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TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 21st, 1888.

THE latest name for a pulpit is "the bulletin board." People who wish all kinds of notices read at the close of the service will perhaps see the point.

A PROMINENT Methodist minister stated the other day in an interview that he expected an adverse vote in Cobourg because several of the professors are opposed to Federation, being connected with Cobourg families. The connections of a professor's family certainly constitute a most satisfactory reason why no respect should be paid to the deliverance of the Supreme Court of one of the largest religious bodies in the Dominion. Are the Senate and professors of Victoria College the servants of the Methodist Church or its masters?

GOOD citizens should set their faces like flint against the growing tendency in many quarters to make Thanksgiving Day a mere holiday. If another holiday in the year is wanted let us have it, but the nation should not be guilty of any such transparent hypocrisy as setting apart a day for thanksgiving to Almighty God for His mercies, and then spend the day in various kinds of amusements. The day is over for this year, but it is not too late to say that nations, as such, are punished in this life, and if we mock God by calling a day of amusement a day of thanksgiving, we may soon have cause for a day of humiliation.

DR. CUYLER says:

There must be leaders in every Church; but don't try to push into prominence conceited people who happen to have large purses or social conspicuousness. The best workers are often those of humblest social rank; and no man or woman should be prominent unless they have earned their position by consecration to the Master's service.

Exactly so. The motto in Church work should always be—the tools for the man who can use them. No decent person grudges a man the prominence he gains by consecration to his Master's work. After all that has been said and written about leaderships in the Church, it comes to this in the end—the man who can lead wisely and successfully will always, or nearly always, be asked to do so. Ability and consecration of heart and purse usually come to the front in a living Church. The best way to become a leader in a live Church is to deserve to be one. Good work well and cheerfully done gives man more and better prominence in a year than a lifetime spent in carping and nibbling at others.

THE character and record of the President-elect of the United States must be very near perfection. During the campaign just closed, even the most unscrupulous opponent could bring no charge against him. The fierce light that beat upon him for months revealed no dark spots. For once the campaign liar has been completely routed. Presbyterians the world over may well feel proud of that Indiana elder and Bible class teacher. The *Interior* says:

General Harrison is an able statesman, a spotless gentleman, a sincere Christian—and for such a President, from whatever party he may come, we will devoutly thank God. Should General Harrison form a government of material something like himself, there will be no difficulty in settling the Fishery and all other questions that are at present pending between Canada and the United States. The last treaty was negotiated at the

worst possible time—immediately before the Presidential contest. The slate is clean now, and there is no reason to believe that a man of General Harrison's character will want to write anything unfair or unreasonable on it. Presumably, the British Government are anxious to have all irritating questions settled. Why, then, should the settlement not take place?

THE position of the Methodist Church on the Federation question may be illustrated by a supposed parallel in the Presbyterian Church. Supposing the General Assembly, after due consideration, instructed the Managing Board of Knox College to do a certain thing and appointed a special committee to help them. And supposing the board and committee meet and go on with the work assigned them by the Supreme Court up to a certain point and then, as a matter of courtesy or for some other reason, consult the College Senate. The Senate instead of co-operating with the board and special committee, passes a resolution which, under a thin—very thin—disguise, is intended to block the action of the Assembly. How long would the Senate live after doing this? It would live until the General Assembly meets next June; then it would get its walking ticket, and as it walked out of office all the Presbyterian people would say, Amen. That is exactly how it would be in the Presbyterian Church. If the Methodist people allow a few men to override the will of the whole Church as expressed through the Supreme Court of the Church, they are in a state of ecclesiastical anarchy. Better have no Church Government at all than a Government whose action a few scheming clerics can thwart.

If the writers who are discussing the "pew system" in the daily journals would come down to particulars and tell their readers exactly what they mean by the "pew system" something might be gained by the discussion. In any Church seated with pews there must be some pew system. Many who discuss the question assume that because families sit in the same pew every Sabbath the system of *pew rent* prevails in the Church to which they belong. Such is not the case. Families occupy the same pew in, so far as we know, all the Churches in which the envelope system is adopted. This system, which on the whole is perhaps the best when well worked, does not make it necessary for families to scatter all over the Church on Sabbath. There are several marked advantages in having families sit together. The moral effect is good. The family appears in the house of God and worships as a family. The pastor can see if members of the family are absent. The parents can see that the little folks conduct themselves properly. As a rule families like to have a pew that they can call their own even when they are opposed to pew rent. Nothing would be gained in the matter of room if families separated and sat anywhere. They would take up as much room in any other pew as in their own. Giving each family a pew, if the room in the Church permits such an arrangement is not the pew rent system, though a good many people assume that it is.

MORMONS IN MANITOBA.

THE rise and progress of Mormonism is one of the religious puzzles of the time, and will probably occasion wonder to succeeding generations when vestiges of the system will only be found in history. Fraudulent in origin and pernicious in some of its practices, it is surprising that so many people have been found to adopt a religion so absurd. The existence of Mormonism affords evidence that people can be found in every age and in every community who are willing to profess the wildest vagaries and become the pliant dupes of designing leaders. The story of Joseph Smith, whether told by friend or foe, can only excite the contempt of people possessed of ordinary intelligence. The imposition of the gold plate story on a credulous people is one of the marvels of this century.

It may be, however, that few, very few indeed, accept the Book of Mormon as a record of fact, and who have their own ideas of its so-called inspiration, but who are, nevertheless, attached to the Church of the Latter Day Saints mainly for substantial and mundane reasons. Without some degree of belief in the system it is impossible that it could have existed so

long. Who are the people who for the most part compose the Mormon community? The population of Utah territory numbers, including Gentiles, over 100,000—and what is the degree of intelligence they possess? Comparatively few Americans are to be found among them. With the exception of the descendants of the original leaders, the vast body is composed of immigrants from various European countries, whose religious training and convictions must have been of the most rudimentary kind. That Mormon missionaries should have proved comparatively successful emigration agents is in no degree surprising. In addressing struggling toilers in overcrowded districts in Denmark, Germany and in Great Britain they could hold out prospects of material well-being which appeared impossible of attainment in their respective countries. A moderate competency in Utah was a bright prospect compared with a life of hard and unremitting toil, scantily remunerated, and when labour was no longer possible the deepening gloom was but little relieved by the consideration that the workhouse would afford a last asylum where life would reach its close. Those to whom life presents few attractions to relieve its stern realities will not weigh with scrupulous nicety the claims of a religious creed if its adoption secures them an un hoped-for advancement in material well-being. This will readily account for the steady stream of immigrants that yearly recruits the numbers of Joseph Smith's followers. Scandinavian and Scot, Teuton and Celt find their way to Utah, but it is observed that they are not drawn from the most intelligent of their respective races. Once there and when the die is cast, there are many inducements for them to remain long after all illusions have fled. The Mormons claim that the annual increase of their community from European immigration varies from 1,000 to 4,000.

As a religious system it is of the most eclectic kind. It is a piece of Mosaic work composed of Judaism, Mohammedanism and Christianity. In its government it is professedly based on the theocratic principles applied in a somewhat autocratic form. To this method of government it chiefly owes whatever coherency and force the system possesses. Polygamy, an after-thought of Mormonism, has not a little to do with its perpetuation. It is the peculiar institution of the Latter Day Saints, yet it was not publicly avowed till 1852, before the settlement in Salt Lake. Accounts as to its origin are somewhat discordant, being generally credited to Joseph Smith who adroitly promulgated a revelation to escape a practical difficulty. The descendants of Joseph, however, now claim that polygamy formed no part of the religion their father was commissioned to establish, and was forced upon it by other of the earlier leaders of the movement. Now that the repugnant practice is felt to be one of the most obviously vulnerable parts of the system, it is convenient and timely to agitate for its suppression, especially as the United Government are in earnest in their endeavours to bring about the same result.

In various parts of Ontario there are a few adherents of Mormonism to be found. They profess to accept the creed, but disclaim the practice of polygamy which the Canadian Government, backed by Canadian public opinion would take good care to prevent. About two years ago a small colony from Utah found its way into Manitoba where they effected a settlement. Last week three of their elders have been on a visit to Ottawa endeavouring to secure special privileges from the Dominion Government. Had the favours for which they asked been granted them it is likely that the community would have received considerable accessions, as it seems to be the present policy of the Mormon leaders to promote colonization. They are forming communities in several of the Southern States and in New Mexico. So long as the Mormons in Canada choose to conform to the laws of the country, and make industrious citizens, they will be left unmolested by the State. In a land where religious liberty prevails they need not expect special privileges. The time for giving exemptions is past. One thing is certain, that Canadians will not tolerate in their midst a community that practises polygamy. When these Mormons first came to Manitoba they gave it to be understood that in Canada they would adhere to monogamy. It is represented that one of their requests to the Government at Ottawa was that they be permitted to bring