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The Canada Presbyterian.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, JULY 8th, 1891.

ONE of our New York exchanges heads off the cry about closed Churches by showing that several of the city pulpits will be supplied during the heated term by some of the most distinguished ministers in America. A glance at the list almost tempts one to think that the preaching will improve during vacation. Will the congregations and collections improve?

THERE is no power in arithmetic to express what the rains of last week were worth to Ontario. Continued drought would have made a poor crop and a poor crop would probably have meant a financial panic. Happily all danger is averted and the prospects are fairly good. Now that the drought has ceased what will be the next thing to complain about? Of course we must always see something that is just going to ruin the country.

THE Irish Presbyterian Church has resolved on a new experiment in Foreign Mission work. Hitherto all the missionaries they have sent to India have been thoroughly trained men, and have each been of late years paid an annual salary of \$1,750. It has been resolved to commence work among the Bhils, to be carried on by lay agents under the name of "The Jungle Mission." The salaries of these agents will amount to only about a third of that paid to the other missionaries sent out by the Church. For the present at least the means to sustain this new mission will not be drawn from the regular funds of the Church, but from private subscriptions which have been generously offered for the purpose.

THE Dominion Parliament should not think of adjourning until this Quebec scandal is thoroughly investigated and the guilty parties punished. If the Minister of Public Works is innocent, he is the most abused man in Canada and deserves the sympathy of all right-thinking people. If guilty it is putting the matter mildly to say he is unfit for his present position. What honest men of all parties should demand is a thorough and impartial investigation. Every good Canadian will continue to hope that the accused Minister can clear himself of the charges made against him. Every opportunity should be given him, and we have no doubt will be given him, to make his defence, but if he cannot defend himself he should go and the sooner the better.

WHEN the friends of Queen's University wished to give the institution a decided lift, they secured the services of one of the strongest all round men in the Presbyterianism of Canada. Queen's is to-day financially and in some other respects what Dr. George M. Grant has made the institution. When the Educational affairs of the Methodist Church came to a crisis the General Conference released Dr. Potts, one of their strongest men, from circuit duty, and sent him round among the people. The result will soon be visible in the Queen's Park, Toronto. Presbyterians should pursue exactly some plan in regard to several of their schemes as soon as they can. The Foreign Mission work, if any change is made, should be represented by the strongest man the Church can find to do the work.

IF the twenty millions of bushels of wheat said to be growing in Manitoba and the North-West are safely harvested and well sold, look out for an exodus from Ontario next spring. Every train-

load of people that goes to the Prairie Province and the Territories weakens a number of congregations in the East. These are times for close and careful supervision on the part of Presbyteries. We hear a good deal about the hardships of the North-West. The pastor who sees his congregation there growing by "leaps and bounds" is not half so much an object of sympathy as the eastern pastor who sees his cause melting away by emigration. All honour to the pioneer pastor of the great Prairies, but let Presbyteries and individual ministers who can help not forget that there are struggling pastors in the old as well as in the new parts of Canada.

PERHAPS the most closely-watched public man in Canada at the present time is the Minister of Justice. His course on the Jesuit Estates Bill was thoroughly distasteful to many Ontario people. Our Methodist friends have a reason of their own for not loving him. But Sir John Thompson is a man of ability, and those who have known him from his youth say his personal record is clean. His ability and reputation for honesty have put him well in the foreground. Rightly or wrongly he gets credit from many people for the recent expulsion from Parliament of a member whose reputation was not lovely. If Sir John Thompson shows the least inclination to shield anybody connected with this malodorous Quebec affair, his political fortunes are wrecked. The Equal Rights people and the Methodists are not the only Canadians who are watching him closely.

THE *Presbyterian Witness* has this to say about Dr. Stalker's sermons and the impression they made in Toronto:—

It may be of some use to somebody somewhere to report the fact that Presbyterian Toronto was much disappointed with the preaching of Dr. Stalker, of Glasgow. Possibly the Torontonians expected too much. We remember forming a very high ideal of Dr. R. S. Candlish as a preacher and the disappointment with which we heard him in London for the first time. The fault was with the hearer, not the preacher.

It may be of some use to somebody somewhere to say that is not exactly how the land lay. Those who happened to be familiar with Dr. Stalker's style and expected a scholarly, thoughtful, quietly-read effort were not disappointed. Those who expected a great oratorical display felt—well, perhaps they felt that they might as well have remained in their own churches. That is a good kind of feeling to have occasionally.

IN one respect the General Assembly has made marvellous improvement within the last few years. Nobody poses now as spokesman and representative of "The Kirk." The men who used to act as keepers of "the voluntary conscience" seem to have gone out of business. Nobody wants to fight for the "principles of the Disruption." The union is complete. The Church is one and indivisible. If a division took place now—which heaven forbid—it would not go on the old lines of cleavage. Would it not be a further improvement if some dearly beloved brethren would stop talking so much about the East and the West? Why choose a man for any position simply because he happens to live east or west of some other place? If we live and labour where Providence assigned us there is neither merit nor demerit in the matter. Let the phrases "claims of the East" and "claims of the West" go to pasture along with that other phrase "the U. P. practice before the Union."

THE poorest "stick" in any Church is the creature who is so bigoted that he refuses to learn anything from other denominations. There is no Church better all round than the Presbyterian, but Presbyterians might learn several useful things from their neighbours. From the Episcopalians some of them might learn not to allow every tramp that comes along to use their pulpits. From the same body they might learn not to use the pulpit as a dead-head advertising medium. Complaint is made of Episcopalian exclusiveness. The exclusiveness that keeps other than Episcopal ministers out of the pulpit may seem extreme, but it will wear better than the inclusiveness that admits every "ecclesiastical prowler" into the pulpit. No notices at all is better than turning the pulpit into a bulletin board and using God's house and God's day for dead-head advertising for the benefit of every crank who may want his show advertised. From the Methodists

we might take many points in the way of making our Church machinery flexible and adapting it to our environment. From the Baptists we might learn one lesson. If a Baptist woman will wade out into a river in presence of hundreds, should a Presbyterian woman be ashamed to present her child for baptism in the Church?

TO one who believes that exercising the franchise is a duty, or a matter in which liberty should be allowed, the action of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of the United States in expelling several ministers for voting seems unreasonable and unjust. But, like every other question, this one has two sides. A Church has an undoubted right to make its own laws. One of the fundamental principles, so-called, on which this body rests is abstinence from the world in matters of civil government. These expelled ministers knew that when they took their ordination vows. If they did not like the position of the Reformed Church to take they could easily have kept out of it. They could easily have found a place and work in one of the other Presbyterian bodies. An insurance company, a fire company, any kind of a society, has a right to make and enforce its own rules, and if they are absurd so much the worse for the makers. A Church should surely enjoy the same privilege. Believing as we do that the franchise is a trust, we think, of course, that the position of the Reformed Church is absurd, but then Churches have a right to do absurd things if they will.

THE long-talked-of Encyclical on the labour question has at last been issued. It has been read in the Roman Catholic Churches generally. According to frequent accounts it took a long time to elaborate, and now that a portion of it has been read to the faithful, it does not appear to contain anything very remarkable. It sheds no new light on a question that is of interest to thoughtful minds of all shades of opinion. It offers no new solution of existing difficulties. Recognized abuses are condemned. Common places about the relations of capital and labour, and the duties of both, have been said over and over again in many forms by others who make no pretensions to superior divine illumination. The socialistic solution of existing evils is rejected and the rights of private property are maintained. As against socialism the position of the Encyclical is well defined, but the Henry George theory of the nationalization of land is not so hardly condemned. The Pope claims that the Gospel is the only real solvent of the social and industrial difficulties that perplex modern society. In this all who believe the Gospel agree. But all do not agree in the assumption of the Encyclical that the Church of Rome and the Gospel are interchangeable terms. The Pope has spoken *ex cathedra* on the labour problem, but his utterance will be no more regarded than will be the contributions of ordinary thinkers who have devoted their attention to a question of pressing importance.

DR. STALKER has reached home after his visit to this continent. He is delighted with what he has seen and experienced in America. It is evident from what he said at a welcome-home meeting in his own congregation that he has formed a very favourable impression of men and things as he saw them. His tour in America, he told his people, had been an uninterrupted pleasure from beginning to end. He observed what is plainly noticeable, that there was a strong tendency to materialism. To this, however, there is a set-off, in the liberal way men of wealth contribute to religious, philanthropic and educational work. The religious activity, also discernible, impressed him, and he has ascertained that the Protestant Churches are keeping pace with the spiritual needs of the people. There is, he states, one Church to every eight hundred of the population. Dr. Stalker thinks that denominationalism has not been so injurious as some are disposed to imagine. Instead of being a drawback he considers that it has been most helpful in the rapidly-growing country. A single Church, he says, could never have done the work that has been accomplished. The friendly rivalry of the various denominations, in spite of some disadvantages, has had excellent results. In a reference to the Briggs controversy in the American Church he gives it as his opinion that notwithstanding the decisive vote of the Assembly the question is not yet