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O. BLACKETT ROBINSON, MANAGER.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 1ST, 1896

WE are asked by the clerk of Toronto Presbytery to call the attention of members to a change in the Presbytery's meeting this time, from the first Tuesday of the month to Tuesday, January 14th, 1896.

THE *British Weekly* says that for the first time during his ministry in London, Dr. Monro Gibson was unable through illness to conduct service on a recent Sabbath. His many friends in Canada will be pleased to learn that the worthy Doctor is again in good health. If he is tired of London fog, there is a place in Toronto he can have by simply giving the slightest hint of his willingness to come.

MODERN history does not furnish an illustration of a statesman who fell farther in one day than Grover Cleveland fell during one a few days ago. If his message to Congress on the Venezuela boundary dispute, was not a jingo bid for the "tail-twisting" vote at the coming Presidential election, then it was a wanton and gratuitous insult to a friendly neighbouring nation. Millions of people the world over who looked upon Cleveland as a first-class statesman, have a very different opinion of him now.

THE following prayer offered the other day by the chaplain of the House of Representatives at Washington has roused the indignation of a good many of our neighbors:

"Heavenly Father, let peace reign throughout our borders, yet may we be quick to resent anything like an insult to this our nation. May prosperity smile upon our land, and peace and happiness come into every home. So may Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, through Christ our Lord. Amen."

The idea that "our land" and the "earth" are the same thing, is more extravagant than even the Monroe doctrine as expounded by President Cleveland. The *Christian Work* says "the country pays \$900 a year to the exploiter of this travesty of the sacred office of prayer." "Exploiter" and "travesty" are good.

LAST year the Presbyterian Church in Canada spent for Home Missions and Augmentation in Manitoba and the North-west less than \$25,000. The cost of a special session of the Dominion Parliament to give Separate Schools to Manitoba will be a good deal over \$300,000, of which Presbyterians will pay at least \$50,000. It would seem as though we are more willing to spend money to satisfy the claims of the Roman Catholic Church than for the mission work of the Church in that field. Either the generosity of the Government in this matter is princely or the giving of the Church is almost beggarly. There is much talk about following the constitution and guarding the rights of the weak, but the Church of Christ has a constitution that is surely as sacred as that of the Dominion. In the Church's constitution there is one clause that reads, "Go and preach the gospel to every creature," and another that reads, "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ."

THE Halifax *Witness*, speaking of the reports given of evangelistic work, says that, the "greater portion of evangelistic work never appears in any report or in any record but that which is kept by the all-knowing God." We do not know how it may be in Halifax, but certainly some of the Toronto journals give quite enough of prominence to the sayings and doings of evangelists. When

Sam Jones and Sam Small were holding meetings in this city a few years ago, their utterances were for the most part reported *verbatim*. The Moody meetings of a few months since were not only reported—they were graphically described. It is even sometimes announced in one of the leading journals that certain evangelists have "passed through" the city on their way to —. Soon after there is a telegraphic despatch that they are holding great meetings in —, and at the close of the meetings there is another giving the number of converts. Any kind of a sensational preacher coming to Toronto seems to have all the newspaper space he wants and that is sometimes a pretty liberal allowance.

COMMENTING on the characteristics of different churches a leading Philadelphia journal says:

"The average Presbyterian congregation is seldom moved by waves of religious fervor or excitement of any kind, and the most acceptable and in all respects successful minister is the one who, with ceaseless vigilance, watches over his people, notes the strangers in his flock, the sober-minded members of his Sabbath school and Young People's Societies, and who, upon each communion Sunday, is enabled to present new candidates for church membership, either through certificate or upon confession of faith. Thus the work is carried on at all seasons and throughout the year. There is steady and encouraging growth. All things are done according to the Apostolic admonition, and the people are built up in their most holy faith, receiving the teachings of the pulpit as authorized expositions of the Divine Word, and seeking in daily life and conduct to reflect its true spirit."

Yes, that used to be the way, and fortunately is the way yet in many congregations, but even some Presbyterians are beginning to hanker after the spasmodic and sensational. The Pennsylvania type, however, is solid.

THE most disheartening elements in the "war-scare" were the scream of delight that went up from Maine to the Pacific, the unseemly haste with which Congress proceeded, the comments of the press and the light-hearted way which many spoke of spilling Canadian blood, destroying Canadian canals and burning Canadians cities. We must not attach too much importance to these things. There are sixty-five millions of people in the United States; and we generally hear from the worst of them first. No hoodlum in any American city could say as wicked things about Canada as some Home Rulers have been saying about England for years, and, be it remembered, England and Ireland are under the same flag. Home Rulers have used dynamite against England, and there are hundreds of men in London who would use the torch in the capital tomorrow, if they dare. Even in Canada we have men who can talk lightly of war, newspapers that are not any better than they ought to be and politicians that would make a war speech on every stump if they thought they could gain a few votes by so doing. It is easy to raise the standard high—for our neighbours.

IF the hundredth part of what is said about the drinking, bribery and other forms of corruption at the bye-elections in North Ontario and Cardwell is true, it would have been many times better that these ridings had remained unrepresented during the present Parliament. To such an extent has drinking prevailed in Cardwell that Col. O'Brien felt it to be his duty at the nomination to call the attention of the Hon. Mr. Foster to the manner in which "whiskey was being swilled and poured down the throats of the people," and he added that if the Hon. gentleman knew it he ought to leave the county at once, and thus discountenance such brazen attempts to corrupt the people. Mr. Foster made the acquaintance of the people of Ontario as a lecturer on Prohibition, and it would certainly have been in keeping with his former professions to have used his influence in stemming the flood of whiskey about which Col. O'Brien spoke with so much force. The question of who may represent Cardwell during next session is a trifling one, compared with the immorality and demoralization of the people wrought by such means, by whomsoever employed, whereby to carry an election. The members returned at these bye-elections cannot, we are convinced, do as much good for the country in one session as the two elections already held have in this way done harm. The fact is, the exercise of the franchise in this country at bye-elections, instead of being a privilege, is fast degenerating into an unmitigated curse.

THE *Christian Work* discusses the Venezuela difficulty in a calm, dignified way and winds up as follows:—

Happily the way to peace seems open. Let either of the two principals immediately concerned in the controversy make overtures to the other for a peaceful settlement on the basis of mutual concession, or, if this cannot be, let some friendly power like Russia interpose with the offer of its good services, and we may believe the olive branch and not the musket will be seized, war-cries will cease, and peace honorable and creditable to all parties will follow. We believe that a middle term is discoverable which will solve the difficulty, which will give England the rights to which she may be equitably entitled, which will protect the equal rights of Venezuela, and which will justify the United States for its friendly and humane interposition in behalf of a weaker Power. We have only to add that war between the two great Christian nations of the world over the present issue would be an abhorrent crime. But this the principles and common interests of both peoples will assuredly make impossible.

Our contemporary differs from Secretary Olney when he holds that the Monroe doctrine is international law, but contends that it is the national policy of the United States, and as such has just as much right to live as what is called the balance of power in Europe. There is force in the contention; and it should be remembered that the Monroe doctrine was enunciated at the request of the British Government of that day. There is no question now, however, about the Monroe doctrine in itself, though Salisbury seems to raise one. The real question is, does the Monroe doctrine apply to the Venezuela dispute. On that point there is probably as much difference among American jurists as among jurists anywhere.

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND NINETY-SIX.

THIS year it so happens that the day on which we publish is also the first day of a new year. Naturally, and very gladly we take advantage of it to wish all our readers a Happy, a very Happy New Year. This hackneyed expression may mean much or little; for ourselves we say it from our heart and mean it in the fullest sense of the words. Nothing would be easier than to moralize at this special season, so fruitful of suggestions for that particular kind of exercise. But we have no intention of giving our readers a homily, still less a sermon, for their experiences in their individual and family life, and still wider relations are so varied and so unknown to us, except as they are common to all, that we can say nothing which would not have the appearance of the merest commonplace and platitudes. The pastors of churches and heads of families can speak to much better advantage to their people those words of spiritual wisdom and profit that are called for by their individual circumstances, than can so impersonal an individual as the editor of a paper. We can only commend everyone to take stock of the past wisely, faithfully, honestly, with a view to making a fresh start, an upward and onward movement for the year just begun. What its possibilities may be in this respect no one can tell, but it is almost certain that to all who are on the outlook for them, and ready to seize them, Eighteen ninety-six will bring with it possibilities of being and doing better than we have done in Eighteen ninety-five.

The past year has not been destitute of events, especially in the far East, which it is almost certain will yet be attended with very important results. Among the most significant and probably far-reaching in its consequences has been the war between China and Japan, and the revelation of the utter inability of the former to cope with a power much inferior in point of numbers, but supplied with all the implements of modern warfare as known in the West. The transfer of Formosa to Japan has naturally a deep interest to all our readers, because of the effect which this may have upon our missionary operations on that island. The outbreaks of anti-foreign feeling in some parts of China, involving the sacrifice of precious and devoted lives of missionaries, have saddened many hearts, and been a cause of great and constant anxiety to our Church for the safety and lives of our noble band in Honan. The conquest of Madagascar by the French, is also an event which may and probably will affect very materially Protestant mission work, and the progress of true religion in that most interesting island, whose history has been so filled with tragic interest. The centenary of that most powerful organization for missionary work, the