

NOW READY.
THE PRESBYTERIAN YEAR BOOK FOR 1892.

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The Canada Presbyterian.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, MAY 18th, 1892.

ONE of the lecturers in Church history in Prince-
ton Seminary resigned the other day. The
students sent a delegation to the directors asking
that their representatives be allowed to appear be-
fore the directors and express their views on the
resignation. The directors refused to see the dele-
gates and the young men were not permitted to take
a hand in the government of the institution. Mani-
festly the directors labour under the old delusion
that students attend college to study. Princeton
always was a slow place.

IT is said that the roll of the American General
Assembly, which meets this week in Portland,
has scarcely a name on it known outside of the
Church. The distinguished men will be conspicu-
ous by their absence. Whether this is a calamity or
not will depend largely on what the distinguished
men were distinguished for. If for wire-pulling and
scheming to make themselves prominent as leaders
of a great Church, their absence from this and every
future Assembly will be a blessing. If for wise
counsel and judicious action, their absence may be a
considerable loss. A wise leader who has the good
of the Church constantly before his eye is a great
blessing, while a pompous Church lawyer who thinks
about himself every time he moves is often an un-
mitigated nuisance.

DR. PARKHURST manifestly has an original
style of speaking as well as of working. Ad-
dressing young men the other day he said:—

If you and I each of us have any wish to be a little re-
deemer, there is no other way to do but to put our feet
in tracks left behind Him by the great Redeemer. There is
earthiness, hellishness all about us, and about in the midst of
it all there are little celestial nests we have constructed, that
we plume ourselves in, viewing with birds' eyes the landscape
underneath, sorry for the horrible things we witness or that
we suspect, regretting the broad belts of hell with which
earth is streaked, but willing that people should stew in the
bubbling, spluttering abominations of their own misery and
iniquity, rather than quit our own paradise for the sake of
pulling them out.

"Celestial nests" is a capital name for some
Churches. The occupants of the nest plume them-
selves, admire their own feathers, criticize the
feathers worn by the occupants of neighbouring
nests, look down patronizingly on the landscape un-
derneath, but do nothing to save men from the
"belts of hell" that surround the nest. Dr. Park-
hurst clearly understands the situation and knows
how to describe it.

AFTER the keeper of the vile den, which Dr.
Parkhurst's search light revealed, was con-
demned to a term of imprisonment, she was in-
terviewed by the representative of a New York
journal. Her defence is curious, to say the least.
There is no regret for the infamous life she was
leading, no expressed desire for amendment. Her
case is only one more illustration of the degrad-
ing and demoralizing effects of a sinful life. Accord-
ing to her statement she is unconscious of having
done anything wrong. The curious part of her
statement is the attack she makes on Dr. Park-

hurst, whose exposures of social crime have made
her doubt the reality of religion! Up to that time
she claims to have been a good Presbyterian, and
that she was descended from a stern and uncom-
promising stock, one of her ancestors having opened
a vein that he might sign the covenant with his
blood. Whatever her ancestry, there can be no
doubt of her descent. From a godly covenanter to
the profession in which she was engaged the fall is
great and pitiful.

PRESBYTERIALLY considered, Peterborough
does not need to take a back seat in any com-
pany. St. Pauls Church might be called St. Pauls
Cathedral. It is large enough for a cathedral, and in
a young country like Canada where new things are
covered with moss might pass for one. As most of
the pews are on the ground floor when the people
are well out, as Dr. Burns used to say, Brother Tor-
rance must feel as if he had about an acre of Pres-
byterianism before him. St. Andrews Church is a
solidly-built structure and crowns a beautiful rising
ground on the western side of the town. The new
pastor came just in time to get the benefit of a sud-
den increase in the population, and we were told the
church is fast filling up. On one side of the church
is a solid stone school-room, and on the other a com-
fortable-looking manse in which we believe the Rev.
D. J. Macdonnell spent the youthful days of his
ministry and prepared himself for shouldering
augmentation and other ecclesiastical burdens.
Near by stands the former home of one whose liberal
gifts will be long remembered. Her Christian mun-
ificence is doing good work in many fields, though
the house on the hill knows her no more. A short
distance to the north stands the hospital that bears
her name, and many a weary sufferer there will bless
the memory of Mrs. Nicholls.

AFTER all that has been said against the Aug-
mentation Scheme, there is not at this mo-
ment a Scheme of the Church that can show bet-
ter work for the length of time that it has been in
existence. No less than 186 congregations have
been put on the self-sustaining list in a few years.
Some people have the idea that the same congre-
gations have been on the list all the time and are
helped from year to year, while as a matter of fact
nearly 200 have been helped into the position of
self-sustaining congregations. Considering the op-
position that the fund has had all along to contend
against, considering the indifference it has had to
encounter in many quarters, and stolid indifference
is often worse than open opposition, considering the
fact that too many people believe in the unity of
the Church only when unity costs nothing, the
fund has been a pronounced success. One of the
cries it has yet to live down is that the fund is used
to bolster up inefficient ministers. As a matter of
fact it leads to the removal of such ministers. Some
people still imagine that it is a ministers' fund. The
fact is that the fund is for the benefit of weak con-
gregations. The people, not the minister, are
helped, and helped on the Scriptural command,
never yet successfully assailed, that the strong should
help the weak.

THE meeting of the Synod of Toronto and
Kingston held last week in Peterborough was
thoroughly enjoyable and profitable. The abound-
ing good nature of the Moderator, Dr. Parsons, the
quiet, efficient and courteous manner in which the
veteran Clerk, Dr. Gray, discharges his duties, and
the good spirit which pervaded the conference held
before the meeting, were some of the factors that
helped to put and keep the Synod in the best of
working humour. Partly because the members
enjoy each other's company as well as for other
reasons the Synod declined to take any steps in the
direction of dismembering itself. As Principal
Grant observed, the better the members know each
other the more they respect each other, and each
meeting makes the Synod a more united body than
it was before the meeting was held. Whatever may
be said about conferences and conventions in the
abstract there is not the least doubt that the annual
conference held by this Synod does good. The
utility of such meetings cannot be settled as an
abstract question. Whether a conference is a good
thing or a poor thing, a waste of time or time well
used, depends entirely upon what kind of a confer-
ence it is. The conference held last week was said
by good judges to be the best the Synod ever held,
and so long as the members continue to receive
benefit from their discussion of vital questions per-
taining to Christian life and work they will no doubt
continue to hold their annual conference.

PETERBORO' is a good town, a town that
might be a city and rank municipally with
such youthful cities as Guelph, St. Catharines, Belle-
ville, Brantford, Stratford and St. Thomas. The
population is large enough for a city, but whether
the citizens are too modest to assure urban hon-
ours or too economical to take upon themselves
urban responsibilities we did not ascertain when
attending the meeting of Synod. Whether mod-
esty or economy, the motive is a good one. Ontario
has probably more than one youthful city that would
get on just as well in town clothes. Peterboro' is a
good town to live in. It is also a good place to get
sick in, for there are two magnificent, looking hos-
pitals there, one on each side of the town. It would also
be a good place to finish one's course in, for the
cemetery, beautifully situated on a bend of the river,
is one of the loveliest spots we have seen for many a
day. What more need be said about Peterboro'?
Yes, there is one more good thing to be said.
Peterboro' has two live newspapers. They made
excellent reports of the meeting of Synod.

THE *Christian at Work* has a "symposium" on
the question of settling Presbyterian minis-
ters. Ten writers wrestle with the problem and
there are more to follow. All the writers agree in
saying that a great evil exists, but not one of the ten
is quite sure that he can suggest a plan by which
vacant congregations and unemployed ministers
may be brought together. Our contemporary, hav-
ing failed to get a practical plan from any of its con-
tributors, goes down to the roots of the question in
this way:—

The first and indispensable step lies in the inculcation of
a new disposition on the part of both Churches and ministers.
A greater desire to hear and practise the truth, and conse-
quently of repression of the "itching ear" that is always
yearning after the impossible, or at least the impracticable,
would in the outset correct much of the trouble. A greater
willingness on the part of some idle ministers to do God's
work in any sphere to which Providence points the way—
even though self-denials lie in there—would help remedy a
portion of the remaining trouble. A committee, discreet and
earnest, might well take the whole matter in charge.
More grace would remedy no small part of the evil
without any change of machinery. The people
actually wanted a pastor for spiritual purposes in-
stead of wanting him, as too many do to "raise a
debt" or "draw a crowd," and if ministers would
cease scrambling for certain kinds of pulpits and
work where they can get work, the number of idle
or Churchless ministers and of vacant congregations
would soon decrease. There is something more
needed than a change of machinery, though that is
needed badly enough.

*THE SYNOD OF TORONTO AND
KINGSTON.*

THE attendance of members was not quite so
large at the meeting in Peterborough as on
former occasions when the place of meeting was
more central. In this, however, there is no reflec-
tion on the choice made a year ago. Nor is there
room for regret that the beautiful inland town was
selected. On all sides it is acknowledged that the
meeting was one of the most delightful, enjoyable
and profitable since district Synods were organized.
The kindness and hospitality of the people could not
have been surpassed. The reason for the compara-
tively small attendance is due to other causes than
reluctance to visit a town which, for most of the
members, is easily reached and which affords every
facility for holding a successful meeting.

The preliminary conference this year was unusu-
ally interesting and profitable. The programme was
prepared with excellent judgment, and with one
exception was carried out, the exception being due
to the unavoidable absence of the brother appointed
to introduce one of the topics. The time, however,
was profitably filled in, and no apparent failure was
observable. Another commendable feature was
visible in the fact that all the brethren appointed to
introduce the various subjects had made conscientious
preparation. There was nothing perfunctory
or slipshod about any of the papers read. They
all of them bore evidence of careful and thoughtful
study. While some of them were of a doctrinal
cast—and very properly so—all of them were directly
practical in their bearing and evangelical in spirit.
The suggestive paper by Prof. McLaren on "The
Nature of Sin" was a masterpiece of theological
lucidity, opening up as it did the way for interesting
and profitable discussion. In line with it came the
excellent and neatly expressed paper by the Rev. B.
Canfield Jones, of Port Hope, on "The Conse-
quences of Sin." The same can also be said of the
address by Rev. R. D. Fraser, of Bowmanville, and