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EASTERN GENERAL AGENT.

MR. WALTER KERR—for many years an esteemed elder of our Church—is the duly authorized agent for THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN. He will collect outstanding accounts, and take charge of new subscribers. Friends are invited to give any assistance in their power to Mr. Kerr in all the congregations he may visit.



TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 1887.

If the *Montreal Witness* desires to make itself useful, it can find an ample field without coming as far west as the Presbytery of Toronto, and without leaving the Church of which it has long been considered the organ. Where is Bray? Or, if the *Witness* must go west, and go out of its own fold, why not give its attention to Bond Street? There are some questions in connection with the mode of worship practised in that institution that need attention quite as much as the Presbytery of Toronto. As the *Witness* so kindly tells the world of a question that Presbyterians must face before long, we take the liberty of reminding the *Witness* of a question that should have been faced long ago. It is this: Should the Bond Street Church and similar institutions be kept open on the Lord's Day?

It is contended that the chaplain of the reformatory at Penetanguishene should be an Episcopalian because a large majority of the Protestant inmates are Episcopalians. We are happy to admit that the figures are against us: The total commitments from the larger denominations have been as follows: English Church, 510; Roman Catholic, 529; Methodist, 283; Presbyterian, 150. On the 30th of last September the proportions in residence were: Roman Catholics, seventy-two; English Church, sixty-four; Methodist, thirty-eight; Presbyterian, twenty-three. In the matter of raising boys for the reformatory, we gratefully yield the palm to the English Church. The only question is whether the Church that cares for her boys in such a manner as to have a large majority in the reformatory is the best one to look after them when they are there.

VARIOUS circumstances combined to make the Synod of Toronto and Kingston, held last week in Brampton, one of the best, if not the very best, ever held by that body. The weather was fine—it was more than fine, it was glorious. Even grave, Calvinistic divines are influenced by the weather—some of them very much so. Brampton is a beautiful town—a good place to meet in. It is easy getting there. The arrangements were ample and well made. Above all, the brethren seemed to be in excellent humour. Business moved along in a medium sort of way, just dignified enough to be Presbyterian, and just easy and lively enough to be pleasant. There was one long and difficult appeal case, but it was conducted on both sides in such a good spirit that it did not seem like litigation. The evening meetings were excellent, especially the meeting on the State of Religion, on Tuesday evening. The tone of this meeting was very good, the speeches short but pointed, and the effect of the whole all that could be desired. On the whole, this meeting of Synod was one of those ecclesiastical gatherings that makes one feel glad he attended. Those who were absent will be sorry when they learn how much they lost. Their number was fairly large.

THE General Assembly of the great American Presbyterian Church meets this week in Omaha. The funds, we understand, are in a healthy state, and

the Church generally in a prosperous condition. There are no burning questions, so far as we know, and the meeting is likely to be profitable and pleasant. The meeting of this Assembly last year in Minneapolis, this year in Omaha, and of our own Assembly in Winnipeg, suggests the tremendous strides that civilization is making on this continent. Even boys, or very young men, can remember when there was no Omaha, or Minneapolis, or Winnipeg. A very few years ago some of our ministers, who went to Winnipeg, felt constrained to write lectures on their adventures in the great lone land. In a few weeks they will sit in the General Assembly in a city of 20,000 people in that region. Civilization is making rapid progress in the West and North-West, and the prayer of every good man is that Christianity may keep pace with settlement. The enterprise of the Western man crops out finely in the railway arrangements for conveying the members of the American Assembly from Chicago to Omaha. One company offers to take the members to Omaha and back for a single fare. Another—the Chicago and North-Western—offers to carry not only members of Assembly at lower rates, but all Presbyterians who wish to attend the meeting. We rather like competition of that kind.

THE number of people in Ontario who think that a lawyer cannot lead a consistent Christian life is probably as large as the number who think it a sin to drink an occasional glass of liquor. We hold no such view of the legal profession. Considering the temptations they are exposed to, and the facilities they have for covering up their tracks, lawyers compare very favourably with any other class of men. There is no calling in which it pays better in the end to be an honest man. But still everybody knows many people believe that a lawyer who acts as counsel must often argue in favour of the wrong and against the right. How would it do, to pass a law, in deference to this popular belief, forbidding lawyers to come to the sacramental table? A considerable number of people in this country believe that the editor of a party newspaper does not lead a consistent Christian life. How would it do to exclude all editors—including the editors of the *Montreal Witness*? Many worthy people believe that banks, railway companies, insurance companies, loan companies and many other monetary institutions are soulless, grinding, godless concerns, that think of nothing but squeezing the last cent out of everybody under their power. Heaven knows some of them are hard and cruel enough. How would it do, in deference to this opinion, to exclude all persons connected with these monetary institutions from Church privileges, and exclude at the same time all who have stock in them? The fact is when you get away from the plain teaching of God's word, and begin to make new terms of communion to suit public opinion, you land in confusion. Where are you to stop? Where draw the line? Public opinion is constantly changing. Should the terms of communion be changed to suit? The only safe way is to stand by God's word, and leave the Master's table as He left it Himself.

IF the *Montreal Witness* wishes to state fairly the action taken by the Toronto Presbytery the other day, it should not say that the Presbytery "continues to sanction liquor-selling church membership." What the Presbytery did was to refuse to make terms of communion Christ never made. The Presbytery is just as willing as the *Witness* to deal with the question, but, unlike the *Witness*, it does not desire to deal with it in an unscriptural way. The *Witness* is pleased to say that the "matter will have to be faced before long." It is being faced now. An number of Sessions have been facing it for many years. In the way indicated by Dr. McLaren the work has been going on steadily and effectively. The *Witness* knows of no remedy but to pass a law of some kind. Just pass a cast iron law, split the Church, and drive a number of our people over to keep Congregationalism out of its coffin a little while longer. That kind of a remedy would suit the *Witness* finely no doubt, but it does not happen to please Presbyterians. During the whole period of its existence the *Witness* has been denouncing the Church of Rome for adding to the Word of God. Now it denounces the Presbytery of Toronto because it refuses to do that very thing. That which is wrong for Rome to do would be right for the Toronto Presbytery to do, because public

opinion happens to be shaping in a certain direction at the present time. Neither the Toronto nor any other Presbytery so understands its duty. The *Witness* should know by this time that Presbyterians do not regard the Church of God as a society or club that has power to alter its constitution and laws to suit each varying shade of public opinion. That theory of the Church may produce men like Bray and Wild, but it never produces MacVickers, or McLaren, or Cavens. It may be the theory under which Congregationalism dies, but it is not the theory under which Presbyterianism grows.

PROGRESS OF TEMPERANCE OPINION.

OF late the Temperance question has been receiving a large amount of general attention. This is due to several causes. It is not a party political contention; it is one of the great moral and social questions of the time. Temperance opinion, however, touches politics at various points. Every year it is entering more largely into municipal affairs. Candidates for election, in most instances, must have a clearly defined position on the subject, as well as general qualifications for the office to which they aspire. The parties diametrically opposed to each other are particularly interested in the record of aspirants in relation to the Temperance movement. Those in the liquor interest, feeling, as they never felt before, that its very existence is now at stake, put forth every effort to secure the return of candidates who favour the perpetuation of the traffic in which they are engaged. Every year they see that the tide of public opinion is running stronger against the business of liquor selling. Toronto, as well as other municipalities, affords evidence that such is the case. A prominent advocate of the Temperance cause was elected to the mayoralty in 1886; while a number of the aldermen were out of sympathy with his views. In 1887 Mr. Howland was re-elected mayor by an increased majority, and a board of aldermen more in harmony with progressive Temperance action in municipal affairs was returned. As a result, a motion for a considerable reduction of licenses was passed, and in due time carried into effect. In some quarters there is talk of reaction, though with vigilant Temperance organization this is most unlikely.

In certain municipalities, where the Scott Act is in operation, efforts are being made to start an agitation for its repeal. The Woodstock Town Council have, by a large majority, presented a petition to the Dominion Parliament praying for the repeal of the Act. This has been promptly met by the Temperance organization of the locality, whose members have passed clear-cut resolutions directly traversing the contention of the pro-liquor party. Other places besides Woodstock are taking an active part in the discussion whether the Scott Act should be maintained or repealed. Long before the decision is made at the ballot box the conflict of opinion will be sharper than ever. It may be relied on that the supporters of the Scott Act will do their utmost to maintain a law that is in the interest of social order and the moral and material well-being of the community. A series of defeats would postpone the realization for which they have been so energetically striving.

The friends of Temperance cannot fail to have noticed that the recently elected member for East Bruce has introduced a bill in the House of Commons for the repeal of the Scott Act. It has also been decided by the Dominion Alliance to test the strength of the Temperance sentiment in the new Parliament. With this end in view Mr. Jamieson, M.P. for North Lanark, a consistent Temperance advocate, is about to submit to the House a resolution affirming the principle of Prohibition. Of course it is not expected that the concentration of the nation's wisdom will pronounce unambiguously in favour of the entire legal suppression of the drink traffic; but, to a certain extent, it will reflect the strength of the prohibition sentiment in the country. Not being a party question, members need not be under the same constraint that usually keeps them in the traces. At all events, Temperance will have a field day in the House of Commons, and discussion anywhere and everywhere is an advantage to the cause.

Another evidence that the Temperance reformation is making marked progress is found in the Convention of the Church of England Temperance Society, held in Toronto last week, and presided over by the Bishop of the diocese. Great interest centred in the