

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

Vol. 24.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13th, 1895

No. 11.

Notes of the Week.

Aberdeen University is moving in the direction of raising some memorial to perpetuate the memory of the late Professor Robertson Smith. No decision has yet been come to as to the form the memorial should take. Meanwhile, subscriptions are coming in for the portrait which is being painted by Sir George Reid, F.R.S.A. An etching or engraving of the portrait has been arranged for.

Some months ago Dr. Walter Smith of the Free High Church, Edinburgh, resigned, and his late people are finding no little difficulty in obtaining a successor. Dr. Stalker, of Glasgow, and Dr. Denney, of Broughty Ferry, were both asked, but declined. The Rev. Robert S. Simpson, of Turiff, was next asked, but, unhappily, on the ground of lacking the needful physical strength for a city congregation, he, too, has been unable to see his way to accede to the request.

The coloured Presbyterian ministers, in some of the middle States of North America, have recently organised themselves into a Presbyterian Council. They wish the benefit of mutual stimulus with the advancement of their respective congregations in self support and of missionary zeal. They also desire to organise their women church members into Missionary Societies, that new Presbyterian Churches may be planted among their people, and generally, by increased effort, to show how adapted the Presbyterian system is to the religious needs of the coloured race as a whole.

Some of the statements made in the report of the Minister of Education just presented are well worthy of mention as showing our progress in this important matter. The average attendance of pupils of schools age in 1867 was 163,974; in 1893 it was 259,426; in the former year the number of Roman Catholic separate schools was 161, in the latter 313; number of high schools 103 in 1867, in 1893, 129. The number of Teacher's Institutes held in 1877 was 42; in 1893, 71. Ninety-two Mechanic's Institutes reported in 1883, in 1894, 263; and at the same dates respectively the number of Free Libraries was 1 and 11. In 1893 the total number of public schools was 7,963, being an increase over the previous year of 145.

While the persecution of the Stundists in Russia has not ceased, it is interesting to note the extent of the circulation in that country of the Scriptures, whose teachings will in time, though it may be comparatively long, lead not only to putting down all persecution, but to the adoption of those very principles for which the Stundists are now suffering. The Bible Society in Russia, though compelled to purchase from the Russian Holy Synod, circulates 600,000 copies of the Scriptures every year. It is strange that the Holy Synod should care to have Bible reading encouraged in this way, since its arm is so heavy on many of those who most prize the Bible. This Bible reading is one of the few hopeful signs in Russia just now; it is the certain, if slow, precursor of religious, social, and political improvement.

Professors elsewhere besides Toronto are having a rather hard time. Mr. Macaskill, so well known in the Free Church of Scotland, has obtained a committee to frame an indictment against Professor Drummond's book "the Ascent of Man." In a speech he describes it as "this man degrading and God dishonouring book." His reverence for theological professors is evidently not very high. Speaking of those of the Free Church he says: "We are nearly ruined as a Church by the conduct of some of our Professors. There is not an evil that afflicts us to-day but may be as-

cribed to their teachings and writings. And if the evil is to be allowed to go on unchecked, disasters more ruinous than anything that has yet happened must overtake us, and that righteously, until the Church we have loved so fondly and well end her career, abandoned by the best of her children, and a laughing stock to the scorers."

In notes of the last Waldensian Synod in the *Quarterly Register*, the organ of the alliance of the Reformed Churches, holding the Presbyterian system, just come to hand, it is mentioned that, "On the last day of the Synod, Dr. Prochet, president of the Evangelization Committee, arrived from America, and was warmly welcomed. He had been absent for a whole year, collecting money in the United States, and visiting the Waldensian settlements in Uruguay. He strongly urged the duty of caring for this distant scion of an old tree, which may become a great source of blessing to South America, and do for it what we are trying to do for Italy." In the same publication it is mentioned that the Federal Assembly of the Australian Churches gave Rev. Dr. Paton, the New Hebrides' missionary, a very cordial reception on his return from America and Europe. He gave a most interesting account of his visit, and described the wonderful liberality which had flowed in the direction of the mission. The sum obtained was upwards of £25,432.

The Parliament of Religions which met in Chicago during the World's Fair there has given occasion to much diversity of opinion as to its effects upon Christianity in heathen countries. Whatever opinions may be held as to that, it can hardly be doubted that even as a matter of general interest and knowledge, and especially for one who proposes to be a missionary among certain peoples at least, it will be of advantage to learn as much as possible about their religion. As a means to this end, and as a result of the Parliament, a wealthy Chicago lady, Mrs. Caroline E. Haskill, gave \$20,000 to establish a lectureship of Comparative Religion in the University of Chicago. The same lady at the same expense has now established a second similar lectureship for India. In a letter to President Harper, of Chicago University, she says: "These lectures, six or more in number, are to be given in Calcutta, and if deemed best in Bombay, Madras, or some other of the chief cities of Hindustan where large numbers of educated Hindus are familiar with the English language."

It is very interesting, and beautiful as well, for it tells of a growing brotherliness of spirit among all Christians, and appreciation of true goodness wherever found, to notice the lamentations made by all good men on the death of the late Rev. Dr. Gordon and Rev. Wm. M. Taylor, D.D. The following tribute to Dr. Gordon is from a late issue of the *Christian Leader*:—"The late Dr. A. J. Gordon was not only the best-known clergyman of Boston, but the leading preacher and religious leader in the Baptist denomination in the United States. He was pastor of the Clarendon Street Church of over a thousand members; but he did not confine himself to the service of his parish, but cared for the kingdom of God everywhere. He was president of the Executive Committee of the Baptist Missionary Union, was head of a school for the training of evangelists, was editor of a religious periodical, author of half a dozen religious books, compiler of a hymn and music book, and an active associate with Mr. Moody in revival meetings and in the summer conferences at Northfield. He was one of a very useful and earnest, if not large, circle of ministers who accept the pre-millennial advent of Christ, and make these views inspire their evangelistic zeal. He was a practical, useful, eloquent, impressive man, and his sudden death in the flower of his life is a great loss to all Christian activities."

In an article in the *Church Monthly* of England for March, by Mr. Gladstone on the "Lord's Day," the writer speaking of the Scottish Sabbath, says: "It might be a question whether the Scottish Sabbath was not for two hundred years a greater Christian Sacrament, a larger, more vital, and more influential fact in the Christianity of the country, than the annual or sometimes semi-annual celebration of the Lord's Supper, or the initiatory rite of Baptism, or both together." As illustrative of this he mentions the conduct of Scotch emigrants on board ship fifty years ago on their way to South Australia; "that perfect religious toleration was established as the rule on board; but that with regard to a fundamental article of religion like the Sabbath, everyone was, of course, required to observe it. Many anecdotes might be given which illustrate the same idea; an idea open to criticism, but one with which the Presbyterian Church cannot well afford to part, without some risk to the public power and general influence of religion."

Public attention just now in this country is turned from Japan and China's War, the brave struggles of the Government of Lord Rosebery and such trifling matters, to watch with keenest interest the struggle going on in Ottawa for and against Separate Schools for Roman Catholics in Manitoba. The Ottawa Government cannot long delay some kind of action, but what precisely it will be we can only wait to know. It is much to be regretted that the settlement of so grave a question did not come up at a time, and under circumstances more favorable than those now existing for a calm consideration of the whole subject, and settlement of it strictly upon its merits, rather than under the pressure and the blinding influence of political exigencies. When, however, the Ottawa Government shall have taken action, the Manitoba Government and people will still remain to be heard from, and from present indications they will resist to the utmost every attempt to establish or force upon them any system of Separate Schools. In this we wish them all success.

Under the heading of "Feed and Seed Fund for Nebraska's Destitute Farmers," there appears in the last *Presbyterian Banner* of Pittsburg a letter signed, "Presbyterian," giving the most lamentable account of the destitution prevailing over large portions of that state and appealing for help. A meeting was lately held at Lincoln, the capital, at which it appeared from the reports of county officials, and other sources of information, that there are at least 100,000 people to be supported until another crop is raised. For the support of these the State Relief Commission has left from donations and the State appropriation, \$43,000. This makes no provision for feed for working teams and other live stock, or for seed grain. That this people may become self-sustaining, at least \$1,500,000 worth of feed and seed will be needed. By reliable missionaries statements like the following are made:—"Many cattle are dying since the blizzard not having vitality to withstand the cold. Horses which must soon put in the crop need food, or there will be little crop put in; for they will not be able to work." "Relief should be prompt and liberal, if lives of useful animals are to be spared from the universal wreck of fortune over nearly two-thirds of the State of Nebraska." Among other relief agencies one of the most effective is that composed of Presbyterian pastors and elders, Synodical and home missionaries. This committee is at present devising a plan by which to secure funds to supply seed and feed for the horses, which are now dying of starvation at a fearful rate. They will furnish the farmers with seed, irrespective of creed, as is the case with the relief for men, women and children, which they are now distributing.