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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 4TH, 1893.

Gladstone was eighty-three years of age last Thursday. He is young enough to manage the affairs of the greatest Empire in the world, but, had he been a Presbyterian minister in Canada or the United States, he would have been superannuated about thirty years ago.

Our good friend, the Halifax Witness, has this to say about the duty of our Dominion rulers:—

If our legislators are wise, they will use all diligence and faithfulness in reducing our taxes and increasing our trade facilities. Our tariff has always been lower than that of the United States; let us make it as much lower as possible.

Very well; just impress those lessons upon the mind of your old neighbour, Sir John Thompson. Though he has no Presbyterian in his Cabinet, no doubt he will give due heed to the advice of a Presbyterian journal published in his own city.

Mr. Justice Strong, lately appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, is sixty-seven years of age. There is not a Church court or committee in the Presbyterian Church in Canada that would dare to give a man a month's preaching at that age. The "young people" in any small congregation or bonused mission station would rebel if a ripe old saint of sixty-seven were sent to preach to them. It never seems to occur to anybody that this insane antipathy to age and experience indicates deplorable mental shallowness and serious spiritual declension. The Church makes a great mistake in pandering to it. Presbyterianism can never be built up by any such method.

Dr. Douglas has been paying his respects to Sir John Thompson again in his usual vigorous style. The veteran divine does not object to the Premier because he is a Catholic, or even because he is a pervert from Methodism. He thinks Sir John should not be Premier because he is a "clerical creation." A Catholic Bishop gives him his seat in Parliament, and the hierarchy brought about his speedy promotion. It certainly is true that Sir John Thompson has risen faster, considering that his ability is a matter largely taken for granted, than any other Canadian public man; and it may also be true that his church connection is the principal lever in his rapid promotion. His religion does not cost him a single Protestant vote, and it no doubt brings him substantial support from his own Church. These are the facts, and Dr. Douglas does not say what can be done about it.

There is no doubt, as Dr. Douglas points out, that there is a great difference between a mere Catholic and a "clerical creation." Sir George Cartier was a fairly good Catholic, but a section of his Church brought about his defeat in Montreal. Dorion was a Catholic, but he never had the support of the hierarchy. Sandfield Macdonald was a Catholic, but his church connection never

brought him many votes. Laurier is a Catholic, but Dr. Douglas tells us the Bishops crushed him at the last election, and let their intentions be known even before the crushing took place. There seems to be an inner circle in the Church in which a politician gets the support of the hierarchy. To be in the Church and not in the inner circle does no good. Dr. Douglas thinks the Premier is strongly entrenched in the inner circle, and has the united support of the clerical battalions. If so, he has probably come to stay for some time—provided he keeps within the circle.

There never was less excuse for raising a howl about heresy-hunting than there is in the Briggs, Smith cases. The Church has not thrown, nor does it propose to throw, any barrier in the way of Biblical criticism, higher or lower. What the Church does say, and what duty compels it to say, is, that these professors should not propagate their views, nor teach them to students, until their theories are fully substantiated. Very properly the Church protests against unsettling the faith of students, and allowing them to drift. In ten years—yes, in half that length of time—every position taken by Briggs and Smith may have to be given up. It will be quite time enough to teach their theories in divinity halls when they and their German friends come to something like substantial agreement on the great question of inspiration, and have fortified their theories with a reasonable amount of evidence.

One of the peculiar things about the present financial position of Canada is the large number of people who undertake to speak for the farmers. Open almost any newspaper and the editor can tell you half a dozen times in as many paragraphs how the farmers are getting on. A Quebec lawyer who knows as much about an average Ontario farm as he knows about the canal system of the planet Mars, can tell his audience almost anything about the Agricultural interests of Ontario. How would it do to allow the farmers to speak for themselves. They should know something about their own affairs. They probably have some idea of what their farms are worth as compared with their value fifteen or twenty years ago. They perhaps know as much about the best market for barley and horses and eggs and hay as an average lawyer or editor. Why not allow them have their say on such matters. They ought to know whether they are making money or not.

The fact that Sir John Thompson has not a single Presbyterian in his Cabinet, provokes some criticism. There is really no reason why anybody should feel hurt about the matter. No doubt the Premier could give a satisfactory explanation—if there is anything to explain. Perhaps his mind was so exercised with the problem of balancing the Ontario Orangemen against the seven Roman Catholics in the Cabinet that he forgot all about the Presbyterians. Probably he thought Sir Oliver Mowat has too many Presbyterians about him, and he wished to counteract the influence of a Government with three Presbyterians and one Catholic by a Government with seven Catholics and no Presbyterian. Possibly the fitness of things may account for the omission. Sir John may have looked over his list and failed to find a Presbyterian socially fit to rank with John Haggart or John Costigan; or, intellectually, the peer of Mr. Carling and Clarke Wallace; or esthetically qualified to associate with Monsieur Caron. There is also a remote possibility that the Premier may have intended the

omission for a compliment. If so, a considerable number of Presbyterians will accept it as the highest compliment he could pay them. Anyway, there is nothing to complain about. If Sir John Thompson can do without Presbyterians, they must just try and get on without him. Omission from his Cabinet will not be half so hard to endure as the treatment their forefathers used to get sometimes from Sir John's co-religionists. Positively, there is no harm done. The Premier has the undoubted right to form a Cabinet as he thinks proper.

A FEW WORDS WITH OUR READERS.

The Canada Presbyterian greets its readers in this number as it begins the twenty-second year of its existence. It has passed the years of adolescence, and enters on a robust manhood. It has seen the Church with which it is identified advance from a congeries of isolated denominations into a great harmonious whole. At present the Presbyterianism of the Dominion is, with slight exceptions, comprehended within a communion that extends from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Gratifying as the extent and resources of the Church admittedly are, it is not its outward greatness that is a subject for self-complacent contemplation. The question which should really interest its ministers, elders, Christian workers and adherents is, does it in any adequate measure accomplish the work which all branches of Christ's Church were instituted to perform? Is it animated by the spirit and purpose of its Divine Founder? Is it seeking steadfastly to bear witness to the efficacy of Christ's saving truth? Is it putting forth all possible effort for the conversion of sinners, for enabling its people to advance in the divine life, in the knowledge of God's truth, in active usefulness in hastening the coming of Christ's kingdom? Is it mindful of the obligations it is under to care for the multitudes that in these days are drifting outside the range of Christian influences? Is it an influential witness bearer of Christ's truth in this Dominion? Is it also mindful of the cry of the great heathen world, come over and help us?

Though our Church has room for earnest heart-searching in regard to all these questions, there is yet clear evidence that it has been trying to realize its responsibilities. In all its pulpits the offer of Christ's salvation, with varying power according to diversities of gifts, is fully, freely and earnestly made. The charitable and loving spirit of Him who came to seek and to save that which is lost is not absent from the Church. Notwithstanding a growing popular aversion to doctrinal preaching, the ministry as a whole is endeavouring to declare the whole council of God. Experimental religion forms the theme of many an earnest exhortation from many a pulpit. The Home Mission Committee, students' associations and individual congregations are resolute in their endeavours to carry the Gospel, with its uplifting power, to the lapsed in our cities and towns, and in districts where religious opportunities are few. The missionary awakening has been powerfully felt throughout the Presbyterian as well as in other Churches, and year by year interest in this essential work of the Christian Church is extending. The Foreign Mission Committee is endeavouring to expand the work in the foreign field just as far and as fast as the people by their liberality enable them to do so. The Sabbath School and Bible Class, indispensable adjuncts of Church work, have grown with the growth of the denomination.

In all these departments of Christian

work it has been the uniform purpose of The Canada Presbyterian to give all the aid and encouragement in its power. On all of them it has spoken with no uncertain sound. Every movement for the moral and social elevation of the people has found in it an earnest, though not an indiscriminate, advocate.

The field of party politics lies outside its sphere, but when religio-political and distinctly moral questions arise, it has not evaded their discussion. It respects the political convictions of its readers and aims only at impartial comments on such questions concerning which honest men conscientiously differ. It desires to speak plainly, directly and without fear or favour. Only thus, it appears to us, can an independent journal, and especially a religious journal, fulfil its functions, and exert the legitimate influence which properly belongs to the public press.

On entering the new year The Canada Presbyterian may, with becoming modesty, say that what it has been in the past it will promise to be in the future. Not that it will follow a stereotyped groove, from which there will be no deviation. Change, when it is improvement, is a condition of advancement and increased efficiency. As in the past, so in time to come, this journal will endeavour to keep abreast, if not in advance, of the age's requirements. The new department, the Christian Endeavour column, may be instanced as an illustration.

Readers will observe a change in the appearance of this week's issue. They will notice that it is not without regard to external effects. The introduction of the recent invention, the type-setting machine, has necessitated certain changes which will soon be recognized as decided improvements. After the experimental stage is passed, it will be observed that the clearness and size of the type will be agreeable to the reader, and will result in an appreciable increase in the amount of reading matter furnished. Gratefully acknowledging past encouragements, we hope to add largely to our steadily-growing circle of readers, to all of whom, old and young, we cordially wish A Happy New Year.

DR. PARKHURST AND MORAL REFORM.

It was supposed that when Dr. Crosby died the demoralizing elements of New York society would have matters pretty much their own way. Fortunately, they have some time since found out their mistake. Dr. Parkhurst has brought even greater vigour and determination to bear on the workers of evil and their abettors, by drawing attention to the variety and magnitude of the evils that afflict and menace society in New York. Some of the friends of moral purity have doubted the propriety of some of the methods pursued by the President of the Society for the Prevention of Crime. Possibly they are open to objection. But it is easier to criticize and form theories in the quiet seclusion of virtuous and happy homes than to grapple resolutely with the destructive forces that are steadily ruining thousands of lives. Kid-gloved methods have been tried long enough, but the flood of pollution and corruption has been steadily rising, while good people have been only looking on and deploring the evils they were helpless to avert. The course pursued by Dr. Parkhurst has at all events enabled him to make sure of his ground. It cannot be said that his terrible indictments are vague and imaginary. His astounding declarations rest on a solid basis of fact.

Nor is this practical Christian reformer contented with partially lifting the veil that but imperfectly conceals the festering