

Fraser had spoken. The need of a learned ministry in these days of restless intellectual activity and diversified thought was made clear to a demonstration by the learned Doctor, who marshalled his arguments with methodic skill and faultless logic. Throughout the entire address there ran a rich vein of vigorous common sense. There were also occasional scintillations of playful humour, refined and delicate, which were readily seen and appreciated. The session is over, its work is done, but associations increasingly tender as the years go by will linger in the minds of students, whose paths in life will lie far apart, of the happy and hopeful days spent in Knox College in the session of 1887-88.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN RUSSIA.

UNDER Russian despotism the rights of citizenship receive but slim recognition. The average Muscovite is just as fond of freedom as the Teuton, the Saxon or the Celt, but immense military force and almost universal espionage make the Nihilist burrow in obscurity and the friends of constitutional liberty await with what patience they can the advent of better times. Attention has been so much attracted to political struggles in Russia that comparatively little notice has been taken of the spiritual despotism under which the people groan. The dominant Greek Church, a powerful arm of the State, exercises far more political sway over the masses than it does in awakening them to spiritual and moral life. Under existing conditions, it is not to be wondered at that vital religion in Russia is at a low ebb. The subordination of the Church to the State and the prevalent formalism in religion have a tendency to repress the spiritual life of the people, and they have in large numbers become very indifferent to divine things. Those in earnest seek for the development of their religious life beyond the pale of their Church, and that can only be done at great sacrifice. The Greek Church is intolerant, and has the power to call in the aid of the secular arm for the enforcement of its decrees. But for this, dissent in Russia would now have been far more vigorous and influential than it is. The readiness with which the people listen to those who have gone to preach evangelical truth is a clear indication that religious progress in marked degree is possible among the Russian people, and it is hindered chiefly by the Church which claims the Czar as its head.

The intolerance of the Greek Church is seen in the recent attempts to repress Lutheranism in the Baltic Provinces. These may in great measure be due to political causes. The strained relations between Russia and Germany may account for the interference with the religious belief of Germans and their descendants resident in Russia, just as their educational and commercial interests have been interfered with. The father of the present Emperor had granted a measure of religious toleration, which the latter has ceased to respect. The disabilities under which Lutherans in Russia are now placed moved the Evangelical Union to petition the Czar on behalf of their persecuted co-religionists. That petition has elicited a reply from the Procureur of the Russian Synod in which it is sought to justify the action of the Russian authorities in their attempt to suppress the Lutheran Church. The vital points in the petition are evaded. Freedom of conscience and the right to worship in accordance with its requirements received no recognition. The law "once Orthodox, forever Orthodox, and with all the descendants," suspended by Alexander II., but re-enforced by his son, has been peculiarly oppressive in the Baltic Provinces, but there is no attempt to justify this return to mediæval spiritual despotism. The Procureur tries to turn the tables on the petitioners by attempting to show that German land-owners and the Lutheran pastors have exercised a political influence to the detriment of the Provinces, and resisted their absorption into the Greek Church. This high dignity also asserts that God has specially commissioned Russia to guard the Christian civilization of Western Europe against the semi-barbarian Asiatics on the one side and the aggressions of Popery and Materialism on the other.

While the spokesman of the Greek Church imputes political motives to those seeking to conserve their rights and regain their spiritual freedom, it is transparent that this effort to force all dissentients into the fold of the Orthodox Church takes its rise in the centralizing tendencies of Russian absolutism which may

for a time trample upon the liberties of a people, but which in the nature of things can never be abiding. A Russian writer declares that there are over 15,000,000 souls deprived of all civil rights, solely because they disregarded the mandates of the Holy Synod in matters of conscience. Russian despotism in things civil and sacred may be terribly strong, but there are forces mightier still. The irrepressible desire for personal freedom, the power of truth, the rights of conscience cannot be eradicated. The spiritual energies of millions will not lie dormant forever, and when once they are fully aroused they will become irresistible. Even in despotic Russia a greater conflict than what the Czar is now preparing for will in due time loom up. The battle for civil and religious freedom has yet to be fought. The struggle may be intense and protracted, but in the end the right will triumph because the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.

Books and Magazines.

THE COSMOPOLITAN. An Illustrated Monthly Magazine. (New York: The Cosmopolitan Magazine Co.)—This recent competitor in the wide field of popular literature presents a most attractive appearance. Its contents are varied and interesting; the engravings are remarkably good, several of them being finely coloured lithographs.

THE CANADIAN METHODIST MAGAZINE. (Toronto: William Briggs.)—Dr. Withrow has the good fortune to travel a great deal: he is an observant traveller, and with rare skill gives his readers admirable descriptions of what he has seen. In the April number he gives "Here and There in Europe," and the second paper on "Our Own Country." Other interesting papers are "Corea, the Hermit Nation," "Macdonald's Life of Dr. Punshon," "Lord Lawrence." The other contents are fully up to the usual high standard maintained by this Canadian monthly.

THE ENGLISH ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE. (New York: Macmillan & Co.)—The frontispiece in the April number of the *English Illustrated* is a pleasingly-executed engraving of the portrait of Ariosto, in the National Gallery. There is a very interesting paper by W. H. K. Wright on the "Spanish Armada," with *fac similes* of old maps, plans and pictures of incidents in the memorable event. The other attractively-illustrated papers are "Coaching Days and Coaching Ways" and "Glimpses of Old English Homes—Arundel Castle." The usual complement of poetry and fiction will be found in the number.

THE MISSIONARY REVIEW OF THE WORLD.—(New York: Funk & Wagnalls; Toronto: William Briggs.)—The Literature department contains ten articles on such important topics as "Paul's Missionary Principles," "David Brainerd's Character," "The Bible in India," "The Miracles of Missions," "Mission Work in Papal Europe," "The Great World Council," "Condition of Females in India," and others by the editors, Dr. Chamberlain, of India, Dr. Clark, of Italy, and other writers. The Correspondence section is full of interest, and so of the International, conducted by Dr. Gracey. Dr. Pierson makes the Monthly Concert part indispensable to pastors and churches. The Monthly Bulletin and Intelligence departments show the ongoings of the entire missionary world. The Statistics are marvels. The Notes on Recent Missionary Books and the Editorial Notes on Current Topics are numerous, trenchant and valuable.

RECEIVED:—THE PEARL OF DAYS (New York: Wilbur B. Ketcham), **THE CONVERTED CATHOLIC** (New York: James A. O'Connor), **THE WOMAN'S MAGAZINE** (Brattleboro', Vt.: Frank E. Housh & Co.), **VICK'S MAGAZINE** (Rochester: James Vick), **THE NEW MOON** (Lowell, Mass.: The New Moon Publishing Co.), **Eleventh ANNUAL REPORT OF THE AMERICAN HUMANE ASSOCIATION** (Chicago: Humane Journal Office), **THE MUSICAL REFORM**, and **A TREATISE ON THE TONIC SOL-FA SYSTEM.** By Theodore F. Seward. (New York: Biglow & Main), **THE HEALTH AND HOME LIBRARY** (Chicago: Health and Home Publishing Co.), **THE SIDEREAL MESSENGER** (Springfield, Minn.: Carleton College Observatory), **BOOK NEWS** (Philadelphia: John Wanamaker.)

THE MISSIONARY WORLD.

LETTER FROM MR. GOFORTH.

By the favour of the Rev. Lachlan Cameron, of Thamesford, to whom the following letter from Rev. Jonathan Goforth was addressed, we are enabled to place it before our readers:

We are now steaming through the Inland Sea between Kobi and Nagasaki. It is like spring, so warm and pleasant that I write this out on deck. The water is almost as level as a floor. This is to us a great relief after the tossing to and fro on the Pacific. We are both in excellent health and as joyous as can be in anticipation of hard work for our Master in Honan. We hope to reach Shanghai on Monday after staying to-morrow, Saturday, at Nagasaki. After spending a few days at Shanghai for the purpose of gathering information, we will push north to Chefu which we will reach about March 5. Here I will leave my wife for the summer and hasten inland alone.

We are delighted with Japan and its people. It is like a trip through fairy land to drive through their streets. Things appear so curious to our Western eyes; yet in Japan all things are not as they were a few years past. Everything but the landscape is rapidly assuming an English costume. Here are railroads, steamboats; the tall brick chimneys of the factories almost lead one to suppose that he is in an English manufacturing town. The people, too, are speedily divesting themselves of all but the form of their features and colour of their skin. There is a Jap with an English hat, here is another with English boots, while a third is rigged complete in European costume. Even the women are casting away the odd Japanese head dress, and do their hair up in American fashion, plus the "bangs."

Tell Hannah the boys and girls of Japan are just as lively and happy in their sports and plays as the Canadian boys and girls. They look pretty, but odd, in their funny dresses of many colours. They have most of their hair shaved from off their heads, those who have not have a little spot shaved off about the size of a penny on the crown of the head. They wear wooden shoes which make a great clatter as they romp about. These little boys and girls are heathen, but the missionaries are working hard. One missionary at Kobi, a city of 100,000 people, told us that their society had 800 children at Sabbath school last Sabbath. We went to the girls' schools in connection with the American Board. Here we saw 150 bright Japanese girls who sang two hymns in English, "Oh think of the Home over there," and "Room for thee." A Chinese woman born in Japan, a native teacher led the singing in a very sweet voice. This band of bright girls are some of the first fruits of a bounteous harvest yet to be reaped from the white field of Japan. Oh that this kingdom with its teeming millions might soon become a kingdom for our Lord. I am so sorry our Church has done no work for Japan. We should have a share in shaping the heavenward destiny of these perishing souls. Can none of God's stewards be found who will start a fund for a mission in Japan? We join in sending you kindest regards.

J. GOFORTH.

S. S. Yokohama Maru, Feb. 24, 1888.

BRITISH RULE IN INDIA.

We all know that India is now under British rule, and that in 1877 Victoria was with great pomp proclaimed Empress; yet the question is often asked, "What right has England to this great prize?" To answer this question we must go back to the year 1497, when commerce with Europe was first opened by the Portuguese. As soon as ebony, porcelain and pearls from India were displayed in the London market, English merchants were inflamed with a desire to engage in such a lucrative trade. In 1600 Queen Elizabeth granted them a charter of protection, and the celebrated East India Company was formed and invested with great powers, in return for which the Crown received annually an immense sum of money. They established trading-houses and factories, and the acquisition of Madras, Bombay and Calcutta soon followed; not, however, without resistance on the part of the natives.

The French also came in a spirit of rivalry, which caused a hundred years' war, ending in their expulsion in 1756. Then followed the cruelties of the Black Hole of Calcutta, when the fiendish native ruler of Bengal committed such outrages as to cause open, decisive war between small English armies and hordes of native, undisciplined troops, ending in the supremacy of British rule in 1774.

The effect of British rule has been most beneficent. Railways span the peninsula; a net-work of excellent roads is laid and planted, with shade trees to protect travellers from the tropical sun; a thorough system of public schools, and even universities has been provided, and a large number of native gentlemen have been liberally educated, and speak English fluently. There are traditions and prophecies among the people that the time is coming when the Brahminical religion is to be supplanted by one from the Western world, and this prophecy is surely being fulfilled.—*Woman's Work for Women.*