

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

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TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1882.

We understand that the Rev. James A. R. Dickson, of Galt, has successfully passed his examination in the first department for B.D., in the Montreal Presbyterian College.

A CASE came before one of the Courts in Osgoode Hall the other day in which the principal witness spoke Gaelic, and nothing but Gaelic. The commissioner appointed to take the evidence speaks Gaelic, and the solicitors on both sides speak Gaelic well. Who says that the Gaelic is dying out in Canada?

IT affords us pleasure to announce that the Jubilee Singers, from Fisk University, during the coming week, will give three of their unique musical entertainments in the Horticultural Gardens, commencing next Monday evening. No words of commendation are necessary; they will command full houses. For particulars, see advertisement in another column.

OUR minister is a dull preacher. Possibly. Does the following extract from a work by one of the Princeton professors throw any light on the matter?—

"An attentive and sympathizing congregation can hardly fail to develop speaking talents, and powers of eloquence in their pastor, of which in other circumstances he might never have become conscious, nor given any manifestation; whilst an inattentive, unsympathizing and stupid people will exert a strong influence to dwarf the faculties, and put out the intellectual light of their minister who might otherwise have attained to no inconsiderable excellence as a pulpit orator."

DR. SPEAR, of Brooklyn, gives his opinion of the "faith-cure" school in this pithy way:

"If you will take out the impostors, the Lord's silly people, and the Lord's singular people from the faith-cure school, I think you will have to shut up the school altogether. There will be nobody left either to preach or believe the doctrine."

Take away the "impostors," the Lord's "silly" people, and the Lord's "singular" people, and you break up a good many schools besides the "faith-cure" one. Nine-tenths of the erratic religious movements on earth are carried on by "impostors," God's "silly" people and His "singular" people. Ninety-nine out of every hundred men who give trouble in congregations belong to one of the classes mentioned. The hundredth is a known disturber, who should not have been allowed to trouble anybody.

A CASE of some interest to clergymen came before one of the Courts in Montreal the other day. Objection was made to the Rev. Mr. Roy, a Congregational minister, giving in evidence facts that were made known to him in his capacity as spiritual adviser. Mr. Justice Jetté held the objection good, according to the Quebec Code, and excused Mr. Roy. How would a similar case be decided in Ontario? Supposing a prisoner before trial should seek spiritual advice from one of our ministers, and in his confidential interview with that minister should acknowledge his guilt, in whole or in part, could the minister be put into the witness box and forced to tell what the prisoner told him? The same prisoner might tell his counsel anything, and no Court in Canada would think of asking the lawyer to reveal what he knew. Are the relations between a prisoner and his counsel more sacred than those between a prisoner and his spiritual adviser? We know now what the law is in Quebec, but may not know in Ontario until some Ontario minister refuses to reveal what some unfortunate conscience-stricken offender has told him.

CONGREGATIONS, like men, have a character. Here is one that has always been noted for unanimity,

liberality, activity, and general efficiency. Everybody knows it is a first-class congregation. Here is another that has always quarrelled. As long as any two of the "old set" are above the sod they must quarrel. They have quarrelled so long that they consider a meeting tame unless it ends in a row. Here is a third that has starved five or six ministers, and is trying how little they can get another to live on. There is a very peculiar congregation—they wear the knees out of their pants praying at special services during winter, and wear out another pair hacksiding during summer. Then there is the fault-finding congregation—the whining congregation—the mean congregation—the cold congregation—the congregation that never comes out, and the congregation that runs after every demagogue that comes into the neighbourhood. Do those people who are everlastingly talking about the different kinds of ministers, remember that there are different kinds of congregations? There are some poor enough preachers, but there are some poor enough congregations, and were it not that they have souls to save, no peace-loving, sensitive man should be asked to live among them. What is the character of *your* congregation?

THE late meeting of the Anglican Synod of Huron was brought to an untimely end by an irrepressible member calling the attention of the Court to the fact that there was not a quorum of the laity present. A member threw some light on the situation by this illustration:—

"A heavily-loaded waggon was being drawn up a steep hill by a tired team of horses, and had nearly reached the top when a man came along with a big donkey and hitched him on behind, drawing down hill, and so stopping all progress."

Do you ever see that donkey around your congregation? The *Manse* waggon is near the top of the hill, and a new house for the minister would soon be up, but the *donkey* hitches himself on behind, and draws the waggon back. The new *Church* waggon is moving up, and would soon gain the summit, but the *donkey* draws its back. The *Home Mission* waggon is making good progress, but the long-eared fellow stops it. The *Foreign Mission* waggon is moving on well, but the everlasting *donkey* hitches himself on and draws it back. Try to increase the minister's salary, and the donkey is sure to be there at his old business. Start any enterprise in *son's* congregations, and the donkey is sure to hitch himself on the hind axle, and pull the congregational waggon back. Pulling down hill is always easy. Who is the donkey in your congregation? Are you?

ENDOWMENT OF KNOX COLLEGE.

IT is very satisfactory to know, as was announced by Principal Caven at the opening meeting last week, that a determined effort is about to be made to have Knox College fully endowed. For this purpose it is understood that an appeal will very shortly be made for subscriptions. What may be the sum to be asked for has not as yet been definitely stated, but we should think that it would not, in any case, be less than a hundred and fifty or two hundred thousand dollars. The latter sum in our estimation would be the one to be preferred, for it is quite necessary in order to make the work complete, and it is better in every way to say so at once, and thus to let everyone know what is aimed at, and what if once secured would make any second effort altogether unnecessary, at least for a long time to come. It is not necessary to dwell upon the necessity for such an effort. On that point there is happily an all but unanimous feeling among the friends and supporters of the College, not only in Ontario, but throughout the whole of the Church. "Knox" needs such an endowment, and at the same time richly deserves it. It has done, and is doing, noble work for Christ's cause in this Dominion, and if it were put upon a firm financial basis there is every ground for believing that it would do still greater good than it has yet been able to achieve. It has supplied for many years past a very large proportion of the ministers of our Presbyterian Church in Canada, and that proportion is not falling off, even in the face of all the other theological institutions with which the Church is now happily supplied. The very amount of its success, however, in one respect the cause of its embarrassment. The number of its students was never so great as it is now, and that very fact, with the demands necessarily made for an education, general and theological, suited in amount and character to the

exigencies of the times, necessarily involves an increasing expenditure, which it is generally felt can be more easily and more efficiently met by a large and liberal endowment than by collections gathered from the Churches from year to year. This has been long felt by many of the warmest and most liberal supporters of the College, and now the Senate of the institution is going to give everyone an early opportunity of showing what he is ready to do in order to make this endowment scheme an "accomplished fact." There is quite enough of wealth surely among the Presbyterians of Western Canada to make such an effort speedily and entirely successful; and we shall not believe, till forced to do so by hard facts, that there is not quite as much enlightened liberality as there is pecuniary power. The other theological institutions of the Church are either already fully endowed, or in the fair way of being so. The friends and well-wishers of Knox will not, we are sure, be behind in this honourable and brotherly rivalry, but will on the contrary show that though they have been somewhat late in entering upon the work, they can more than make up the leeway, by the zeal and liberality with which they carry out the scheme of the College authorities as soon as it is laid before them. In this, as in every other work for Christ, all that is needed, is that everyone do something—that everyone do that something cheerfully—and that everyone do that something in the proportion in which God has prospered him. It is a prosperous time, and God has been abundantly blessing a very great number of the members of our Presbyterian Church. Let the thank-offering of all such be in correspondence, and all that Knox College needs will without difficulty and without delay be secured.

THE LICENSING POWER.

WHILE THE PRESBYTERIAN never has been, and never intends to be, either partizan or political, it must enter a strong protest against the crusade that has been proclaimed against the present licensing system, and that, avowedly, in order to secure a return to the old plan of leaving it all in the hands of the different municipalities. Very few who had any knowledge of how things were managed under municipal rule, need to be told of the many and great abuses which then prevailed, and of the little regard that was paid to the interests of morality, and the well-being of the neighbourhood. The Crooks Act is very likely not all that could be desired. We believe the number of licensed houses which it permits is far too great. The idea of allowing a drinking place for every 470 or so of the population is simply preposterous. If only "moderate" drinkers, in the sense in which intelligent people use that term, were patronizing those houses which are actually licensed, one-third of them would be bankrupt in three months. The statement lately made by Mr. Howland to the effect that TEN licensed houses in Toronto would amply supply all the wants of genuine "moderate drinkers," is not in the slightest an exaggeration. What are all the rest for? And how do their owners make a living? They are for making drunkards, and they exist simply to pander to the vices of the community.

But while all this is the case, it is something to have to add that it is of great consequence to have had any limit put to the multiplication of these houses, other and better than the caprice or interest of the self-seeking ward politicians, who to such an extent "run" our municipal institutions. This is what the "Crooks Act" has done; and let heated partizans say what they may, it is beyond all question that that Act has been helpful to a large extent in the cause of sobriety and general decorum. We should prefer something far more stringent, but better half-a-loaf than no bread; and we protest against such legislation being made the mere shuttlecock of fierce unreasoning party politics, and against a wise and wholesome measure being denounced simply in order to have the "ins" turned out, and the "outs" let in. Party politicians had just as well learn sooner or later that this sort of work does not pay, and that the friends of temperance, whatever may be their opinions on general politics, are not prepared to "go it blind" at the order of any party, whether it call itself "Conservative," "Liberal," or "Reform."

At a late meeting of the Huron Presbytery, Rev. Robt. Thynne, of Kirkwall, declined the call tendered him by the congregation of Rodgerville. He has accepted the call to Port Dover.