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## The Canada Presbyterian

O. BLACKETT ROBINSON, MANAGER.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, OCT. 2ND, 1895.

THERE was a serious omission of duty the other day in Toronto. The youthful Duke of Malborough passed through the city and nobody seems to have asked him what he thought of us.

PREMIER BOWELL is reported to have said that the Indians of the North-West begin their pow wows with the government with a request and end them with a demand. Perhaps the Red man learned this method from his pale-faced brother.

THE Hon. Mr. Ouimet, the head and front of the Hierarchical party in Quebec, visited the town of Collingwood last week and made an oration at the great Northern Fair. One of the press reports says that an allusion to an appropriation for the Collingwood harbour was received with "wild applause." Collingwood is the Capital of Mr. D'Alton McCarthy's constituency.

IN a letter to the *Globe* on the Manitoba School Question Mr. Joseph Martin, M.P., politely describes Principal Grant as "a conceited humbug." Had the Principal desired to carry on the discussion in the spirit and style in which Mr. Martin writes he might have told the readers of the *Globe* that Mr. Joseph Martin, M.P., is an Agnostic and that his Agnosticism may have had a close and natural connection with his wish to "obliterate" all trace of religion from the school system of Manitoba.

WE notice that the political friends of Mr. Wm. Smith, M.P. for South Ontario, are urging his claims for the important position of Dominion Minister of Agriculture. It would be an excellent appointment. Mr. Smith is an intelligent gentleman, a successful practical farmer, an experienced parliamentarian, and generally well versed in public affairs. The Ottawa Government would materially strengthen its position with the great farming interest of the country by placing the portfolio of Agriculture in the hands of the members for South Ontario.

QUITE frequently we see juries denounced in the press because they brought in a verdict of not guilty after the trial judge was supposed to have charged against the prisoner. It never seems to occur to such critics that jurors have minds of their own, and have taken an oath to do their duty. Nor does it ever occur to them that some judges are quite as fallible as jurors, and that

all are more or less so. Still less does it occur to them that even an editor may be mistaken at times. He never makes a meaner mistake than when he assumes that the sole duty of a juror is to say ditto to the judge.

THE president of the Baptist Union of Great Britain recently spent a Sabbath in Toronto and his experience in two of the city churches made him feel sorry for the people of Toronto if the sermons he heard are specimens of Toronto preaching. He writes that in the morning he went to a Baptist Church and heard a sermon on "State Education," Manitoba school question probably. In the evening he went to a Methodist Church and heard a sermon on some political question about which he knew nothing and cared less. The president thinks the Toronto people must be "hungry for things spiritual." Our distinguished visitor is mistaken. If the people who worship in these churches were hungry for things spiritual they would soon put an end to political preaching.

WE regret to announce the death, on the evening of Thursday last, at Kingston, of the venerable Rev. Dr. Williamson, of Queen's University at the age of ninety, and after a professional career of over fifty years. The doctor's varied attainments and the needs of Queen's in its earlier years demanded from him very varied services, and at one time or another he filled every chair in the University, although mathematics, and, later, astronomy, were those which properly belonged to him. The doctor was twice married, his second wife being the sister of the late Sir John A. Macdonald. He was always known as the student's friend, and was ever loved and revered by all who sat under him or knew him. His funeral took place yesterday (Tuesday) under the auspices of Queen's University, the students forming a guard of honor.

ON Friday at noon, the veteran missionary of our Church, Rev. G. L. MacKay, D.D., with Mrs. MacKay and family, and the Chinese student who has been visiting Canada with him, left the Union Station for Formosa. Twenty-four years ago Dr. MacKay left this country, unknown comparatively, and untried, to enter upon missionary work in North Formosa, and there, by apostolic zeal, consecration, and unremitting and most laborious toil, as well as by his unique methods of work, he has accomplished results which have made his name, and, we may add, the name of our Church known in all Christian lands. This is his second, and in all probability his last, visit to his native land. Many prayers will follow him, and a joyful welcome awaits him in his beloved Formosa, from hundreds who have been, by the blessing of God on his labors, brought out of heathen darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel of Christ. It will be the wish and prayer of all that he may be long spared to carry on his great and good work. A large number of friends were at the station to bid the Doctor and party farewell. A volume, we may add, detailing his labors is expected soon to appear.

THE utter collapse of the case against the Grays in Peterborough, the acquittal of a professional man in Bradford, who was undoubtedly innocent of the odious charge laid against him, the acquittal of two men in Muskoka charged with murder on evidence that any law student in his first year would know to be insufficient, make it absolutely necessary for some one to put an end to this continual tampering with the liberty and the character of Her Majesty's subjects in this Province. The Grays were dragged all the way from Florida on a charge of murder, and the evidence was so insufficient that Chancellor Boyd stopped the trial when the evidence for the defence was not more than half in. In the other cases there was absolutely nothing to justify arrest. Zeal in the administration of justice is praiseworthy but the man arrested has his rights as well as the crown. To injure the character of an innocent man by putting him on trial, to destroy his peace and besmirch his reputation for life, is itself a crime. The state has no right to commit crimes any more than the individual. Justice miscarries as certainly when an innocent man is wronged as when a guilty man escapes. It is more than time that the Ontario Pinkertons were called down.

## PRINCIPAL GRANT ON THE MANITOBA SCHOOL QUESTION.

IT is well known to most of our readers that Principal Grant has been engaged for some time in investigating this difficult, and in some respects burning public question, and that the results of his labours have been communicated to the *Globe* in a series of six letters of considerable length. Our readers who know this may not so generally have read them with care, even when they have had access to them, and as many may not have seen them, we propose, for the benefit of all such, to set forth as briefly, and as far as possible the main facts Dr. Grant has given, and present the conclusions he has arrived at after a study of the question. This only; for the present we offer no opinion. We may in a subsequent article present some of the chief criticisms which his letters have called forth.

We need say nothing of Dr. Grant's fitness to do this work. Few men, in the Dominion, perhaps, no one, could be found in all respects better fitted to perform such a task as he has performed within the time he has been able to give to it. In addition to all his natural fitness for it, every facility that could be wished for the best performance of his task was freely afforded him by all parties wherever he went. The importance of the subject is such as to entitle it to the careful and enlightened attention of every patriotic citizen whether of Manitoba or of any other Province.

BEFORE 1890.

Eighteen ninety is the pivotal period. The state of things up to that time should now be well known to those who take interest enough in this matter to inform themselves at all upon it. Briefly it was this: The school system till then was denominational, a school board, composed of two sections, Protestant and Roman Catholic, and a superintendent of each faith managed the schools. Religious instruction of some kind was given in all of them, and there was no religious difficulty. Under this system, far from perfect, and though the schools were in many cases in rural districts especially, very poor, as poor as they could be, yet, in Dr. Grant's opinion, they were about as good as, under the circumstances, could be expected, for the difficulties they had to contend with were many and great, such as diversity of languages, and different regions, one of which could not be taxed for the schools of the other, and in addition a sparsely settled country and general indifference of the half-breeds to education. This was the state of things to amend which the legislation of 1890 was carried into effect.

As the question of religious instruction is the crucial one it may be well to note what Dr. Grant understands it should be; not dogmatic, on the one hand, nor, on the other, the bare mechanical reading of so much Scripture, as if it were a charm but reading it with so much simple explanation and comment as is necessary to make it intelligible and give its lessons due weight. The teacher should be as free to teach the Scripture lessons as he is to teach other reading lessons.

CHANGE OF 1890.

In 1890, then, a change was made, not, Dr. Grant says, because those who made it charged faulty administration or poor results, but because "it was wrong in principle and must therefore be abolished root and branch." The intention of the author of the new system was to make it purely secular, so that no religious instruction would be given in the public schools, but as the people of Manitoba would not accept this, a change was made so as to require in all public schools religious exercises to the extent of reading a certain portion of Scripture at the close of the school day and offering a prescribed form of prayer. From 1890-1894 the most of the French Roman Catholic schools kept on much as they had done, because through a defect in the wording of the statute they could still obtain the whole or a part of the provision made by the Legislature for their support. The defect has been amended and now schools which do not comply with the law are deprived of support, in consequence of which many French Roman Catholic schools have ceased to exist, and the last state is worse than the first. Public Schools in the Mennonite Reserve, on the contrary, receive Government grants, although the law with regard to municipal and district support is openly violated.