

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

82.00 PER ANNUM IN ADVANCE.

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, Editor and Proprietor.

OFFICE—NO. 6 JORDAN ST., TORONTO.

TO SUBSCRIBERS:

Letters and articles intended for the next issue should be in the hands of the Editor not later than Tuesday morning.

Post Office money order or registered letter is preferred. Money mailed in unregistered letters will be at the risk of the sender.

The figures following name on address label indicate the date to which the paper is paid. Thus John Jones, 31 Dec. 7, shows subscription paid up to end of 1877.

Orders to discontinue the paper must be accompanied by the amount due, or the paper will not be stopped. Subscribers are responsible until full payment is made.

In changing an Address, it is necessary to send the old as well as the new address. The change cannot be made unless this is done. Parties remaining will please note that giving the Township is quite useless: the name of post office alone is all that is required.



TORONTO, FRIDAY, AUGUST 15, 1879.

THE LORD'S DAY.

IS Ontario to have its Sabbath surreptitiously taken away? Is nothing to be done, no voice to be raised against the present assault upon God's day of holy rest? Why is Hamilton silent? Are all the Christians of Toronto dumb-founded? Think of it. Sunday service trains are advertised and run between Dundas and Hamilton, and between Hamilton and Burlington Beach. Steamers also are to ply between these places, if they have not begun. Pleasure boats leave the wharves of Toronto on Sabbath for Burlington Beach and elsewhere. But no action has been taken save in the case we referred to three weeks ago in Dundas, when the complaint was dismissed on the ground that *carrying companies may under the Lord's Day Act convey travellers for pleasure or business or from any other motive, on the Sabbath.* This decision has never been noticed or called in question by the press, and it would seem to be acquiesced in as a correct interpretation of law. Add to this that the "Globe" is opening its columns to a discussion as to the obligation of the Sabbath, in which one correspondent calls in question its application to Christians, assails the Old Testament scriptures by impugning their authenticity, historic value, and truth, and saying that they may be thrown aside by the present generation of Gentiles, assails dogmatic theology, and in the name of liberty claims the right of any man to seek his pleasure on the Lord's day. Is the Christian community prepared to submit to all this? If not, it is time to speak out and to act. Unless decisive steps are speedily taken by either enforcing the law, if we have one applicable to these evils, or by obtaining the necessary legislation, our Sabbath will be gone—a thing of the past. Not only pleasure but business will be generally prosecuted on the Lord's day and Christians will either have to break the Sabbath or give up their situations. This is no time to sit still. Inaction means irreparable loss. The following speaks for itself:

"Manager Hickson, of the Grand Trunk Railway, has pronounced against Sunday excursions. He says: 'I have no sympathy with these Sunday excursions, and I am thoroughly convinced it will be to the advantage of both the public and the railway companies themselves not to introduce the system into Canada.'"

THANKSGIVING DAY.

THAT it is our duty as a Christian nation to observe one day annually as a day of thanksgiving to God for the countless blessings of the year few will deny. In the past there has been a very marked lack of uniformity in regard to the particular day to be observed. Sometimes the Lieutenant-Governor of one of the Provinces has appointed by proclamation a day for his own Province, while the matter has been neglected or overlooked in other parts of the Dominion. Again, very frequently this or that denomination has observed a particular day while members of other churches have observed some other day of the year, and thus there has been a lack of uniformity and unanimity, not altogether seemly in a Christian land. To obviate this in future an application should be made by the authorities of the several churches, either jointly or separately, to the Dominion Government, asking the Governor-General in Council, to appoint a day of thanksgiving for the whole Dominion. To attain uniformity this year action should be taken *without delay*, before a day is fixed upon by any of the Provincial Governments or by any of the several denominations in the country. Having called attention to the subject it may safely be left in the hands of the respected Moderator of the General Assembly.

There is, however, one point in connection with the day to be named, which appears to us be worthy of consideration, viz., the propriety of fixing permanently the *same* day every year. There are many advantages in this which it is not necessary to enumerate, seeing they will at once suggest themselves.

This is the practice with our friends across the lines, where it has worked well in the past, and seeing how closely we are connected with our neighbours in commercial, social and religious life, we think it would be very becoming and advantageous were our Government permanently to fix as a day of thanksgiving throughout the Dominion the day observed by the people of the United States. We see no objection whatever to the accomplishment of this. On the contrary, we believe that it would tend to the better observance of the day in both countries. To see the two great Christian nations of the northern part of this continent uniting in the observance of the same day annually as a day of thanksgiving to the Great King and Ruler of the universe, for His unnumbered gifts and blessings is a thing worth seeking to accomplish, a fact we hope soon to be able to record.

HOME MISSION DEPUTATIONS.

FROM the reports of Presbyteries appearing in our columns during the past few weeks we learn that, in accordance with the requirements of the General Assembly, deputations have been appointed to visit the various supplemented congregations and mission stations throughout the Church, for the purpose of stimulating the liberality of the people with a view to reducing the grants from the Home Mission Fund. The large majority of these congregations and stations are in rural

districts, and with the prospect of an abundant harvest this season, the present is a good opportunity to endeavour to increase their contributions towards the support of ordinances. In many districts of our Church there is a lack of system in conducting financial affairs, and one of the main objects to be kept in view by deputations should be *thorough organization* in every congregation and mission field. A committee of management should be appointed consisting of the most efficient men whose services can be obtained, and some definite plan should be devised and put into execution whereby the giving power of the people may be drawn out to the fullest possible extent. The plan should embrace frequent periodical contributions either weekly or at any rate monthly. Too often subscriptions are payable in annual, semi-annual or quarterly instalments, whereas were the monthly or weekly system adopted the amount received at the end of the year would be very considerably increased. We know how conservative many congregations are and how unwilling to change any system with which they have been familiar for years. We know the objections frequently made to the introduction of the weekly or monthly offering plan especially in country districts but we are convinced that in many of these districts the objections have little or no force. The plea that farmers have money only at certain seasons of the year and can therefore only contribute for the support of church ordinances annually, or, at most, twice a year, however valid in the earlier history of the country, is not so now, more particularly in the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, where owing to the introduction of so many lines of railway there is a constant market near every one's door for all kinds of dairy and other farm produce and where, not goods in trade as formerly, but cash can be obtained for everything the farmer has to sell. There are comparatively few congregations or mission stations where the people are not in a position to contribute weekly or monthly as well as, nay better than, they can do half-yearly or yearly. In nearly every instance where the weekly system has been adopted it has been found to work well and in many congregations the people could not be induced to give it up and go back to the old system. There are many of our people now giving \$5 or \$10 annually, who, were the weekly plan adopted, would never think of giving less than twenty-five cents or half-a-dollar, or even a whole dollar per week; and we are convinced that in most congregations the adoption of the weekly offering would largely increase and in many of them double the revenue for the support of ordinances.

Another point which deputations to the supplemented charges and mission fields should keep in view has reference to the desirability of getting our people to contribute *as God prospers them*.

There are not a few of these charges and stations that have been getting grants,—and some of them grants to the same amount,—for the last five or ten years and this notwithstanding the fact that their membership