

Talks about Books.

CANADIAN Presbyterians naturally take a deep interest in the English Presbyterian Church. Its late moderator, Dr. Munro Gibson, though, like many of us, not born on Canadian soil, is to all intents and purposes a Canadian. We also claim Dr. Donald Fraser, Mr. R. M. Thornton, Mr. James McCaul, and, not the least among them, our own graduate Mr. John Mitchell of Chester. Elsewhere in the pages of the JOURNAL will be found his protest against the Talker's charge, that the Presbyterian Church in England is virtually an offshoot from Scottish Presbyterianism. Mr. Mitchell's protest, for the present brief, is but a wedge to keep open the question it discusses, until, with larger leisure, he may be able to put the readers of the JOURNAL in possession of the facts which historically link his Church with that of the Westminster Assembly. I was, of course, aware that several congregations in Northumberland and other northern counties can trace their descent from Westminster days, congregations which still retain their Presbyterian integrity; but also I was familiar with the fact that Lord Brougham's Dissenters' Chapel Bill of 1844 virtually left the spoils of old English Presbyterianism in the hands of the Unitarians. I call the bill Lord Brougham's, although it was really the work of Lord Lyndhurst, whom May eulogizes for it in his Constitutional History of England, because that erratic Scottish peer, in his dislike of all things evangelical, contributed most largely to the defeat of Westminster theology. In 1872, Dr. Thomas McCrie, emeritus professor in the English Presbyterian College, wrote these words concerning the evangelical succession in Mr. Mitchell's own city of Chester: "Matthew Henry's old chapel, it is believed, is still extant in Chester, and a copy of his commentary long remained in it attached to the building; though, being now in the hands of Unitarians, it is doubtful whether even this relic of evangelical Presbytery has been allowed to perpetuate his memory." Come on, Brother Mitchell, by all means and set us right, for we would fain ever be more solicitous for the truth than for our own ephemeral reputation. Mr. Mitchell is an authority on Church statistics, of recognized worth, being the contributor