

FRANCE IN TRANSITION.

The "London Daily News" gives the following—We have received a long letter from the hon. correspondent in England of the "Associations Culturelles" in France, in which the writer describes a movement in the French church, which, "though hardly recognized in this country, is fraught with possibilities of a remarkable nature." For centuries France has rejoiced in the proud title of "the eldest daughter of the church," although she has occasionally showed signs of being refractory. Now it seems that within her heart there is a deep desire finding articulate expression for liberty and truth. According to our correspondent, about 300 priests have adopted the programme of the Catholic Evangelical Reform, framed by Mons. Felix Millon, himself a converted priest, and till recently the Director of the "Œuvre des Pretres Convertis." A deputation of these liberal priests was in Paris at the end of October, and M. Meillon with them presented an address in the French Parliament to obtain religious liberty in spite of Rome. Of course, these priests are Roman Catholics, yet if properly guided and helped, they cannot fail to see the errors incultured by the Roman Pontiffs, nor to draw nearer, to the simplicity of the Gospel. Many of these priests already distribute New Testaments among their parishioners, especially on the occasions of first communion and marriage. Such men as these do not wish that the State should confiscate the church buildings and ecclesiastical goods. They feel it insupportable that the dog in the manger policy pursued by the Roman Curia should be allowed to result in driving French Catholics into irreligion, indifference, and Atheism.

PRESBYTERY OF PARIS.

The general passenger department of the Grand Trunk Railway System are in receipt of a letter from a Chicago gentleman who travelled over the Grand Trunk recently, and who speaks in enthusiastic terms of the service he found on the train, especially the dining car service. He says: "It was after about one hundred and twenty people had been served that I could secure a table for myself and a friend in the dining car. Our supper was as good a one as I have ever had on a railway. Our table was so situated that I could make a close observation of the general service, and we were surprised at what we saw. Dishes like sliced tomatoes, ice cream and other delicacies which so much depend upon the way in which they are served, were certainly never put on a table in a more deft manner. The service was prompt, and everyone connected with it pleasant and agreeable, and I wish to congratulate you on the satisfactory way in which you take care of your patrons."

Rev. Alvin Simpson, a retired Presbyterian minister of Nova Scotia, who is at present in Kaslo, B.C., sends the Presbyterian Witness the following description of things in that town: Kaslo, where I am, is a mining town on the west side of the Kootenay Lake, of about 800 inhabitants, and, like all the mining towns of B. C. it is anything but an easy place for ministers. To say nothing of the saloons, and the gambling dens and worse places, the indifference to the Church and her services on the part of the people generally, notably on the part of the men, is to one like myself from the east, something surprising, amazing, astounding. Religion is about the last thing they seem to think of; the Church the last place they seem to go. Fancy, if you can, a church, so-called, without an elder, without a male member, without a man to assist in the Sabbath school, or in a prayer meeting—but such is the Church at Kaslo to which I was appointed a few weeks ago. The people are intelligent, agreeable, kind and all that, want to have a minister among them, and are fairly liberal in his support, but feel themselves under little or no obligation to attend the services he conducts; still less to assume the responsibilities of membership. It is a new phase of church life and work for me, that I scarcely know how to deal with."

ANOTHER LETTER FROM INDIA.

Last week we placed before our readers two letters from Rev. James S. McKay to Rev. Dr. Gordon, Winnipeg. The letter that follows gives something of an idea of Mr. Mackay's own work:

Neemuch, Sept. 19th., 1906.

Dear Mr. Gordon and St. Stephen's

Friends:

You will think ere this it is quite time I was remembering you with another letter, and it is quite true, so I shall delay no longer. In my last letter to you I spoke of another possible rearrangement of our Mission staff to suit the needs of our work. This has now come to pass and I am once more located at Neemuch and very happy to say, with a life assistant, so that henceforth St. Stephen's will have a double interest in India. You doubtless will have heard ere this reaches you that plague has again appeared in parts of our Mission. Indore especially having been visited. For many weeks it has raged with no sign of abating yet, till the death rate has risen as high as 150 per day, producing a condition of wretchedness and sorrow impossible to picture without living in the midst of it. Very heavy rains have prevented people living in huts and temporary houses erected for isolation purposes, so that the only hope seems to be in more favorable weather, as it takes a long time for the dread disease to wear itself out.

In Neemuch we have been much more fortunate, possibly in some measure due to a much lighter rainfall than in other parts of the field. We have not escaped altogether, however, and only last week our oldest Christian worker lost one of his boys by plague after an illness of only a few hours.

With three Hindi services each week in Neemuch, I do not get very much time to go out among the villages, and indeed, for sometime now rains have made travel on country roads well nigh impossible. I try, however, to give part of three days each week to village work for here much more than at home, one must go to the people with the gospel rather than wait for the people to come for the gospel. Very early in the morning most of the village people leave their homes and go to weed their crops in the fields, so that it is difficult to get many listeners at a time. This, however, is not nearly so hard to cope with as the pitiful ignorance and indifference of the people when one does get an opportunity to speak to them. Belief or faith in idol worship with great numbers of them seems to be a thing of the past, though the old customs are still adhered to. The power of centuries of unchecked superstition and sin is not speedily overthrown, however, and even among those who have practically forsaken idol worship it is very difficult to make a favorable impression. Among those who are favorably disposed to gospel influence, many tell us they are obliged to toil daily so long and hard for something to eat, they soon forget the message we give them. And to any person who has lived in India this is too painfully manifest, for millions here have to toil late and early to keep soul and body together. Out of some ten villages visited, in only one was I urged to come back again and tell him more about Jesus. I told him I would come again as soon as I could, and I shall gladly do so, but at the same time one remembers that within a radius of twelve miles of this city there are over 300 villages with a population of from fifty to 500 people each, and our great Word is for them as well as this man and his fellow villagers.

We are always glad for a gleam of light in the thick darkness of heathenism, and one message is of Him who will alone lighten heathenism, yet we more and more feel the need of the

great Spirit of God to move the people to accept it. It encourages us much to know that although so far away you may daily unite with us in beseeching God to incline the hearts of India's host to receive the gospel we seek to give them in their great need.

Wishing yourself and St. Stephen's much blessing, I remain.

Sincerely Yours, J. S. MACKAY.

WESTERN ONTARIO.

The next regular meeting of Guelph Presbytery will be held at Guelph, on 19th March, at 10 a.m.

Major Currie, of Callingswood, has presented the Duntroon Church with a bell which is now being installed in the tower.

Rev. L. W. Thom, of Flesherton, has intimated his intention to resign at the end of six months, or sooner if convenient to the congregation.

Under the pastoral charge of Rev. Thomas Mitchell, New St. James' church, London, continues to prosper. The receipts totalled \$4,939.95. It was ordered that the managers have the balance of the gallery seated when required.

The receipts of Erskine Church, Hamilton, amounted to \$4,250.09. Membership stands at 704, a net gain of 51. It is proposed to build a gymnasium adjacent to the Sunday school at a cost of \$4,000. A committee was appointed to look after the matter.

At the induction of the Rev. Thomas MacLachlan, as pastor of St. James' Church, Hamilton, Rev. D. R. Drummond, Moderator pro tem of the Hamilton Presbytery, presided, Rev. Dr. S. B. Nelson preached the sermon; Rev. John Young addressed the pastor, and the Rev. Dr. Lyle addressed the people. The utmost attention was paid throughout, and the discourses produced a deep impression. At the close of the proceedings the newly inducted pastor received warm welcome from members of the congregation. The Hamilton Times, says:—"Mr. MacLachlan is a nephew of the late Alexander MacLachlan, a Canadian poet. A cousin, the Rev. Alex. MacLachlan, is president of a Christian College in Smyrna, Asia Turkey."

HAMILTON.

Sherman avenue Presbyterians are laying plans for a new church building. About \$2,500 has already been subscribed.

Rev. S. Burnside Russell, of Erskine church, preached anniversary sermons at Jarvis on the 20th inst. Rev. D. M. Buchanan, of Jarvis, filled Mr. Russell's place in Erskine.

A large number of city ministers turned out at a recent meeting of the Ministerial association to hear Rev. J. A. Macdonald, of Toronto, speak on the subject, "Public Opinion and Public Life."

Annual meetings of the various congregations show that the wave of prosperity is still with us; 1906 has been a year of substantial increase.

Rev. H. B. Ketchen's services at MacNab street church are so greatly appreciated that at the congregational meeting recently held it was decided to increase his salary from \$1,800 to \$2,000.

Mr. H. M. Paulin, of Knox College, has been appointed to take charge of Knox church North End Mission.

The tallest people in the British Isles are to be found in the district of Galloway, in South Scotland, where records of the stature give an average height of 5 feet, 10 1/2 inches. The shortest stature is found in Wales and South-West England. The people of the Midland and Eastern Counties, of Saxon descent, are of medium stature.