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The Canada Presbyterian.

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, MANAGER.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 24TH, 1894.

THERE should be no difficulty in putting an end to the barbarous practice of hazing in institutions that are under the control of the government. Just shut off the supplies.

"ANYBODY can write a paragraph." Almost anybody can spread an idea or two over a page; but anybody cannot express the same idea with more force in a single sentence.

THE fundamental question in regard to hazing is whether students at college are to be allowed to break the law of the land while men on the street are hustled off to the cells for breaches of the peace not nearly so serious as those committed in some colleges. There ought to be no difficulty in settling that question.

WE clip the following from the "funny" column of the *Globe* :—

The pastor of a church near Boston makes the following announcement :—"He would be very glad if every one on whom he calls will bear in mind his previous suggestion as to the great value of time in the effort to reach near 400 homes, and subordinate decoration to despatch."

Will some one please translate this last clause?

No working pastor will find the slightest difficulty in translating that clause. It means that the pastor did not wish to wait until all the female members of the family dressed themselves for company. There is an immense amount of precious time lost in that way. The Boston pastor knew his business.

WE do wish that the municipal electors of Ontario, especially those who dwell in cities, could see a report of the proceedings that are now taking place in New York, Chicago, Sioux City and other places in the United States. The amount of municipal corruption that is being unearthed is simply appalling. Gambling, hell, saloons of the worst kind, houses of ill repute, and every kind of disreputable establishments, have flourished under the eyes of the police and have been encouraged as sources of illicit revenue for the administrators of the law. Prevention is easier and better than cure; and the only sure way to prevent municipal disgrace is to put good men into the municipal councils. Good men will never be put there if good citizens do not take an interest in municipal elections.

ONE scarcely ever opens a newspaper now without seeing a case of suicide reported. Whatever else may be there is very likely to be an account of the death of somebody who rushed unbidden into the presence of his Judge. Sometimes we see a report of two or three cases in one paper. Various theories are given to account for the epidemic. One theory is the existence of financial de-

pression. This may account for some cases, but certainly not for many others. Two cases that occurred in Canada last week were marked exceptions. The increase of mental disease may, and very likely does, account for a corresponding increase of suicide. Probably the principal cause is growing unbelief in God. The moment a man begins to doubt the existence of a personal God he becomes more or less likely to extricate himself from real or imaginary difficulties by taking his own life.

WHILE the committee on supplying vacancies is getting to work it might be well for somebody to refresh the mind of the church with the scripture argument in favor of the right of the people to elect their pastor. Not long ago we asked a couple of well read ministers for the strong points of Scripture in favor of the system. One of them replied that the Scriptures say nothing on the question, and the other that there is "something in Cunningham about it." The subject has not been much discussed for a long time. Every body—that is, every Presbyterian body—takes for granted the system is scriptural. It might do good to have the Scripture texts in favor of the system set before the people. Our columns are open for that purpose to anybody who can give the argument in a condensed form. But we want to hear from Paul or James or Peter or their Master—not from Cunningham, excellent and able though he was.

CHIEF JUSTICE MEREDITH takes his seat on the Bench in his fifty-fifth year. Everybody wishes him a long and useful judicial career. Were the learned chief a minister of the gospel a good many people would think that his career is about closed and his usefulness about gone at fifty-five. Being a judge people think his career is only beginning at that age. Most village congregations would hesitate to call a pastor at fifty-five. Some of them would scarcely give him a hearing. The country calls Mr. Meredith to one of the highest judicial positions in the Province at fifty-five and nobody says he is too old. The craze for youthful preaching is bringing the church and the pulpit into contempt. People who do not believe much in either church or pulpit say the work cannot be very important if a boy can do it better than a man. The country would be shocked at the sight of a boy on the Bench dealing with men's property. But then, too, many people think more of their property than they think of their souls.

IF all conventions were like the one held in Toronto last week thoughtful people would take much more interest in them. The subject was an important and intensely practical one—the saving of children. The members of the convention were practical men who come in contact every day with the strays and waifs of society. The discussions could not fail to be of interest to every patriotic Canadian. As was pointed out again and again during the convention, the only sure way to prevent the increase of crime is to stop raising criminals. As long as municipalities use their gaols for training schools in crime they must pay the bill for the administration of criminal justice. It costs far more to punish criminals than it would cost to build a suitable house of correction in each county. The money for the house of correction or industrial school would have to be voted at once and the sum might seem large to some eyes. The amount needed to care for and try criminals is paid out gradually and is not so much missed. Hence, the work of training criminals in gaols goes on in many places, and people seldom think very seriously about the matter except when some unfortunate neighbor's boy goes to the gallows. Then they moralize for a few days quite seriously.

IN this vigorous way does the *Interior* "show up" a practice that will stand, and should have more discussion of the same kind:

There is a kind of talk in our newspapers, both secular and religious, that wears us. We read in the speeches and addresses of our temperance advocates, and now and then it creeps into a deliverance of the General Assembly, that "Christian America sends five missionaries and five thousand gallons of rum annually to the west coast of Africa." Hamlet says that some things are "as easy as lying," but that is not true of many forms of speech. The fact is that Christian America sends its missionaries, and pagan America sends its rum; and the churches of Boston are no more responsible for New England rum sent to the Congo than is the Mosque of Omar at Jerusalem. We never knew a man so idiotic as to blame the wheat for the cockles that grew in the heart of its field. And yet a platform orator will "bring

down the house" by telling how he "counted five churches on the avenue and fifty saloons under their shadows," as if the sowing of churches produced saloons. It is but the flimsiest logic and the cheapest rhetoric that holds Christianity responsible for all the evils sown by an alien hand in her home field. And yet there is probably not a day in the year when somebody is not preparing for the platform or the press a rehash of this worn-out and absurd declamation.

Temperance orators of the anti-church class are not by any means the only people who indulge in this kind of rubbish. The stock in trade of some evangelists is cheap abuse of churches and ministers. Demagogues, who profess to have much interest in the poor, often expatiate on the splendour of city churches and the sufferings of the poor under the shadow of their steeples. Do these mothers not know that ninety-nine out of every hundred cents given to help the poor is given by church-going people. We often hear it said that the white man brought the Indian the gospel, and whiskey, and taught him to swear. Was it the same white man? It is more than time that church people had thoroughly exposed the declamatory rubbish that tries to bring out a vulgar cheer by fathering every kind of iniquity on the church.

AN OLD-FASHIONED CHURCHMAN.

WE quite willingly publish in another column the letter of "An Old-Fashioned Churchman," which he rather expected would find its way to the waste-basket, because it advocates opinions and practices which he considers find little favor in the eyes of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN. We may say here, once for all, that nothing can be further from our wish or intention than that everything should be refused a place in our columns which is not an echo of our own opinions. This would be to court failure and deserve it. We claim in the most absolute manner the right to think our own thoughts, and say respectfully our own say; and we should despise ourselves, and be worthy of being despised by others, if we restricted them in the exercise of a right which we claim for ourselves. The columns of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN will always be open to all fair criticism of our own or any other person's opinions, and for the discussion within reasonable bounds of every subject suitable to such a paper. Let this be fully understood.

We turn now to "Old-Fashioned Churchman's" criticisms. With much that he says we are in full and hearty accord; at the same time, we feel some difficulty in knowing just exactly what his real position is, for, while he apologizes for some things that we have but little sympathy with, and generally appears to be in favour of a more elaborate service than is now common in Presbyterian Churches, he, at the same time, assures us that he has "no sympathy with the ultramontane liturgicalism which is creeping into the Church of Scotland." But let that pass.

"A narrow sectarianism," he says, "has for the last year or two been creeping into THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN in the place of that broad catholicity of spirit for which he has often praised and recommended it." He instances, in proof of this charge, our treatment of the Mother Church, meaning by that, we understand, the Established Church of Scotland. Our reports respecting her have "generally been one-sided, and we have seldom a good word to say for her." We admit, it may be, that, having spent over fifty years from early boyhood wholly in Canada, in close connection not only with a non-established church, but with churches which have broken off from the Church of Scotland, although not consciously under the influence of any prejudice whatever against her, we may unwittingly wound the susceptibilities, which we would not willingly wound, of those who have early, long-cherished and dear associations in connection with that historic branch of the Presbyterian church. We willingly grant that she has done much to give Scotland and Scotchmen that, in some respects, unique character which they bear and that powerful influence which they exert the world over.

But worse! "In a late issue we rail against some of the reformations being made in the churches and services in Scotland." Further on reference is made to St. Cuthberts, as if something in connection with it were specially alluded to. Some time ago we gave from British exchange accounts of the opening services at St. Cuthberts, of their stately pomp and ceremonial, and quoted some opinions not favorable to so much ceremony, and charging them with being an aping of Episcopacy. We gave these simply as found in our exchanges. If doing this is to rail at these things we may be blamed with it. No one, however,