

The Dominion Presbyterian

is published at

323 FRANK ST. • • OTTAWA

and at

Montreal and Winnipeg.

TERMS: One year (50 issues) in advance \$1.50
Six months 75

CLUBS of Five, at same time..... 5.00

The date on the label shows to what time the paper is paid for. Notify the publisher at once of any mistake on label.

Paper is continued until an order is sent for discontinuance, and with it, payment of arrears.

When the address of your paper is to be changed, send the old as well as new address.

Sample copies sent upon application. Send all remittances by check, money order or postal note, made payable to The Dominion Presbyterian.

Advertising Rates.—15 cents per agate line each insertion, 14 lines to the inch, 1 1/2 inches to the column.

Letters should be addressed:

THE DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN

P. O. Drawer 1070, Ottawa

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OTTAWA, WEDNESDAY, AUG. 22, 1906.

Word has been received at Toronto that Rev. Donald MacGillivray, who graduated from Knox College in 1880, and went as a missionary to Honan, China, narrowly escaped drowning on July 5. His boat upset while returning from Mekanuan, and a companion was drowned, but American marines rescued Mr. MacGillivray.

The name of Deputy Minister of Justice, E. L. Newcombe, is mentioned as a possible successor to the late Judge Sedgwick for the vacancy on the Supreme Court Bench. Should the appointment be made it will be a popular one with the Bar and the public, as Mr. Newcombe's ability and experience eminently fits him for the high position to which rumor assigns him.

The death of a Christian Scientist at Peterborough under somewhat peculiar circumstances seemed to render an inquest necessary. At the inquest it was brought out that from July 18, when he took ill, until an hour before his death, on 16th August, no medical assistance had been given the patient. Coroner Gray referred to the Christian Scientists as persons walking on the boundary line of insanity and toppling on the inside. Not very complimentary to professors of the cult.

The Foreign Missionary Committee is making a strong effort to send out men needed for its work in China and Japan. Early in the fall fourteen new missionaries will be assigned to the several fields in China and India, and on October 1st a party of twelve will leave for China, making a total of twenty-six going into the field. They will go to the provinces of Honan and Canton. Those sent to the latter will be largely supported by the Chinese of Canada, from whom the request first came for missionaries.

WORSHIP OF BIGNESS.

Throughout the world there is considerable worship of bigness; sometimes even in churches. We hear of big empires trying to be bigger. In the United States everything in the line of bigness is acclaimed, especially growth in bigness of population. Yet with the incoming hordes of foreigners annually pouring into the United States come at the same time grave evils and menacing risks. It is difficult for the little red school-house and the various churches to assimilate and digest such vast quantities of the raw material of citizenship. So it comes somewhat to this: it would be better for the United States and for the world if the United States grew in population more slowly but more conservatively.

We hear the same bragging about the growth of cities. When any city gets a considerable population, it has all that a city can have, and practically all of civilization and comfort that the world can give. Large cities breed slums, and every form of evil. Recently Toronto appointed an official "boomer," whose duty would seem to be by hook or crook to promote an increase in the population of the city. Any boomer might be safely challenged to show in what respect Toronto can increase in true civilization, in comfort of the masses, or as an influence for good in the world, through additional bigness. It would be a thousand times better were Toronto to pay attention, instead, to making the Toronto of the present all it ought to be, physically, intellectually, and morally. It will grow more safely if it is allowed to grow normally.

The Dominion is in danger of following the United States in the mania for bigness as to population, by scouring the earth for all and sundry who can be begged or bribed to come. While Canada should welcome population of the right kind, it would be a tremendous mistake to set up mere bigness as our national idol and ideal. A growth sane and wholesome, founded on sound Christian principles, will mean in due time a better and greater Canada than can any premature results artificially born of the worship of Bigness.

The proprietorship of the Advocate, Prince Albert, Sask., has changed hands. Mr. Andrew Stewart has sold out to Mr. Robert J. Hartley, a well known and experienced journalist, some time ago connected with the Herald, Montreal, and more recently on the staff of the Toronto News. The Advocate has always been a well-conducted paper, and under Mr. Hartley's able management it will continue to promote the best interests of the progressive town it aims to represent.

A Desk-Book of Errors in English, including notes of colloquialisms and slang to be avoided in conversation, has just been received from the publishers, Messrs. Funk and Wagnalls, New York and London. "The purpose of this book," we are told, "is to correct careless diction and to point out common errors and vulgarisms that have crept into the language, so that anyone desiring to acquire refined speech may learn from its pages what to avoid." The book is arranged alphabetically so that its contents are alphabetically for immediate consultation. Price 75c. net.

DR. TORREY AND THE PRESS.

Everybody recalls that when Rev. Dr. Torrey was in Ottawa he praised the newspapers for their good reports, but in the United States he seems to have adopted a different attitude, and is coming in for considerable criticism on that account. Rev. J. Kirkpatrick, pastor pro tem of the Mariners' Church, Philadelphia, writes as follows to The Public Ledger of that city:

In common with many others, I have been surprised at the strictures on the "newspapers of to-day," made on several occasions by the Rev. R. A. Torrey. His latest deliverance on the subject was made yesterday at Northfield, Mass., in which, among other things, he declared, "If Christ were now on earth, He would have nothing to do with them." This is, to say the least, very ungrateful of Doctor Torrey. The newspapers of Philadelphia served him well when he was here recently, and the reports of his services given in The Public Ledger surpassed anything of the kind I have ever seen for fulness and accuracy. I believe the verdict of the entire Christian community here is that they were exceptionally fine. All the papers seemed to vie with each other in giving the largest publicity to his utterances, and thus thousands were reached who had no opportunity of hearing his voice.

Doctor Torrey might as well say Christ would have nothing to do with the printing press or the telegraph or telephone. Doubtless Christ would not approve of many things in the papers of today, but to say He would have nothing to do with them is absurd. His cause greatly appreciates the opportunities afforded by the press in our time, and Christian ministers everywhere gladly avail themselves of the facilities furnished by the newspapers for spreading Christian intelligence and influencing public opinion on the side of morality and virtue. It is too much to say what Christ would do if He were here. He would doubtless do the very best in the new environment in which He would find Himself, and while not endorsing much that the modern newspaper contains, He would regard it as a useful instrument in the dissemination of truth, which might be used for the betterment of mankind.

The Rev. J. Kirkpatrick, above mentioned, will be remembered by many readers in Toronto, as the former pastor of Cooke's Church in that city. He succeeded the late Rev. Dr. Robb, and accepted a charge in Philadelphia some twenty years ago.

A POET PREACHER.

Dr. Armstrong Black, lately minister of St. Andrew's church, Toronto, Ont., is the subject of a highly eulogistic notice in one of the London papers. One Sunday he occupied Dr. Munro Gilson's pulpit, and the Scottish preacher is thus described: Above the average height, with compact, well-knit frame, coal-black hair and slight black moustache, black, flashing eye with a wistful, pleading look on his expressive features, half suggestive of melancholy, he makes a striking figure in the pulpit. The calm, quiet, persuasive voice deepens the impression. It is a voice that is strangely, yet not unpleasantly, inconsistent with the stalwart frame, the voice of one crying for release. Both in the sermon and in the tone in which it was delivered there was a suggestion of tears. The preacher was carrying a burden of sorrow, and though he struggled bravely he could not entirely hide it. For a time, at least, he is devoting himself to literature, and those who know his "Morning and Evening" and "Ruth, a Hebrew Idyl" will receive this intimation with more than usual pleasure.