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The Canada Presbyterian.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12th, 1890

Presbyterian Lesson Scheme for 1890.

Copies of the Syllabus of the International Lesson Scheme in convenient form can be had at 50 cents a hundred, at the office of
THE PRESBYTERIAN PRINTING AND PUBLISHING CO., (LTD).
5 JORDAN STREET, TORONTO.

A SENSIBLE elder of the American Presbyterian Church writes to one of the journals asking why it would not do to use the Shorter Catechism at ordinations and ask the persons that are being ordained if they accept the Catechism as a summary of their faith? A very large number of solid Presbyterians would reply that it would do very well. The Shorter Catechism contains theology enough for any average elder or minister. In some respects it is a better system than the Confession, and perhaps very much better than the Confession will be when the American Church has revised it. A Church that stands loyally by the little Catechism, and teaches it to the young growing up within its pale, will never become either heterodox or weak. On the whole, we would rather take the Catechism as a symbol than the revised Confession if Dr. Briggs has much to do with the revision.

THE experiences of the past month should make us all more thoughtful and more prayerful, too. There are few families in the Dominion whose plans were not more or less interfered with by a cause that not one in a thousand thought of on Christmas day. Death has hurried many to their long home. Every morning journal has a notice of the sudden call of some one we know. One peculiar feature of the mortality has been the number of prominent and useful men who have been taken. Aged people and weak people have been summoned in large numbers. If many churches were thinned out last month there was no lack of powerful sermons for those who were kept at home. God sends His messages in many ways and the pulpit is only one of them. Empty pews in the churches and empty seats in the Sabbath school should have their lessons. They should remind us that we know not what a day may bring forth and that the time is not far distant when others shall fill our places and do our work. January was a dull, trying month, but it might be made an unspeakably great blessing.

BY the death of Senator Macdonald Toronto loses one of its best citizens, the Province one of its merchant princes, and the Methodist Church one of its most eminent laymen. Some men are Methodists and little more, just as some men are Presbyterians and little or nothing more. John Macdonald was a Methodist and a great deal more. He was an excellent business man, a ready, forcible speaker, a fairly good writer and a princely giver. In private life he was kindly and genial and ever ready to help the needy. His political career was a living refutation of the vile slander that party men are necessarily unprincipled and corrupt. In 1878 he faced defeat in Centre Toronto rather than support a fiscal policy that he did not consider in the interest of the country. Taking him all in all, we may not soon see his like again. The Methodism of Toronto has sustained some severe losses of late. The places of such men as William Gooderham and John Macdonald are not easily filled. But the Lord reigns, and will take care of His own cause. Men may come and men may go, but the good work still goes on.

A JOURNAL over the way says that in the selection of members of Congress, especially in the west, brains do not count for as much as bullion. Brains or bullion is often the issue submitted to the people, and bullion too often wins.

It was not always so. Many of the most distinguished statesmen of the Republic have been poor. Webster, Sumner and Henry Wilson were comparatively poor men. Millionaires fairly swarm in Washington now, and a statesman's standing there depends more on his bullion than on having a brain like Daniel Webster. So far in Canada brains count for more than bullion. Comparatively few of our first rank men are rich, but other things being equal, any one of them could carry any ordinary constituency against a mere money bag. Canadians like money well enough, but comparatively few of them worship the almighty dollar if another man has the dollar. It has often been said that in England they worship a lord, and in the United States they worship the almighty dollar. Both kinds of worship are essentially degrading.

WE do not share the opinion expressed by many that the utter defeat of the London Times in the Parnell case will have an injurious effect upon journalism. A journal, like a man, must stand in the end on its own merits, and if the Times displayed an amount of malicious stupidity that would disgrace the lowest party organ, then the Times must suffer, but that is no reason why all journals should suffer with it. Indeed it is quite conceivable that the experiences of the past few months may make the Thunderer a better journal. For generations the Times has spoken on all subjects with a mingled air of omniscience and infallibility. Recent blunders have shown that it is a long way from being omniscient or infallible. The oracular utterances of the Times have always been offensive to readers of good taste and sound judgment. If the great London organ will now change its tone and speak as if its conductors were human like other mortals it may still hold its own. The infallibility air was offensive in the Times; it is simply nauseating in its one or two Canadian imitators. They, too, may probably be taught before long that they are merely human.

THE business depression at present existing in Ontario should not, and we believe will not, make any serious difference in the finances of most congregations. The average amount paid per member and per family is so small that if you spread it out over twelve months no temporary depression need affect it seriously. Herein lies the beauty of the envelope system. Thousands of people will pay a small sum cheerfully each Sabbath that could not, or perhaps would not, pay that sum at the end of the year when multiplied by fifty-two. A man in fair circumstances can pay \$1 per Sabbath and not feel it much, perhaps not feel it enough to do him good, but if you asked him for a lump sum of \$52 at the end of the year he might feel it too much. There are, however, two sources of danger. The one, in fact the principal one, is that when everybody is complaining of depression, many people imagine themselves pinched who are just as prosperous as they are at any other time. The other is that business men who give really large sums annually may not find themselves able to do so. Still God's work goes on, and often goes on much better in a time of partial depression than in a time of inflation. A "boom" never promotes piety.

DURING the debate on Revision in the New York Presbytery the audience applauded one or two good points. The Moderator sharply rebuked them, told them that they had twice broken "the sanctity of the building" by applause, and asked them to behave better in future. Whether a little mild applause when a speaker says a real good thing breaks the sanctity of a church building or not is a question with which we shall not in the meantime wrestle. One thing, however, is clear. If a mild round of applause breaks the sanctity of a church, so does a snore, so does staring around the room, so does whispering, so does giggling and simpering and several other unseemly practices. If the man who feels so much interest in the proceedings that he claps his hands mildly breaks the sanctity, what about the man who feels so little that he is thinking about his business or his cattle? Of course two blacks don't make a white, but there is no sort of sense in denouncing expressions of feeling at public meetings and winking at worse practices. There is grim humour in saying that applause at a Presbytery meeting breaks the sanctity of the building. If so, how the building must suffer when two or three members of the court are on the floor at the same time proving—well, proving that members of Presbytery are human like other men.

DR. REID'S JUBILEE.

IT is not given to many ministers of the Presbyterian Church in Canada to serve in the work of the Gospel for half a century. The majority of its ministers are not suffered to continue by reason of death. Here and there of late years honoured men have been enabled to complete a fifty years' ministry, but the number of such is comparatively few. When this period of service is reached it is eminently fitting that the fiftieth year should be hallowed. A faithful ministry extending over a period so long is deserving of grateful recognition and usually when such occasions occur there is no undue laudation of those who have attained to years and honours. At all events a critic of the coldest and severest type could not venture to say so in connection with the celebration of Dr. Reid's jubilee that was held last week in Charles Street Church, Toronto.

At the last meeting of Toronto Presbytery the occasion was embraced for the purpose of making congratulatory remarks and the passing of an appropriate resolution. An incident of special interest in connection with the completion of his fifty years of ministerial service was the fact that Dr. Reid preached and took part in the communion service in the Church at Colborne where he had been ordained to the office of the holy ministry on the same date, fifty years before. The circumstances must have been unusually solemn and impressive, and those who were privileged to be present will not readily forget the impressions produced by the living words enforced by the consistent life of half a century.

The meeting in Charles Street Church was in keeping with the circumstances and consonant with the modest and unostentatious disposition of the worthy recipient of the honour and respect so freely and spontaneously expressed. The proceedings were entirely free from extravagant and formal eulogy, but even in regard to what was said the worthy doctor in his quiet and familiar tones remarked that without affecting any mock modesty he believed he was overrated. It is not hazardous much to say that in this opinion none in the audience would share. At all events the sentiment was not cheered, but was received by a gentle, good-humoured smile, as much as to say: "It is very like the doctor, but there, at least, he is mistaken." On the platform with him were Rev. John Neil, pastor of the Church, Professor Gregg and Rev. Dr. Fraser, of Barrie. The proceedings opened with devotional exercises conducted by Rev. Robert Wallace and Principal Caven. Apologetic messages for absence were received from Rev. P. Duncan, Colborne; Dr. Laing, Dundas; Dr. Wardrope, Guelph; Dr. Scott and Dr. Fletcher, of Hamilton. The Presbytery of Toronto was represented by a committee of which Professor Gregg was chairman. He read the address which had been prepared, as follows:

As representatives of the Presbytery of Toronto, we congratulate you on having reached the jubilee year of your ministry in the Gospel of Christ, and on the measure of health and vigour which, in the good providence of God, you are still privileged to enjoy. With gratitude to the great Head of the Church, we recognize the valuable services you have been enabled to render in the various positions you have occupied, as a stated pastor, as general agent of the Church, as editor of the *Missionary Record*, as Clerk of successive Synods and General Assemblies, and also as Moderator of the highest, as well as of subordinate, courts of the Church.

In the Presbytery of Toronto, which we represent, you are regarded with the respect and esteem which are due to age, wisdom and worth. In like esteem and respect we believe you are held by the Church at large, which, because of the confidence it reposes in you, ever seeks and generally follows your counsels in times of critical emergency.

Since your ordination in 1840 you have witnessed great changes and important movements in the Presbyterian Church, and especially in the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec. You have witnessed the growth of the Church from a comparatively small number of ministers, members and adherents, to its present numbers and extent. You have witnessed the unions which have been effected between different branches of the Presbyterian Church in 1840, in 1861 and in 1875. You have witnessed the development of our Home and Foreign Missions. You have witnessed the origin, work and endowment of our colleges, and the organization of the schemes which have been devised for the benefit of retired ministers, and of ministers' widows and children. In all these and other movements and enterprises you have taken an active and influential part; and to you, under God, the Church is largely indebted for its present position and prosperity.

While thankful for your past services, it is our earnest prayer that you may be long spared to render to the Church, in years to come, the benefit of your lengthened and ripe experience. It is our earnest prayer also that, with the highly esteemed partner of your life and all the members of your family, when the work of each on earth is accomplished, an entrance may be ministered to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

WILLIAM GREGG.

Chairman of Representatives of Toronto Presbytery.

This was followed by an address presented by the officers on behalf of Charles Street and read by Mr. James Brown, who made a few interesting refer-