

# THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

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## Notes of the Week.

THE increase of handsome Christmas numbers of Canadian journals and magazines has this season been very marked. The same may be said of the British press. The *Christian Leader*, of Glasgow, has issued a very handsome and attractive holiday number.

DR. SCOTT, of St. George's, Edinburgh, in the sixth and concluding Croall lecture of the present course, discussed "The Two Religions in History." He showed that Buddhism, though supported by the greatest powers of the eastern world, had only succeeded with the inferior branches of the human race; while Christianity, with all the world against it, and in spite of three centuries of unparalleled persecutions, had vanquished its highest opponents and approved itself to the lowest.

PRINCIPAL RAINY, addressing the students of Moray House training college, said he had found in Australia religious men who were quite decided in favour of the system of purely secular instruction in the common schools, one of their reasons being the importance of the common schools as a binding element, and their desire to avoid the divisions that are connected with religion. This statement was received with applause. Dr. Rainy added that there were not ministers enough to overtake the duty of religious teaching, even if they were disposed to try it.

THE Hamilton Ministerial Association at its last meeting passed unanimously the following resolution: Inasmuch as it is the belief of this association that the genius of the Christian religion is the entire separation of Church and State: Resolved, That this association believes that the consistent application of this principle requires the abolition of all grants to religious bodies for sectarian purposes, and therefore of Separate Schools supported out of public rates; and that all property held by or for religious bodies, and all church officials cease to receive civil patronage in the form of exemptions from taxation.

SOME interesting statistics on the relation of the Roman Catholic Church to education are quoted from the *Statistische Monatschrift*. In Spain sixty-three per cent. of the population are unable either to read or write; in Italy forty-eight per cent.; in France and Belgium fifteen; in Hungary forty-three; in Austria thirty-nine; in Ireland twenty-one; in England thirteen; in Holland ten; in the United States (white population) eight, and in Scotland seven. In purely Teutonic countries the percentage of illiteracy is remarkably low. The highest is in Switzerland—2.5 per cent.; while in the whole of Germany it is only one. In Brazil and other South American States, where Roman Catholicism possesses greater sway even than in Europe, the percentage is given as eighty and upwards.

DR. THAIN DAVIDSON, who is by way of eminence the young men's preacher, in a recent sermon to that class, referring to recent disclosures of revolting immorality, declared that another Juvenal is needed to scourge us, as he did the Romans of old. We want some modern Cato, armed with authority above the law, to seek out men who are leading infamous lives, and mark them with the brand of infamy. Only last week he met a gentleman who has travelled all over the world, and has been in every capital in Europe, and whose deliberate opinion is that London is morally the foulest city on the globe! So rampant is vice in the metropolis that Dr. Davidson considers it imperative that every one who can get the ears of young men should put the trumpet to his mouth, and proclaim the judgments of heaven upon the men who are wallowing in the foulest sink of iniquity, and bringing on the whole land the scandal of their abominations.

THE organic union of all the Presbyterian bodies working in Japan has produced excellent results, and we glad, says the *Christian Leader*, to observe that the movement for a similar union in India, started by the Lahore Presbytery in 1887, is making good progress. The committees appointed have

got the preparatory work well in hand and on the 20th ult. the first public meeting was held in Calcutta. Sixteen Presbyteries, representing eleven Churches, have chosen delegates, the only Churches unrepresented being the Original Seceders and the Gopalgunge Evangelistic Mission, though the co-operation of the latter is expected on the return of its missionary to India. Three sub-committees have been appointed to report on a basis of union from the standpoints respectively of doctrine, polity, worship and local organization. Rev. Kenneth S. Macdonald is Convener, and the chairmen of committees are Drs. Mackichan, J. W. Scudder and R. Stewart. The chief difficulty that lies in the way is the adjustment of relations with the various missionary boards which supply the funds for carrying on the work; but the *Indian Witness* thinks that the lions in the way will prove, as in Japan, to be chained like those that terrified Christian.

IN an editorial the *Ottawa Citizen* says: The opening of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church marked a new era in the history of the congregation, indeed it may be appropriately remarked that "old things have passed away and all things have become new." The Presbyterians of Ottawa have now four of the finest Protestant ecclesiastical edifices in the city—each an ornament to the locality in which it is situated, and creditable to those who worship in it. The contrast between the old frame building which has just been deserted by the congregation of St. Paul's and the handsome stone structure which adjoins it and in which divine worship will hereafter be regularly held, is striking, and both externally and internally affords evidence of the progress made in Presbyterian circles in the matter of church architecture; while the introduction of instrumental music in the service of praise, which is now common all over the Dominion, but which is a recent innovation in St. Paul's, tends to show that the extreme prejudice which at one time existed against the use of organs, or instrumental music of any kind, in the worship of God, is rapidly dying out. . . . The congregation of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church and its highly esteemed pastor, the Rev. Dr. Armstrong, are to be congratulated upon the successful consummation of the building scheme which they inaugurated a few years ago, and upon the happy auspices under which their beautiful new church has been occupied. The church is one of the most attractive buildings in Ottawa, and it will long stand a monument of the munificence of those who now comprise the congregation.

MR. ROBERT CARTER, senior partner in the well-known publishing firm of Robert Carter & Bros., New York, died at his residence on Saturday morning week. He had been ailing for nearly a year past, but the cause of death may be ascribed in a general way to old age, he having attained his eighty-second year. Mr. Carter was born at Earlstoun, Berwickshire, in 1807, and after getting his education in the parish school became assistant to a teacher in Peebles. In 1831 he came to New York, and after teaching in the high school, and in a private school which he organized himself, he started in 1834 on his career as a bookseller. For half a century he has been doing a wholesome, honest, beneficent work. He has passed through many seasons of general business depression, and yet maintained his own credit unimpaired. He conducted his business with dignity, integrity and success. Who can estimate the value and extent of his influence as a publisher? What a factor he has been in the religious education of this country. Beloved and honoured by all who knew him, he is not only without enemies, but with troops of friends. For fifty-eight years he was a member of the Scotch Presbyterian Church in Fourteenth Street, and during nearly the whole of that time was one of its elders. He was a trustee of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church and the oldest living manager of the American Bible Society. Two of his sons are Presbyterian ministers and one was associated with him in business. Three sons and one daughter are all of his family who survive. The funeral services were held in the Scotch Presbyterian Church, and the remains were interred in Greenwood in presence of a large concourse of friends.

THE Irish correspondent of the *Presbyterian Messenger* writes: Since my last communication death has laid its heavy hand upon several of the leading members of our Church—ministers and laymen. The Rev. Robert James Watt, of Kilmacrennan, eldest son of the Rev. Dr. Watts, of Belfast, has been cut down in his youth after a short pastorate of less than five years. His gentle, amiable disposition had endeared him to all who came in contact with him. The rector of the parish, the Rev. William Allman, M.D., in the kindest and most affectionate manner attended upon him and prescribed for him: till the arrival of the family doctor, but medical skill was unavailing to avert the fatal stroke. The Rev. David Edgar, of Ballynahinch, after a faithful pastorate of sixty years, entered into his rest on Sabbath morning, December 8. He and Mrs. Edgar had gone to the communion together for the last time about a fortnight before. On the way home she caught cold, and was soon taken away. But a few days after, he followed, so that it may be said, "In death they were not divided." The deceased minister was a son of the late Rev. Samuel Edgar, D.D., of Ballynahinch, author of "The Variations of Popery," and brother of the late Rev. John Edgar, D.D., of Belfast. He was one of the oldest ministers of the General Assembly, and had belonged to the Secession Synod before the union of that body with the Synod of Ulster to form the General Assembly. Devotion to his Master's service was the great characteristic of his life. "This one thing I do," seemed to be his motto, and his labours were abundantly and greatly blessed to many. To these the names of Rev. James White, Carrickfergus; Rev. Alexander Savage, W. K. Brown, J.P., and Robert Johnston, Immarne House, Tempo, are added.

AN angry correspondence is published between Professor Marcus Dods, of the New College, Edinburgh, and the Rev. Murdo Macaskill, Dingwall. On November 27 Dr. Dods wrote to Mr. Macaskill, saying it was currently reported that he had said Dr. Dods denied the divinity of Christ, and His resurrection, and Dr. Dods asked to be informed if there was any foundation for this report. Mr. Macaskill replied that he had nothing to do with current reports, and offered to supply Dr. Dods with a copy of his speech to the Presbytery of Dingwall on the Professor's views. Dr. Dods answered that it was as he suspected; Mr. Macaskill was unable to give him a straightforward answer. A Christian or a gentleman would have expressed regret that the reports he referred to were in circulation, and would have hastened to disclaim connection with them, and to repair the wrong done. "Were you prosecuted," Dr. Dods proceeds, "for defamation, as you are liable to be prosecuted, a civil court would hardly accept your plea. However, I have done my part; I have given you an opportunity of denying the truth of these reports. You refuse to deny that they are true, and therefore lead me to understand that you have given grounds for them. If so, you have uttered false and mischievous calumnies. People, indeed, tell me that it is only your stupidity that misinterprets my writings. This may excuse you in the past; it cannot excuse you now." In conclusion Dr. Dods warns Mr. Macaskill that the course he is pursuing is likely to do the Church in the Highlands much harm. To this Mr. Macaskill made a long reply. After alluding to "your very polite and Christian letter," he goes on to tell Dr. Dods—"With what you personally believe or do not believe, I have nothing to do, nor have taken anything to do, in this controversy, but only with what you have published as an accredited teacher of the Free Church." Then, taking up the word, "stupidity," he dwells at length on this, and, mentioning numerous names of clergymen and newspapers whose views of Dr. Dods' teaching, he avers, are similar to his own, declares that "stupidity must be the order of the day all round." "My 'stupidity,'" he proceeds, "and your profound erudition may meet at no distant date, when others will be the judges of our individual right to these designations." And, in closing, he says—"You threaten me with civil prosecutions; proceed, sir, and Cæsar will very soon teach a much-needed lesson in our ecclesiastical ethics." Other two letters of a similar character close the correspondence.