

## THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN

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## The Canada Presbyterian

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, MANAGER.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11TH, 1893.

Knox College was opened last week for the fiftieth time. The institution has had its difficulties, but, as compared with almost any other college, its half century of work has been accomplished with very little friction. Its fiftieth session opens with more money, more students, more friends and more influence than it ever possessed before. The Presbyterian who does not thank God for all that Knox has been honoured to do in the last fifty years must have something wrong with him.

Professor MacLaren is one of those highly favoured men with whom the Church and the world deal kindly. The Church supplied him with a timely topic for his opening lecture a few years ago, when he let in some much-needed light on the organic union question; the world gave him a good subject for his lecture of last week. There are few subjects on which the public need wholesome teaching more than on the permanent obligation to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Loose views on the Sabbath are threatening the very existence of the Church on this continent.

Dr. Reid is the only minister in the Church who has seen Knox College opened fifty times. He may not have been personally present at all the early openings, but he was pastor of the Grafton and Colborne congregations four years before Knox began to exist. Forty years ago he was appointed to his present position, and has rarely been absent from the opening and closing exercises during all that time. If in good health and strength, the venerable Doctor should be a prominent figure in the semi-centennial year. He knows more about the inner history of Knox College than all the rest of us put together.

The Children's Aid Society, of Toronto, is entering upon an enlarged sphere of usefulness and responsibilities under an additional staff of officers, by the appointment of Rev. Edward Starr as Agent and Secretary. This is a most beneficent charity. Through its Fresh Air Fund, five thousand children and mothers have during the summer had the benefit of an outing at a cost to the Society of \$936. Its objects, sick, and needy children with their mothers, appeal to every heart; its support is purely from the voluntary contributions of the charitable, and as winter is approaching, now is a good time to come to the help of those who are actively interested and engaged in this good work.

It now appears that the poll tax charged Chinese on entering the country, was not collected from Rev. Dr. MacKay for Mrs. MacKay, but that she was detained on board the vessel until the officers looked up the law applicable to her case. Surely the officers of the Dominion Government on the Pacific coast where Chinese are continually entering, might be expected to know the law without subjecting a lady in the position of Mrs. MacKay to even the inconvenience of detention for a time, besides the pain and annoyance caused at the very threshold of the country by such treatment. One would

suppose also, that the document of a British Consul in any part of the world would at once be accepted as satisfactory by any intelligent Dominion officer. A correspondent mentions that there comes with Dr. MacKay to visit Canada, a Chinese student who has had to pay the poll tax. In this is so it ought, by all means, to be promptly returned. It is outrageous that a native of a country to every part of which a British subject has free access, cannot visit every part of the Dominion or of the Empire, even without being subjected to the indignity of having to pay a tax for the privilege. If this is the law we have something to learn yet from the Chinese.

The Manitoba school question is again up before the courts for adjudication. The initial proceedings, because of their unusual character, have provoked a good deal of comment in the secular press, not for the most part, of a favorable kind. We regret to see hints thrown out in some quarters, indicating a feeling of possible political leaning in the action taken. Nothing almost could be more unfortunate than that there should be any well-grounded cause for such a feeling. We shall be slow to think it, and only believe it, when to do otherwise is impossible. Confidence in the absolute impartiality of the judiciary, is one of those things which form the very foundation of national stability. The whole country will watch this case with the deepest interest, and all the more because it is generally felt that this new reference looks like, if it is not really an attempt on the part of the Government to evade, what it has been thought was a final settlement of this subject by the decision of the Privy Council. We believe that R.C. Separate Schools have been a mistake in Ontario, and that the people of Manitoba are acting wisely in seeking to avoid a repetition of the mistake in their province. We shall heartily rejoice, therefore, if the province should be successful in this new, and to them irritating bringing up of the subject forced upon them.

The Prohibition Convention of last week was, out of sight, the best meeting of the kind ever held in Ontario. For the first time in the history of the Temperance Question temperance men of all kinds are united and are brought in a solid phalanx squarely in front of the enemy. Several times during the proceedings the old-time propensity of temperance men to fire on one another was beginning to show itself; but it was restrained by love of the cause, fear of the foe, divine grace, or some other good influence. The campaign has opened in good style, and the size of the majority will depend largely on the manner in which it is conducted. The balance is held by a large body of electors who are not by any means indifferent to the evils of the liquor traffic, but who are somewhat doubtful about prohibitory laws as a remedy. There is no doubt that Home Rule has been hindered more by Home Rulers than by anti-Home Rulers; and there is just as little that the plebiscite may be more injured by the unwisdom of a few professed friends in each constituency than by the opposition of the liquor traffic. Many of the people are in a queer kind of humour, at the present time. The ties that bind men together are not as strong as they used to be; business is dull and money is scarce in many places; the public mind is more or less irritated; the Scott Act is not forgotten—these and other reasons make it somewhat difficult to handle public questions in a manner that will influence public opinion in the right direction. Wisdom is the thing most needed in this campaign. There are four Presbyterians on the campaign executive committee, Dr. W. A. McKay, Rev. W. Frizze, Mr. John Cameron and Senator Vidal. No doubt these gentlemen will make their influence felt

against the holding of campaign meetings on the Lord's Day. The friends of the Sabbath have just won a signal victory in Toronto; and it would ill become Prohibitionists to hold meetings on Sabbath, at which speeches not savouring much of spirituality are punctuated with cheers and laughter. It will not do to say that if people do not like such meetings they may remain away. That was one of the leading positions taken by the Sunday car men. "Those who do not believe in Sunday cars need not use them." There are week days enough before the end of January to do all the campaigning necessary without encroaching on the Sabbath. A man who will not devote a part of the week to campaign work, and who goes to a meeting on Sabbath to listen and cheer and laugh, because he has nothing to do at home, is a slim moral reformer. The people who "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," who rest and worship on the Lord's day, are the only men who can be relied on to do any kind of good work for any length of time. Why should Prohibitionists grieve and perhaps alienate the best friends of the cause?

## WELCOME HOME.

Welcome home! The renowned missionary, the Rev. Dr. Geo. L. MacKay, has landed once more on our shores after an absence of twelve years. They have been years of tragic interest and triumphant success. He well deserves a period of rest; and yet the rest of inaction is foreign to his nature. It is about twenty-two years since he set sail for Formosa, and during all that time he has enjoyed but one lullough. His many privations and dangers, his indefatigable labours, together with "the care of all the churches" under his superintendence, would have broken down an ordinary man long ago. But Dr. MacKay, physically and otherwise, is not an ordinary man. Having landed at Tamsui early in 1872, he began the study of the Chinese language at once. So rapid was his progress, that in eight months he began to preach the Gospel to the natives in their own tongue. But malignant persecutions began about as soon as he entered the place, and his object became known. The deluded idolaters would intrude on the lonely stranger's privacy in his cheerless chamber, jibe at him, jostle up against him, spit in his face and otherwise aggravate and maltreat him in the hope of driving "the foreign devil" (as they called him) out of the island. They even turned lepers into his room to annoy him. All this was borne by the missionary with a degree of Christian forbearance and fortitude which astonished his persecutors. The ringleader in those persecutions was a young man of powerful physique and high mental endowments, whose name was Ahoa. He was struck with the forgiving spirit of this follower of Jesus and asked for a private interview with him. This was cordially granted. Many interviews followed. The Spirit of God was preparing the heart of Ahoa for the reception of the Gospel. He became the first convert in Northern Formosa. Then the foremost persecutor became the foremost helper and has continued to be such ever since. His splendid talents as thinker, orator, administrator and leader of men, were thrown without reserve into the service of his new Master. The rapid increase of converts which followed, has seldom been equaled in the history of modern missions. The F.M. Committee's report of 1873, the next year after our missionary landed in Formosa, tells of "five converts from heathenism baptised, of numerous inquirers, of a little chapel built by the natives, opened for public worship, and other matters of interest." And the work has advanced from that time till the present at an almost uniform rate of progress. Now the number of converts is about three thousand and the number of preaching stations scattered

over North Formosa, between sixty and seventy. But the arch-enemy was not idle. Persecutions multiplied. Our missionary's life was in constant danger for several years. His thrilling experiences with his intended murderers and his almost miraculous escapes were precisely similar to those of Dr. Paton in Fanna. In spirit as in experiences the two great missionaries resemble each other. Each has been incessant in labours, fearless in dangers, strong in faith and willing to die in his Master's service at a moment's notice. But Dr. MacKay will soon be among us and will tell us his tale in his own fascinating way. May the effect on the Church be equal to that produced by his visit thirteen years ago. Then the contribution to Foreign Missions doubled at a bound, and the increased liberality has continued and has been steadily advancing ever since. May his visit be still further blessed in the spiritual quickening of the Church.

## THE WEEK.

Three events have marked the week which deserve more attention than simply to be chronicled and pass out of notice. The first of these was the great Prohibition Convention, whose meetings were held on Tuesday and Wednesday, October third and fourth. This meeting, we venture to say, will be a memorable one in the history of prohibition in this country. If we may adopt the figure used by one of the speakers, applied first by General Grant to the British soldiers, who marched past him at Gibraltar, this gathering had in it, "the swing of conquest." The number of delegates alone was a significant factor in its power. Nearly one thousand from all parts of the Province, representatives of every form of temperance work, of all classes, creeds, and political parties, earnest, intelligent looking people. The number of disciples who met together in an upper chamber at Jerusalem was one hundred and twenty, and from these went out a power that revolutionized the civilized world. What is not possible in the way of moral reform in our land to one thousand earnest men and women?

Another striking feature of the Convention was its perfect harmony. Whatever the case may have been in committee meetings for arranging details, and there, we believe, it was substantially the same, not a note of discord was heard in the great mass meetings which two evenings in succession filled the Horticultural Hall. If union is strength, there is strength in this present prohibition movement, and this in addition to numbers. These were the leaders; behind them are the strong battalions. To numbers and unions must also be added what no one could help seeing and feeling, earnestness, hopefulness and enthusiasm. The mass meetings in the evening, completely filling the spacious hall, were an inspiring sight. The speaking in every case was good, and in several quite above the common level. The earnestness, intelligence and enthusiasm of the great audiences bore up and carried on the speakers, and they in turn lifted up and swept onward and upward their hearers. Hope, confidence, enthusiasm were the key-notes of the evenings, were the augury, and carried in them the promise of victory. At the same time, it must be noted, that there was a full understanding expressed by the speakers, and felt throughout the audience, of the gravity of the present crisis in the history of this movement. If it fall now the result will be, if not disastrous, to at least throw back for years the attainment of the great object towards which temperance organizations of every kind have for years been working. Accordingly, it was again and again emphasized, that what was wanted on January 1st was votes, every vote that could possibly be brought out, so that there should not only be a majority in favour of prohibition, not only victory, but an overwhelming majority, a decisive, tri-