

The Presbyterian Review.

Vol. XII.—No. 27.

TORONTO, JANUARY 9 1896

\$1.50 per Annum

OVER LAND AND SEA.

The Rev. Dr. Monro Gibson, London, has accepted the nomination of the committee of the National Council of the Free Churches for the presidency. In that capacity he will preside over the Free Church Congress, which meets at Nottingham next spring. One of the objects of this Council is to watch and, if necessary, take action on the education question.

Dr. J. Marshall Lang says that nothing has impressed itself more upon him during his perambulations through Scotland during the past five years than the complaints that have reached him from many quarters of a decadence of pastoral visitation.

Arrangements for the International Conference of the Pan-Presbyterian Council in Glasgow next summer are being rapidly pushed forward. The council was formed in 1874, since when five conferences have been held—in Edinburgh, Philadelphia, Belfast, London and Toronto.

At a recent debate held in the London Presbyterian College on "Needed Reforms in Presbyterian Government and Worship," it was suggested, amongst other things, that pastorates should be terminable at a fixed period; that appointments to the eldership should not necessarily be for life, nor should prospective elders be required to assent to the whole of the Westminster Confession; that the office of Deaconess should be revived; and that Congregational meetings for a full and free discussion of matters affecting the welfare of the Church should be held from time to time.

It is greatly to be lamented that singing God's praise is not more general in family worship. There was a time when the Psalm book was thought to be as indispensable as the Bible in the worship of the household. Philip Henry, the father of Matthew Henry; the pious commentator, was accustomed to say that it was "a way of exhibiting godliness, like Rahab's scarlet thread, to such as pass by our windows."

Christians, who are not willing to give the one-tenth of their annual income to the Lord, often try to take refuge behind the statement that we are not under the law, but under grace. The statement is true; but instead of affording a reason for giving less than the tenth, it affords the best possible reason for giving more. Duty does not cease to be duty, nor are we less dependent upon God, nor is there less need for our giving, nor does God appreciate it less, because we are "Not under the law, but under grace."

Dr. Danet, a leading French physician, in a paper on the reign of alcohol among the principal modern nations, says: Its ravages are almost as terrible among us as they are among the English and Irish. In France every sixth suicide has been committed in a state of intoxication. One-half of the liver complaints, two-

thirds of the diseases of the kidneys and one-fifth of the various forms of insanity have been produced by the use of alcoholic liquors.

The "African Templar" gives an instructive account of a model village in South Africa which serves to show what may be actually accomplished by earnest philanthropists. The entire village is the property of Messrs. Searle & Sons, well-known temperance advocates. It is prettily situated at the foot of a range of hills, and has a river running through it. A feather manufactory, a saddlery and a boot factory are all kept going, and all the hands employed are abstainers. No hotels, no saloons and no policemen are required, but a church, a school, a cricket team, and a brass band are well supported.

The two twin evils which wreck our homes are drink and scolding, says the *Interior*. It is true that many men of middle life have practically given up their homes, taking some of their meals there and usually their sleep too; but it is equally true that there they have a refuge from that tongue which no man can tame, not even an apostle. Our fathers used to duck a common scold, under the mistaken belief that heat of spirit could be cured by lowering the temperature of the body, but experience only proved that a fiery temper is fed by water as if it were oil. Andrew Lang in his late comments upon Shakespeare's "Taming of a Shrew" says that it makes an amusing comedy but that "no shrew ever was tamed" by Shakespeare's process or any other. We are very much afraid that women's temper has driven more men to drink than women's tears have redeemed; and that not many a Xantippe is married to a Socrates who can seek solace for loss of home comfort in the consolations of philosophy. More will follow Rip Van Winkle to the woods with his pint bottle in his pocket. English literature is a literature of chivalry and is apt to condone every failing in a woman but one. But it is doubtful whether the immunity thus given to woman to "do her worst" has been a benefit to her. Everybody knows what few care to say, that the wife's temper is responsible for as many wrecked households as the husband's vices.

Herodotus the historian says that Amasis, King of Egypt, made a law for his people that every man should come once every year before the governor of his province, and show that he got his living honestly; and that he who did not so appear should be put to death. This same law was considered so good that the Athenians adopted it also. How should we stand the test? It is to be feared, but poorly. The pressure of numbers, the love of display, the thirst for riches—lead more and more to crooked actions, to *dishonesty* in trading. In such a matter a man must listen to the voice of conscience, and it behoves each of us seriously to consider if his income is made by strictly honest means. However a man of questionable practices in his business may seem to prosper, the warning of the prophet still holds good: "Woe unto him who buildeth his house by unrighteousness."