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The Canada Presbyterian

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, MANAGER.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16TH, 1895.

IT takes a brave man to keep up his spirits these hard times. Any kind of a human biped can keep in good humour where money is plentiful.

WHY cannot cities on this continent manage their water supply, their light, their street locomotion and other matters without the aid of middle men, as many British cities do. The millions made by middle men, who have valuable franchises, are just so many millions out of the pockets of the people.

THE presentation of Rev. Principal MacVicar's sermon on "The Office and Work of Elders,"—noticed in our "Books and Magazines" column—by a parishioner to each member of the session that looks after his spiritual interest would be a handsome act on the part of the parishioner, and might help the session to make a good start in 1895.

SIR JOHN MACDONALD left school, his biographer tells us, at an age when many boys begin their studies, in order that he might help to support his parents and sisters. Grover Cleveland stopped the study of law and taught school so that his widowed mother might not be dependent for support on the widows fund of the Presbyterian Church. There is a lesson here for the boys.

STRANGE is it not that many good people who are afraid lest what they call innovations should wreck the Church, never seem to be alarmed when the Church is in danger from want of funds. A proposal that congregations should repeat the Lord's prayer in public worship or engage in responsive readings of the psalms would raise more excitement than a deficit in every fund in the Church. How is that?

THE first professorship in the Presbyterian College of Montreal was offered to four "distinguished strangers," before the Synod saw the right man among their own number. It is not likely that any one of the four would have been as successful as the present principal has been. No time should be lost by any such attempts to fill the chair left vacant by the death of Professor Thompson. A good man is just as likely to be found in our own Church as in any other. Next April it may be reasonably clear that either of the men now doing the work, can, with a little more time and study, fill the position.

WHY should there have been so much said and written about the *Empire* giving accommodation to the *Globe* staff after the fire which destroyed the *Globe* office. As a rule the professional staff of a high class journal has no more personal feeling against the staff of a rival journal than one lawyer has against another, or a professor of Calvinistic theology has against his Armenian brother. The people on the back concessions who read the rival journals have a monopoly of the personal quarrels.

DR. REID gives the following comparative statement of receipts up to the 5th of January, 1894, and the 5th of January, 1895:—

	JAN. 5, 1894.	JAN. 5, 1895.
Assembly Fund.....	\$ 718 55	\$ 864 34
Home Missions.....	12,547 82	18,080 23
Augmentation.....	3,363 77	2,821 22
Foreign Missions.....	18 157 99	13 392 29
Widow's Fund.....	936 11	1 445 32
Widow's Fund Rates.....	1,632 82	1,648 58
Aged & Infirm Minister's Fund.....	1,398 47	1,304 45
Aged & Infirm Minister's Rates.....	2,043 66	2,219 48
Manitoba College.....	428 22	340 15

A CORRESPONDENT in our issue of last week touches a weak point in our Church work when he says that city, town and village congregations are much visited by agents, while rural congregations at a distance from railway lines are seldom visited by anybody. That is a sad fact. The pastor of a town or city congregation can hardly keep people out of his pulpit with a club. Meetings of one kind and another are so plentiful that it is sometimes impossible to find evenings for them, while many rural congregations have not even a missionary meeting. The result may be seen in the gaping, empty columns of the Blue Book.

ASPART at the end of the church year may be better than a deficit but it is not wholesome. A church in a good financial condition never needs to make spurts. The work that tells is steady all round work for the whole year. The giving that needs no spurt is liberal, systematic giving every month in the twelve. Besides spurts cannot be continued. A few liberal people should not be asked, at the end of each financial year, to do what the whole body of the people should have done during the year. The liberal souls may respond liberally but it is not for the interest of the Church that a few people should do what ought to be done by the many.

OUR good friend the *Presbyterian Witness* has this to say:

If all our congregations and all the members of our congregations were truly living, and in full sympathy with our LIVING HEAD, what a stupendous revolution would we witness! Well: let this be a year of life, and such efforts and deeds as shall prove that we are members of the body of Christ and that His life throbs in us unceasingly.

Yes, let this be a year of life. With increased spiritual life the Church would grow in numbers and influence, our funds would increase without any special efforts in the way of collecting money, and every good thing in our beloved Zion would prosper. With all our hearts we join the *Witness* in saying: "Let this be a year of life."

AN English journal quite friendly to Lord Rosebery tells its readers that a certain speech delivered by the Premier was too short; that it was unprepared and did not deal fully with several important questions; that he went astray in several sentences and had to begin them again; that he mixed a metaphor about the "advanced wing of the party shaking its fist in the faces of the more central members;" that the reporters had to put the speech into better form; and that his lordship did several other things which a high class speaker should not have done. Criticism of this kind helps mightily to elevate and maintain good public speaking. Praising all the speeches of friends and disparaging all the oratorical efforts of opponents is many times worse than no criticism at all.

THE *Interior* says: "There is not in the human constitution a more active passion than the thirst for dominance and power over other men." Has our Chicago friend been reading the life of Sir John Macdonald. Possibly. But more likely the *Interior* has been watching the efforts made to

obtain power in Presbyteries, Synods and General Assemblies. It is a sad fact that the ambitions of parliaments and other secular deliberative bodies are too often reproduced in church courts. The temptation to gain power in spiritual bodies is just as subtle and dominant as the temptation to gain power in political assemblages. Between the spirit that craves and schemes for leadership in parliament and the spirit that pines for power in a spiritual court there is not much to choose. The passion for power and display is, at bottom, the same everywhere.

WEARY of incessant strife about the Higher Criticism and other irritating questions many good people in the Presbyterian Church of the United States are longing for a genuine outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The *Herald* and *Presbyter* says:—

Every genuine revival of God's Spirit must begin in the human heart. It may be in yours, it may be in mine, but experience shows that it begins in the heart of some individual Christian. It may be the pastor of the church. It may be an elder, a deacon, a trustee or private member. It matters not who it may be, so it takes possession of a soul. Most frequently it begins with the pastor while he weeps over the desolation of Zion. He mourns, meditates and prays over the feeling of his own weakness, unfaithfulness, want of zeal or devotion. While so engaged, love for Christ and for souls is increased. As he meditates upon God's promises, his soul is fired with an increased faith in their truthfulness, preciousness and immutability, until he feels his faith revived. While he is musing, the fire burns on his own altar and begins to spread; then comes a revival of sympathy for perishing men. He sees with a new light the widespread desolation wrought by sin in the world. He dwells long and earnestly upon God's honor and glory, and asks himself, How can I promote it and increase earnestness and devotion among Christians? Out of the process of self-consecration grows the revival spirit. Like the fire, it diffuses itself; other hearts are warmed. It shows itself in more earnest prayer, in words of comfort and admonition, in tears of weakness, and in groans for neglectfulness and sin. Shall we have such a revival this winter in the hearts of pastors and people?

Shall we have such a revival as that in the Presbyterian Church in Canada this winter? Not a thoughtless crowd, and sensational addresses and music and a parade of converts, but a genuine outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Surely there is one human heart in each congregation in which the good work might begin.

A PRESBYTERY LECTURE COURSE.

THE statement is often made, and made in the vast majority of cases with too much truth, that young Presbyterians are growing up with little or no clear and definite knowledge of Presbyterianism either as to its doctrine or polity, altogether unable to tell why they are Presbyterians, or to give the grounds upon which Presbyterian doctrine and polity may be justified and defended. It is often a most difficult question to answer how this undesirable state of things is to be remedied? Though the pulpit may be used occasionally to take up some single point, it is not the proper use to put the pulpit to, to set forth in any systematic and extended way the special doctrines and polity of the Church, or enter into any full account of the origin and development of the standards and symbols of the Church. Neither can this be adequately done in the Sabbath school or Bible class as they are now conducted, or as it appears to secure the highest ends, the building up of the young in Christian life and character, they ought to continue to be conducted. Parents, also, for the most part, not very well informed themselves in these subjects, are not competent to instruct their families upon them.

How then is it to be done? A step taken by the Presbytery of St. Paul in the Presbyterian Church North, of the United States, would appear to suggest a method as to how the serious difficulty referred to may be met, perhaps as well as for the great majority it can be met. Last winter a course of lectures was given by members of the Presbytery on Church History. This winter another similar course is being given on Applied Christianity. Speaking of this plan a correspondent in one of the religious newspapers says: "The results of this effort of Presbytery to promote popular education have far exceeded the anticipations of those who devised the plan. The pastors of the Presbytery heartily co-operate in the scheme, though it entails much extra work. Last year, upon request of the churches, about 150 lectures were delivered within the Presbytery, twelve pastors constituting the lecturers. The audiences in country and city averaged about two hundred people, and a genuine enthusiasm was created. The course, this winter,