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The Canada Presbyterian.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10th, 1892.

THE *Christian at Work*, replying to a correspondent who protests against politics, says it would like to know how anybody can conduct a newspaper in the United States and "eliminate reference to all matters concerning which Democrats, Republicans, Prohibitionists, Grangers, and Alliance men differ." How can a live newspaper be conducted in any country without discussing scores of questions on which men differ?

IT is to be hoped that Presbyteries receiving liberal sums annually from the Home Mission Funds will avoid even the appearance of opposing the appointment of a Foreign Mission Secretary on the ground of expense. It would ill become a Presbytery receiving liberal sums for Home Mission purposes and perhaps enjoying the services of a Mission Superintendent to cry out about "salaries and offices" because the Foreign Mission committee ask the Church for help that they consider indispensable to the success of the work. That kind of advocacy is certain to do Home Mission work much more harm than good.

THE old saying that any man's place can be filled will be tested in London before long. If any living man can fill Spurgeon's place and carry on all his work the Tabernacle people would no doubt be glad to see him. The fact is any man's place cannot be filled. It may be occupied, but that is a different thing. Guthrie's place has never been filled. Beecher's place is not filled. Spurgeon's place will not be filled in this generation. Rarely indeed does any generation have more than one Spurgeon, or one Guthrie, or one Beecher. Of course the work of God always goes on, but there are many ways of going on, and few living men may see another who will make any such volume of work go on at the rate Spurgeon did. Even among lesser men it is not always true that any man's place can be filled. It may be in time, but the effort to fill some men's places often costs time, labour, worry and repeated failures.

SPURGEON'S faith in the Gospel he preached so long and so well seemed to increase as he came near the end of the journey. A few days before his death, while feeling a little easier, he wrote a most touching letter to his congregation, from which the following suggestive paragraph is taken:—

On looking back upon the Valley of the Shadow of Death through which I passed so short a time ago, I feel my mind grasping with firmer grip than ever that everlasting Gospel which for so many years I have preached to you. We have not been deceived. Jesus does give rest to those who come to Him. He does save those who trust Him. He does photograph His image on those who learn of Him. I hate the Christianized infidelity of the modern school more than ever, as I see how it sends away from sinful man his last and only

hope. Cling to the Gospel of forgiveness through the substitutionary sacrifice, and spread it with all your might, each one of you, for it is the only cure for bleeding hearts. Peace be unto you as a whole, and peace be to each one.

Christianized infidelity may do well enough for men to talk about when they are healthy and strong, but it does not cure bleeding hearts nor support men in the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

THE ex-priest business has become so popular that a Baptist minister from New Brunswick has been posing in Montreal as an ex-priest of Rome, and, of course, has drawn large audiences. He claims to have attended a Jesuit College at Listowel, County Kerry, Ireland, though the *Halifax Witness*, which seems to be deeply interested in the case, declares there is no such college. The *Witness* solemnly warns its neighbours that his course, if persisted in, must end in ruin. That Baptist ex-priest should come West at once. In Montreal they know all about convents already, and the Brother should not waste his time on people who have any number of nunneries right under their nose. Should he come West a few Presbyterian, and any number of Methodist, Churches may be thrown open to him. Bald-headed elders and class leaders will leave their own Churches and sit at the feet of the ex-priest who never was a priest. The trifling fact that the last ex-monk who made a triumphal tour through Ontario is now in the penitentiary in England should not be allowed to deter this New Brunswick brother.

A SENTENCE in Mrs. Jamieson's letter of last week will stand reproduction. Our Mission Bands and Foreign Mission Auxiliaries might do a good service by putting it in a conspicuous place in their minute books. Mrs. Jamieson says:—

"I was not indifferent to the heathen, but, owing the difficulties, though right in their midst, I could not accomplish for them as much as any Canadian lady who will give or collect \$70 a year and send it to keep a thoroughly trained Chinese Bible woman at work among her own sisters.

Mrs. Jamieson was for several years in Formosa, and had every opportunity of seeing the work done there by Dr. Mackay and his native assistants. Her deliberate opinion is that owing to the difficulty of learning the language, the difficulty of standing the climate, and the difficulties that always prevent a foreigner from favourably impressing a native, \$70 a year to keep a trained Chinese Bible reader at work may be of more real service than the personal efforts of a labourer sent from Canada. This fact should certainly stimulate and encourage Canadian ladies. Comparatively few of them can go to China, but a goodly number could manage to raise \$70. There is not a large Sabbath school nor a large Bible class in the country but might raise that amount. If a Bible class or Sabbath school sent an individual labourer the act would attract a good deal of attention. Be it remembered that \$70 may do more good than could be done by an individual labourer. Many are of the opinion that the great bulk of Foreign Mission work will yet be done by native teachers and preachers.

THE *Globe* thinks that Canadian Presbyterians are watching with some anxiety the contest in the American Church on Revision and on the Briggs case. So far as we have ever been able to diagnose Presbyterian opinion on these matters, the feeling is one of gratitude that the Canadian Church is permitted to go on with her work undisturbed by such burning questions. The effort of our neighbours to revise the Confession has not so far been such a shining success that anybody need want to imitate it. In fact, they have not revised the venerable symbol to suit themselves and may never be able to do so. The extreme wing of the Revisionists and the Anti revisionists are alike dissatisfied with the work done by the Revision Committee. If the Canadian Church does anything in the near future the thing done will probably be to draw up a short, comprehensive statement of our cardinal doctrines more convenient for modern use than the venerable Confession. Fortunately we have no Briggs, and therefore no Briggs case. Our pastors and professors have to work so hard that they have little time to shock the Church even if they wished to do so. No doubt we have an odd man here and there that would like to pose as a higher critic and become a sort of Canadian Briggs, but so far such efforts have not attracted much attention. The assumption and arrogance of Briggs, without his learning and high position, need not be taken seriously. With a thousand Home Mission stations to look after, our Foreign Mission work in its infancy and plenty other work of various kinds to do, the Cana-

dian Presbyterian Church can do quite well without a Revision Committee or a Briggs case.

THE law which provided Canada with election trials was no doubt intended to do good and probably has done good, though not nearly so much as its promoters expected. Evil checked in one place always breaks out in another. The only effectual cure for corruption at elections is the moral elevation of the people. But is there not a way of amending the present law so as to make it much more effective? Why not strike from the voters' list the name of every man found accepting a bribe? If instead of voiding the election on the first proven charge, all the charges were gone into and every bribed elector disfranchised for life or a long period of years, the constituency would be purified in at least a distinctive way. It might be urged that the judges have no time to investigate all charges. True, no doubt, but the appointment of an election judge or judges, whose duty it would be to try all election cases, would be a good thing. This would relieve the judges of much arduous work and keep them from contact with party politics. Two or three general elections followed by the usual number of protests and a general disfranchisement of bribed voters would clear up matters wonderfully. It has been urged that the present law is as fair for one party as for the other. A sufficient reply is that laws are not made for parties. Laws are made for the good of the body politic, and it is not for the good of the body politic that men who take bribes should escape and candidates who wish to conduct their elections fairly should be severely punished. Canada needs the services of the best men of all parties. How can the people expect their services under the present gross law—a law that punishes the innocent and allows the guilty to escape?

A PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS.

A SIGN of the times is visible in the proposal to hold, during the exhibition year in Chicago, a convention of all the great representative religions of the globe. We have been accustomed to Pan-Anglican, Presbyterian, Congregational and Methodist Conventions. The Evangelical Alliance is no novelty, but as an indication of the rapid rate at which, as the century is nearing its close, we are now travelling, we are apparently about to witness a meeting of representatives of Christianity, in its Protestant and Catholic form, Islamism, Buddhism, Parseism, and several other varieties of religion. In one sense the conception of holding such a conference is grand and comprehensive, yet is impossible to repress the question that will rise in the minds of many when they hear of the proposal, is it practicable, and if practicable what will be its probable results? It seems a preliminary address, setting forth the objects of this cosmopolitan congress, has been issued, but what that address contains, so far as we are concerned, is only a matter of conjecture. Those who have had the good fortune to see it, however, are disposed to embrace the idea with varying degrees of enthusiasm. Distinguished men like Mr. Gladstone and the poet Whittier have cordially endorsed the scheme, and several of the American Roman Catholic dignitaries pronounce somewhat cautiously in its favour. So far as appears none of the European or Canadian archbishops have as yet expressed their approval of the proposal. Bishop McLaren, of Chicago, and his brother Huntington, of New York, speak encouragingly and hopefully of the movement. The only Presbyterian thus far on record is Principal Grant, of Queen's University, who goes into it with his wonted ardour and enthusiasm. Joseph Cook writes: "I congratulate you upon the progress of your work for the Parliament of Religions. I hope it will not be on the one hand a battle of polite hostilities, nor on the other a mush of Christian concession. You may rely upon my doing all in my power to promote its usefulness." Dr. Storrs and Professor Simon, of Edinburgh, speak favourably on behalf of the Congregationalists. College professors of distinction give the proposal the benefit of their recommendations, and for the literary men, Oliver Wendell Holmes and Sir Edwin Arnold express their sympathy with the project.

To give the reader an idea of what is contemplated, the following statement is made:—

1. To bring together in conference, for the first time in history, the leading representatives of the great historic religions of the world.
2. To show to men, in the most impressive way, what and how many important truths the various religions hold and teach in common.
3. To promote and deepen the spirit of true brotherhood