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TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, MAY 26, 1886.

COMMENTING on the use of alcohol as a medicine when prescribed by a competent physician for the cure of insomnia, the *Homiletic Monthly* says:

In the present stage of the temperance reform, almost any clergyman, in our judgment, would do more good by dying through a refusal to keep alive by the use of alcohol than by living through its help.

Should the editor of the *Homiletic Monthly* become afflicted with insomnia, and should he come to the conclusion that he can do more good by dying than by living through the use of alcohol prescribed by a competent physician, probably he has a right to die if he prefers dying. We submit, however, that he has no right to say what others should do in such an emergency. Some clergymen, quite as conscientious as the editor in question, might think that they could do more good by living a while longer and working. Some have a wife and children to take care of, with nothing but their small earnings to keep the wolf from the door, and they might possibly wish to live a little longer for the sake of their wives and helpless children. It is not at all probable that if a clergyman, or any other man, did make a sacrifice of himself in this way, the *Homiletic Monthly* would take care of his family after he had gone. Besides, sufferers do not generally die from insomnia in its first stages, usually they become insane and are put in an asylum. When insane and locked up, the medical superintendent generally gives them what the doctor prescribed before they were put in the asylum. Would it not have been as well to have taken the remedy before Reason left her throne? Common sense would seem to say that a doctor who can be trusted to prescribe arsenic, strychnine and other deadly poisons can be trusted to prescribe alcohol. The writer is no doubt sincere enough, but such statements as that quoted do the temperance cause much more harm than good. They keep or drive out of the temperance ranks sensible, thoughtful men—the very men most needed “in the present stage of temperance reform.”

In common with a good many others we have been waiting with some interest to learn particulars in regard to the new ecclesiastical machinery which the committee on co-operation with the Methodist Church in mission work are going to advise the General Assembly to erect. About the only thing we can ascertain is that the committee recommend the appointment of a joint commission with only advisory powers. To this joint commission, we presume, cases of a certain class are to be referred, and the joint commission is to tell Presbyteries whether, in the opinion of the commission, a Presbyterian mission station should be opened, and if opened whether it should or should not be handed over to the Methodists. What everybody who takes any interest in the matter would like is some details. Is it to be entirely optional with Presbyteries whether they ask the advice of this commission or not? Advice being given, is it optional with a Presbytery whether the advice is acted upon or not? Most Presbyteries are of the opinion that they are perfectly capable of attending to their own business. It may be a delusion, but they take it all the same. The chances are a million to one that no Presbytery

would ever ask the advising commission for advice. Presbyteries keep an eye on their rights just now, and not without reason. They never did take very kindly to the erection of centralizing machinery, and they may probably draw the line at the management of our mission stations, and do the work themselves. Another important question arises: Where does the Home Mission Committee come in? They review the Home Mission work twice a year when they vote the supplies, and may be presumed to know what stations should have money and what others, if any, the Methodists should be allowed to occupy. Is the Home Mission Committee also expected to consult the advisory board? We may have been mistaken, but we have always thought that the Home Mission Committee had a fair amount of confidence in their own ability to take care of mission stations without asking anybody's advice, except that of the Presbyteries. What everybody wants about this scheme, who wants anything, is details.

It is natural and right that the present condition and future prospects of Ireland, especially of Ulster, should claim the attention and sympathy of Canadians. Some of the best blood in Canada has always been Irish blood. As a Church, we are closely connected with, and owe much to, the Ulster Presbyterians. If all that Irish Presbyterians have done for Presbyterianism in Canada were taken away, there would be an enormous gap left. But it does seem to us that while doing our duty toward our Irish brethren we might devote a little more attention to our home affairs. The thing dreaded in Ireland under possible Home Rule is Rome Rule. Have we any Rome Rule in Canada? What about the party press of Canada? How many journals of either party dare protest even when a most unsuitable Catholic judge is put on the Bench? What about the Province of Quebec? Is it at all probable that, even if Home Rule were granted, Rome would have more power in Ulster than Rome has in Quebec to-day? It is quite possible that if Home Rule were granted Ulster might have more influence than Ulster now has. The Nationalists would be certain to split, and Ulster might hold the balance of power and rule Ireland. All this is possible, and not at all improbable. How much power have the Protestants of Quebec? The very thing most dreaded by the Protestants of Ulster we have right under our own eyes in this Dominion. And we don't say very much about it either. Recent developments have shown that priests and bishops have quite as much to do with elections in Canada as they can possibly have in Ireland. Three men agreed four years ago to hand over the whole Catholic vote of Ontario to the Premier of the Dominion for a consideration. Could they have done anything much worse in Ireland? Our Ulster friends are afraid their splendid system of education would be assailed under Home Rule. Their fears are quite justifiable. Have our educational systems never been assailed by the same power? Let the Protestants of Quebec answer. A good deal has been said about the dynamite used by the fiends who think they are helping the Nationalist cause. Dynamite has been used a dozen times in Ontario against Scott Act men, and scarcely a word has been said about it. It was used three times against one man in Orangeville, who, judging from the name, ought to be a good Presbyterian. John Bull took the dynamitards by the throat, and rushed them into the penitentiary for life before they knew what struck them. Ours are still at large, and most likely on the look-out for more Scott Act men. The Nationalists would probably appoint very bad officials. What about some of ours in the North-West? Let Mr. Robertson answer. Some of the Nationalists at present in Parliament are very bad men. What about a good many of ours? Let anybody answer. By all means let us extend our sympathies and any other good thing we have to Ulster, but let us not forget Canada. The Protestants of Ulster can take care of Ulster quite as well as we are taking care of Canada. That is one hard fact.

WE respectfully submit that if the Committee on Consolidation of the Colleges have no feasible plan to lay before the General Assembly it would be well to bury the question out of sight. Ten years have passed since the agitation began, and it may be safely assumed that what the Church cannot do in ten years it cannot do at all. No better committee can

be named than the one now considering the matter and if they have no practical solution of the problem it is not solvable in any way that would not do much more harm than good. Consolidation is a good word, but it should be remembered that consolidation simply means annihilation for some college or colleges. Do the friends of any of these institutions wish to have theirs annihilated? Let their gifts speak. Within the past few years the friends of Knox College have expended over \$300,000 on that institution—nearly \$200,000 for endowment and \$120,000 for a new building. Does that look as if they wished Knox blotted out of existence? Queen's is better supported, better attended than it ever was, and has more influence in Ontario ten times over than it ever had before. Hundreds of the best men in the Church who never belonged to the Kirk are anxious that the Presbyterians of the Dominion should have a university of their own, and would prefer that Queen's University should be brought even into closer relations with the Church. Long ago Dr. Willis predicted that the day might yet come when the Presbyterians of Canada would be glad that they have a university of their own. Were the theological faculty of Queen's removed the university might not long continue distinctively Presbyterian. It is difficult to see how anybody can seriously think of annihilating Montreal College. Apart from the fact that it is a tower of strength to Protestants where strength is greatly needed, we might well ask, Who built that magnificent pile on the mountain? Montreal Presbyterians. Who endowed the institution so far as it is endowed? The same princely givers. Is it seriously proposed to break faith with these people as well as with the donors of Queen's and the men who have put \$300,000 of their money in Knox? Can the Church afford to do anything of the kind? Would it be right to do so even if a majority in the Assembly favoured the proposal? The time to discuss the propriety of establishing a theological hall in Winnipeg was three years ago when the hall was established. Surely nobody suggests that it should be annihilated now when it is doing excellent theological work. That the Maritime Provinces need a college goes without saying. If the friends of any college wish it annihilated by all means let the work be done. We don't happen to know of any college in that unfortunate position. Looking at the question from every standpoint it seems to us that unless the committee are prepared to submit a feasible plan that can be carried out at once, and with the minimum of friction, the General Assembly should bury the question and be done with it. Let consolidation, if impracticable, go on and keep company with the deceased wife's sister, the college of moderators and other defunct issues.

## EVANGELIZATION.

IN theory it is universally recognized that it is the special duty and mission of the Christian Church to make world-wide proclamation of the Gospel of Christ. Whatever differences of opinion concerning certain doctrines of the Christian faith may exist there is perfect unanimity as to the plain command of the Master, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. Neither is there any denial of the obligation to bring the power of religious truth to bear on the vast masses in large cities who from year's end to year's end absent themselves from all religious assemblages. Occasionally a growl is heard that too much attention is given to heathen in foreign lands, and that the heathen at our doors are neglected. The hollowness of this complaint is at once apparent when it is found that the growlers who object to contribute for the support of foreign missions are equally sparing of their gifts in aid of home mission work. The fact is that both for home and foreign missions contributions have not been too lavish. It is painfully true that both departments of Christian endeavour have been far too inadequately sustained, and it is no less evident that the Christian Church collectively has not felt how incumbent is the duty not merely of caring for those within her pale and providing the means of grace for outlying districts, but also the necessity for systematic, earnest and sustained endeavour to bring the masses of large cities under the power of Gospel truth. It would be unfair and unjust to say that efforts have not been made. For half a century and more in large cities in Britain special missions have been generously supported. Most excellent work has been done by these and similar agencies.