

# THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. 22.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 23rd, 1893.

No. 34.

## Notes of the Week.

A coloured woman who has been a teacher in the public schools of Brooklyn, N.Y., ever since the war, has recently been appointed principal of one of the largest schools in that city. This is a significant comment on the solemn belief of some people, less than fifty years ago, that the negro was not a human being and had no soul. Surely the world is progressing.

Irish Presbyterians are greatly pleased at the handsome reference made by Sir George Bruce, when addressing the Free Assembly, to students of the Irish Presbyterian Church, who have been, and are attending college at Cambridge. 'Irish students,' Sir George said, 'never desert their own Church, but keep steadfast to their own Church, but keep convictions.'

The British National Society for the prevention of cruelty to children reports 18,817 children rescued from neglect and starvation; 5,783 from habitual violence; 1,175 from abandonment; 1,134 from exposure, and many others from various forms of cruelty. The Society reforms vicious parents. They know that the agents are widely scattered, and this puts upon them a wholesome restraint. The cruelty prevented by such societies is much more than that which is corrected.

It may be true that in political circles in Great Britain, the question of Home Rule overshadows all others, but in Scotland, at any rate, the question of disestablishment holds a by no means secondary place. Its discussion is not confined merely to ecclesiastics. Politicians have now recognized the fact that it must be faced, and it has therefore come to be one of the leading articles on the programme of the Liberal party. The question, however, has not been allowed to rest even in Parliament, and three private members have introduced bills dealing with some phase of the Church question in Scotland.

The horrors of famine are indeed dreadful. A late Shanghai despatch concerning a widespread famine in the interior of China, says that the people are driven to such desperate straits that the sale of women and children in the affected districts is a daily occurrence, that in some places even male children are being sold by their parents, and that in one prefecture more than 70 female children have been devoured by the famine-maddened people. This is shocking to contemplate. Yet the perpetual drink tragedy in many of its details, in the continual "murder of the innocents," is scarcely less appalling, only we become so familiar with it, that we cease to be shocked by it.

There is much discussion, it is said, as to the position and prospects of the Spurgeon's Pastors' College. In a very short period it lost its founder and inspirer, Mr. Spurgeon, and its Principal, Mr. David Gracey. We believe it has been suggested that Dr. Pierson should be appointed Principal. Dr. Pierson has no engagement in America, beyond the editing of his magazine, and it is understood the work would be agreeable to him, while he is very popular among the students. Even if he did not become a Baptist that would not be an insuperable objection, for the first Principal, Mr. Rogers, was a paedo-Baptist and a Congregational minister to the end of his life.

To overcome the uncertainty of steam communication between Port Said and Joppa, which has hitherto been the great obstacle in visiting Palestine, it is proposed to build a line of railway from Joppa through the country of the Philistines to Port Said. The distance is a little under two hundred miles, and when the road is completed Port Said will be but twelve hours by rail from Jerusalem. The natural advantages which from the earliest times have made Damascus the centre of the overland trade between the Euphrates and the Levant are still showing themselves by its being the point upon which converge four railway lines which at present are either proposed, or under construction.

The universal rejoicing of the religious press in the U.S., in which we heartily join, over the closing on Sabbath of the gates of the Exposition, appears to have been rather premature, as they have been opened again. It is hoped this may be only temporary. The people, however, as a whole have stamped the course of the directorate with disapproval so emphatic as to show that the nation at large has no wish to see and will lend no aid to trampling under foot an institution which, apart altogether from its sacredness, is in its civil and humanitarian aspects, a priceless blessing, with which all the money, and all the elevating education, so-called, to be obtained by opening the Exposition, are not for one moment to be compared.

The House of Laymen of the Established Church of England, by an overwhelming majority, accepted the principle affirmed in Sir Douglas Fox's resolution of the entire sacredness of the day of rest as a divine institution. The working classes are not blind to the fact that legislation on the subject must be attended with consequences to the nation as a whole; and that the provision of a few hours of amusement for themselves on the Lord's day, will tend to its being secularized for other purposes disadvantageous to themselves. Farsighted statesmen have opposed the movement, and men, too—as Lord Beaconsfield and Mr. Gladstone—whose political differences were most marked. The House of Commons, too, has declared against it on every occasion on which it has been brought forward.

The first General Synod of the Episcopal Church in Canada meets in Toronto next month. As this meeting will be representative of the whole body from the Atlantic to the Pacific, it will doubtless be one of great importance and possess no ordinary interest to all Christian denominations in the Dominion. This is a consummation for which earnest Anglicans have long laboured and they are to be congratulated upon the success of their efforts. This union will create a Canadian Anglican body having powers and responsibilities analogous to those of the Episcopal Church of the United States. The English Church is now, or at all events will be when the General Synod meets, the sister Church of the Established Church of England, and of the Episcopal Church of the United States. Difficulties will no doubt be found in getting the whole body under its changed conditions into good working order, but these we can well believe will in time be overcome by the exercise of a proper Christian spirit. We can wish nothing better for the enlarged body than that the union may be as happy in its working and results as that of the Presbyterian bodies has been.

## PULPIT, PRESS AND PLATFORM.

The Interior: 6,700 persons perished by murder in the Western States last year—in the same area in which cyclones killed 170. How much less terrible and destructive the wildest forces of nature than the vile and wicked passions of men!

Abbott E. Kittredge: Parents, as you love your children, keep holy the Sabbath day, fill its hours with prayer and song and words that are perfumed with the Christ—let it be the brightest day, the golden day of the week, to which your children shall look back with gratitude to God, when you shall have fallen asleep.

Harley College: Meetings were held at Harley College, Bow, to take farewell of thirty-eight students at Harley House and its associated colleges who were about to go as missionaries to foreign lands. The cosmopolitan character of the institution is shown by the fact that among the students were representatives of seventeen or eighteen nationalities, including a Turkish and a Russian Armenian. Its undenominational character is shown by the fact that among the students leaving are Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists, Brethren, Lutherans, as well as members of the Church of England.

The Occident: Reverently we approach the throne of grace. There is a dignity and sweetness in the Bible prayers, which never descend to the commonplace in the form of their expression. Endearing terms cannot express the nature of the communion between God and His people. How simple, yet how majestic, in its phrasing is "Our Father," weakened by none of the adjectives with which we struggle to express human affection and emotion. The Christ-love cannot be measured by human standards and epithets. The license taken in some of our hymnals is an exceeding bad taste, and the tendency towards irreverence is to be deplored.

United Presbyterian: It seems to be very easy to fall into a careless habit in regard to church-going. Even sincere Christians are liable to backslide, and need constantly to watch and pray, lest they enter into temptation. It is probable that many of those who make a profession of religion, and for a time attend church and seem to be sincere, and then go back and walk no more with the disciples of Jesus, never had the root of the matter in them—were stony-ground hearers only. If one finds himself disposed to seek after excuses to justify his non-attendance upon the public ordinances of religion, he needs to carefully examine himself.

Dr. Dale: Already Sunday schools have conferred on this country, blessings which cannot be measured, but their real and highest work is only just beginning. What we need is a deeper and larger estimate of what it is possible for them to achieve; a free and earnest investigation by the very best minds of the country of how their methods are to be improved; a larger consecration to this form of Christian service of the intellect and the heart, and the cultivation of the most earnest and able members of our churches; and, in addition to all this, more earnest and constant prayer that in every Sunday school God would reveal more fully, both in teachers and scholars, the greatness of His power and the glory of His grace.

Dr. Stalker: At present the Bible is an arena of great controversy, and the probability is that the contention will increase. Old views are cast aside; new theories are coming up in bewildering number. To the faint-hearted it may seem that the authority of Scripture is declining. But notice how many are reading the Bible, studying it more keenly than it was ever studied before. Helps to the Bible are sold by millions. For the virtue that resides in it we may for the moment have lost the right name; but let the Bible be doing its unique work of saving men, and the Church will have to find a theory commensurate with the results.

The Occident: Truth is eternal and unchangeable, but views of truth, the setting of truth, the application of truth, may and must vary as the ages roll. The diamond is the same to-day in substance and appearance as when it flashed from the breast of beauty centuries ago, but there certainly has been vast progress in the art of setting it. Man must have bread. That is a truth that will stand till the heavens fall, but it is in every way consistent with the utmost progress in the culinary department. Man must have a house; but it does not follow that styles in architecture may never change. Put the emphasis on the right thing. Progress never changes truth, but only the garniture of truth. There has been progress in astronomy, but the stars shine on the same forever. There has been progress in geology, and yet—

"The gray old rocks  
Uplift the same unvarying faces  
To every change of sky."

So there has been progress in theological shoe-making, and will be in days to come, but the old paths of the Gospel will remain unaltered until the last wanderer has found his way back to the Father's house.

Rev. J. Hiles Hitchens, D.D.: Laodiceanism is the bane of the professedly Christian Church to-day. It abounds on all sides. With a mistaken definition of Christian charity, there is displayed a lamentable indifference to error. Every sect is smiled upon as though there were no vital distinctions. The higher criticism is applauded. The downgrade is ignored. Unitarianism, which denies the divinity of Christ, is deemed to be a phalanx of the Christian army. Romanism, which most grossly dishonours Christ, is treated as a friend, not as a foe. A fair field is claimed for every teacher, whatever he may propound. Every religion is regarded as safe. All roads lead to heaven. There is probation after death. There is no necessity for contending for the faith once delivered to the saints. It is only stirring up strife among brethren to speak or write against Popery, Ritualism, Infidelity, Unitarianism, Theosophy, and the like. Let every man's creed alone. Try and elevate the masses by benevolent and political measures and then be happy! Such is the tenor of the teaching sadly too prevalent. The result is that a spiritual indifference is manifest—an unsettled, roving, gipsy-like spirit which marks a large number of professing Christians. Inside the Established Church, impudent Ritualism and icy Rationalism grow side by side. Outside that Church the men who claimed to have descended from the Puritans, and to be the Protestants of Protestantism, the Dissidents of Dissent, are so weak-kneed that they seldom, and that here and there only, utter a word of protest against the rapid encroachments of Romish errors. Looking upon the Protestant Christian Church of to-day, Christ may well say, "I would thou wert cold or hot!"