATIONAL LESSON SCHEMES

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The Canada Presbyterian.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 24th, 1892.

THE attention of all concerned is especially directed to the advertisement announcing the meeting of the Executive of the Home Mission and Augmentation Committees in St. Andrews Church West, Toronto, on the morning of Tuesday, 11th October.

IF there is much more said about Mr. Blake's appearances in England, Englishmen may be tempted to conclude that we are greatly surprised to find that our countryman amounts to anything over there. Is there any reason why a Canadian should not be a first-class man? Englishmen would think more highly of us if we had more self respect, and did not take colonial inferiority for granted.

THE annual vacation is a comparatively new thing in Canada, but it is a really good thing. A rest and a new start help a worker of any kind mightily. It is a good thing to stop occasionally and look at one's work from the outside. In the thick of the fight a man cannot see his work in the same light as he sees it in the quiet of his vacation. Canada affords splendid opportunities for recreation. The northern part of Ontario is one of the best recruiting places in the world.

AN idle man is to be pitied at any season of the year, but never so much as in August. During this month thousands of busy workers pack their grips, say good-bye to their work, and start for the lakes or the mountains or the sea-side, to have a rest and a good time. A chronic idler cannot take a vacation. His whole year is a vacation, and he cannot have the luxury of a rest, because he has never enjoyed the luxury of hard work. We sometimes pity people who have to work hard, and some of them are objects of pity, but positively there is no human being so much to be pitied as a man or woman that has nothing to do, and does it every day.

WHILE many other counties in this Province have formed Christian Endeavour Unions, York has been behind in this matter. With the object of forming a County Union, a Convention will assemble in Cookes Church, Toronto, on September 2nd and 3rd, the first session commencing at 2.30 p.m. on Friday, September 2nd. Good speakers have been secured, and ample time will be given to the discussion of all practical questions in connection with this important branch of Christian work. Full particulars can be obtained from Mr. Thomas Rennie, Secretary of Committee of Management, corner Jarvis and Adelaide Streets, Toronto.

THE colleges are deeply interested in the question of the missing two hundred thousand. Hard-headed methodical business men, with a weakness for figures, when asked for money to support theological education, will be apt to ask in return if the young men are being properly trained in pastoral theology. All the pastors in the Church have not been trained in Canada, and it is just as much the duty of the elder as of the minister to look after the stray sheep, but still the question of pastoral efficiency will come up. There is not much use in a young minister who knows the heresies of the tenth century, but has not the most distant idea of the spiritual condition of his own village.

DERANGEMENT of trade is not the most serious feature of the strike at Buffalo. No doubt the accumulation of freight there causes a vast amount of inconvenience and loss in many places and to many individuals, but a little time would soon rectify matters of that kind. The alarming feature of the case is the bad blood that seems to be permanently stirred up between capital and labour. The contest at Homestead actually amounted to civil war. There are 8,000 men under arms at Buffalo, and the whole militia force of the State of New York has been called out. How much worse could matters be even if civil war existed?

THERE can be no reasonable doubt that the loud swaggering of millionaires and railway magnates on the other side of the line has had much to do in the way of intensifying the feeling between labour and capital. The world has heard a good deal about the overbearing conduct of the aristocrats of the old world, and no doubt many Lords and Dukes have been disreputable bullies. There is no kind of lordling, however, quite so disgusting as the vulgar, ignorant American millionaire who has made a fortune out of the hard work of others, and who constantly thrusts his ill-gotten gains in the faces of his neighbours. So long as money enables men to do as they please, and millionaires are above the law, there will be constant war between the rich and the poor.

IT is amusing to read some of the predictions that are being made about the future of the Gladstone Government. The difficulties the old parliamentary hand has to contend against are represented as quite insuperable, and it is gravely asserted that his Government cannot last a year, perhaps not six months. Now, all that may be true, but the wish is generally the father of the prediction. People often pursue the same course in Church matters. If you hear a man predict that his minister is going to fail, always expect him to help to fulfil his prediction. He is pretty certain to work for the prediction at least negatively, if not positively. The man who predicts that a collection will be a failure, does not intend to do much to make it a success. The man who asserts that a Church debt can never be paid does not intend to help to pay it. Predictions generally indicate the feelings of the prophet.

THE printing of the "Acts and Proceedings of the Eighteenth General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada" is now completed, and the distribution of the volume is begun. Like the Church whose work and progress it records, it is growing larger every year. As formerly it contains the official record of the proceedings of the General Assembly, all the reports presented to the Supreme Court, and much valuable and authentic information concerning the work of the Church. Many people still cherish the delusion that the Church's Blue Book is merely a mass of dry and uninteresting details not worth anyone's while to read. We are convinced, however, that the most volatile individual who casually glances at the Home and Foreign Mission Reports, the Statistical Report and many of the others will find matters of surpassing interest embodied in these necessary portions of this valuable record of the Church's doings during the year. It is certain that if the ministers and office-bearers in the Church took a periodic course of Blue Book, their interest and efficiency in Christian work would be enhanced. Future Church historians will bless the memories of the compilers of "The Acts and Proceedings" long after they have finished their earthly labours.

NO one capable of forming an intelligent opinion on such matters doubts that the census enumerators are substantially correct when they find 230,000 more Presbyterians in the Dominion than the Church finds. Dr. Torrance says in his report that "There is every reason to conclude that the figures reported by the Government are substantially correct." Dr. Cochrane, we know, holds the same opinion, and both are first-class business men. The cold, hard fact the Church has to face is that while we have been talking about "this great Church," and passing resolutions on political questions, and legislating about the deceased wife's sister, nearly a quarter of a million of our own people in a population of only five millions are unknown to the Church and presumably uncared for by the Church. There is no use in concealing this fact, and no man who has the welfare of the

Church at heart can help fearing that there is something seriously if not radically wrong somewhere. The Church courts spend many hours on matters of very little importance, but when they are told in an official way that over two hundred thousand Presbyterian people in a population of only five millions are like sheep without a shepherd, the fact does not awaken as much interest as the putting of a name on the Standing Committee.

WHO has not heard scores of sermons on the relative importance of temporal and spiritual things? Congregations are urged to give more attention to the things that concern the soul and eternity, and less attention to the affairs of this world. Hortation on this line is one of the most common of pulpit commonplaces. Do ministers practise their own precepts in this connection? Do the Church courts give the most important matters the most attention? The General Assembly spent a considerable amount of time in putting one name on the Home Mission Committee, but it spent no time enquiring into the decrease in the number of Presbyterians in the Maritime Provinces, or in looking for the stray quarter of a million Presbyterians that the ministers and elders do not know as much about as the agents of the Dominion Government know. Presbyteries will probably spend more time this autumn in making verbal criticism of their minutes than in making enquiry about our 200,000 lost sheep. How can ministers expect their hearers to give superior attention to vital matters if the hearers know that in the spiritual courts of the Church the greater part of the time is often given to matters that are not only non-essential but trifling as well?

DR. COCHRANE is of the opinion that there may be a few groups of Presbyterian families in the older Provinces of the Dominion that are not reached by the Church, and are therefore not included in the statistics. Exploration is expensive and the Dominion Government can stand the expense much better than the Home Mission Committee. When exploration is asked, the Committee explore and give the newly found district all the help the Committee can afford. No doubt this is true in regard to a few Presbyteries, but the number is certainly few. Bruce and Barrie are the Presbyteries in which such groups would most likely be found, and there is a most efficient mission superintendent in these Presbyteries to watch the formation of Presbyterian groups. As a matter of fact he does watch and report them. If there are such groups in the older Presbyteries, more's the shame to the Presbyteries. We do not believe that unreported groups exist in one old Presbytery out of a dozen. In Dr. Cochrane's own Presbytery, for example, where is there a group? and the same question might be asked about a dozen others. The only possible places in Ontario where such groups can be found are the Presbyteries in the north-eastern part, and we doubt very much if there are many groups in these. Dr. Campbell will perhaps give his views on this question. As a matter of fact we believe that the great majority of the missing two hundred thousand are to be found in cities, towns and villages right under the shadow of our church spires. They are too careless to attend Church, and in too many instances the Church does not exert itself much in the way of compelling them to come in. More anon.

CHILDREN'S DAY.

CONGREGATIONS and Sabbath schools are taking kindly to the observance of Children's Day. The Sabbath School Committee have made all necessary arrangements for bright and attractive services on the day appointed. The last Sabbath in September, the 25th, has been selected as the day most generally convenient for holding such services. Owing to the meeting of the Pan-Presbyterian Council, most of the Toronto Sabbath schools have resolved to hold the children's special services two weeks earlier, on the 11th September. The Sabbath School Committee are cordially in favour of observing a day annually as Children's Day, and the General Assembly has given its sanction to the appointment. It is superfluous to add that Sabbath school teachers generally, and all who sympathize with them in the delightful and valuable work in which they are engaged, heartily approve of the effort to establish an annual Children's service throughout the length and breadth of the Church. In a short time it will be eagerly looked forward to with joy.