

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN,

PUBLISHED BY THE

Presbyterian Printing & Publishing Co., Ltd.,

AT 5 JORDAN STREET, - TORONTO.

Terms: \$2 Per Annum in Advance.

ADVERTISING RATES.—Under 3 months, 15 cents per line per insertion; 3 months, \$1 per line; 6 months, \$1.75 per line; 1 year, \$3. No advertisement charged at less than five lines. None other than unobjectionable advertisements taken.

The Canada Presbyterian.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16th, 1890.

Presbyterian Lesson Scheme for 1890.

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THE PRESBYTERIAN PRINTING AND PUBLISHING CO., (LTD).
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THERE seems to be some doubt as to whether the "Society" people of Woodstock received "Lord Somerset" with open arms when he favoured that prosperous town with his presence a year ago. It is understood that the upper ten deny the soft impeachment. At all events they don't call upon him now and he finds it inconvenient to call on them. Whatever the facts may be in regard to Woodstock it is notorious that every city and town in the Province has been sold by a Lord of some kind at one time or another. It seems to give people pleasure to be gulled and the bogus Lords have always found the business profitable. So long as there is profit on the one side and pleasure on the other why should not the "Lord" business go on?

ONE of the best things about the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society is its breadth. We of course mean its breadth geographically—not theologically. Looking down the *Globe's* column of names you find delegates from every part of Ontario. There was scarcely a point from Ottawa to Sarnia, from Welland to Owen Sound, that was not fully represented. The Hamilton meeting was no local gathering. The delegates came from everywhere. All things considered, perhaps the rural congregations were most fully represented. It was a genuine Ontario meeting. The constituency of the Society is the Province. This is as it ought to be. The attendance at these annual gatherings shows in the most conclusive manner that the whole Church is waking up to the importance of mission work. Besides the six hundred women who were present, there were six thousand or more at home who were there in spirit.

WOULD it not be well to consider the propriety of holding the annual meeting of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society a few weeks later? At the present date the weather is very uncertain—generally, we believe, unfavourable—and the roads in the country almost impassable. If all the members lived close to a railway station, the state of the roads would not be a matter of much concern, but any one who examined the Hamilton roll could not help seeing that no small number of the members had to take a long and muddy drive to catch their trains. Besides all this the state of the weather has much to do with the enjoyment and profit of any meeting. It is much easier to hold a good meeting of any kind on a fine sun-shiny day in May than on a bleak, raw, drizzling April day when there is a searching wind blowing from the north-east. No doubt it is desirable that the funds should be in Dr. Reid's hands before he closes his books on April 30, but that matter might be satisfactorily arranged.

THE annual meetings of our numerous Parliaments never fail to illustrate the liking of people for a fight. Half a dozen of the ablest members on both sides may work for a whole sitting on half a dozen real good bills, but nobody pays much attention to them or the bills. The people in the galleries yawn, say it is "mere routine," and leave. If Mr. Fraser and Mr. Meredith should help each other across the floor to pass a bill that would be an unspeakably great blessing to the country, few people would take much interest in the efforts of the hon. gentlemen. If they would engage in a kind of political prize fight about nothing at all, the

galleries would be crowded to suffocation and the interest outside intense. Let a dozen of the ablest men on both sides of the House of Commons spend an entire evening in perfecting a good law, and most people vote the proceedings a bore. In a somewhat modified form the same love for a fight may be seen in our Church courts. A heresy trial or a frantic wrangle over a second-hand melodeon always crowds the galleries, while a quiet discussion on the State of religion or some vital topic may be listened to by a very thin audience. This inordinate love of a fight is evidence of a low tone of piety and of a thoroughly vulgar mind.

THE *Interior* has this sensible thing to say about stopping church quarrels:

The only way to stop a Church quarrel is for everybody to absolutely stop talking. That is a sure cure. Change is in constant progress. Nothing remains to-day what it was yesterday, and nothing will be to-morrow what it is to-day—and the swift fingers of time are not long in substituting every fibre of the old with the new. All one has to do if dissatisfied in church relations is to wait. They will come right of themselves.

If everybody absolutely stopped talking about church quarrels, and all newspapers stopped publishing sensational reports about them, nine-tenths of them would never amount to anything. Just as long as vain, conceited notoriety-hunters find little knots of gossips to speak about their achievements in mischief and newspaper reporters to put their malicious sputterings into decent English, just so long will they be tempted to seek notoriety by raising quarrels in Christian churches. A conceited feather-head, who is itching for prominence and cannot induce his fellow-men to give him a prominent place, is always ready to bid for the unsavoury notoriety that a church quarrel is sure to give him for a time. Nothing kills a notoriety-loving demagogue like silence and a severe letting alone. He can stand anything but that.

MR. JUSTICE ROSE in charging a jury the other day made the following suggestive observations:

Let me say a word about this constant attack upon the Roman Catholic Church. Some of you may have strong Protestant feeling, but is there a man who dare say that the Church to which he happens to belong contains all the truth and nothing of error? Is there any one denomination of Christians that to-day has all the truth, or affirms as truth all that their fathers and forefathers affirmed as truths? Does not the advancement and enlightenment which comes from years of study of God's Word and religious teachings show that many of us have yet many things to learn, and that we are only on the ocean shore picking up the pebbles and beyond us lies the large sea of truth? And can any one of us say that all is error outside of us? Let us be tolerant each of the other's opinions, because, if we believe as we have been taught, we feel assured that in the Great Day no one will be approved because he is a Roman Catholic or because he is a Protestant, because he is an Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist or a Baptist, but simply because he is a Christian, having observed the rules of right and wrong and done his duty to his neighbour, and, so far as he has instruction, his duty to his God. And it is no advantage to a community, and it is no advantage to the members of the community, no advantage to Protestants or Orangemen or to any other class to make foul suggestions with reference to those of another faith. It is not wise, it is not politic; it does no good; it creates ill-feeling, stirs up dissensions and causes those with whom we must live not to live with us in that spirit of friendship that ought to mark the communications of neighbours. And until one reaches that eminence when he can declare that he knows the whole mind of God, I think it behooves him to be humble and sit at the feet where he may learn wisdom and be willing in the feeling of charity to believe that others may be right, although they see differently to what he may see.

The trouble is that too many people think they actually do know "the whole mind of God." They think that their own "ism" is all that ever was in the Divine mind. Mr. Justice Rose is a strong Methodist but he manifestly has a good deal more breadth than many denominational men have.

DR. PIERSON has found out to his cost that the Dods' party in the Free Church of Scotland are quite ready and able to defend themselves. In a letter to the *New York Observer* Dr. Pierson stated that the Rev. George Adam Smith holds a theory of Inspiration which abandons all that is peculiar to prophetic insight and foresight, denies all supernatural communication, and reduces the Bible to the level of any other book written by sagacious students of human nature and current events. Mr. Smith promptly brought the writer to task, and succeeded in getting him to admit that he had never read Mr. Smith's work on Isaiah, but had founded his opinions on one extract from the book and on conversations he had heard in various parts of Scotland. After proving that he does not hold any such theory of Inspiration, Mr. Smith says in a closing letter:

Is it only I that will suffer from this sort of thing? Far higher interests than mere personal ones are endangered

through one who was called, as you were, to so purely spiritual a work among us, by the consent and welcome of all our parties, and to whose strong appeals we have all listened with thankfulness to God for raising up so inspiring an advocate of missions—through such a one stooping from his lofty mission to take up controversial matter, and especially using his authority to report the evidently exaggerated and, as it now turns out, the false charges of some members of the Church against their brethren.

Certainly it was not good taste in Dr. Pierson to involve himself in controversy while in Scotland on a much higher mission, and few right-thinking people will sympathize much with him when he comes off decidedly second best in his encounter with the Scottish divine. The one thing abundantly clear at the present time is that Drs. Dods, Smith and Bruce do not intend to let the case go against them by default. They are decidedly able men and will make a strong defence.

A YEAR ago the Synod of the English Presbyterian Church published a new creed which, truth to say, did not call forth much enthusiasm in any part of the Presbyterian family. The article on Inspiration was considered defective and was sent back to the committee to be amended. The amended article reads thus:

"We believe that God, who manifests Himself in creation and providence, and especially in the spirit of man, has been pleased to reveal His mind and will for our salvation at successive periods and in various ways; and that this revelation has been, so far as needful, committed to writing by men inspired of the Holy Spirit, in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which are therefore to be devoutly studied by all as God's written Word or message to mankind; and we reverently acknowledge the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scriptures to the Supreme Judge in questions of faith and duty."

The *British Weekly* has this to say about the result of the second attempt:

We do not see that there is anything that can conceivably be objected to by any evangelical Christian in this article, but it looks as if the victory lies with the advanced party, for there is not a word in it under which any process of heresy could be conducted against the most advanced critic who has ever appeared in any Church calling itself evangelical. The real question which should have been faced was whether Scripture as originally given was without error in fact or doctrine, and whether the statement of this belief shall be essential on the part of ministers and elders of the Presbyterian Church.

To say that there is nothing in an article that any evangelical Christian can object to is not saying much, but even this mild praise is neutralized by the fact that the article would be useless if you had to test it by a trial for heresy. An article on Inspiration under which you could not try a minister who denied inspiration would be about as useful as a law against theft under which you could not try a man for stealing. Our American friends will find out that the difficulties of Revision are not over when the Church decides to revise. The real difficulties begin when the actual work begins.

WOMAN'S WORK FOR WOMAN.

ANOTHER year's substantial and progressive work has been achieved by the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society. The entire history of this modern institution has been one of steady progress. It was not entered on unthinkingly. Its origin is due to no sudden but momentary outburst of enthusiasm. The special consecration of woman's efforts to the advancement of Christ's cause in heathen lands was not a novelty when the women of the Canadian Church formally entered on a sphere of work in which they have been so singularly successful. There were similar organizations in connection with sister churches in other lands. These had done excellent work, and it was deemed advisable that similar efforts in connection with the Canadian Church might be made. The results have amply justified the foresight and sanctified common sense of those who undertook to found the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society in connection with the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Many of those who inaugurated the work have given it the benefit of their counsel, and have been unremitting in their self-denying efforts in advancing the cause for whose promotion it was founded, and is so ably maintained. Others who were faithful and devoted in their labours have fallen on sleep; yet their memories will be long and gratefully cherished and their influence and example continue to animate those that remain.

The meeting at Hamilton, as it was expected to be, was one of great interest and profit to all who were privileged to attend. In point of numbers it was exceptionally large, so many of the auxiliaries being well represented. The business was conducted in a methodic and satisfactory manner, there being no unnecessary waste of time, which verbose discussion is sure to occasion; neither was