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THE MORNING GUARDIAN

MONDAY NOV. 19, 1900.

RELIGIOUS PROGRESS OF THE CENTURY.

We have received the first volume of The Nineteenth Century Series published by the Linecott Publishing Company of Toronto. The full series of 25 octavo volumes will contain a review by eminent writers of all the lines of progress during the century past. The first volume of nearly 500 pages deals with Religious Progress in the Century and is from the pen of Rev. Dr. Withrow, of Toronto, whose portrait graces the frontispiece. Other portraits of men prominently connected with the religious movements of the century are given, and include the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Beecher Family, Rev. Dr. Thomas Chalmers, Rev. John Wesley, Bishop Phillip Newman, Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, Pope Leo XIII and Gen. William Booth.

As an absolute necessity in noting the religious progress of the century the first few chapters are devoted to showing the moral and religious conditions prevailing at the close of the eighteenth century. Dr. Withrow is no pessimist, and the contrast clearly presented between the conditions then and now prevailing indicates that very great progress has been made, upward as well as onward toward humaneness, sobriety, cleanly living and that higher moral tone which it is the mission of religion to promote. It is both fitting and encouraging to note this contrast. The nineteenth has been a better century than the eighteenth, and its close marks a stupendous advance from its beginning in religion and morals as in science, discovery and material improvements.

"During the whole period of the Georges," Dr. Withrow says, "there seems to have been from the King to the last king an almost entire absence of moral sense. The card table was a main resource from ennui. Faded dowagers sat late in the night playing the magic cards. The Newmarket races were the haunts of profligacy and vice. So also were the resorts of Bath and Taunbridge Wells. Immense sums were lost and won in bets. The fashionable literature to be found in fine ladies' boudoirs was such as few now care to acknowledge having read. Intemperance was a prevailing vice. No class was free from its contamination. The crimes of the Judge and cassock of the priest were alike polluted by the degrading practice. The dissipation of the lower classes was almost incredible."

In those days in our Mother Country profanity and drunkenness were almost universal; highwaymen plodded the

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country roads and footpads infested the unlighted streets of London; wreckers and smugglers plied their trade with merciless and murderous violence around the coasts; the conditions of labor were such as would now be deemed intolerable; bear baiting and cockfighting were the common sports of the people even on Sundays; executions were public entertainments and the victims were left hanging in chains at the roadsides; human heads were exposed impaled on Fleet Street or London Bridge; prisoners were unmercifully flogged in pestilential jails; press gangs seized citizens on the streets and compelled them to serve for life on His Majesty's ships; and in most of Britain's colonies slavery prevailed and men and women were bought and sold like sheep in the shambles. Much more might be said, but let this suffice. Surely, there has been a great enlightenment and uplifting of the moral and religious sense during the century past!

In succeeding chapters in part two of the book, Dr. Withrow traces with clear penetration and a vigorous pen the inception and growth of the great missionary movement which has carried the gospel to the ends of the earth. It furnishes a most inspiring story. Part three treats of the forward movements in each of the branches of the Christian Church, which include the Oxford movement in the Church of England, the beginning of Methodism, the disruption of the Established Church of Scotland, the proclamation of the papal infallibility in the Roman Catholic church, the union of various religious bodies, &c. Part four deals with the trend and progress of religious thought, in various countries, and the progress of Biblical archaeology. It is of great interest, but hardly more so than the fifth and concluding part which gives a clear survey of the Sunday School, the Salvation Army, the Young Men's Christian Association, the St. Andrews Brotherhood, the Christian Endeavor and other societies which have become so numerous, active and widespread.

The volume before us gives a clear and inspiring review of the religious progress of the century, such as was fitting and necessary to be written and to be read at the present time. Its literary style is well-adapted to the taste of the better class of readers and the subjects treated. It contains much valuable information not available in any other one volume. Besides it gives promise that the succeeding twenty four volumes of the Nineteenth Century Series will sustain the high expectations that were raised among the reading public when the scope of the work and the names of the authors were first announced some months ago.

In the states of Utah, Wyoming, Colorado and Idaho the women possess the full voting franchise and took part in the Presidential election. In Colorado 88,943 women voted, being nearly twice the number who voted in 1886. In Utah the woman who seconded Bryan's nomination at the Kansas state convention was a candidate for a state office, but ran far behind her ticket. In Wyoming a Democratic candidate for Congress, who had made the incautious statement that "the women vote was the easiest possible thing to get," was defeated by women votes.

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THE WEST DURHAM ELECTION CASE

An interesting case for the politicians, judges and lawyers is supplied from the recent election in West Durham, Ont. Hon. Edward Blake's former constituency. It turns upon the validity of a certified bank cheque as a candidate's deposit on nomination day.

There were two candidates.—Mr. C. J. Thornton, Independent Conservative, and Mr. R. Beith, Liberal. The Liberal candidate's agent, two days previous to the day of nomination, filed with the returning officer Mr. Beith's nomination paper and with it four fifty dollar bank notes, making \$200, for which the returning officer gave his receipt, according to law.

On the day before the nomination Mr. Thornton's agent filed his nomination paper, and with it a certified cheque for \$200. The agent and the returning officer had some conversation at the time, a part of which is in dispute, but the returning officer accepted the cheque as a deposit, gave his official receipt for \$200 and deposited the cheque in bank to his own credit.

The election followed in due course and Mr. Thornton received a majority of some forty votes. But between the days of nomination and polling the returning officer became dubious as to the legality of Mr. Thornton's deposit and separately consulted two eminent Toronto lawyers Mr. A. B. Aylesworth, Q. C., and Mr. W. R. Riddell, Q. C., and placed the facts before them. Both these lawyers concurred in the view that the returning officer ought not to take the responsibility of declaring Mr. Thornton elec'ed, but leave the question to be decided by the higher tribunals. This course has been adopted. Neither candidate has been declared elected, and all the papers have been sent to Ottawa, there to be dealt with.

There are several questions arising in connection with the case. The first of these is, Was Mr. Thornton legally nominated? Both the lawyers to whom the question was referred are of the opinion that he was not. The second question arising is, Did the action of the returning officer in accepting the cheque and giving his receipt for it cure the irregularity that existed? Mr. Aylesworth thinks that this is a question upon which even the judges would be in doubt. Mr. Riddell is of opinion that the action of the returning officer did not cure the defect in Mr. Thornton's nomination, and that Mr. Beith, whose nomination was in all respects good, ought to have been declared elected on nomination day. But since the election was allowed to go on, the returning officer ought not to take the responsibility of declaring either candidate elec'ed.

There is talk of an appeal being made to compel the returning officer to declare Mr. Thornton elected. Mr. Beith, the Liberal candidate, says he does not want to obtain the seat on a mere technicality, and in this he shows a fitting sense of propriety and the situation as it stands. The Toronto Globe, in a leading article under the heading, The Majority Must Rule, argues that Mr. Thornt is clearly entitled to the seat.

The Quebec Opposition are in a most unfavorable condition to begin a campaign, but they seem disposed to face it manfully. They cannot hope to win the electoral battle, still it will be best for Quebec, and best for the Parent government also, that the leading men of the Opposition should find seats in the House. Under our system of politics intelligent and able criticism of the conduct of public affairs is a prime requisite, and this can only be realized by having a somewhat fair representation of both parties in the Legislature.

The Boers are cutting the railway lines in the southern part of the Orange River Colony, between Bloemfontein and the Orange River. They are a troublesome lot of fellows, but it is perhaps best that they shall do their utmost before the great body of the British troops are withdrawn. Had they remained quiet till the troops had returned to England and then made a determined uprising, much of the hard work of the past months would have to be done over again and matters would have been even more serious than they now are.

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