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The Canada Presbyterian

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, MANAGER.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26TH, 1895.

MR. JOHN CHARLTON is one of the very few members of Assembly that the Supreme Court is always sure to welcome with a hearty round of applause. Perhaps the Assembly honours him all the more for the enemies he has made.

WHEN the panic about "murder for insurance money" dies out, rational people will begin to ask if a tree or a weight in a defective elevator may not fall just as readily on a man with a high insurance on his life, as upon a man who carries no insurance.

REV. R. P. MACKAY, Foreign Mission Secretary invites all who desire a supply of Foreign Mission Reports for distribution in congregations or societies, to apply within two weeks, stating the number wanted. "It would be well," he says, "if a copy were placed in every family in the church, but there is no use in printing, if they are not wanted. They will be sent gladly in any quantities, simply at express charges."

MR. DALTON MCCARTHY thinks one can hardly fail to notice that the Lord Chancellor of England, when hearing the Manitoba appeal, made some remarks and observations which showed he was influenced by considerations which did not appear as part of the case. Quite likely the counsel on the other side failed to notice anything of the kind. In court, as everywhere else, it makes some difference whose ox is gored.

MR. JOHN CAMERON, who, by the way, is becoming a more and more useful member of Assembly, recently said in an excellent paper on the "Pulpit and the Press" that he would like to see the pulpit more generally optimistic in its tone. "Pessimism," said Mr. Cameron, "is of the Devil. Optimism is of God. Optimism is hope and hope is healing." There are not many things that the pulpit needs more to keep in mind these days than that Pessimism is of the Devil.

PRINCIPAL GRANT should try his well-known persuasive powers on some of his clerical neighbours and see if he cannot make them a little more careful in the use of the English language. Not long ago a high Romish Prelate, of the Limestone city made a terrific onslaught on the Public Schools of Ontario. Many people said, of course, that the attack was from Rome. But the other day an Episcopal clergyman surpassed even the Archbishop in denouncing the schools that this province pays so much to support. This school agitation seems to unbalance a great many people.

THE poorest thing the General Assembly did, was to call the attention of the Synod of Toronto and Kingston to the fact that an elder had been moderator of the Presbytery of Whitby. The Synod knew that already; it also knew that an elder had been moderator of the Presbytery of Owen Sound. If the Supreme Court had no time to discuss the question, it should have said so. Let there be no more criticism about the iniquity of politicians when they send troublesome questions from the Dominion Parliament to the Local Legislatures and back again.

THE sensational report of last week that the authorities of Rome, through Cardinal Somebody, influenced the Privy Council in its decision on the Manitoba school question is unthinkable rubbish. That the Hierarchy would be willing enough to try goes without saying; that they did try in any direct way is not likely. To say they could succeed if they tried is simply to libel the highest tribunal in the Empire. There is nothing safe in the greatest empire of modern Christendom if the Privy Council can be influenced by a Romish prelate. It would be well for rational people to dismiss any such suspicion from their minds.

MOST earnestly do we urge our readers to keep as cool on the Manitoba school question as the weather will permit. This talk about a "crisis" at Ottawa among the politicians should not deceive anybody. There will be no "crisis" there or anywhere else. At all events there will be no "crisis" that will lead anybody to give up his office if he can hold on to it, or lead anybody to keep out of office if he can get in. The people of this country should have more steadiness, more common sense, than to take seriously, sensational talk about a "crisis." Behind all the scheming at Ottawa, there is the cool head and steady hand of John Bull.

THERE is too much reason to fear that the final outcome of the agitation about religious teaching in the schools will be schools without any religious teaching. Wearied and disgusted by continual strife, the people may arise in their might and say: "This agitation is hurting the country in many ways—we'll stop it by 'obliterating' all trace of religion from the schools." Manitoba had a narrow escape from pure secularism in public education, and we may be nearer it in Ontario than we think. One thing is absolutely certain. When Protestants have banished, every trace of religion from the schools and the very name of God from their school books, Roman Catholics will go on teaching their children the same as ever.

A correspondent, evidently familiar with the fact as to the opium trade with China, writes us with respect to the forced treaty on this matter, which the Royal Commission in its report says that the Chinese Emperor has no desire to terminate, although he has the power to do so. The treaty referred to is "The Cheefoo Agreement or Convention." He adds: "This was signed in February, 1875, by the Chinese and English plenipotentiaries, but was not ratified by the Imperial Parliament till nine years later (during which period Chinese money had been filling our Indian treasury to the tune of about \$35,000,000). It was so artfully arranged that if from any reason it falls through the odious Tien-tsin Treaty of 1858 comes into immediate operation. Rule 5 of the agreement made in pursuance of Article 26 of this treaty, enacted regarding certain commodities heretofore contraband, and is as follows:—'The restrictions (total) affecting trade in opium . . . are relaxed, under the following conditions: opium will henceforth pay thirty taels per pecul, import duty; the importer will sell it only at the port; it will be carried into the interior by Chinese only, and as Chinese property, the foreign trader will not be allowed to accompany it.' From this clause it will be seen that China cannot free herself, for if she violates the Cheefoo agreement the above clause immediately comes into force, and is by no means a restriction of the import trade. One clause of the Tien-tsin Treaty agrees that it shall be revised every ten years, but that the rule of revision should not apply to opium; a strange fact

remains to be explained, which is, why so called Christian England, should, in June 1858, force the Chinese to admit opium (practically for all time, since the opium clause could not be revised), and then in August of the same year, consent to sign a treaty with Japan, a big country, but a short distance to the East, in which opium was contraband, and has so remained to the present time? The above I think will show clearly to any careful reader that China is sadly handicapped in her struggles for liberty and freedom, unless the terms of agreement are different to-day from the above arrangement which existed in 1892."

THE MANITOBA SCHOOL QUESTION.

THIS was really the only subject debated in the Assembly that called into full exercise, or nearly full exercise, the intellectual skill and strength of those who took part in it. The fact that almost every Synod of the ecclesiastical bodies that have of late been meeting have pronounced on that matter in some form, fully justified Dr. Caven's position of the competency and duty of the Church in its corporate capacity to pass upon it, or against those who proposed to say nothing. The numerous amendments to his motion showed unmistakably the keenness of feeling upon it, and the diversity within certain lines of that feeling. The speech of the doctor in opening the discussion was a masterly one, traversing questions with which he is perfectly familiar, and laying down and expounding principles with which his name has become identified in his dealing with similar great public questions. It evidently took the Assembly from the first, not only because of the principles it enunciated, but because of its clear declaration of something that should be done. The Rev. Dr. Grant in supporting his amendment was also on ground with which he is perfectly familiar, and ably supported one of his main contentions, the substance of which is found in the motion which carried, namely that by a full investigation of the whole case by the Dominion authorities, some common ground might be found, whereby a happy solution of the difficulty which has arisen might be arrived at without the autonomy of Manitoba being interfered with, or the recognition of religion in the teaching of the common schools being abandoned. Both of these principles were evidently dear to the Assembly.

Dr. Bryce spoke with ample knowledge, and presented with great force the argument for non-interference from the Manitoba point of view, and his arguments beyond doubt told powerfully upon the minds of delegates. The Rev. Dr. King's speech was a strong arraignment of the evil of a purely secular system of education, and warning against taking any steps which might lead to what they had in Manitoba made a narrow escape from, namely secular education pure and simple, a danger from which they were not even yet wholly free.

One thing the Assembly was clear and all but united upon, that was in its opposition to separate schools in any shape, and the differences of opinion as to the thing aimed at, were really not so great as the number of amendments and the strong speeches made might at first sight indicate. It was accordingly to be expected, that what Dr. MacLaren suggested would take place, the appointment of a committee to endeavour, in view of the whole situation, to prepare a resolution, or resolutions, on which the whole Assembly could agree.

Late in the evening of Wednesday the 19th the committee on resolutions appeared and announced that it had come to a satisfactory decision. Principal Caven read and moved the following resolution: "The General Assembly, having had its attention called to the difficulties which have arisen in the Province of Manitoba in connection with the matter of public education resolves:—(1) That it belongs to the State to see that the people receive such a measure of education as shall qualify them for the ordinary duties of citizenship. (2) Whilst the duty of giving definite and detailed religious teaching must rest above all on the parent and the church, yet the system of public instruction should be based upon and pervaded by the principles of Christianity, and should give distinct place to the reading of the scriptures and prayer. (3) The General Assembly does not regard the system of Separate Schools with favour, and is strongly opposed to the extension of this system in Canada."