

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL 14.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10th, 1885.

No. 24.

"In every respect a credit to the Presbyterian Church in Canada."—*Barrie Gazette.*

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN,
PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY BY THE
Presbyterian Printing and Publishing Co.

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Notes of the Week.

At the Kingston District Methodist Conference strong resolutions condemning the Senate's mutilation of the Scott Act, after a number of vigorous speeches had been made, were enthusiastically carried. The Rev. F. McCuaig, being present, instinctively rose to cast his vote, which action he explained by saying: I well knew that it was the first Methodist vote I had given but my heart was so full that I could not keep my seat. I believe the time will come when party politics will be ploughed up in the interest of Temperance. The Presbyterian Church is heartily in sympathy with this work. The Conference then sang "God save the Queen," and soon after adjourned.

It is significant that while in certain quarters there is a growing disregard for the sacredness of the Sabbath on this Continent, efforts are being made in European cities to secure the cessation of Sunday labour. The working classes are weary of the intolerable burden of having to toil every day of the week. In Vienna a law prohibiting manual labour has just come into force. This is a step in the right direction. Opponents of the Sabbath advocate pleasure excursions, opening of museums, etc., with the design of gaining the sympathy of working men, but they carefully keep in the background the disagreeable fact that such movements inevitably lead to enforced toil on the Lord's Day. European workmen have found this out by painful experience and from them are coming the strongest protests against Sunday labour.

PRESENT indications are that war between England and Russia has been averted. The threatening appearances of a few weeks ago have given place to a more hopeful state of affairs. The Penjdeh incident is to be submitted, it is said, to the King of Denmark for arbitration. Whether his award will be satisfactory to the contestants remains to be seen. He sustains close relations to the reigning families of both nations, being the father of the Princess of Wales and of the Czarina of Russia. The rectification of the Afghan frontier will now be proceeded with, and its accomplishment will remove for a time at least the ostensible grounds of quarrel between the two powers. The warlike preparations continue and in both countries there is a war party whose wishes, it is to be hoped, will be thwarted. The jingo element is at present needlessly eloquent on the humiliation of Great Britain. The preservation of peace by just and righteous means accords with the highest honour.

SPEAKING of the May meetings the *Daily News* says: There is one feature of the month of May which is almost confined to this country and to London. We are always reminded at this time of the year of how vast an organization of religious and philanthropic effort this metropolis is the centre. A great stream of beneficent intention and endeavour which is running silently all the year comes to the surface in the spring, and observers are astonished at its vast volume and its unflagging flow. The May meetings are only a means, and not in any sense an end. They are only the outward and visible signs of the quiet work which goes on otherwise unnoted, all over this country and all round the world. British commerce is not more widely spread than British philanthropy; and there is no part of this planet's surface where men are in need,

no social stratum of our own population, in which some of these societies are not engaged in a struggle against ignorance and evil. The sums of money collected and expended every year in these efforts tell up to millions.

At a meeting recently held in Toronto to consider a proposal of a conference, by the friends who believe the coming of the Lord to be imminent, it was resolved to invite such a conference to meet at Niagara, Ont., on July 14th and three following days, and a committee consisting of ministers and laymen was appointed to perfect the arrangements for the purpose with Mr. W. H. Howland, chairman; Mr. S. R. Briggs, treasurer, Mr. Alf. Sandham, secretary. Among those announced to take part in the proceedings are the following: Dr. James H. Brookes, St. Louis, Mo.; Rev. John Mutch, Toronto; Dr. S. H. Kellogg, Professor of Theology, Alleghany Seminary, Pittsburg, Pa.; Rev. H. M. Parsons, Toronto; Rev. W. J. Erdman, Jamestown, N. Y.; Rev. T. C. DesBarres, Toronto; Rev. Joshua Denovan, Toronto; the Hon. S. H. Blake, and the Bishop of Huron. The meetings are announced to be held in the pavilion erected by proprietors of Queen's Royal Hotel on the site of the tent in which the believers' meeting was held two years ago. All contributions for expenses to be addressed to Mr. S. R. Briggs, treasurer.

GREAT labour, says the *Christian Leader*, is being expended at present by Romish writers in England on the records of Queen Elizabeth's reign for the purpose of justifying the canonization of the victims of that illustrious ruler's penal policy. Such men as Father Knox, the editor of the Letters of Cardinal Allen, try to make out that Elizabeth's legislation was a religious persecution pure and simple; but, as the *Christian Irishman* clearly demonstrates in its current number, not one drop of blood was shed by Elizabeth until the Pope had drawn up his bull absolving her subjects from their allegiance and a Romish plot had been formed to assassinate the Queen. Even Allen himself, in one of the letters published by Father Knox, admits that on the side of England the conflict was not a question of religion, but of the stability of the Empire, and speaks of "the clement reign of her Majesty" in the twenty second year of that reign. In the light of the revelations made by Father Knox, it cannot be admitted that the Romish victims forfeited their lives for religion. The acts of the legislature were not aimed at theological belief, but at treason during a crisis of supreme peril in the history of England. There are many Protestants in our midst to-day as well as Romanists, who need to have this fact impressed upon their minds.

THE annual sittings of the General Assemblies of the Scottish Established and Free Churches were commenced in Edinburgh on the 21st ult. The opening proceedings of the Assembly of the Church of Scotland were marked by the usual imposing State ceremonial. The levee held by the Lord High Commissioner took place at Holyrood Palace in the early part of the day, and was attended by a large and brilliant assemblage. The service at St. Giles' was conducted by Rev. Dr. P. Mackenzie, of Ferintosh, the retiring Moderator. After service, the Lord High Commissioner proceeded to the Assembly Hall where the Assembly were formally constituted. The Rev. Dr. Mitchell, Professor of Church History in St. Andrew's University, was elected Moderator. The Queen's letter was then read, and the Lord High Commissioner addressed the Assembly announcing the gift of \$1,000 by Her Majesty to assist in propagating religious knowledge in the Highlands and Islands, adding the suggestion that part of the grant might be used to encourage Gaelic preaching in certain districts. Professor Miligan thereafter laid on the table five volumes constituting the completely revised English Bible, which were accepted, and ordered to be placed in the library of the Assembly. The Free Church Assembly met at noon in the Free Assembly Hall, which was filled with members and the general public. Rev. Dr. W. R. Taylor, Thurso, the retiring Moderator,

preached. Afterwards the Rev. Principal Brown, of Aberdeen, was elected Moderator, and delivered an eloquent address from the words—Isa. xxi. 11—"Watchman, what of the night?"

PRINCIPAL BROWN, Moderator of the Free Church General Assembly, said: We are living in transition times. Great changes are coming over the country in almost everything political, religious, social, artistic. The discoveries of science are astounding, and the theories they give rise to are, some of them, fatal to all religious belief. But while this will, I believe, only redound in the end to the honour of all revealed truth, it will force us to enlarge our conceptions of the varied ways in which the same truths may be loyally held and expressed, so as not to be enslaved to the precise forms of speech handed down by tradition from our honoured fathers, nor yet bound to keep up every trifling usage of their times—times very different from ours—provided there is no religious principle at the bottom of it. I know that here I touch on tender ground. But, to give now simply my own private opinion—an opinion, however, of half-a-century's duration, and now more firmly held than ever—my judgment is, that in everything vital nothing must be yielded, but everything held fast even to the death; but in things not vital—things which in no way affect the essentials of our faith and worship as Presbyterians—our true wisdom will be from time to time to make such partial adjustments as to the staunchest and most intelligent friends of the Church seem wise desirable and almost necessary. The Church that will do this, I venture to say—supposing it otherwise sound—will live on; but the Church that insists on upholding every usage and every way of procedure which it has inherited from former days, even though it have nothing to recommend its antiquity, has in it, I fear, the seeds of decay.

IN the discussion that took place in the United Presbyterian Synod on raising money for religious purposes by means of bazaars, some very wholesome truths were uttered. Rev. T. S. Dickson, Dundee, said: The system was evil; it was troublesome to all concerned and very expensive. The practice of raffling goods was illegal, and preaching against gambling was rendered ineffectual by the example set by Christians. The church gamblers escaped while the club and turf gamblers were prosecuted. It was high time that ministers and office-bearers washed their hands of the degrading business of lotteries. Even when these practices were not resorted to, they had others of a frivolous and unworthy kind, such as comic minstrels, punch and Judy entertainments, stalls for the sale of intoxicating drink, dramatic recitals, and stallholders dressed up as Newhaven fishwives or Tyrolese peasants. This was very unlike pentecostal times. There was no appeal to Christian principle. It would be more consistent even if less pious to drop the prayers from the programme. If congregations would return to the divine method of church organization, these congregational wringing machines, which were a modern caricature of true Christian giving, would be no longer needed. Principal Cairns said he had been very much mixed up with the opening of bazaars, and he wished very much that he had not. He had done it reluctantly and with regret that it had been found necessary to raise money in such a way. Mr. Jerdan, Greenock, said that a raffle in a bazaar and sweepstakes in a horse-race did not differ in the principle underlying them. It was a commercial impertinence for a whole congregation to go into trade, and open for a few days a general store for the sale of haberdashery and groceries; and it involved a moral degradation that ministers should become shepwalkers at a bazaar, or that a church should act as a purveyor of frivolous and often low-toned amusements. A resolution moved by Mr. Jerdan was adopted condemning as evil the practice of the raffle and lottery; urging sessions to discountenance questionable methods of promoting the success of bazaars; and enjoining upon ministers to enforce from the pulpit and otherwise the duty of direct systematic and proportionate liberality,