



# TRUTH FOR THE PEOPLE

OLD SERIES—17TH YEAR.

TORONTO, ONT., JANUARY 17, 1885.

NEW SERIES—VOL. V. NO 224.

## WHAT TRUTH SAYS.

A very unusual celebration took place in Bridgewater, Mass., the other day. This was nothing less than the celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the wedding day of an aged couple named Thompson. The groom of the long ago was 94 years old and the bride was 91. Everyone will be glad to know that they are both in good health. Let us all hope that they may both be spared to celebrate their centennaries.

Chicago keeps up its character pretty well the paradise of thugs and rascals of assorted sizes. A gang of these young ruffians recently stopped a street car at ten o'clock at night, and went through it, relieving the passengers in true highway-man style.

Presidential elections come somewhat high. The last Democratic Convention cost \$150,000. It is not likely that the Republican cost much less. And then there would be other expenses which would very considerably swell the total amount. Good things, however, are apt to come high.

We are not so nervous as Canning's wife grinder about speaking or writing anything in the way of politics. Quite the reverse. For what may politics be after all, but a peep should affect such a holy horror about touching them with even a ten cent pole? The dictionaries tell us that it is the science of government; that part of politics which has to do with the regulation of government of a nation or state, the preservation of its safety, peace and prosperity; the defence of its existence and interests, against foreign control or conquest, the augmentation of its strength and resources, and the protection of its citizens in their rights, with the preservation and improvement of their morals. If this is politics, then instead of anybody being ashamed to meddle with it; every one who claims a share of intelligence and public spirit ought to be ashamed to acknowledge that it does not meddle with it all the time. Some of those we have known who have been the readiest to turn up their eyes in horror at the very name of "dirty" politics, when they phrase it, have personally been at the meanest, uncleanest, and least reputable in their business relations that could be thought of. In fact, politics are "dirty" when handled by "dirty" people, and as a general rule the politics of a country pretty fairly reflect the general character of the inhabitants. The meanest people will have mean, unscrupulous politicians, and mean, unwholesome politics. A citizen of a free country who takes no interest in its concerns, is not worthy of the position he occupies. He should go to the place where the rulers do all the thinking and all the management. He may be a fat, headless man, and such as sleep on their feet, but he is little more—such a man, or a tyrant's love and self-seeking egoism. TRUTH has often, wondered, especially at clergymen, crying out about politics, as if having anything to do with it was the sure road to the bottomless

pit. Such talk tells very evidently that their preaching has had very little effect, for if it had been as successful as it ought to have been, the whole moral and political atmosphere of the country would have been changed and improved. In short, a religion that can't exist in the atmosphere of active political life and grow strong in it, is not worth much, and we therefore say to all the weak friends who put, on their longest face of self-satisfied Phariseism and thank God they are not politicians—"Pray friends don't. You have no idea how ridiculous you appear, and hollow and ungeniune youthal."

A valuable paper on scarlet fever, how propagated and how prevented, from the pen of Dr. W. Canniff, City Health Officer of Toronto, will appear in the next issue of TRUTH. The paper is of great practical value, coming as it does from a gentleman of skill and large practical experience. To many this paper alone will be worth more than an entire year's subscription to TRUTH. To others it may be the means of saving life. TRUTH will furnish much reading of great value, as well as of great interest, this year.

In compliance with the request of a number of the friends of TRUTH, arrangements have been again made for the publication of a piece of good music in each issue. Every pains will be taken to furnish TRUTH readers with the very latest and best music available, as well as with the latest and best literature of all kinds. TRUTH aspires to be the most popular family journal in Canada.

We fear Toronto is a long way yet from having a full and satisfactory supply of good pure water. It will no doubt, come by and by, but it is a very long and expensive road apparently, that has to be travelled first.

So the British Government has check-mated Bismarck after all, in that matter of Angra Pequena, or however it may be spelled. What the Germans wanted was to get a access to the rebellious Dutch Boers of the Transvaal, so as to make them more and more thorns in the sides of Britain. The strip actually annexed by them is a long strip of barren coast line. What does Britain do but quietly annex all the fertile territory lying between it and the Transvaal, on the west side, and takes also possession of the only feasible harbor in Delagoa Bay, on the east. Gladstone's Government may not be blustering and Jingolish in its talk, and may have no swagger about it, but it is not by any means asleep, and is all the better prepared for any eventuality by striving continually to be just. Not a bad plan that either, for individuals or governments.

What is loyalty at the present day? Is it adherence to a system; to a dynasty or to a government, however bad the one and injurious the other? If this young man or that think upon the whole that it would be better for Canada were she independent of Great Britain, would he be justly liable to be

shot, or at least have his hat knocked over his eyes if he said so? Frankly, TRUTH believes in no such talk. People are loyal to Britain because they believe it is best for all their interests that they should be so. But you won't convince the folks of the present day that it is their duty to continue loyal, though it were the very reverse, though they were thereby made to starve instead of having all they could desire.

No, no, friend fool. In these practical days such doctrines won't go down, and ought not. Should Canada ever change her political relations it will be by the fiat of the overwhelming majority of her people, and any small minority, that would "shoulder a musket" to prevent such majority having its way, would be very foolish, and something worse. It is by the silken cords of common interest and common affection that such ties are to be maintained, not by confused noises and garments rolled in blood.

It is curious how there is always every now and then, cropping up a real or supposed scandal in connection with school books. When the present series of Readers which is about to be laid aside was introduced, there was great outcry about jobbery, and we rather think with some good ground. The books were prepared in great haste, revised with the least possible labor and care, paid for to the supposed literary laborers with a large amount of liberality, and handed over to one firm for exclusive publication for one year, and that for no reason at all that would stand impartial investigation. That one year gave a mighty fine profit to the fortunate bibliopole. Now there is an outcry of a similar job, but of larger dimensions, being consummated. It is not enough to say that the books are cheap unless it can be shown that they are as cheap as it is possible for them to be produced. And this can never be shown except by unlimited competition. Why should three firms have a monopoly for ten years? The first shadow of a defensible reason for this has not as yet been produced. If these three firms in reason had a claim for being recouped their loss ought to have been valued, and compensation given them in hard cash. But to hand over the stereotype plates prepared by Government, and to let them have the monopoly of sale for five thousand schools for ten years, to onlookers appears perfectly monstrous. If tenders had been asked for printing from these plates, and that is all the favoured ones have to do, there would have been a large yearly royalty paid with the greatest of pleasure. It would have yielded more to the country than two or three good timber limits, and the happy man that got the contract would have made spanking profits besides. It is said that it is not everybody that can turn out such fine work. Such nonsense! If any don't turn out the job in a proper, workmanlike way, their goods, according to present contract, are confiscated. Could not that have been done to anybody that agreed to try the work? And why not at any rate say to all and sundry, "well, here are the plates. Any body that likes can get a set for \$2,500

and he can try his hand." With such a prospect of gain, plenty would have enlarged their premises, put more capital into their business, imported workmen if necessary, &c. Go along! The thing is altogether too thin. The ministers we have no doubt in general, and Mr. Ross in particular, meant to do the right and fair thing. But the men of paper have been too cute for them, and have pulled the wool very considerably over their eyes. Think of a man selling out his stand, for which he paid \$2,000, for \$25,000, and then very likely gnawing his nails that he had been so moderate!

It may be all as it ought to be, but it looks queer. Ever since Sir Hugh Allan's mournful lamentation over his disappearing ducaats, the word *recoup*, has had an awkward, yet very suggestive sound. Most sincerely do we hope that the school book business will all be satisfactorily explained, and it be shown that, by the arrangement made, neither the country nor any other person has suffered injury to the extent of a farthing.

In the proposed federation of colleges, those institutions which have university powers are not to surrender those, but simply keep them in abeyance, so that if at any time not pleased with the new arrangement they can return to their old condition as full-fledged universities.

The *Globe* has at last got a new wrinkle, and this time altogether its own. It is going to give Spurgeon's sermon every week. It is on the right track now, and we believe it will succeed. At any rate, its readers will be all the better for getting the reading of a sermon every Sunday by the great Baptist. Sermons have not gone out of fashion, not at any rate if they are of the right sort, and Spurgeon's has stood quite a long and a heavy test. It will pay better than the watches, after all.

The *Ontario Gleaner*, of Cannington, came out with a very large and imposing Christmas number, with a fine blue cover and twelve pages of reading matter. The *Gleaner* is certainly an enterprising and well-conducted country journal.

A well written article on some of the practical results of prohibition in Maine appears in another page of this journal, from the pen of the Hon. John B. Finch, of Nebraska. Mr. Finch stands to-day admittedly in the front ranks of the prohibitionists of the United States, and he has carefully investigated the subject of which he writes. That there has been a great deal of wilful misrepresentation about the state of affairs in Maine few can doubt. No doubt good will come from the most careful enquiry. That there should be a greater amount of crime in any country under prohibition than under the open license liquor traffic, few will believe. Mr. Finch will favor TRUTH readers with other papers on this important question during the year.