

Leading Canadian Preachers

II.—Rev. Samuel P. Rose, D.D., Montreal, P.Q.

By William Strachan Leslie

FOR many decades there stood on St. James street, Montreal, in the very heart of the down-town business section of this commercial metropolis, a plain but substantial stone church, which looked almost out of place in the midst of the business blocks, for the population of Montreal, like that of all other cities, has been moving uptown and to the West End. But St. James Street Methodist church continued to be the rallying point for the Protestantism of the city, and will long be remembered for the many interdenominational meetings and evangelistic services held within its walls.

Finally, however, the congregation followed the usual course and moved uptown, about ten years ago. The old church was torn down and replaced by a large office building, while a magnificent new church was built on St. Catherine street, the leading uptown business street, and the St. James Methodist church, as it is now called, is an ornament to the city. It is still the



rallying-point for Protestant religious gatherings, and many memorable meetings have been held there in recent years, including evangelistic services conducted by D. L. Moody, Rev. B. Fay Mills, and others. Those who were at the international C. E. convention in Montreal will remember it as one of the meeting places.

The pulpit of this church has been filled by many men whose names are household words not only in Canadian Methodism but throughout all Canada, but it is safe to say that none have occupied a higher place in the esteem of all classes in the city than the present pastor, Rev. S. P. Rose, D.D., who has almost completed his fourth year in the pastorate, having received a very warm invitation last year to extend the usual limit of three years. His popularity as a preacher is evidenced by the fact that the church, which has a seating capacity of 2700, is filled at almost every service; and the congregation is a most representative one, embracing not only all classes but all denominations, for St. James is essentially a "people's church."

Dr. Rose is a very fluent and pleasing speaker. He is thoughtful and scholarly without being dry; he is intensely practical, and there are few preachers of broader sympathies, his championship of the poor and downtrodden being well

known. Withal he is a man of spiritual power, as all who heard his address on "The Baptism of the Holy Spirit" at the convention in Ottawa in 1896 will realize, and the chief power of his preaching lies in the fact that the hearer knows that the preacher believes what he says.

Dr. Rose was born at Mount Elgin, in Middlesex county, Ontario, in 1853, his father being the Rev. Dr. Rose, a pioneer Methodist preacher whose name is widely known and honored, and he is a brother of Justice Rose, of Toronto. His education was chiefly obtained in Toronto, at Upper Canada College and by private tuition, his great regret being that through poor health he was deprived of the advantage of a university course. In 1873 he began to preach, at the age of twenty years, and in 1877 was ordained. Among his principal pastorates have been those in Peterboro', Belleville, Toronto, Brantford, and Montreal. He has been in this city for nearly nine years, filling the pulpits of Dominion Square, Douglas, and St. James churches, and it is a matter of sincere regret to Montrealers generally that next June he is likely to leave the city for Ottawa.

In addition to his pastoral work, he acted in 1892 and 1893 as a lecturer at the Wesleyan College, Montreal, with much acceptance, and in 1892 was honored by that institution with the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

While a loyal Methodist, Dr. Rose is an ardent believer in interdenominational fellowship, and is a Christian Endeavorer, through and through. When pastor of Dominion Square church, about eight years ago, he saw that the young people's prayer meeting in that church, which had been very successful, would need to be organized more fully, and he placed before the young people, as impartially as possible, the claims of the Christian Endeavor Society and of the Epworth League, which was then purely denominational. "They unanimously chose," he says, "the Christian Endeavor Society, for two rather paradoxical reasons—because it was more fraternal and more Methodical." The society became one of the most successful in the city, and the pastor, closely in touch with the young people and thoroughly in accord with the spirit of the C. E. movement, soon became a leader in C. E. circles. For two terms he was president of the Montreal Local Union, holding that office during the international convention at Montreal and acting on the "Committee of '93"; since then he serves a year as president of the Provincial Union.

At the great New York convention Dr. Rose preached the convention sermon before the immense audience in Madison Square Gardens, and at the Boston convention he also took a prom-