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C. Blackett Robinson, Editor.

OTTAWA, WEDNESDAY, AUG. 15, 1906.

We have made arrangements for the publishing in our columns of a series of articles from the pen of Dr. Harper, of Quebec, on the proposed union of the churches. The first article appeared two or three weeks ago, but contained not a few errors. It is repeated on another page in corrected form, and may be accepted as an introduction to the series which will be continued at regular intervals. The question of Union is one of great moment at the present time; and we have no doubt Dr. Harper's articles will prove a valuable contribution to the discussion.

The "Old Boys" re-union at Cornwall appears to have been a great success. It was participated in by former residents of the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, who have journeyed from all parts of the continent that they might be present in this great home-gathering. As a matter of course Presbyterians were largely in evidence at the formal reception at which Mr. D. Munroe, chairman of the Old Boys Committee, presided, and, on behalf of the committee, extended to the visitors the freedom of the town. Messrs. A. Broder, M.P., Dundas, and R. A. Pringle, M.P., Cornwall and Stormont, performed like duties as representatives of their constituencies, that for Glengarry being given by Col. R. R. McLennan. The response was delivered by Sir James Grant, of Ottawa, a Glengarryian born. He recounted the names and achievements of many of the sons of the United counties who have won renown in all parts of the empire and the United States, referring particularly to such men as the late Sir Roderick Cameron, Hon. D. A. McDonald, Hon. John Sandfield Macdonald, Judge MacLennan, Hon. J. P. Whitney, Col. R. R. McLennan, ex-M.P., Auditor-General Fraser, Rev. C. W. Gordon (Ralph Connor), and Donald Grant of Minnesota.

PASTIMES.

The fact that the largest daily newspapers give a greater space to pastimes and sports than to almost all other descriptions of news-matter combined, gives some indication of the hold of competitive pastimes upon the public. In our opinion the newspapers give too much space to "sporting intelligence." Yet there are pastimes beneficial and pastimes evil in tendency. Speaking generally, those sports are least to be commended which lend themselves, or seem in actuality to be connected in any degree with gambling and betting, while those pastimes are usually least detrimental to youthful morals in which people take part as participants rather than as spectators. The tour of the British bowlers in Canada now in progress, is much in evidence in the daily press. The pastime of bowling on the green is one which seems suitable to all ages (one of the liveliest of the Scottish bowling team is 83 years of age!), it does not lend itself to gambling nor to violent play, and we observe it numbers not a few clergymen among its admirers.

The records of the centuries are full of accounts of popular pastimes and of the people at play. Where these pastimes are not harmful in themselves and are used simply as recreation within the limits of prudence and common sense, it is easy to see how they might legitimately fill in a modicum of space in the lives of men of even grave affairs.

Clean athletics has been found of great value in connection with the Y.M.C.A. in diverting youthful energies into safe channels, and those who have seen the late Principal Grant "rooting" (i.e., shouting and encouraging) at a football match at Queen's will not readily forget the scene. We know of one minister who has strengthened his influence with his young men by taking part with them in bowling on the green adjoining the church.

The minister needs to look at the whole question of pastimes in a large and moderate spirit, never allowing the young or the old to think it proper to make amusement the main interest of life; nor, on the other hand, assuming an attitude of asceticism beyond the boundaries of what is reasonable.

It will be remembered that before the close of the Torrey-Alexander meetings in this city it was announced that Mrs. Alexander was ill at her home in Birmingham, and recent intelligence is to the effect that she is still in a critical condition. Mr. Alexander has been with her ever since the close of the Ottawa campaign, and has cancelled all his immediate engagements. It is just possible that he will have to give up taking part in the fall series of missions in the United States, which mean a serious weakening of the power of the work. Mrs. Alexander was a Miss Cadbury, of Birmingham, where she is greatly beloved by reason of her self-sacrificing philanthropy and beautiful Christian character.

Last week an appeal was made in behalf of the Methodist West China mission for \$1,000 to build a church at Yunhsien. Dr. Sutherland acknowledges the receipt of a cheque for this amount from a generous supporter of the church, who does not wish his name to appear.

"RELIGION AND REWARDS."

Some men's religion, theoretically, becomes so exceedingly spiritual and ideal that they shrink from any acknowledgment that the thought of either reward or punishment has anything to do with it. Others are genuinely perplexed as to the question, while they feel and acknowledge the force of the idea of reward, both for themselves and in appealing to those who are not Christians. It is a problem that is continually brought to pastors by those who are troubled with it. It is not a difficult one when we remember the way in which God uses every natural means to appeal to the heart of man, and avails Himself of every natural occurrence for the furtherance of His cause. He knows our weakness, and while the reward is not the ideal or the final thought, it is meant to help us in the struggles of life. The "Advance" has a clear and sane editorial on this subject. It says:

"There is an altruism which attempts to exalt itself to a higher plane than the teaching of the gospel. Its heaven or threatens a hell is only an appeal to selfishness; that losing one world to gain another has no advocates tell us that a religion which promises a better motive than that of a dog which drops a bone to jump at a piece of meat; that to be disinterested and unselfish the religious life must be free from all such motives, and be a cultivation of virtue without hope of reward.

"But this view of religion, usually put forward by a class who neither found missions nor establish asylums, ignores one of the plainest principles of life, the principle of compensation. It is everywhere, and its reign well nigh absolute. To the man who toils there must be compensation. Muscle and fibre, bone and brain are wearing away. There must come back to him food and raiment to restore the wasting tissue, to maintain and protect the body taxed by labor. Without this principle of compensation the labor of the world would cease, all wheels of industry would stop, all ships of commerce rot in the harbor. Without the harvest no sower would be seen in the field, and without the increase of the flock no herdsman would be on the plain. The business world would be a blank.

To the scholar there must be compensation. The end of study must mean scholarship, knowledge. Even the upper air and solar walk philosopher must feel that he is doing something, that he is making some kind of gain, not simply beating the air, or wearing his brain with speculations which mean nothing, that have in them no recompense.

"And so must love have its recompense. The heart cannot beat unless it is fed. If it throws out blood, blood must come back to it. So must love have its return. It cannot feed itself out, and out and out, with no answer, with nothing to feed itself. The essential justification of all action is that it does something worth the expenditure of the force, and in the nature of the case this return or its equivalent must come back to the source of the action. The fruitful tree is rewarded with great care and culture, and with long life. Good deeds strengthen good character, and good character brings the protecting care of heaven, long life, eternal life. This connection cannot be broken without destroying the foundation principles of moral life. When Jesus Christ promises a future life and heavenly reward to those who live a life of faith, self-sacrifice and love, He is simply making proclamation of a fundamental principle.