

# THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

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## Notes of the Week.

DUNDEE presbytery have expressed approval of the retention on the assembly's list of the church of Campvere, in Holland, as a curiosity. Rev. W. Mason-Inglis mentioned that at Middleburg, near Campvere, there is a congregation composed mainly of the descendants of old Scottish settlers, and that their minister might soon appear in the assembly and claim a seat.

THE Rev. W. Mason-Inglis, of Auchterhouse, denounces the present system of appointing Edinburgh elders to represent country presbyteries in the assembly, and the oligarchical procedure generally of the circumtabular party. Unless a member, he says, is a *persona grata* with the select inner circle, and can secure the circumtabular three nods, he may as well stay at home.

DEAS CROMARTY writes: English Presbyterianism does itself no more than justice this year in naming so true a son of the old northern Protestantism for Moderator of the Synod which meets next April in Manchester. Those who took Dr. Morison south made no mistake as to the nature of his gift and power. He is not only a man of excellent quality; he is a preacher to the city, knowing what he has to say and how to say it.

INVERNESS Free Church presbytery, after a lively debate, have agreed by seven votes to five to a motion by Rev. Mr. McConnel that the home mission superintendent shall be at the disposal of the Highland committee to superintend their work. Rev. Murdo Mackenzie, one of the minority, objects to any such official at all, his office savouring of Popery and Prelacy. Rev. Alexander Lee, of Nairn, is recommended for the post.

ANYWHERE from twenty to seventy thousand persons will be more or less employed within the grounds of the Chicago Fair. Among the daily tasks to be performed will be the sweeping of nearly seven hundred acres of floor spaces. A variety of statistics might be gathered to show the amount of work incident to so great a Fair. Be the Sunday opening as moderate as it may, it means an extra day of work each week to a large corps of toilers.

THE Rev. Dr. F. L. Robertson, of St. Andrew's parish, Glasgow, died recently in his sixty-fifth year. His father was Dr. John Argyll Robertson, of Edinburgh. In 1851 he was elected minister of Bonhill, and twenty years later was transferred to Mid parish, Greenock. In 1873 he was chosen to succeed Dr. Runciman, in Glasgow, where he also acted as secretary of the Educational Endowments Board, and of the Association for the Erection of Fine-Art Galleries.

MR. HAWES, in announcing that he would, by request, preach on "Ghosts and Apparitions in the Old and New Testaments," made an apology for the unconventional subjects of his sermons. "You think you like the conventional sermon, but you don't like it. 'So careful of the type,' and if the type were that of Massillon or Bossuet, or even of Henry Melvill, well and good. But our conventional sermons are usually a lump of sugar, which is the text, and a tumbler of water, which is the sermon."

A NEW missionary society has been formed in England called the Evangelization Society for South America, taking as its doctrinal basis the Evangelical Alliance. It is undenominational in its character, and will seek to co-operate as far as possible with other societies in the South American field. The occasion for its formation was

the giving of a large sum of money to the missionary bureau in connection with the Young Men's Christian Association of London, for the purpose of evangelizing the Indian tribes of Brazil, Peru and Bolivia.

THE fragment of the "Gospel of Peter," one of the documents found in a grave in Upper Egypt, narrates the Passion and Resurrection, and closes at what seems the opening of an account of the miraculous draught of fishes in John xxi. It is mainly based on the gospels of Matthew and John, but those of Mark and Luke are also used. This "Gospel of Peter" is referred to by Serapion, about A.D. 190, in terms suggestive of its date being prior to A. D. 150; so that it affords evidence of the early currency of the whole four gospels.

GLASGOW Free Church presbytery recommend that a lectureship open to Presbyterian ministers and missionaries be substituted for the professorship of evangelistic theology. Rev. P. A. G. Clark thinks the word Presbyterian might have been left out, a view concurred in by Rev. Dr. Stalker. Rev. James Wells' motion in favour of closer relations with the United Presbyterian Church, such as by inviting its ministers to ordinations and by co-operation in forming congregations, has been unanimously adopted.

In referring to the new form of gambling, the missing word competitions, the *British Weekly* says: Our opinion of the proceedings before Sir John Bridge on Tuesday must mainly be expressed by missing words. More discreditable treatment of a crying scandal was never witnessed. However, it appears that the nuisance is at least to be abated. With fine magnanimity the personage who is mainly responsible for the mischief, and who must have feathered his nest pretty comfortably, intimates that when all his arrangements are completed he will be graciously pleased to discontinue his competitions. We do not think, however, that the end of the whole business will be quite so unsatisfactory as this.

DR. PENTECOST, speaking at the Sunday school Conference in London on the method and results of Sunday-schools, strongly denounced the English schools as compared with those in America. To be a success, he thinks, the school must represent all classes. In England they have never got away from Robert Raikes' idea that Sunday-schools are only intended for the poor and degraded. In America they started Sunday-schools clear of this idea; their buildings were also palatial, and attended alike by the rich and poor, the class distinction noticed in Britain being entirely absent. He had prevailed upon the Marylebone congregation to spend \$500 on a Brussels carpet for their hitherto dingy underground schoolroom. This kind of environment will, he is persuaded, elevate the tastes and ideas of the poorest children, and induce others of a different class to attend.

THERE appears to be considerable uncertainty as to Dr. Pentecost's intentions. The *British Weekly* says: Dr. Pentecost informs us that he has definitely declined the call from Boston, and has decided to remain in London. A formal announcement to that effect will probably be made in a few days. It has been stated that he had expressed his intention of accepting the call from Park Street Church, Boston, but it seems there has been a mistake somewhere. Dr. Pentecost has given an address to the office-bearers of Marylebone Presbyterian Church, suggesting improvements in their methods of finance. He thinks that while seat rents should be continued, the weekly storing should be introduced. He makes various suggestions as to how the church may be restored to its proper posi-

tion. The address has been printed and circulated in the congregation.

REV. PROFESSOR RENTOUL, D.D., of Ormond College, Melbourne, conducted both services in May Street Presbyterian Church, Belfast, on a recent Sabbath. At the evening diet of worship, when there was present a very large congregation, the rev. gentleman spoke on the subject of "Church Life and Work in Australia," choosing as his text a portion of Psalm lxxii. and Isaiah xxxv. 1. In Australia, he said, their Presbyterian Church was one without division, and without separatism. It was largely tolerant in respect of things that were non-essential, and spent its strength on those things that were absolutely necessary. He did not wish to enter into any of their difficulties here. It might, however, be very interesting for them to know that they in Australia sang not only their psalms, but they sang hymns, as in the English Church. They had instruments of music, and he never saw any harm coming from them. Those questions were never thought of in Australia, and they made no difficulty whatever.

THE *Methodist Times* says: There is too ample evidence that at present the one Church in England which is so hopelessly schismatical that it is useless even to discuss with it the subject of reunion, is the one Church which talks most about it. The ruling section of the Established Church of England having accepted in all sincerity the baseless figment of the Apostolical Succession, have put her for the time being beyond the very possibility of reunion with any Church that adheres to primitive Scriptural Christianity. There is no reason why any of us should jeer at the ultimate possibility of a general reunion, or attempt to explain away the plain and obvious meaning of our Lord's Prayer for such a reunion as would be manifest even to the unbelieving world. But anything like a *rapprochement* between the Anglican Church and the other Churches of this country is practically impossible until she has abandoned an ecclesiastical fiction as groundless as the forged decretals upon which the Papacy is based.

THE St. Petersburg correspondent of the *British Weekly* writes: Although very little information can be gleaned from the public press about the condition of the Russian peasantry this winter, yet in many districts the peasants are wholly dependent upon the help afforded by the Government. For instance, in the provinces of Voronezh, Perm, Penza, Samara, and Saratoff, the crops have been, if possible, worse than those of last year, and officials from St. Petersburg are on the spot making arrangements for the succour, during the winter and spring, of the peasants in these districts. The Government allowance, however, is so very small that it hardly does more than keep body and soul together, so that help from private sources is urgently required. In connection with this, it may be mentioned that from the official cholera returns just published, 265,000 persons died between the 1st July and 1st November. In the province of Saratoff the number of deaths was 21,033; in Voronezh, 12,072; in Samara, 18,040. It is simply impossible to imagine the gloomy and helpless condition of the poor people in these cholera and famine-stricken districts.

THE University of New York has conferred the degree of Doctor of Divinity upon the Rev. Dr. Philip Schaff, in honour of the approaching fiftieth anniversary of his first lectures as Professor at the University of Berlin. The Directors and the Faculty of Union Seminary have also sent him a letter of cordial congratulations in honour of the same event, with appreciative recognition of his wide and varied

learning, and of his long and fruitful labours as a Christian teacher. Here is a paragraph from their high testimonial: From the hands of such masters as Tholuck, Neander and Muller, from the influences of Tubingen, Halle and Berlin, you passed into the life of this country before the touch of the great educational centres of Europe had been fairly felt in our schools, and brought to bear upon the study of Christian Theology and its kindred themes the forces which had moulded your own thought and your literary methods. These forces you have exerted from various and commanding positions; from the pulpit, from the Chairs of Theology, of Biblical Exegesis, of Biblical Languages, and of Church History, and through the medium of the religious and secular press.

THE *British Weekly* says: On Monday evening a full-length portrait of Mr. Gladstone, the work of the most noted Canadian portrait painter, Mr. John Colin Forbes, was presented by Canadian Liberals to the National Liberal Club. Mr. Blake made the presentation on behalf of his countrymen in a speech of great eloquence, which closed appropriately with a dozen lines from Tennyson's "Ulysses." Lord Rosebery responded, and remarked that if Mr. Gladstone's life were written, the task would have to be undertaken by a limited liability company. He gave an emphatic assurance that the Government meant to stand by their pledges, and bring in a strong Liberal programme. "We have not come into office to patch up. If we are not a Liberal Government, we are nothing. By that declaration I ask you to judge us. We may fall, and we may fall, but it will not be by falling short of the principles which Mr. Gladstone has expounded." The occasion was specially interesting as a proof that in his work for Ireland, Mr. Gladstone has the sympathy of all political parties in Canada. The problems which seem insoluble to us have been met and conquered by them, and like Virgil's hero comforting his men out of the experience of the past, their consolation is that "these things also shall have an end."

AN English contemporary says: The Presbytery of London North met at the College, Bloomsbury, recently, Rev. R. M. Thornton, B.A., Moderator. The business on the agenda did not promise much in the way of excitement, but the Presbytery speedily found itself face to face with a most important, and in some senses painful, subject, the difficulties and hardships of ministers of the weaker congregations in working-class districts of London. The Rev. D. M. Connan, of Kentish Town, and the Rev. W. M. Smith, of Bowroad, introduced the subject in carefully-prepared speeches, which were so outspoken that the Presbytery resolved that they should be considered as if delivered in private. The Rev. Samuel Hester, of South Hackney, followed in a similar strain, the united burden of complaint being that it was impossible to carry on Christian work in the districts of London referred to without greater financial assistance from the general funds of the Church. After an interesting and sympathetic conversation, in which the Rev. Dr. Gibson, Mr. R. T. Turnbull, Sir George B. Bruce, Principal Dykes, D.D., and others, took part, a large and influential committee was appointed to consider the whole circumstances and needs of congregations of the class referred to, and report as to how best they could be helped to do their work with efficiency and success. It was admitted on all hands that these weak congregations—mostly in the East End—will require to be treated on exceptional lines, the ordinary rules of the Sustentation and Home Mission Funds having failed to give them the assistance necessary to the carrying on of their work with success.