

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

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Edited by Rev. Wm. Inglis.

TORONTO, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1880.

SEVERAL Presbyterian reports and other items unavoidably crowded out.

HOME MISSION COMMITTEE.

ELSEWHERE in our columns the notice will be found calling the regular half-yearly meeting of this important Committee of our Church. We understand that the applications to come before the Committee, from new and important fields, are very numerous. It is, therefore, earnestly to be hoped that every congregation will not only maintain the standard of liberality of last year, but, if possible, go beyond it. Otherwise the Committee will be unable to meet their liabilities.

THE ORIGIN OF THE PAN-PRESBYTERIAN COUNCIL.

WE shall not try to settle who has the honour of being the first to propose such a meeting as that which is at present being held in Philadelphia. Some attribute the first suggestion to Dr. McCosh of Princeton, while others would give the credit to Dr. Blaikie of Edinburgh. It is a matter of little or no consequence. Sufficient that the suggestion, come from whom it may, has borne excellent fruit, and promises to produce still more in the future. In any case we find that Dr. McCosh suggested such a council about the time of the union of the Presbyterian Churches in the United States, in 1870.

In 1873 simultaneous action was taken by the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Churches of the United States and Ireland, by their appointing committees to correspond with other Churches on the subject. This movement was followed up by a meeting during the sessions of the Evangelical Alliance of October, 1873, and a committee was appointed to bring the matter under the notice of the Presbyterian Church universal, and to invite the coöperation of all. A paper was prepared addressed "To the Churches of Christ organized on Presbyterian principles throughout the world," setting forth, among other things, that it was not sought that the Churches should "merge their separate existence in one large organization, but that, retaining their self-government, they should meet with the other members of the Presbyterian family to consult for the good of the Church at large and for the glory of God."

This address met with a hearty response and in July 1875, a meeting composed of nearly one hundred delegates, appointed by their different Churches, in various countries, was held in the Presbyterian College, London.

During its sessions a constitution for the proposed Alliance was drawn up, on the basis of Presbyterian polity and Reformed Church doctrine, and proposing a Triennial Council of Delegates—ministers and elders—to be appointed by the several Churches in proportion to the number of their congregations. A year later (1876) the Churches accepted this as their basis of representation and appointed delegates to the First General Council of the Presbyterian Alliance, which met in Edinburgh, July 3rd, 1877.

That Council was composed of 333 delegates representing more than forty-nine separate churches, scattered over twenty-four different countries, and connected with more than twenty thousand congregations. It did good work, and will long be remembered by all present at its meetings. According to the understanding come to for a Triennial Conference the present meeting at Philadelphia is being held. It is attended by even more delegates than the previous one, and may be expected to exert a still more extended and beneficial influence.

THE DIFFICULTY IN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE.

OUR readers are aware that for some time past matters have not been moving smoothly in University College. The facts are so well known that it is unnecessary for us to give them in detail. We had hoped that when Mr. Warren gave up his appointment all the difficulty would have been finally disposed of, and we are therefore correspondingly sorry to understand that such is not the case. No one, we believe, can have the slightest doubt about its being the earnest and honest desire of the Provincial Ministry in general, and of Mr. Crooks in particular, to do the very best possible for the interests of our Provincial University in appointing Professors and making all other necessary changes and arrangements in that Institution. But as to the wisdom of some of their recent proceedings in this connection we fear there will not be the same unanimity of opinion, even among those who are generally their most enthusiastic admirers and most unwavering adherents.

We should be sorry to insinuate that the newly appointed Professor of Classics is at all overpaid. Very much indeed we should hope the reverse, though his success as an instructor still remains to be tested. But that he should, from the very start, receive more than the other Professors are getting now, after years of successful labour, and after they have passed through a graduated scale of remuneration according to their length of service, is, we take the liberty of saying, at once impolitic and invidious. No doubt we are told that a competent person could not be secured for that Chair for less than has been given. We more than doubt this. In any case, however, competency is merely a relative term, and if in its supposedly highest degree it could not be secured for the Classical Chair of our Provincial University without casting something like a slur (however little intended) upon the rest of the Professors, then we submit that the true course to be adopted both in the interests of the higher education of the country in general, and of University College in particular, was to be satisfied with that amount of competency which the salary previously attached to the Chair, or at present given to the other Professors could command. This, we believe, would have been the wise and self-respecting course, unless the funds of the University had been in such a state as to justify an increase of salary all round. That there is, however, more difficulty in securing a first-rate Classical Professor than in filling the other Chairs in the most satisfactory manner, we do not believe. On the contrary we are fully persuaded that it would be a much easier task to make a most excellent appointment in the former department than in some of the others, as will be seen very evidently when such a Chair as that of Mental Science, for instance, shall happen to fall vacant. Be this, however, as it may, when people can't do all they would like, without being guilty of something very like injustice, they must accommodate themselves to their circumstances, whatever be the consequences. We are not at all surprised at a protest having been sent to Mr. Mowat by the aggrieved Professors, against the offensive discrimination referred to, and if the facts in connection with the appointment of Classical Tutor and Dean are as they are generally represented to be, it is not at all a matter of wonder that other parties should also feel aggrieved. We are exceedingly sorry to be obliged to say even this much, and shall not cease to hope that the difficulty may even yet be satisfactorily arranged, though how it is to be in the present state of the University funds we can scarcely see.

When we are on this subject at any rate, we cannot help adding that for some time past not a few of the most loyal friends of our Provincial University have felt with increasing sorrow and anxiety, that there were some things about the administration of that Institution, as well as about the character and efficiency of some of its teaching that greatly needed

looking into. Whose business is it to see to it that all the Professors and Tutors are honestly and successfully doing the work for which they are paid? Is everyone left to his own discretion? And might we ask still further if it is not a fact that some of the classes always dwindle down to a shadow long before the academical term is over, and that some of the teaching is little better than a sham? Rumours to this effect fly thick. Whose business is it to see whether or not there is any ground for them?

CHRISTIANITY AND PEACE.

PROFESSOR GEORGE P. FISHER, of Yale College, in a recent article in the New York "Independent," calls attention to the hostile attitude of France and Germany toward each other, and to the precarious tenure of peace in Europe generally.

After describing the horrors of war and pointing out some of the many miseries which it entails, the Professor asks why the Roman Catholic and other great ecclesiastical and professedly Christian bodies in Europe have "nothing to say, and no measures to recommend, for the purpose of removing and preventing crimes the enormity of which no language can adequately depict. He refers also to the position and attitude of the Presbyterian Churches, with special regard to the General Council at present being held in Philadelphia, in the following terms:

"We are to have a Presbyterian Council in Philadelphia, comprising distinguished representatives from different countries. Here is a state of things in Christian society; here is an anticipated calamity of immeasurable interest to all who know what the kingdom of Christ means. It may be important for such a body to advert to the speculations of sceptical students of physical science, or of innovating critics in Biblical theology; but is it not of some importance to consider what can be done by Christian people, to whom Christianity is something more than a name and a dogma, to prevent the outbreaking of devastating wars among Christians, and to deliver the Christian nations from the intolerable burden of vast military establishments? Why, a tithe of the cost of military institutions in Christendom, for a single year, would support Christian preachers in every portion of the globe, and carry the Bible to every town and hamlet and habitation on earth. What Christian people are doing for the evangelizing of the world, is as nothing; it is the dust in the balance compared with what they are doing every month and every day in providing the means of destroying one another."

All this is as sad as it is uncontrovertible. To all appearance we are a great deal nearer a general European war, which will affect disastrously the whole world, than we were when Professor Fisher penned the above sentences, and, perhaps, it may be said that the state of matters in Turkey, and the perversity of the Sultan, are such that the sharp arbitrament of the sword will alone settle the difficulty. Whether such be the case in this instance or not, it is surely sad to notice so many nations, calling themselves Christian, all armed to the teeth and all quite ready, upon the merest hint from two or three men, to fall upon each other with the resolution to do as much mutual damage as they possibly can, and yet not a word of protest against the frightful iniquity involved in such a state of things from all the Churches and Christians in every one of those countries. It seems all to be taken as a matter of course that ever and anon there should be a general repeal of the ten commandments—for practically war simply amounts to this—and any who may cry out against such a state of things are ridiculed as dreamers, and pitied and despised as lily-livered milksops. What is our Christianity worth if it can do little or nothing to bring such a state of thought, feeling, and action to an end? It is usually said that Captain Sword is giving way to Captain Pen, and we are thankful to believe that, to a certain extent, such is the case. The progress, however, in this direction is very slow, and surely the Churches of Christ might very properly lift up their united protests against the war spirit more frequently and more earnestly than they do. Of course, the merest hint at such a thing is always the signal for small wit-crackers and feather-bed soldiers making merry at the expense of those supposedly verdant blockheads who could fancy that Bismarck or Gambetta, or any of the other supposedly prominent big-wigs, would care one straw for all the protests of all the Churches of Christendom, though these were sufficiently numerous to thatch the face of the universe. All right, most magnificent wit-masters and general managers of the world's concerns, on paper, and according to the old orthodox doctrine of force and blood-letting, but neither Bismarck nor Gambetta, nor any other of the men "of blood and iron," to whom you refer so fre-