

## THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

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TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16, 1884.

UNUSUAL pressure on our space necessitates the reluctant omission of a variety of matter for which room cannot be found this week.

THE closing ceremony in connection with the Woman's New Medical College, will take place in the theatre of the Normal School on the afternoon of next Friday, 18th inst., at three o'clock. The Cameron Scholarship will be awarded.

A CERTAIN class of so-called temperance men have a marked weakness for temperance laws. Their remedy for all the ills of the liquor traffic is legislation. They seem to think that men can be legislated out of vice and into virtue. Now the fact is that Ontario has temperance laws quite abreast with the sentiment of the people if not ahead of it. The amendments made to the Crooks Act last session puts Prohibition within the reach of every polling division in a town or city. Sub-section 16 of section 4 provides that:—

No license shall be granted to any applicant for premises not then under license, or shall be transferred to such premises if a majority of the persons duly qualified to vote as electors in the sub-division at an election for a member of the Legislative Assembly petition against it on the grounds hereinbefore set forth, or any such grounds."

Now observe that the electors of any sub-division can, by petition, absolutely prevent the granting or transfer of a license. When that petition is signed, attested and presented to the license commissioners the work is done. No license can then be issued. The commissioners have no discretionary power in the matter. Now what more do people want in the way of law.

THE Trustees of the Presbyterian Hospital in Philadelphia were offered the proceeds of a charity ball not long ago, the amount being the handsome sum of \$2,500. They promptly but very courteously declined the offer. Of course there was the usual amount of criticism. Many approved the course pursued and some thought it narrow and unwise. The respectable press supported the trustees; the "satanic" press of course denounced them. One journal, not by any means Puritanic in its motives, made the very sensible observation that "It is not the refusal, but the acceptance of questionably earned money that is injuring the American churches and weakening their hold on the American people." The hospital, however, did not suffer by the refusal. A solid Pennsylvania Presbyterian was watching the case from his quiet home in the country and the moment the trustees refused he sent them his cheque for \$3,000, \$2,500 in lieu of the sum refused, and \$500 as a recognition of the adherence of the trustees to principle in refusing the proceeds of the ball. Here is a lesson for congregations that use questionably earned money for carrying on congregational work. If they resolutely shut down on such operations the money would come in the right way as it did in Philadelphia. One thing is certain—that which injures a congregation spiritually will injure it financially in the end. And the end in such cases comes soon.

THE attention of the public has lately been called to the unnecessary expense that is often incurred at funerals. The same subject is being discussed by many of the religious journals across the line. The discussion does not come any too soon. It is well known that many people of limited means seriously embarrass themselves by funeral expenses that might very well be avoided if we had a sound public opinion on the subject. The unnecessary expenses incurred at the funeral of the head of a family would often support

the widow and fatherless children for months. At the very time that they most require to be economical they are compelled by senseless custom to expend an amount that everybody knows they cannot afford. The living suffer because custom says the dead should be buried in a certain way. The motive which prompts the expenditure may be praiseworthy, but the family suffer all the same, and perhaps incur a debt that it may take months of pinching to pay. Any reform must begin with people of means and position. So long as the comparatively poor see wealthier neighbours expend large sums in burying their dead they will follow the example set before them. They do so lest it might be thought that they do not show as much respect for deceased relatives as is shown by the rich. Who can blame them? The rich might confer a real benefit on their less favoured neighbours by cutting down such expenses as far as decency and propriety allow. A real benefit it would certainly be.

THE subject of funeral reform raises another question which we are glad to see discussed in many of our exchanges. It is this: Is a minister under any obligations to attend the funerals of persons who have not been connected with his congregation and whose friends may have no Church connections whatever, though perhaps living under the very eaves of a place of worship? However people live they all believe in Christian burial, and the most careless, godless men in any community rarely have any hesitation in asking a minister to bury their relatives. They never attend his church and probably never intend to; they never contribute a farthing to the support of his congregation and would not do so if asked. And yet they quite confidently ask the minister to leave his work to attend a funeral and probably expect him to hire his own conveyance. They do not believe in reading the Scriptures and prayer at any other time but they must have a service at that particular time. Now a minister is under no more obligation to do that work than he is to do any other kind of work for strangers. It is no part of his duty. Not only so, he may have to neglect some of his duties to his congregation to do this work for those who have no claim upon his services. Ministers are often forced to attend such funerals simply because they do not like to refuse when those who make the unreasonable and often unjust demand have a corpse in their house. Ministers in the country are often compelled to travel many miles and spend a whole day in attending such funerals and are often expected to preach a funeral sermon. If they refuse a cry is at once raised and they are denounced as unfeeling and unneighbourly. Now why in the name of common sense should a minister be expected to do this work, and do it quite often for people whose influence is often wielded against his work. Common decency requires that he should at least be remunerated.

## THE WOMAN'S FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

ONE of the healthiest signs of Christianity at the present time is the growing interest in the missionary enterprise. Every section of the Evangelical Church is taking a more or less active part in the work of spreading the Gospel in foreign lands, not as is too often represented in heartless caricature, to the exclusion of active effort among neglected classes at home. New fields are opening up everywhere for the labours of the missionary and for various forms of Christian activity, older fields, where there has been sowing in tears, are becoming more hopeful and encouraging. The great success attending missionary effort in India, China and Japan is not only a cheering fact for those interested in the extension of the Gospel, but an added call to the churches for increased energy and a growing devotion to the work to which they are especially called.

The organization of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society has fully justified itself. If any regarded it as the first formation with coldness or indifference, there is now no room for any other feeling than that of fervent gratitude for the important work which during the eight years of its existence it has been enabled to accomplish. The actual results are in themselves great. It has been fruitful of blessing to all connected with it; to those in China, India, and the North West, who have been benefited by its efforts. The hearts of devoted men and women in the mission fields have been cheered by the increasing interest

taken in the work they are doing. The members of the various auxiliaries have reaped important spiritual blessings from their active participation in one of the most important spheres of Christian activity. The churches have been incited to take a deeper and more practical interest in Christian missions than they have ever yet done.

The history of this the latest development of missionary consecration and zeal has been one of steady and uninterrupted progression. Every year has seen an advance in numbers, contributions, and good work accomplished. The meetings at Hamilton last week were the most successful yet held. A larger number attended than at any previous gathering. There were over three hundred delegates in attendance.

From the secretary's report the following facts are gleaned:—

Life Members, 16; ordinary members (as far as reported), 2,515, of these 940 are members of the General Society; Presbyterian Societies, 6; Auxiliary Societies, 89; Mission Bands, 16; contributed by auxiliaries, \$6,068 86; contributed by mission bands, \$1,285 72; contributed from all sources, \$7,656 62.

The society has this year provided for the erection of a girls' school in Formosa the sum of \$3,000. The building is situated near Oxford College, Tamsui. The material used is cut stone. It was completed and opened last January. The society also supports three lady missionaries at Indore, Central India, and contributes towards the maintenance of schools for Indian children in the Canadian North-West.

Gratifying as is the history and present position of this movement, much greater results may be confidently expected, and that too, in the immediate future. It is as yet only in its infancy. It seems destined to advance with accelerated speed. It will not be long till every congregation of any size will have its auxiliary fully organized and in active operation. There is zeal, devotion, and tact sufficient in every congregation to make these organizations, healthful and energizing centres of missionary activity. These are the main qualifications required to make them efficient. The possession of these qualities has, under the divine blessing, made the society the success it is to-day. From these centres will go forth throughout the congregations, a stirring influence on the inertia that exists in every church. There will be a large development of the missionary spirit. A keener interest will be felt in the progress of Christian work in all lands, and a spirit of liberality beyond what the Church has yet known in contributing for the support of Christian work abroad. Another cheering result traceable to the influence of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society will be the increased number of faithful men and women devoting themselves to missionary work.

The large annual gatherings in different places of the Province are much more than agreeable reunions of those engaged in a common work in their respective spheres of action. They awaken a deep interest in the cities where they are held, and give a healthy impetus to Christian work in the various congregations. Wherever the meetings take place the delegates receive a cordial welcome. They are held in honour for their work's sake, and all who know its value will wish the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society a fervent God speed.

## BOOKS AND MAGAZINES.

HARPER'S YOUNG PEOPLE. (New York: Harper & Brothers.)—The reading matter and illustrations of this welcome weekly are as interesting, attractive and timely as ever.

ST. NICHOLAS. (New York: The Century Co.)—The number for April is admirably adapted to the season of the year. There is a description of the first Russian ice palace, to remind us that winter is not long gone, and a delineation of the "Fairy Lodge" bespeaks the presence of spring. The stories, the illustrations, the poems and historical sketches make a most attractive number.

RECEIVED.—Knox College Monthly; Queen's College Journal; The Presbyterian College Journal; The Starial Messenger for April, conducted by William W. Payne, Carleton College Observatory, Northfield, Mass.; the Hon. Edward Blake's Speech on the Orange Incorporation Bill. Thomas D'Arcy McGee. An address delivered before St. Patrick's Society of Sherbrooke, P.Q., by Robert D. McGibbon. (Montreal: Dawson, Brothers.)