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## The Canada Presbyterian

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, MANAGER.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1ST, 1893.

Says the Interior: "We are not so anxious to annex Canada as to see some of her good ideas transplanted to this side of the border." That is all right; you can have all the ideas you want, but not a foot of territory.

Several brewers have testified before the Commission that they sold more beer in Scott Act counties while that law was in force than before its adoption or after its repeal. If prohibition improves their business, why do they ask compensation for loss of property and business should a prohibitory law be passed. If the Scott Act improved trade, why did they spend money in repealing it. There seems to be a screw loose somewhere.

We believe we are correct in saying that there was not a passenger killed on any railway in going to or returning from the Centennial in Philadelphia in 1876. It has been far otherwise with the Columbian. There have been several serious accidents, and some of them were of a nature that it was very hard to read the details. Of course the number of people carried to and from Chicago was much larger than the number at Philadelphia in '76, but the difference in numbers could not have made all the difference. The solidity of the East and the excitability of the West may have been factors in the case. Whatever the cause, the World's Fair will be a sad memory in a good many homes.

Once again we remind our friends of the danger of trusting too much to meetings in this plebiscite campaign. A good meeting may be informing or stimulating, or both, but it must be one or the other to make it worth holding. If a meeting informs the people, it is a good one, because many people need information. If it rouses the people to action it does good, because many need to be roused. If it does neither, it is no use. In fact, it is worse than useless, because the time and money spent on it might have done good in some other way. Organization that will bring out the votes is the indispensable thing. Ballots, not speeches, will be counted on the evening of polling day, and a speech that does not increase the ballots for prohibition is no use.

There is one kind of a temperance meeting that all good people should unite in stamping out. We mean the kind at which sentences not any too serious or refined are punctuated with laughter. The liquor business and its consequences are no laughing matter. Two-thirds or three-fourths of the crime of this country is produced by the liquor traffic, and crime is not a laughing matter. Much of the poverty of Canada is caused by intemperance, and poverty is no laughing matter. Hearts are broken and homes darkened by drink, and the man who can laugh at a broken heart or a darkened home is unfit to address his fellow men on any serious question. It is said that five thousand men go down every year in this Dominion to a drunkard's grave and a drunkard's doom. The man, who with that awful fact staring him in the face, can retail Yankee stories to make an audience laugh, has as little moral earnestness as the audience that laughs at him.

For many years it has been considered a good thing by temperance and municipal men to compel a large majority of the retailers of liquor to provide a certain amount of accommodation for the travelling public. A certain number of rooms in the house and stalls in the stable were necessary in order that a license could be secured. Several experts in their evidence before the Commission tried to knock that old theory on the head. They were quite certain that the best plan is to separate the liquor-selling from every other form of business. A capital move, they say, was made when the liquor and grocery business were separated years ago, and they are right. That was a good stroke of business. It is now contended that it would be an equally good move to separate liquor-selling from the business which finds accommodation for the travelling public. Quite likely that would be a good move too, should the plebiscite fail to find a sufficient majority.

The Commission on the liquor question has served at least one good purpose. It has been made clear by the evidence that the temperance sentiment of the Dominion, and especially of Ontario, has made marvellous strides forward during the last few years. Prohibitionists and anti-prohibitionists, temperance men and brewers, experts and ordinary citizens—witnesses of all kinds agree on that point. There was another point on which they all agreed, and that was that the influence of the Churches was one of the principal factors in bringing about the change in public sentiment. Of course no intelligent man needed to be told that, and no fair man would deny it, but between the present time and the first day of January, many of our readers may hear that the Churches are responsible for nearly all the drunkenness in the Dominion. The testimony of prominent men and not any too friendly to the Churches, is certainly of much importance on this point. Had it not been for the steady Gospel work done for years in the Churches, whiskey would be flowing in every corner of Canada to-day as freely as it flowed thirty years ago.

Why in the name of common sense should a judge have extraordinary powers to defend himself against criticism? The reputation of other prominent citizens is just as dear to themselves and as valuable to the community, as the reputation of a judge, but there is no power given them to put their critics in prison without a trial. Fair, intelligent criticism helps a man, and even unfair criticism hurts no man strong enough to be a judge. Principal Caven had his own share of newspaper criticism during the Equal Rights excitement and Sunday car fight. What earthly difference did it make to him. Mr. Macdonnell's name was in every paper in Toronto nearly every day the street car excitement was on. Who thinks any the less of him for that. Principal Grant is under newspaper fire nearly all the time. He stands it without a squirm or a scream. If the offending editors called at Queen's, he would take them into his house and give them the best kind of entertainment. The fact is, a judge who has to defend himself by the exercise of extraordinary power, lays himself open to the suspicion that he needs a great deal of defending. If any one misbehaves in court, by all means fine him or "send him down." Every approach to disrespect should be punished. We want order, decorum, and if possible dignity in the administration of justice, but the last way to get and keep these things is by having weak, sensitive, vindictive men on the bench. Mere arbitrary power will never command respect. A man strong enough to be a good judge does not need to put critics in prison.

Mr. J. Hardie, superintendent of the Bank Street Presbyterian church Sunday school, Ottawa, has held that position for twenty-five years. He is very popular in the school.

## WHAT CASTING OFF PASTORS IN THEIR PRIME IS LEADING TO.

"I should like to please you, father, if I could, by entering the ministry, but I think I can serve Christ as well in some other calling in which I would not be liable to be cast off as unable to work at fifty or fifty-five." Is this a common feeling among the students that you associate with? "Yes, very common, and besides it is a very common opinion that the strong men are not entering the ministry for this reason, but are going into law, medicine, or other professions." This, which is part of a conversation that took place between a well-known and most influential minister of our Church and his son, is ominously significant, provided the facts are as stated. That which refers to the young man's own course is certainly as it is here given. He is not going to enter the ministry, and one, at least, of the reasons why, is, that he might be cast off at fifty or fifty-five, as he sees many others being cast off. If this feeling is common, as he avowed it is, and that the stronger men are avoiding the ministry for the same reason as himself, there is good ground for the utmost solicitude on the part of the Church at what is before us. The infatuated conduct of our people in running so blindly and persistently after young men, however pious and devoted, yet without experience, and casting off men who both have experience and are yet in their intellectual prime, is likely if it goes on to cost the Church dear. She is losing in both ways, disgusting the most able and aspiring youths, so that they are driven from the ministry, and she loses what might become a glory and honour and power to her under the blessing of God, and casting out of her pulpits and from her service those who might enrich and adorn her as they only can do who have spent the largest portion of their lives in loving devotion to her interests for Christ's sake. Not ministers alone, but everyone who loves the Church and all that the Church means of incalculable benefit and blessing to our country and to mankind, is surely called upon to give this matter the most serious consideration, to discover, if possible, the cause and remedy for a state of things which all admit and deplore. The causes are without doubt many and diverse. One thing, may be said, which of itself means much. The cause is certainly not that the Church is becoming more intensely spiritual in her membership and life, and because of this young men are preferred and older ones cast off, for no one who has had opportunities of observation would say that the preaching or the life of the younger men are marked by a deeper spirituality than those of the older men who are being cast aside for them. That is not the reason, and that, as we have said, means much. On the contrary, because the tendency of real piety in every man and perhaps more so in the case of ministers than of most others, is to become more deep, intense and all-pervading with years, there is great reason to fear that the main cause of the evil growing among us, is a decline in spiritual life. There is great activity, we admit, organizations and machinery without limit, grand churches and no end of display in the way of music, decorations and externals, but all these are no evidence that the Church's spiritual life is more real and intense now than at a former period, when full proof in the ministry was more prized. It has always been so, that the more the Church has prospered in a worldly sense, the more conformed to worldly ways she has become, and a truly godly and spiritual ministry was less prized. There can be no doubt about the material wealth and prosperity of the Church at the present day which has led many to connect themselves with her who are very far from being spiritually minded or caring for spiritual things. To all such, a ministry growing in spirituality must be unpalatable. The discussions which for many years have been agitating the

Church on some such vital subjects as inspiration, for instance, have no doubt shaken the faith of many and begotten a large amount of practical infidelity, even among church-goers, and consequent indifference as to who it is that does the preaching or what or how they preach.

No doubt much is due to the spirit of unrest, the love for change which has been produced and is constantly ministered to by many things which characterize our time. Nothing remains long in one stay. "There is a tremendous feeling of unrest," said the Moderator of the Synod of the Maritime Provinces, the other day, in his address to the Synod. This affects Church relations as well as all others. "The day," he adds, "for long pastorates, is evidently over. The Church should strive to solve the problems connected with pastoral changes." Ministers are very widely and deeply affected by this spirit of unrest as every Moderator of a vacant congregation knows. The number who apply for a "hearing" in vacant charges is so great, as almost to lead one to conclude that there are very few of our ministers who are not willing or even anxious to make a change. These cases for the most part become known to the congregations, and when once they get to know that their minister would move if he could, they are in many cases not only willing that he should move, but are also anxious to help him to get his wish and take the first plausible reason that arises to do so. To a certain extent then, the blame lies with ministers themselves.

"This is the young people's age," said a speaker at the Christian Endeavour Convention held at Montreal, and the greater scope and power given to young people in all Church work and life by these societies, and their natural preference for those more like their own age, who may reasonably be expected to have closer and more ready sympathy with them, has undoubtedly its influence, not only with the young, but also with parents, in choosing youth rather than age to fill up vacant pastorates, and make vacant places for young men. Often the first and chief question with respect to any minister wanted for a vacant congregation is, "Will he keep or will he draw the young?" Parental control and influence have been relaxed, and instead of parents drawing their children to, and keeping them in the Church by a spiritual life and character, exercising a steady influence in the home and over the family, they look to the minister to do the drawing, without distinguishing very carefully, in many cases, what the nature of the drawing may be, whether really to Christ by the power of a new life begun in the soul, or only to an outward connection with the Church by means of some one of the many societies which have come to be regarded as an indispensable part of it, if not the Church itself, and for which the buoyancy and fresh enthusiasm of youth are better fitted than the gravity of riper years, which instead of commending a pastor to his people, are often without hesitation or shame pleaded as a reason why he should be got rid of. But what is to be done? Is the Church to look on helplessly in the presence of what is felt to be a most serious and threatening danger? The question of remedies is too large to take up and deal with here, and must be left for another time.

The statement, published in this week's issue, of the Rev. John Wilkie, of Indore, of the needs of our mission college there, deserves, and we hope it will receive, the earnest attention and prompt, active help of very many who will read it. We should rejoice to think, of so many and to such an extent, as will relieve the difficulties and consequent great disadvantages the mission is labouring under. The statement of Mr. Wilkie gives weight to the view of a contributor, L. A. C., that the wise course for the Church to pursue is first to strengthen and raise to the highest degree of efficiency one missionary under-