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THE DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN,

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C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, Manager and Editor

Ottawa, Wednesday, May 6 1903.

The twenty-seventh annual meeting of the western division of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society is being held this week, in Knox Church, Guelph.

Rev. J. Munro Gibson, the noted London divine, who is to preach at the fiftieth anniversary services in St. James' Square Presbyterian Church, Toronto, during the last week of this month, sails from Liverpool on the Allan liner Tunisian on Thursday next.

One of our ministers recently enforced strikingly the thought that the New Commandment of Christ, which enjoins the love of others (including enemies) as ourselves, was as much a direct commandment as any one of the Ten Commandments. If this be so, there must be many who sit down at the Lord's Table, who come far short of keeping the New Commandment. It may be difficult, but it cannot be impossible, otherwise it would not have been commanded.

CORRUPTION IN MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS.

A correspondent who thinks more attention should be given to the causes of electoral corruption, names as one cause the corruption so often prevalent, at all events in cities, in connection with municipal elections. Our correspondent asserts municipal contests are often training schools for buying and selling votes at political elections. He says many money-by-laws are also carried by the use of money and the stuffing of ballot boxes. The most demoralizing thing, he thinks, is the fact that such dishonest practices in municipal elections are laughed at by many as smart rather than reprehensible, and are seldom followed by punishment. We fear our correspondent's strictures must be accepted as a true bill. The legislature should provide some automatic system of public protection of the purity of municipal elections, instead of leaving it, as now, to private initiative.

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GOOD PREACHING AND HARD WORK.

It is a great mistake for a minister not to find and take time for the due preparation of his sermons. It is a good thing when members of session recognize this, and protect as far as may be the time of the minister. Different denominations get a name for different characteristics. With Methodism one somehow connects the idea of many meetings of one kind and another all the time. With Episcopalianism one is apt to connect what is spoken of as "parish work"; whereas, in Presbyterianism a strong emphasis is placed on preaching.

Strong, helpful preaching does not spring out of the ground. It comes, apart from the blessing of God, from hard work. One is reminded of the saying "that easy writing makes hard reading." A sermon that costs the minister nothing is not likely to make much impression on the people. Earnestness that comes from travail of mind and heart is contagious; but so also are inertia and mere routine of sermonizing. Without the hard work implied by thinking, reading, and thoroughness of revision, a minister's phrases and ideas are apt to get into ruts. A fresh mind will not be content with repeating illustrations; and how can a speaker keep himself supplied with fresh illustrations without the hard work of reading, watching, and constantly recording? Dr. Stalker says no illustration can come with freshness to an audience that is not fresh to the speaker himself. It is dangerous to repeat illustrations, however powerful—that is, to the same audience. The writer remembers being powerfully impressed with an illustration by his minister, drawn from a famous, New England novelist. It was that scene of expiation in the place of public shame to which the clergyman of the story was compelled by conscience to submit himself; but the effect was by no means the same, when the illustration was repeated by the able preacher almost verbatim at a later period.

RECOGNITION OF FAITHFUL SERVICE.

At the recent convocation of Queen's University the degree of D. D. was conferred on the Rev. A. McLean of Blythe. Sometimes this degree is given for special scholarship, sometimes for distinguished services of the practical kind, at other times it is difficult to make out why it is given. In the case of Dr. McLean it is a recognition of long and valuable service rendered to the church and the community. Thirty-six years ago Dr. McLean was called to his present charge and he has maintained a fresh vigorous ministry, exercising a gracious influence over the people committed to his care. For almost the same length of time he has acted efficiently in the important office of Presbytery clerk. About twelve years ago the Synod of London and Hamilton elected him moderator. Mr. McLean has during all these years been respected by his brethren in the ministry and many will join the DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN in offering him hearty congratulations on the honour which he has received from the Senate of Queen's University.

THE CRITIC'S CORNER.

Capital and Labour.

One of the most significant things in these days is the unrest among labouring men resulting in strikes, which cause great inconvenience and sometimes lead to tragic scenes. To discuss the cause or cure of such discontent would be a big subject. In this corner we have no space for elaborate essays on political economy, but we have sympathy for working men and would like to see their lot improved by sure and peaceful methods. In these conflicts the labourers themselves suffer severely and it is hardly likely that they would allow themselves to be led into them unless they thought they had a just cause. But the general public also suffers and when the troops have to be called out as in Montreal, we presume the public has to pay the bill, of course, order must be preserved, whatever price has to be paid. In many cases the leaders of the men evidently do all that they can, but when great crowds are gathered together and worked into a state of excitement awkward things happen for which it is difficult to fix the responsibility. Hence, we would gladly see some other way of settling disputes, which might restore a working agreement without this bitter strife.

Just one point may be dealt with here. We note that in many of these cases the corporations refuse to treat with the unions, even when they are willing to go a long way in yielding to the demands. That seems to be illogical and unreasonable. If wealthy employers can combine for mutual protection and advantage, why cannot working men do the same? Certainly, the union of men should only ask for what is fair, and they must go about their business in a quiet, legitimate manner. Any man who wishes to work should be allowed to do so; in fact, the community must protect the rights of each individual, whether he is an employer or a working man. But, is it not too late in the day to refuse to acknowledge the right of any class to combine in a lawful manner for the protection of their interests? It is said that these unions encourage violence and intimidation. If that can be proved, it ought to be possible to proceed against them. In England it has recently been proved that the law can reach them. But that is not the question. What have employers to gain in this democratic country by refusing to recognise facts? Men will combine, and must do so if they are not to be completely at the mercy of wealthy corporations, and hence, the union should be recognised in a reasonable manner. It ought, however, to be a Canadian union and not one whose policy is controlled by those who live in another country. We can understand that employers in this country resent foreign interference. When all is said, however, we cannot see that the policy of refusing to recognise and treat in a fair way with the unions is one that can be maintained.

VERAX.

When God's purpose with us here is ended our purpose with the world is ended.

As acid upon lime and an aching tooth at a feast, so is envy in the heart of man.