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The Canada Presbyterian

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, MANAGER.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4TH, 1893.

If there is a country on this planet with two millions of people that can take as many honours at the World's Fair as Ontario has taken, we should like to hear somebody name it.

The directors of the Chicago Exposition opened the gates on Sabbath to make money. They are losing heavily on the operation. The Government of Canada tax incoming Chinamen to make votes on the Pacific Coast. A few more outrages like that perpetrated on Dr. George Leslie McKay will most assuredly result in the loss of votes. "The best laid schemes," etc.

Judging from the reports of the annual fairs—and our exchanges are loaded with that kind of literature—the farmers of Ontario seem as able to get up as good a show as they ever were. Wheat is low in price, but most of the Fall Fairs are quite up to the mark. There is distinct improvement in some lines. Nobody on the fair grounds seems to be afflicted with hard times. That is a gratifying fact. Let nobody speak of hard times when the pew rent is due, or a contribution is wanted for the schemes of the Church.

Gladstone should stop writing on theological topics and give the world a few suggestive articles on how to keep young at eighty-four. The Grand Old Man is a marvel in many ways; but there is nothing about him half so marvellous as his sprightliness. In his racy description of the third reading of the Home Rule Bill, given in the *Globe* the other day, Mr. Buckingham says the only visible defect in the Grand Old Man's powers is his dullness in hearing. Otherwise he seemed more jaunty at one o'clock in the morning than most of the youthful members sitting around him.

Some of the dignitaries engaged the other week in uniting the different parts of Canadian Episcopalianism into one great Church, alluded occasionally to parts of the Presbyterian system of government that they thought worked well. Our neighbours are quite welcome to borrow anything from us that they consider useful, but they should be careful to avoid the weak parts of our machinery. For the most part our system is a good one for us. In fact it is the only one possible for us now, but intelligent, thoughtful people working it cannot fail to see one or two sad defects. Our long vacancies and the spirit they engender are the bane of Presbyterianism. Our Episcopal neighbours, whatever they borrow, should be careful to avoid the causes of the long vacancies.

An effort is being made in the Established Church in England to induce the Kirk of Scotland to join hands with the Establishment of Wales in opposing disestablishment. It is very unlikely that the Kirk will join any such alliance. Whatever may be said in favour of a national church in Scotland, nothing can be urged in support of the Establishment in Wales. Less than one-fourth of the people care anything about it, and the three-fourths are determined that it must go. The Kirk made a tremendous mistake a year ago, when it went almost as a unit

against Gladstone. The Premier was not anxious to raise the question of Scottish disestablishment. Had the Kirk let him alone the chances are he would have let the Kirk alone. The clergy forced the fighting, and now they are likely to have all the fighting they want. It is not probable that they will make another blunder by uniting their fortunes with a Church that is already practically disestablished.

If the facts are as stated, there is just one course for the Government to pursue in regard to the collecting of a poll tax on Mrs. George Leslie McKay, at Vancouver. That course is to refund the \$50, and give an ample and immediate apology to Dr. McKay for the contemptible outrage. No one expects Sir John Thompson, or his colleagues, to have any sympathy with Presbyterian missions, or any liking for Presbyterian missionaries. But Presbyterians, and all other good citizens certainly do expect and demand that the Government shall respect the law of the land. Mrs. McKay was clearly exempt from the odious law. The Government had no more right to tax her than to tax her husband, or her children. The taxing was a wanton violation of the letter of the statute, as well as a gross outrage on one of the most heroic self-sacrificing missionaries of this missionary century. The outrage is all the more exasperating, because at the time it was committed, Sir John Thompson and several of his Catholic colleagues, were careering in triumph through one of the most Presbyterian parts of Ontario.

There has just now come into our hands a little pamphlet, to which we would draw our Church's attention. It is entitled "Resolutions relating to the Foreign Mission work of the Presbyterian Church in Canada adopted by the General Assembly of 1893, with notes by the Rev. R. P. Mackay, B.A., Secretary of Foreign Missions." It contains outline maps of Northern Formosa, of India, and of a part of Northern China, showing our mission stations in these countries. Next it gives the names of all our missions fields or stations, of all our missionaries, with the date of their appointment, when retired, where they have done so, or of the death of those who have died. It also gives the amount of salary in some cases, we could have wished to see it in all. Then follow the resolutions, with helpful notes by Mr. Mackay, whose position gives the means to add much that is interesting with regard to our missions. The whole gives in a condensed form what could only be got by much toil in searching through lengthy reports, and will be found useful by all our ministers and others who take an interest in our foreign mission work.

Having seen from our exchanges that the Rev. Principal Grant, of Queen's College, Kingston, was present at the Parliament of Religions held at Chicago, a short time ago, in connection with the great Exposition, and had taken, as a Canadian representative, a prominent part in its proceedings, the Editor of the *Canada Presbyterian* asked him to favour our readers with his impressions of that altogether unique gathering. The response, hearty and prompt, was the letter which appears in this week's issue and which, we are sure, will furnish both pleasure and profit to our readers. "Such an assemblage," as the writer says, "could never before have been held;" not only so, but we shall greatly mistake if it do not in future be looked back upon and pointed to as marking the beginning of a new era in the social and religious history of our race. Just as the Exposition of 1851 was the first, but has not been the last of its kind, so this first gathering of men from so many distant lands, representing so many different forms of belief and worship, can hardly but be the precur-

sor of meetings of a similar kind which will follow; and if our Christian faith is in all respects what we believe it to be, it has nothing to fear from such contact.

According to the Blue Book there are about one hundred ministers on the roll of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, who are either "Retired," or "Without charge," or entered as "Residing within bounds." Speaking roughly, about one-ninth of the ministry of the Church are without regular employment as ministers of the gospel. A number of these are too old or too feeble to work; a few are engaged in other vocations; but the hard fact remains that a large proportion of them are doomed to enforced idleness by the prevailing mania for young men. Some of them can do as good all-round work as they ever did. Some can preach better than they ever preached. But the burlesque that we call our system for settling ministers, and the morbid clamor for youthful pastors have laid them aside. Can the Church afford to go on in this way? Some of us were taught in our youth to respect grey hairs. We were told that the Bible required us to honour our advancing years. Was our early education wrong, or can congregations do in their corporate capacity what would be a wrong and a scandal for individuals to do. We may plan and scheme and talk as we please about this great Church, but if the Church does not make its voice heard and its influence felt against this growing evil, there is no future for it that any good Presbyterian can look forward to with hope. God's laws cannot be over-ridden by the Yankee dead line of fifty.

Are committees, conveners of Sessions, and other people who have the making of preaching arrangements altogether clear of blame, for the large proportion of our ministers who are without regular employment. Is it not notorious that some of them yield to the growing clamour for young men, without any show of resistance, if they do not even pander to it. The worst feature of the case is, that the congregations and mission stations bonussed for years by public money, are among the loudest shouters against any approach to grey hairs. Did the funds that have supported these stations and supplemented congregations, during the whole period of their existence, come exclusively from young men? Were the hundred thousand dollars given last year, for Home Missions, given by boys? Nay, verily. Many a good old man, and grey-haired old woman denied themselves to contribute to that fund. Are the recipients to be encouraged in saying, "We'll take money from people of any age, but don't you dare to send a man here with one sign of advancing years, or we'll refuse to contribute." In the name of common honesty, we say, let the people who speak in that way, go and honour with their presence some church that has no regard for decency. They are not fit to be Presbyterians. It is more than time that this subject had a little light thrown upon it, and we propose to contribute a few occasional rays.

A COSTLY AND GHASTLY TRAFFIC.

A valuable article appeared in our last issue, by Thomas W. Casey, of Nanawee, on Ontario's Drink Bill. A very common argument used by those opposed to prohibition, or to any effective and thorough restriction of the drink traffic, is the difficulty that would be felt in supplying the deficit in the national revenue, which would be thereby created. This has always appeared to us a specially weak and indefensible argument. If the traffic is injurious to individual, and therefore to national well-being, if it is fraught with evil and danger, and if it can be shown, above all, that it is morally wrong, then why should a question of revenue be used to

justify its continuance? But it is shown in the article referred to, that every dollar of revenue raised from the drink traffic, costs more than one dollar in hard cash to get it, in the cost of jails, reformatories, the administration of justice, and in the support of a crowd of officials of all kinds, whose existence, to some extent, and whose duties almost wholly depend upon the drink business of the country. It is often said that the most effectual way to reach a man is through his pocket, and this argument may legitimately and ought to be largely used by all interested in the coming vote of the people upon the question of prohibition. Hundreds of clear-headed, industrious, sober men, who have no special interest in temperance or prohibition as a moral question, will lend their assistance and vote for prohibition if it can be clearly shown them that every year the drink traffic robs them of a certain amount of their hard-won earnings. The Provincial Prison Reports last published, give the cost of common jails, prisons, and reformatories at \$404,721 and the cost of the Administration of Justice, support of hospitals, charities, asylums, and such like, made necessary largely by drink, amounts to \$805,224, a total in these two items of \$1,209,945. This is a costly traffic for Ontario alone.

But if we ask what we get for this great outlay, what return of profit, benefit or blessing to any class, and give the most favourable answer possible, it must be confessed that, considering the worldly circumstances of those who pay the largest share of this bill, it is a piece of the most unjustifiable and astounding extravagance, to say the least. But when we consider the answer to this question in its less favourable light, which is also its true one, then nothing less could account for the existence of this traffic, or its continuance, than that those who support it or justify it, are smitten with a species of moral insanity, which, if it were physical, would warrant their being put in a place of confinement, both for their own safety and that of others. What do we really get for it? According to the testimony of no less an authority than the Premier of Ontario, supported by that of judges, magistrates, and those connected with the administration of justice, supported also by the reports of prisons, hospitals, and asylums, we get three-fourths of all the poverty, crime, and wretchedness, that exist in the country. This is a bald way of stating the matter, and if we look into it, and analyze it into its elements of idleness, vice, danger to life and property, and the morals of the young growing up, the commercial and moral ruin which it means, ay, and eternal ruin, the incalculable and unutterable misery in homes, to wives, and helpless, innocent children, the legacy of disease and misery it imposes upon those yet unborn, to curse society, then truly it is a ghastly traffic, and no argument which is worthy of a moment's serious consideration, no reason justifiable upon any pretence, can be given for its existence or continuance. Now that the people are to have an opportunity, that they have been invited by the legislature and the Government to pronounce an opinion upon it, to say whether they want to have it continued or banished from the country, let them speak with no uncertain sound, with such a loud, unambiguous, and commanding voice, as that deadly traffic shall, at no distant day, be banished from amongst us.

THE SUMMER SESSION.

In a late issue we reproduced from a Winnipeg paper a very full account of the summer session for theological study held in Manitoba College. It must be gratifying to the whole Church to know from the testimony of Principal King, that this new and important departure in our Church work, "has been in many respects a marked success," and that it has thus justified the "spirit of