

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

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TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1888.

THE Jubilee Singers are to give another concert in this city on Saturday, 9th December. The bare announcement is sufficient. They are sure to have a full house.

THE present session of Morrin College, Quebec, was opened on the evening of the 8th inst. The opening lecture was delivered by the venerable principal, Dr. Cook, on "The Development of Practical Christianity." The attendance of students is quite encouraging.

"A PLEA FOR TRUTHFULNESS AND GENEROSITY IN PUBLIC LIFE," the theme of Dr. King's timely and vigorous discourse on thanksgiving day, which appeared in a recent issue of THE PRESBYTERIAN, has been re-published, by request, in neat pamphlet form, and may be had at any of the city book stores.

WE know very well that our neighbour the "Guardian" is too plucky to be put down by the authority of a great name when discussing such a practical question as sleeping in church. Nevertheless we fling this sentence from Phelps at our neighbour, and ask him to watch for illustrations of its truth the next time he has a favourable opportunity. In his work on preaching Phelps says: "You will often detect a hearer deliberately composing himself to sleep when he sees the prospect of an elaborate discussion." An elaborate discussion is a good thing at times, and we submit that neither the sexton nor the minister is to blame if a hearer deliberately puts himself to sleep at the mere prospect of such an effort.

BEWILDERED by the conflicting criticisms of the New York press the morning after her *debut* Mrs. Langtry said in despair, "Will somebody tell me what kind of an actress I am?" Our friend Mr. Robertson, of Chesterfield, must have used some such expression when he read the criticism of the "Globe" and "Mail" on his pamphlet on the school question. The "Globe" says, in substance, that it is an able production, clearly and logically written. The "Mail" says that Mr. Robertson calls his pamphlet a "protest," but fails to make clear what he protests against—that he deals with "a compulsory voluntarism"—whatever that may be—that he "fights a man of straw throughout the bulk of his pamphlet"—that he, though deserving credit for his convictions, is not "to be complimented on the clearness of his vision or the soundness of his logic," and a great deal more of the same kind. If our good friend cares anything for the criticism of our leading journals, he must sometimes ask "What kind of a pamphlet is that, anyway?"

SATISFIED of all verbiage, the "Globe's" position on the school question is this: The act of the majority in putting the Bible in the schools is *compulsion*, and compulsion is a very wicked thing. The act of a small minority in keeping the Bible out may be compulsion, but in that case *compulsion* is a good thing. Compulsion by the majority in favour of the Bible is bad; compulsion by the minority against the Bible is proper and right. Let it be said for the hundredth time that the advocates for the use of the Bible in our schools never asked for compulsion of any kind. What they ask is that the Bible be read, and that pupils whose parents think the reading of the Scriptures hurtful may retire. The compulsion comes from the "Globe"

and those who think with the "Globe." The compulsion is *against* the Bible, and not *for* it. Practically applied, compulsion means that two agnostics in a school section, who are opposed to the Bible, shall have power to *compel* twenty Presbyterians to keep the Bible out of school. That is exactly what it comes to, and columns of quibbling, and refining, and hair-splitting cannot hide the fact.

THE "Herald and Presbyter" of a late issue has a timely and instructive article on the difficulty and enormous expense of establishing Church papers. In the west, south, and south-west over half a million dollars have recently been sunk in the attempt to publish Presbyterian journals. The one thing besides money necessary to the very existence of a Presbyterian paper is to have a field. What the "H. and P." means by a field is thus described:—

"A Presbyterian paper, to secure patronage, must have around it, within two hundred miles, a Presbyterian population of not less than 100,000 communicants. If every second family consisting of five communicants will take the paper where there are 100,000 members, it may be supported, but that number is far above the average of what can be secured, especially where other papers have been introduced by immigration or otherwise."

The "Interior" of Chicago has a constituency in Iowa, Illinois, and Wisconsin alone of 172,665 communicants. The "Herald and Presbyter" has a field in Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky of 167,311 communicants. The entire membership of the Presbyterian Church of Canada is only 116,883. These are scattered over the continent from Cape Breton to British Columbia. If a Presbyterian paper, in order to be successful, must have a constituency of 100,000 communicants within 200 miles, THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN has fallen upon rather hard lines, we have scarcely that number within a 1,000 miles. And yet there are people who ask why don't you publish a paper like the "Interior" or N. Y. "Evangelist"? There is no Presbyterian paper published in the United States equal to THE PRESBYTERIAN, and published under the same difficult condition. Half a million dollars have been sunk in the United States in the attempt to establish papers under conditions less difficult than those under which we have made this journal fairly successful. Do you see?

DISESTABLISHMENT IN IRELAND.

WHEN the Anglican and Presbyterian Churches in Ireland were disendowed and, so far at least as the future was concerned, disestablished, a few trembled for the consequences—fearing, as they did, that the liberality of God's people would be a poor substitute for the cash box of Cæsar in supporting and propagating the cause of Christ in that land. Some even went the length of prophesying that Protestantism would eventually die out of the country altogether or, at the best, become a very puny and very sickly affair. They have learned from experience a very different lesson, and it is to the credit of some of them at least, that they have publicly acknowledged their mistake and deplored their faithlessness. Instead of injury, the cause of Christ has received a very marked impetus for good by the change. There has been a stirring among what, in too many cases, were only collections of dry bones. The blessing of the Lord has not been withheld, and to-day the Anglican Church in Ireland, as well as the Presbyterian, is stronger, more active, and more aggressive, in the proper sense of that word, than ever it has been before in any part of its history. Let any one read carefully such a passage as the following, taken from a charge to his clergy, delivered about seven or eight weeks ago, by the Bishop of Meath. Referring to the recent outrages, he says:—

"But the dark cloud had not been allowed to burst over the country until, in the providence of God, the Church had been prepared to abide the fury of the storm. Had they been called upon to face a Land League agitation at a time when they were ministers of a State-protected Church, when they received their tithes from the poor, or even when they received their tithe-rent charge from landlords—some of them in very needy circumstances—how intolerable would have been their position as regards the obloquy and outrage they would have had to endure, and the straits to which they should have been inevitably reduced. Now, however, the very disaster which seemed most to threaten their downfall had been overruled for their good. Their separation from the State has taken away one at least of the handles whereby their enemies were wont to bring them into disrepute, and their dissociation from all connection with the land, whether as receivers of the tithe or rent-charge, had saved them from those fresh complications which an agitation such as the present would have brought about."

This negative advantage of freedom from the reproach of injustice and oppression which all Churches unconnected with the State enjoy, is not a small one; for undue privileges enjoyed by some at the expense of others, whether in the way of exemption from taxation or of receiving regular stipends from the public treasury, are sure to act as a hindrance to the progress and acceptability of such Churches, so far as the outside world is concerned. The Bishop of Meath feels this, and consequently rejoices in the freedom which his Church now enjoys. The gain thereby secured is worth a great deal more than all the pecuniary loss sustained by Gladstone's great measure, even though that had been much greater than it actually was. Nor is this all. Let any one read still further what the worthy prelate says about the increased liberality among the people who adhere to that Church, and he will find another illustration of the might of willingness, and the beneficial effect arising from Christ's cause shaking itself free from all entangling State alliances, as well as all cramping and deadening State endowments, and of its standing fast, in this as in all other respects, in the liberty wherewith the Maker makes His people free:—

"And what has been the result since the date of the Church's separation from the State? Not only had a sum of about a quarter of a million been since annually contributed for the sustentation of the Church, but the work of church building and restoration would seem to have been carried out with fresh vigour and liberality. In the work of cathedral restoration alone (including that of St. Patrick's) a sum of half a million had since been expended. Nor was this all. The cause of the orphan and widow, and the interests of those many Evangelistic efforts which the Church had been forwarding at home and abroad, had not meanwhile suffered. From a Parliamentary report of the condition of the Church in 1862, his lordship learned that of the ninety-two incumbents then holding livings in the diocese of Meath, forty-seven did not reside within their parishes, and of these nineteen were pluralists, who resided in other parishes and discharged their duty in Meath by proxy. There were then also twelve benefices without churches, and fifty-four without glebe-houses. Now, if they excluded four clergymen temporarily absent from ill-health, and two who for want of suitable residences within the parish are obliged to reside beyond its limits, but within easy reach of their duties, there is no incumbent in the diocese who does not live within his parish. It was also encouraging to know that there is now no incumbency without at least one church, and that instead of fifty-four parishes without glebe-houses, as in 1866, there are now only eight in that condition. Was it not a satisfaction, too, to remember that since the days when Alexander Irvine reviewed the work of church building and restoration that had up to that time been accomplished, all the principal parish churches in this diocese had been renovated, and some new ones built at a cost in all of not less than £20,000?"

When the heart is opened to receive the truth there is not much fear of the hand remaining closed; while, on the other hand, when God's professed people begin to think it a burden to support and propagate God's cause, it is a pretty sure sign that the things which remain are ready to die.

IS THE RISING GENERATION DEGENERATING?

A GOOD deal is said in certain quarters about the marked degeneracy of the rising generation. Many a wise shake of the head is given while the old saw is repeated, that the former times were better than these. But is there any truth in all this outcry about the growth of irreverence and godlessness, the increase of crime, and the accelerated downward career of the youths and maidens of the hour? We say, No. In all democratic countries there is, and will be, a certain amount of self-assertion, which, with some, may pass for irreverence, combined with an independence of thinking, which those who do not like to have their own opinions called in question, may denounce as impious. But, after all, where are the signs of this incoming flood of ungodliness among the young of our day? We fail to see them. That there is any amount of ungodliness, is beyond all reasonable question. But would those inveterate croakers point to any period in their past when this was not the case, and to a much more noticeable extent than it is to-day? The memory of the good things in times past remains, but there is a natural, and very powerful tendency to forget the drawbacks and shortcomings of those times. Parents, it is said, are not respected as they used to be. Is such the fact, who are to blame? To a very great extent, those very parents themselves. But is it, after all, a fact that the irreverence is so great as alleged, when compared with what was exhibited a quarter or half a century ago? We have never, we must confess, seen any very reliable evidence adduced in support of such an assertion. We make bold to say, on the