

## THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

PUBLISHED BY THE

Presbyterian Printing &amp; Publishing Co., Ltd.,

AT 5 JORDAN STREET, - TORONTO.

Terms: \$2 Per Annum in Advance.

ADVERTISING RATES.—Under 3 months, 15 cents per line per insertion; 3 months, \$1 per line; 6 months, \$1.75 per line; 1 year, \$3. No advertisement charged at less than five lines. None other than unobjectionable advertisements taken.

## The Canada Presbyterian.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4th, 1889.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *British Weekly* says that he heard an Oxford M.A. refer several times in the course of a lecture to the "ideal of education," and that he frequently hears allusions made in the pulpit to Martha and Mary and Leah and Rachel. The use of the "r" in that way should be left to the "rough, raw and democratic people of the colonies."

THE evidence in the Cronin trial has all been presented to the jury, and now the able lawyers are doing their best to secure the result that the prosecution and defence respectively desire. Possibly before this reaches the eye of the reader a conclusion shall have been reached, and though it is not safe to predict before events, the indications are strong that those accused of the commission of a crime of more than ordinary atrocity will have had their guilt brought home to them, and that they will be brought face to face with the last dread penalty of the law.

IN connection with the Mormon system there have been some recent startling disclosures. It seems that as in almost all false systems there is an *imperium in imperio* connected with it. Those who pass through the Endowment House are required to take oaths that no man can take without incurring guilt and debasement of his humanity. They are sworn to commit and to conceal, for the benefit of the Church, the gravest of crimes. These facts have been testified to under oath by those who have renounced Mormonism. So deeply have the State authorities been impressed by these revelations that they have refused to confer the rights of citizenship on those who have passed through the Endowment House. Some of the Mormon refugees in Canada have expressed a desire for the establishment of an Endowment House in our North-West Territory. Before such permission is granted them the nature and purpose of such an institution ought to be thoroughly understood.

AS a general thing Presbyterians are not in the habit of observing saints' days, but the Scottish adherents of that admirable system of doctrine and polity are disposed, along with their fellow-countrymen of other denominations, to make an exception in favour of St. Andrew's Day. Many of our prominent ministers occupy the honorary position of chaplain to the various local St. Andrew's Societies, and they are by no means the least effective and eloquent orators at the festive gatherings with which the memorable day is usually closed. This year a more than ordinary number of special sermons of marked excellence have been preached by eminent Canadian pastors, most of whom embraced the opportunity to discuss questions of great importance and of present public interest. Much as these patriotic Scotchmen and sons of Scotchmen prize the old historic land, they are equally fervid in their loyalty to Canada, for whose welfare, moral and spiritual, they are devoting their best energies.

THE Conference on Prison Reform that met in Toronto last week grappled with some perplexing problems, and did it in a practical way. The proposal to send a deputation of influential men to the different county councils of the Province is a good one. Gaols can be enlarged by county councils, and by them alone. There is nothing to be gained by continually going to the Ontario Government about such matters. The Government have not the power to enlarge or alter gaols. It is not at all likely that many would need to be greatly enlarged. In many counties the criminal population is happily small, and very slight alterations in the

county buildings would make the proper classification of criminals quite easy. The trouble is in the centres of population. There the tramps congregate, the beggars gather, and the criminals of various grades are found in large numbers. No doubt the deputation will make it plain to county councillors that raising criminals does not pay even as a matter of finance. That argument should be potent with the Reeve who has pledged himself to keep down taxes.

THE Venerable Archdeacon Dixon, after giving his opinion of the intelligence of the jury that convicted Harvey, asks if such a jury would be tolerated for a moment, suppose there was a great financial question at stake. The reply is easy, They would never be put into the box. Great financial questions are usually tried by special juries. Would the Grand Trunk Railway, or the Canadian Pacific, or one of the banks, or an insurance or loan company leave a case involving \$5,000 or \$10,000 to any jury that might happen to be called? That is not their mode of doing business. We quite agree with the Venerable Archdeacon when he describes Harvey's death as "a legalized blot on justice and truth." Very few more such blots will inevitably lead to an uprising of the people against capital punishment. It is not at all improbable that the jurors expected the executive would interfere. If so, their expectations have not been realized, and thousands of the best people in Ontario believe that a citizen was hanged last Friday morning in Guelph who was irresponsible for his actions when he committed the deed that sent him to the gallows.

DR. DANIEL CLARK of this city is a specialist in mental disease of more than continental reputation. He swore positively that Harvey was irresponsible for his actions when he took the lives of his wife and daughters. His opinion was confirmed by the sworn testimony of three other specialists in mental disease. A fifth specialist has since declared in a letter to the press that he was ready to go into the box and swear that Harvey was insane. If the Minister of Justice ever had a reputation as a specialist in criminal law it never got beyond the bounds of Nova Scotia. It is extremely improbable that he knows anything more about insanity than any lawyer in ordinary practice. And yet though four men who have made a life study of insanity declared Harvey insane, the Minister of Justice without any special knowledge of insanity, refuses even to issue a commission to enquire into the case. Was the sworn testimony of four trained experts in mental disease not enough to raise a doubt about the prisoner's mental condition? If not then there is no use in offering the evidence of medical experts in any case. Ignorance must prevail even though it sends men to the gallows.

THE *Christian-at-Work* quotes the following sentence, and a noble one it is, from Dr. King's recent lecture on the Separate School question.

The public school is to be the seed-plot of noble character, of generous virtues, and not simply of scholastic attainments; if it is to furnish society with good citizens and not simply with smart arithmeticians or possibly with apt criminals, there must be found in it not only methodical instruction and careful intellectual drill, but amid all else, as the occasion offers or requires, moral teaching and moral influence. The presiding genius in every school, a genius which may be often silent, but which should never sleep, ought to be a lofty and generous morality.

Our contemporary observes that

These are true and earnest words, and they cannot be too strongly emphasized at this time. We believe, also, with Dr. King, that moral teaching to be successful must have its basis upon the great truths of revealed religion, and be enforced by its considerations. We are aware that the difficulty arises here of discriminating between religious instruction and instruction that savours of sectarianism. But this discrimination can easily be made by those who have a mind to do it, and it should form no obstacle in the way of the introduction of higher and nobler aims in the training of our public schools.

Yes, the discrimination can easily be made by those who have a mind to do it. The trouble arises with those who have a mind not to do it.

THE Minister of Justice is reported as saying that he would give no reasons for refusing to appoint a commission of experts to inquire into the mental condition of the unfortunate man Harvey who suffered the extreme penalty of the law in Guelph last Friday morning. Probably it is just as well for the learned gentleman's reputation that he did not condescend to lay his reasons before the public. Had he done so his logic might have been found as faulty as it was found last spring when he reasoned against the disallowance of the Jesuit

Estate Bill. His long and laboured argument on that question failed to convince thousands and his reasons for not making further inquiry into the mental condition of Harvey might have been found equally futile. The learned minister asks far too much when he asks the people to assume that he is right. The law officers of the Empire were not above telling the people why they commuted the sentence of the woman Maybrick and our Minister of Justice might not have been above following their example. Of one thing the Minister may rest assured and that is that twice within nine months he has shocked the feelings of thousands of Canadians in a manner that they have not been shocked for half a century.

## PRISON REFORM.

THE indirect as well as the immediate influence of Christianity is observable in many directions. There is only too abundant room for the complaints frequently made that there is much superficial religion abroad, that there is too much divergence between profession and practice. It cannot, however, be doubted that wise religious thought and true religious feeling are being directed into practical channels of good-doing in many and widely different spheres. People animated by Christian and philanthropic motives have of late been turning their attention to the condition of our criminal population, with the earnest desire of performing the part of the good Samaritan to those lying by the wayside of life, wounded and bleeding. Such philanthropists have outgrown the idea that society has no other duty to its criminals but to throttle them and thrust them fiercely behind bolts and bars, as has been too often the case. The notion that all the treatment malefactors require should be vengeful and punitive is no longer entertained by any one who gives the subject a moderate amount of serious consideration. It is beginning to be understood that society owes it to itself and to the criminal class that its dealings with them should be disciplinary, and, if possible, reformatory. Unfortunately society has been so busily occupied with other things that a satisfactory method on an adequate scale has never yet had a fair trial.

All beneficent moral and social reforms require time. Really good work cannot be got over and done with in a hurry. Wrong ideas have to be corrected, faulty methods must be replaced by those that are more sensible and adequate for the accomplishment of the purpose for which they were designed. The public mind must be convinced and interest aroused. All this takes time, but the persistent and enthusiastic devotion of those who do the pioneer work of moral and social reform will in due time have a telling effect. This is well illustrated by the efforts of those who have given much of their time and attention to the reformation of criminals, and to bringing the prison system into harmony with humane and Christian principles. In carrying out their work of faith and labour of love they have many and formidable obstacles to encounter, but they work on with a degree of perseverance and hopefulness that will certainly lead to success.

In the endeavour to lessen crime and succour the criminal, a tolerable knowledge of human nature is absolutely necessary. Cunning is one of the most effective weapons the criminal is in the habit of employing. Endlessly varied are the fictions they tell in order to evoke the pity of the sympathetic listener, and when cornered, they reply with ready cynicism that were they to tell the plain facts of their respective cases, people would neither believe them nor give the relief that a fraudulent tale is sure to elicit. Few functionaries are so played upon as are gaol chaplains. It is all very well for prison reformers to have tender hearts. They must at the same time have hard heads and be wide awake to all the wily devices of those whose principal stock-in-trade is imposition. Prison reform should begin at a little distance from the prison. Attention needs to be directed to those who are going down the steep declivity that leads to criminal action. For this reason the duty of caring for the children who in their earlier years are exposed to malign influences is receiving at least some of the attention that it urgently needs. It is now generally understood that the indiscriminate huddling together of those of every age, on whom the law has laid its ungloved iron hand, ought no longer to be continued, and efforts are being made in Ontario to secure a proper classification, so that tender age may not be forced to consort with those who have grown hoary in crime.

The Conference that met in Toronto last week, at which the question of Prison Reform was con-