

# The Dominion Presbyterian

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The Dominion Presbyterian is seeking a reliable agent in every town and township in Canada. Persons having a little leisure will find it worth while to communicate with the Manager of The Dominion Presbyterian Subscription Department, Address: 232 St. James St., Montreal.

The enthusiasm with which the Century Fund was launched has not yet died out. At the first meeting of the executive committee last week the ministers pledged themselves to raise \$100,000 of the \$1,000,000 required. It is in order now to hear from the elders.

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The score of faithful committeemen upon whom the burden of work at the last General Assembly fell are enjoying a much-needed rest. In the meantime they may also have time to fully consider the matter committed to them during the Assembly, and it may be that the conclusions, reached after mature deliberation, will not tally with those in which they acquiesced while another Convener was pulling at their coat-tails at the Assembly. It might not be a bad idea to elect proxies next year.

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We have noted with more than passing pleasure the increasing interest taken in nature studies. Current literature has a large place for such works as those of Chapman's "Bird Life," Card's "Bush Fruits," Parkhurst's "Nature for Its Own Sake," Grosz' "The Play of Animals," Kenyon's "News from the Birds," and many others. These will prove better companions to the minister during his vacation than will "David Harnum" or "Red Rock," etc. They will send him out into the woods and fields with his field-glass, and he will return to his pulpit with a mind richly stored with nature lore, upon which in the coming months he may draw for many an apt illustration.

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A few Sabbaths ago, when a conference was being held in a town in Eastern Ontario, the officials of a church in an adjacent town conceived and carried out the plan of chartering a local steamer, and carrying passengers at a fair profit to the town in which the Conference was being held. At the said Conference a strong resolution was passed calling upon the members of the church to guard the Sabbath Day from the encroachments of greedy corporations. The profits made on this particular Sabbath did not go to swell the dividends of the boat company, but to help pay for a new church the congregation had recently finished. Did the end justify the means? Was there much force in the resolution so heartily passed respecting the Sabbath? Need we wonder that corporations, whose business is to make dividends, follow the example of the thrifty officials?

The Christian Endeavor Convention, meeting at Detroit, congratulated itself upon the success of the year that has just closed. That is not called success which went by that name some years ago. Then the organization was winning its way, commending itself to the Christian public. Enthusiasm was its watchword, and how to promote it was the aim of its promoters. Success is not now computed numerically, but is reckoned by achievement. What practical work has been accomplished?

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It is encouraging to note that the answer to this is an encouraging one. With a somewhat smaller membership (we speak only for our own country) the actual work accomplished has been greater, and we conclude the actual working strength of the organization is either greater or is being used to better purpose. And we rejoice to find this evidence of real progress. The strength that is reckoned by the thousands is not worth much unless the thousands can be induced to follow some leader into active service. And a leader for a thousand is not forthcoming at call.

## Century Fund Reflections.

The first distinct move on the part of the Twentieth Century executive is before us, in the shape of a circular unfolding a scheme by which, giving on an average of a tenth of one year's income to the fund, the ministers of our Church shall, within the next two years, contribute \$100,000, or one-tenth of the whole Century Fund. The scheme is heroic: at first sight it looks impossible, but as we think of it, it grows upon us, and we begin to see that it can, and will, be successful. For we know that in a quiet and unobtrusive way our ministers are already leading in almost every form of Church effort, and thus we are carried on to the belief that they are the very men who may be expected to prove equal to the new occasion for self-denial, presented to them by the committee. It must be seen, indeed, that there will be much self-denial required before so large a sum as this Ministers' Tenth is reached. Yet we are confident that we have in the ministry of our Church a class of men who are so devoted and true and unselfish that they will stand the test, and will willingly deny themselves that the minister's call to service may be promptly and generously met.

We bethink ourselves of the splendid impetus that such unselfish action will have upon the Church; of how every minister will thus stand before his congregation as acknowledged leader in the great movement; of how our laymen will have all their doubts as to the feasibility and necessity of the Century scheme swept aside; and of how ministers and people standing shoulder to shoulder will set up a fitting memorial of God's presence with His Church in the century now closing; and we say: May God guide and encourage and strengthen our ministers to give such noble answer to this appeal as shall assure the success of the Ministers' Tenth scheme, and also of the whole Century Fund movement.

There is something in the appeal about the strong helping the weak, and rightly so. A tenth, from the Home Mission pioneer whose income is small, and even a problematic sum, or from the minister of some straggling augmented charge, who has from year to year to forgive a certain deficiency, may well be too heavy a burden, though we know enough of these men to predict that they will strain every nerve that their quota may be provided. But our able and better provided for men will keep this point in mind, and out of their own assured abundance will devise liberal things, so helping to lighten the burden of their brethren. Already we hear of members who are preparing to do that. The \$5,000 subscribed by the worthy agent of our Church, as we believe, will not stand alone; we should not wonder if it were exceeded, and subscriptions of \$1,000 and \$500 are so sure to be

heard of soon, that we have great confidence that the apostolic injunction will be obeyed, and that strong and weak shall stand together in answering this appeal.

Our Church has great confidence in its ministers, and in a right way is proud of them, and gladly trusts them and follows their lead.

In this matter our people will watch with interest the course taken by the men they reverence and love, and we imagine to ourselves the turt of applause—expressed in quick following of a noble example—which will greet the success of the Ministers' Tenth scheme. Of that success we cannot doubt. Long acquaintance with the men who are asked to take the place of honor and of sacrifice, makes us certain that before the quiet season—the holiday season—is over, the way will have been shown by our ministers by which there may be advance all along the line.

## Religious Conference.

Thousands are now travelling farther and farther to and from conferences upon religious topics. The most gigantic of these is now meeting in Detroit. It is perhaps the one whose effects may be as strongly felt for evil as for good. Many of those in attendance are in the formative stage of their religious experience. Impressions are received that sink deep. Emotions are strongly roused, attention is concentrated, and the mind is closed to all but the one idea then being powerfully presented. The brand of it will remain and may be read many years afterwards.

If the idea so powerfully presented be the embodiment of a great principle, the impress of it upon the mind will be a lasting benefit. If, as is too often the case, it is merely the description of the application of a great principle, perhaps under circumstances and with surroundings very different from those obtaining where the hearer resides, the result is likely to be a more unhappy one. Perhaps not one in ten of those who listen to the description will discover the underlying principle, which is the same in Canada as in Texas, but the ever-ready pencil will make a note of the method pursued. The same method is tried in their home field; they look for similar results; their disappointment is the least of the evils that follow, for work has been spoiled, and time has been lost, and discord has been introduced. A tremendous responsibility rests upon the speaker at such a great convention. The cosmopolitan character of his audience makes the discussion of any but the most elementary principles to be fraught with danger.

A real impulse upward is often received in what are known as conferences for the deepening of the spiritual life. The vista that opens as one listens is in itself an inspiration. Life seems a different thing if such life is possible. An intense longing to realize it takes the place of the religious indifference of former days, and men who cared nothing for the spiritual, dwell with real enjoyment upon its possibilities.

Then, too, the very close connection—indeed, the identification of the spiritual with the everyday life that these conferences have helped to emphasize—has filled the daily life with new meaning. Quite an alarming number held to the comfortable belief that there was an almost absolute divorce between the religious life and the daily business life. The temperature of the one, taken at stated intervals, is much above the normal; that of the other—well, as it is not connected with the spiritual life, it does not matter, but it is not above the line.

It comes as a distinct shock to learn that no such line of demarcation exists, and that our spiritual temperature is accurately indicated by the level of our daily life. If the religious convention has done nothing but emphasize this, till we are slowly admitting its truth, it has justified its existence. We shall be more careful of the daily life. We shall make some effort at least to raise its spiritual temperature.