

## OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

### ASIATIC TURKEY.

MR. EDITOR, - It was only yesterday that, on taking up THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN, whose visits to our "konak" are like the visits of an old friend, I noticed, in the number of date April 16th, Miss Machar's communication announcing ten dollars for the famine sufferers here, and your foot-note in which you undertake to forward all such sums as may be contributed for that purpose. Allow me, on behalf of needy humanity here, to thank you for your active interest in our work. I wish also to extend cordial Christian greetings to Miss Machar and to all those whose pure minds may be stirred up to do likewise.

By last mail I forwarded to Principal Grant a somewhat detailed account of our needs and prospects. The last few days have discovered additional facts which call loudly for prompt action. Dr. Lanzoni, Sanitary Inspector, writes under date of May 14th, from Bayazid: "Leaving Toprakali (from which village his last report, extracts from which I forwarded to Dr. Grant, was sent), the state of the people becomes more grave. On the way to Diaden (35 miles from Toprakali) twenty dead bodies have been picked up within the space of a month. The death result chiefly from insufficiency of nutrition. The symptoms are extreme emaciation, swelling of the body and extreme weakness. From Diaden to Bayazid the situation is still more grave. A large part of the population has fled the country. The city of Bayazid is on rations. The suffering is principally among the Koords, whose animals are all dead and who have nothing. Their condition is pitiable."

A day or two later, in a letter to his wife, the Doctor says that he had gathered five more bodies for interment. A traveller who brought us letters from friends in Tabriz, and who passed through Bayazid, tells us that he was robbed and beaten by hungry Koords. Passing through one district he counted seven bodies of those who had died by the wayside.

My brother, Wm. N. Chambers, and Rev. Mr. Baldwin, of Constantinople, are now on their way to the annual meeting of our mission, to be held this year at Van. They write us from Khanoos, another district in our field and about eighty miles distant from this city, that matters there are in a desperate way. The acreage under crop is very scanty. The situation is worse than we had been led to suppose and the need of immediate assistance is as great as in Bayazid. The government of that district being practically in the hands of Circassian robbers is a serious aggravation of the distress.

By the way, a curious case is just now pending decision in what by courtesy may be called the legal courts of that district.

During the Russian occupation a band of forty or fifty Cossacks routed about 500 Koords, killing several. Some Armenians, knowing the country well, had been pressed into service to guide the Russians to the haunts of these mountain Koordish robbers. Quite recently these Armenian guides have been thrown into prison to await trial for murder; and thus at the instigation of robber bands, who are allowed months to collect or manufacture evidence, peaceable citizens are made to suffer because they, perforce, gave assistance to the Russians in a praiseworthy attempt to rid the country of one of its numerous curses.

Last evening Capt. Everett received a telegram authorizing him to draw £300 more for the poor. As we had just about reached the bottom of our purse and were mercilessly striking from our lists all who did not present a really famished appearance you may imagine the relief this announcement afforded us. Refugees from surrounding plains and even from Persia are crowding into our city by hundreds every day. Some groups on arriving here are only remnants of the families who left their hungry homes to search for bread. Many of these people drop fainting in the streets. The field greens upon which they have been subsisting for weeks are now uneatable. Yesterday and during the night we had a glorious rain, which, after two weeks of dry weather, again revived our hopes of a harvest. This morning the surrounding hill-tops in their mantle of newly-fallen snow are not easily distinguishable from the lowering clouds, which—God bless them!—promise a continuation of the rain.

June 5th. Yesterday evening I spent an hour on the hill-sides gathering flowers. The utter lack of flower gardens in the city is offset by the prodigality of the uncultivated slopes outside the walls. Buttercups, grape-hyacinths, tulips, forget-me-nots, mille-fleurs, and twenty other varieties blooming at the same time, cover the ground with their hues and fill the air with their fragrance. Three weeks ago the same ground was fairly pink with crocuses. Returning to the city from my short stay in what seems a remnant of Eden, I found that the post had arrived with newspapers etc., up to date of April 30th. In THE PRESBYTERIAN of that date I notice your acknowledgment of sums received for the famine here and forwarded to Mr. Ward. The same mail announces Mr. Ward's telegram to Constantinople authorizing us to draw £50 for the poor, which sum no doubt includes the contributions from Canada.

Wood is now coming in—but such wood! Poplar twigs dug up by the root, the greatest diameter being about 2 inches! And for such wood, sold by weight, some of our friends have been paying from \$30 to \$40 per cord, as nearly as we can compute, during the winter. Good hardwood of rather better size is, however, to be had, and we expect by watching the market closely to secure our wood for the coming year at about \$15 per cord.

But the entire absence of trees in this vicinity is partly compensated by the presence of countless numbers of birds. Birds are so associated in my mind with groves, that writing at my desk, or reclining, book in hand, under our tent on the house top, the unceasing twitter acting on my imagination holds me almost uninterruptedly in the leafy thicket of a Canadian spring time.

R. CHAMBERS.

P. S.—The meeting of the General Assembly is near at hand. May a rich blessing attend its sessions! You will of course meet with Mr. Mackay of Formosa. Please remember me to him with affection. We spent two years together at Old Princeton.

R. C.

Erzroum, June 4th, 1880.

### EDMONTON, N.-W. T.

MR. EDITOR,—During the Assembly proceedings at Montreal a strong inclination was shewn by a number of members of Assembly to send a commission out to visit the North-West to gain a knowledge of the places likely to be future centres of population—and to fit the gentlemen sent for dealing more intelligently on the Central Committee with Home Mission matters, in what has now become the great home mission field of the Church. Could the Assembly have seen its way clear in the matter of expense, no doubt much valuable information could have been obtained.

Among the places spoken of by Rev. Mr. Gordon, of Ottawa—an ardent friend of the missions of the Church—was Edmonton, a settlement which had taken his attention in his trip from the Pacific Ocean to Ottawa, and a point recommended by the Presbytery of Manitoba to the Assembly's Home Mission Committee. I have just received a letter from a Presbyterian gentleman at Fort Edmonton, whom business had taken from Winnipeg to that point. I give extracts:—

"DEAR SIR, - I would like to bring before your notice the great loss sustained by the Presbyterian body through not having a representative at Edmonton. I hardly think the Synod is aware of the great importance of this place, and the number of residents who, before leaving Scotland, for the Hudson's Bay Company's service, were brought up in that Church. There is a large field of labour here for a missionary and the people are waiting to give a Presbyterian a hearty welcome. I attended the Wesleyan service a few evenings ago and was more than disappointed by what I heard. The mission and parsonage are very commodious, especially the former, and the attendance was only sixteen, some of that number being children. . . . The English clergyman also is not at all suited for the country. . . . Now, I would ask you if the people are not justified in calling out for a minister of the Gospel who will point out to them their duty. Two of their chapels are such as you will find in few places of this size and the people built them. There are four men here who I know, have offered \$25 each for the purpose of building a Presbyterian Church, and more would be forthcoming if any movement was taken in the matter. I am not a resident

here but will give \$20 to the Home Mission Fund if anything is done for Edmonton. . . .

Fort Edmonton, June 2nd, 1880.

These facts, Mr. Editor, need no comment. Edmonton, I may state, is, by road, about 1,000 miles west of Winnipeg.

GEORGE PRYCE.

Mount Pleasant, Brant Co., July 2nd, 1880.

### FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

MR. EDITOR, - I have been surprised at the representations given in THE PRESBYTERIAN, from time to time, of the condition of the Free Church of Scotland, in connection with the case of Professor Smith.

From these representations, our people here will be led to draw very false inferences as to the condition of that Church. One would think, from last week's paper, that that Church was on the eve of a disruption. That the two parties, as represented by the vote on the Smith case, could scarcely live together in peace—and that a large section of that Church was not maintaining a very decided orthodoxy.

Now, so far as my information goes, such a view of the Free Church is as incorrect as it is possible to be, is not just to that Church, and is fitted totally to mislead our people. And, moreover, not the slightest trace of such a state of affairs is mentioned in any ecclesiastical publication in Scotland. The July number of the "Free Church Record," on the contrary, presents that Church as in a most hopeful and flourishing condition, and from the latest and most authentic information concerning that Church it can be truly asserted,

(1) That the Free Church is in as healthy and sound a condition, so far as orthodoxy is concerned, as she ever was;

(2) That she is in as united and prosperous a condition as she ever was, as is shewn by the very noteworthy fact, that her contributions this year exceeded those of last year by the sum of £40,000, and exceeded those of any year in the past by the sum of £15,700, having reached altogether £591,478;

(3) That she never has been more active and successful in mission work, nor more generous in assisting the cause of religion in the colonies, and specially in this colony, than in the past year.

And as to the case of Professor Smith. She has shewn herself to be exceedingly sensitive to anything approaching heresy, to the allowance of any views that would subvert the teaching of the Confession of Faith. Only in a Church spiritually alive would such a case as Professor Smith's cause the excitement it did. And in the July "Record" of that Church, and other public journals likely to be informed, there is no whisper of division being threatened, and no notice of the absurd document referred to in THE PRESBYTERIAN taken. There are in circulation in Scotland, at this moment, sermons teaching doctrines wholly opposed to, and subversive of the teachings of the Confession of Faith, the writers of which are not interfered with by the Churches to which they belong. But the writers are not connected with the Free Church.

Apart, however, from the facts of the case, surely the consideration that the Free Church is the only one of the Scottish Churches that is contributing generously to aid us in our Home Mission work should secure for her, not any undue favour, but a fair presentation of her state before our people. I hope that this statement on the subject, will at least shew that there is another view of the situation, taken in well informed quarters in Scotland, than that which has been presented repeatedly by the THE PRESBYTERIAN.

PRESBYTER.

### THE NEW HYMN BOOK.

MR. EDITOR,—I see from the proceedings of the General Assembly of our Church that the new Hymn Book is ready for publication, and it now becomes a question of the greatest practical importance what editions of it we shall have issued for congregational use. Having great faith in the excellent judgment of the Committee who compiled it, I do not propose to say anything about the unharmonized editions, of which, following the example, and learning from the experience, of other Presbyterian Churches, they will, no doubt, publish several at different prices and in varying styles. But I think it may not be amiss to call attention here to the vast importance of having a good harmonized edition with a view to the cultiva-