

## 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 covenant 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 difference  
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 assume 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 conscien-  
tious 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