

# THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

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## Notes of the Week.

The ultimate result of the appeal by the women of Great Britain to their sisters in France on the subject of peace, promises to be an international peace league between the women of Europe and of the United States of America.

Rev. George McKelvie, M.A., late chaplain with the Gordon Highlanders at Rawalpindi, India, has been appointed by the Colonial Committee to Mauritius. Mr. McKelvie is an alumnus of Glasgow University, and worked for some time in connection with the Canadian Presbyterian Church in Central India.

Judge Hughes, the author of "Tom Brown's School Days," says "that no month passes on his circuit that he has not to make at least one hundred committals of debtors to prison for terms ranging from one to six weeks, in cases which he can clearly trace to the baleful influence of the present law as to licenses for the sale of beer and spirits. And this is going on more or less in every county court of the United Kingdom!"

In India, a Presbytery of the Reformed Presbyterian Church has been organized, to be called the "Reformed Presbytery of India." It began work by licensing two candidates for the ministry. It sounds like home to hear the new Presbytery making a record of "trial pieces" and of students being "examined in theology." We are reminded, however, that the scene was in a distant land when we read that one of the licentiates was named Narifam Dass.

In the British Army in India during the past year, nearly twice as many drinking men as non-drinkers were admitted into hospitals, and on trials by court-martial ten times as many convictions were found for drunkards as for abstainers. Nearly twice as many drunkards were convicted for insubordination, and five times as many for minor offences, as in the case of temperate men. The moral of these facts is too plain to be misunderstood by any one who knows the meaning of facts.

Speaking under the auspices of the British and Foreign Bible Society recently, the Lord Mayor of Liverpool said: "Ninety-one years ago, the Bible was almost a sealed book in which some might look; now it was found in every home in the country, at all events it might be there. It had been translated into 300 of the languages and dialects of the world; nearly 4,000,000 copies had gone forth during last year from their presses and over £11,000,000 had been expended during the operations of the society."

It is interesting to notice every act of consideration by great corporations for the comfort and benefit of the great mass of people, whose benefit and comfort are in many ways so dependent upon them. In this, the state of matters in the home land is in many respects in advance of what it is with us. The following is an instance of it which no doubt many would like to see imitated amongst ourselves. A London tramway company is about to issue double-journey tickets at a reduced fare. These tickets are available, not only for the day of issue, but for any day; not only for the original purchaser, but for any one; and not only for a journey to town and a journey back, but for two journeys either way, if desired. The company has caught the spirit of progress. Railway companies would do well to follow its example.

In the Presbyterian Churches of London on a late Sabbath, more lady missionaries were announced as wanted for China. Miss Eliza Reid, a member of Regent Square Church, has gone out, at her own expense, to carry on mission work in Oude. Miss Graham, another member of Regent Square, is laboring at her own expense in China. This practice, which, in the case of persons with means, is much to be commended, is becoming much more common, and as the spirit of consecration and missionary zeal grows in the church, will yet we believe extend very greatly, and be the means of the rapid spread of Christianity.

One of the most prominent constitutional ministers of the Free Church of Scotland has passed away by the death of Rev. W. Balfour, D.D., of Holyrood, Edinburgh. He was born in 1821, in the manse in which he died, and as minister of the church to which he was ordained in 1848. Of his eight brothers and sisters who survived to an adult age, all either became ministers or doctors or married ministers or doctors. He studied under Dr. Chalmers. During the Dingwall assault on Dr. Marcus Dods, Mr. Macaskill found a staunch supporter in Dr. Balfour in all the proceedings of the metropolitan Presbytery.

Owing to the death of the late Professor Lawson, of Dalhousie College, Halifax, which was noticed in our columns a short time ago, \$45,000 have been divided among the following benevolent and philanthropic institutions in that city: Protestant Orphans' Home, \$9,000; Home for the Aged, \$9,000; Protestant Industrial School, \$9,000; Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, \$9,000. In addition \$9,000 is donated to the Presbyterian Foreign Missions. The above is the half of the estate of Professor Lawson's late wife, a sister of the Rev. Louis H. Jordan, B.D., of this city, who left it to her husband for life.

It is pleasant to be able to record progress in every good cause. *The Church at Home and Abroad*, the official organ of the Presbyterian Church North, in the United States, and an admirable publication, notes that "the Rev. Alexander Robertson writes from Venice that a further advance has been made in that city in Sabbath Observance. By a decree of the town council, all the public offices of the city are closed on Sunday, excepting post, telegraph and one office at the municipality which has charge of the cemetery. Formerly, the town council sat, and all the offices of the municipality were open, as on week days."

The forty-sixth anniversary meeting of the Glasgow Working Men's and West of Scotland Sabbath Protection Association was held lately. It was stated at it, as an unquestionable fact, that there had been a vast increase of open Sabbath profanation in Scotland within the last fifty years; and with respect to Sabbath traffic, Sabbath travelling, and Sabbath recreation, half a century had wrought a marvellous transformation. People had become familiar with sights and sounds, habits and customs that would have shocked our forefathers and roused their holy indignation; and it was to be regretted that social usages were losing to some extent their Christian character, and that social institutions were losing that character of conformity to the gospel that used to belong to them. The report went on to deal with the various forms of Sunday desecration. In regard to Sunday steamers, it was stated that ever since the Passenger Vessels Licensing Act came into force, suppressing the sale of drink on board, these steamers had ceased to sail on the Clyde on Sabbath. This association was chiefly instrumental in carrying that Act.

Dr. James McGregor, of Edinburgh, speaking lately at a meeting of St. Cuthbert's Working Men's Guild of a speech of Mr. Chamberlain, Colonial secretary, said: "He spoke in an Imperial tone, advocating the importance of drawing nearer and closer the ties which bound this country to the great colonies across the sea. If this land were dependent upon what it could do for itself, it would, he said, be a very poor land indeed, and he was thankful that ideas of federation were growing. He was satisfied that the day was coming when a close political tie, as well as a close commercial tie, would bind together the greatest branches of the English-speaking race."

The receipts in cash for the million dollar anniversary Reunion Fund of the Presbyterian Church North, U.S., have enabled the treasurer to pay over to the following Boards, Home Missions, Foreign Missions, Education, Relief and Freedmen, a total of \$99,310.62, and sums sent directly by churches to the Home and Foreign Mission Boards, added to the above, make up altogether \$107,881.33. The great majority of congregations have not as yet made their contributions, but evidence of very considerable interest in this fund is being shown, by intimation of collections to be taken up for it in Philadelphia, New York, Baltimore, Washington, Chicago, Cleveland, Buffalo, etc.

The Presbytery of Melbourne North, Australia, has lately been discussing a remit received from the General Assembly, on the question whether a ruling elder should be eligible for the position of Moderator of the General Assembly. It was moved by the Rev. John Mathew that the remit be not approved of, as he regarded it as an attempt to introduce a new order of things, which would have a lamentable result on the welfare of the church. The other side was put by the Rev. Dr. Macdonald, who argued that there were precedents for putting an elder in the Moderator's chair, and that it was most desirable that the change of practice should be made. The Rev. T. W. McGregor seconded the amendment. The matter was put to the vote, when only five voted for the motion. A large number voted against it, and the proposal to make laymen eligible for the chair was, therefore, rejected. The debate so far as reported in our exchange, appeared to be rather facetious in its character, and was noticeable for the way in which the scriptures were ignored in the matter.

Only a few moments' thought would be needed for anyone to see that the office of Private Secretary to the Queen and keeper of her privy purse must be no sinecure; but the death of the late Sir Henry Ponsonby, a few days ago, the holder of that office for many years, and the notices accompanying his death, could alone reveal to the general public the rare and high personal qualities of many and diverse kinds, indispensable to the proper and satisfactory performance of his arduous duties. From a most interesting sketch of the late private secretary which appeared in the *Mail and Empire*, it will be seen what an irreparable loss especially at her now advanced age, the Queen has sustained by his death, and not only the Queen, but all who have to come into contact with her, and how often national, and even international interests, may be involved in the character and judgment of one so close to Her Majesty's person, the channel of communication between her and the outside world on ordinary occasions, in times of the gravest peril, and in all her social relations. That Her Majesty has had near her for so many years, so wise and judicious an officer, must in innumerable instances, especially during her widowhood, have lightened for her the cares of her high position, and his removal from her side, now in her old age, may well attract to her, as her trials have often done before, the sympathy of all her subject.