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OTTAWA, WEDNESDAY, APR. 24, 1907.

The epidemic of coughing that attacks a congregation at times is regarded as of sufficient importance by a writer in The British Medical Journal (London) to merit discussion in a column article. He is of opinion that the cause is nervous irritability, but will not accept the theory of an American physician that it is due to prolonged attention, holding that lack of attentiveness must rather be held responsible.

The medical missionary work in India has grown to tremendous proportions. Statistics of the Indian Medical Missionary Association show that in the past year more than 2,000,000 patients were treated, and that 54,298 operations were performed. There are now in India over 300 medical missionaries, only 120 of whom are men, the disproportion in the sexes growing out of the necessities of the Zenana work.

The latest discoveries and conclusions relative to "Electric Waves and Wireless Telegraphy" are described by W. A. Shenstone, in an article which THE LIVING AGE for April 20 reprints from the Cornhill, in a manner to be easily understood by the ordinary reader. Mr. Shenstone is a recognized adept in conveying scientific knowledge in a popular way, yet without the air of painful condensation often affected in such articles.

Miss Marianne Farningham is probably the oldest woman journalist in England, having already celebrated her jubilee of work since she was writing for several magazines in 1855. She joined the staff of the Christian World at its birth in 1857, wrote for the first number, has written for the latest and for practically every number in between. Miss Farningham is a frequent writer of verse, several specimens of which have been published in The Dominion Presbyterian.

## THE DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN.

### FRIVOLITY OF SPIRIT. COMMUNICATIONS.

The Western Christian Advocate of Cincinnati deals firmly with the triviality of the so-called communications with the spirit world. When it is asked whether, in all the years during which disembodied spirits have purported to speak to us through mediums, any important truth in science, philosophy, or religion has been given us through them, the answer must confessedly be "Not one." And, even more disappointing, it must be admitted that men, of high talent and culture when living, have seemingly fallen into childish and foolish ways of thinking and speaking when supposedly talking to us after death. We do not write in a spirit of contention. We are willing and more than willing that the reality of the spiritual world and of immortality shall be established through psychical research, if it can be. But if our belief in the hereafter is to rest upon anything that these revelations have yet shown, we must admit that we are leaning on a broken reed. Science is very far from proving immortality. We who accept it must believe on other grounds, and those mainly of religious faith. The evidence furnished by psychical research is too suspicious, flimsy, irrelevant, and trivial to furnish any firm standing-ground whatever. At present, at least, we can not walk by sight.

Another broad and Evangelical statement is made by Canon Henson, of London. Speaking of Confirmation, he says—As to the "spiritual gift" conveyed in Confirmation, Canon Henson rightly appeals to the test of fact and actuality. Young Nonconformist Church members show "no observable moral inferiority" to young Anglicans, and those who theorize about some special and unique gift of the Holy Ghost in Confirmation have "frankly parted company with Christian experience." As a matter of fact, it appears, this doctrine of some spiritual gift communicated through material agencies is a later Latin theory of Divine grace, unknown to early Greek theology. Canon Henson shows that the Anglican Church Fathers—and Baxter in particular—looked upon confirmation simply as a public personal profession, corresponding to the Nonconformist's "Joining the Church." He urges, therefore, that mutual recognition of Church membership should be arranged between the Anglican and other Protestant Churches, and so "the standing injury to Christian charity" of refusing the fellowship of the Communion to brother-Christians be done away with.

Among the soon to expire copyrights is that of "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," by Lewis Carroll, which expires in November. The copyright on Sir John Tenniel's illustrations, however, has several years to run, and as these illustrations are as much a part of the book as Lewis Carroll's prose the authorized edition will still hold its own.

### THE SCHEMES OF THE CHURCH.

The sub-joined statement shows, for purposes of comparison, the amounts received at the church offices here from congregational contributions, donations, etc., for schemes indicated for year ending February 28, 1906, year ending February 28, 1907, and the disbursements for the year ending February 28, 1907. Increased contributions have not kept pace with the expansion of the work. Contributions to Knox College seem much larger for year 1906, but this was owing to a large legacy and other contributions which were special, being placed in the ordinary fund. The contributions to Home Missions were over \$2,000 in advance of 1906, but the expansion of the work called for over \$16,000 increase in expenditure. This necessitated the drawing of \$10,000 from the reserve fund to meet the claims for the year, in addition to the balance of \$10,250 with which we began the year.

It has been the custom to place legacies in the reserve fund. This was done this year as usual, so that the reserve fund is over \$3,000 larger now than it was this time last year.

A somewhat similar statement has to be made regarding the Foreign Mission Fund. Although the amount received during the year just closed was greater by over \$7,000 than that of the preceding year, the greater expenditure required the transfer of \$12,000 of the sum received in legacies to the ordinary fund.

As in the preceding year, \$5,000 from the special donors' contributions and from British grants were transferred to the Augmentation Fund, yet it was necessary to transfer over \$3,000 from the Reserve in order that claims might be paid in full. The Reserve Fund of French evangelization had also to be drawn upon to meet the expenditure.

Doubtless the terribly severe winter in the West preventing the removal of the grain was the chief cause of the deficiency in the funds. It was fully expected that from Manitoba Synod the sum of \$30,000 would be contributed for Home Missions, but the amount received from the whole church west of Port Arthur did not nearly reach that sum. We have good reason to expect that the contributions for this year from the West will show that the failure to give last year is fully made up in the present with interest added.

If all our congregations, instead of trusting, as so many do, to a chance collection for the schemes of the church, were fully organized for missionary giving, and the session to keep its hand and eye upon the organization, all the year through, there would be abundance of money in the mission treasury for all the work of the church. Organization of the congregational forces for aggressive work is the need of the hour in our church.

	Rpts. to Feb. 28, 1906.	Rpts. to Feb. 28, 1907.	Disbursements to Feb. 28, 1907.
Knox College ..	\$ 12,049	\$ 5,944	
Queen's College..	3,407	3,542	
Mont. College ..	2,339	1,885	
Manitoba Col..	4,374	4,198	
Home Missions.	140,534	142,625	\$160,967
Augmentation ..	31,493	32,408	41,328
Foreign Missions	154,278	161,543	172,767
W. & O. Fund..	25,232	23,015	24,883
A. & L. M. Fund	35,756	32,626	38,692
Assembly Fund..	6,555	7,063	9,897
French Evange..	24,095	19,294	23,574
Pl. aux Trem..	14,373	14,117	14,117

JOHN SOMERVILLE,  
Interim Treasurer.  
Toronto, April 13, 1907.