

# Dominion Presbyterian

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## Note and Comment.

The Halifax Presbyterian Witness of April 8th, has obituary notices of six people whose combined ages aggregated 482 years, or an average of 80 years and 3 months. The youngest was 71 years at death, the eldest 94.

Union of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational denominations of Canada is in the air. The sentiment for union is strong wherever the question has been discussed. This is especially the case in the maritime provinces, where the old veterans, as well as the younger men, strongly desire union.

ABBE LOISY, the learned Frenchman, is under condemnation. His works are placed on the Index, and he himself is to be excommunicated. He is sincerely attached to the Church of Rome, and will submit as meekly as possible; but he declines to assert what he knows himself to be erroneous. It is said that some of the ablest scholars in the Roman Communion have written urgent appeals to the Vatican, imploring the authorities not to commit again in the twentieth century, the Galileo blunder.

The resignation by Rev. James Carruthers, of the pastoral charge of the congregation of Innes Church, New Glasgow, N.S., recalls the fact that that congregation has had only four pastors in its long history. These were Rev. Dr. McGregor, from 1787 to 1830; then Rev. Dr. Roy, followed by Rev. E. A. McCurdy and Rev. James Carruthers, four pastors in 117 years, an average of about 30 years to each. That is a record worth mentioning.

Church union will soon be an accomplished fact if all Presbyterians, Methodists and Congregationalists are possessed of a spirit like Rev. Dr. Patrick, principal of Manitoba College. He says: "There is no-thing in the tenets or government of the Methodist church which I cannot accept, and I believe that the church which springs from the union of the Methodist and Presbyterian churches will be more Catholic, more Evangelical and more powerful than the two churches when separate. The Congregational church I honor equally with the Methodist."

An Anglican clergyman in England recently gave a lecture on the question: "Is English Non-conformity Schismatic?" His answer was: "He did not think that Non-conformity was equivalent to schism, nor did he think schism was always sin, much less that schismatics were always sinners. He desired to express his most eager desire for hearty communion and spiritual fellowship with all Nonconformists. If he refused to recognize that fact, and considered many of Christ's own to be outside the pale of His Church because they walked not with them, while they cast out devils in His name, and were doing—and doing well—half the Christian work of the country, then he would feel it was he and not they who were guilty of the sin of schism." Noting the lecturer's views the Belfast Witness says that "he is a scholar and knows the historical rights of the matter."

The statement is made in the Belfast Witness that since the work of preaching the Gospel in China was begun a hundred years ago, 207 Protestant missionaries have laid down their lives in that land for Christ's sake. A Martyrs' Memorial is now to be erected in Shanghai to cost £50,000; it is to be in the form of a Hall and Christian Institute for general religious purposes; it is expected to be ready for use in 1907, the centennial of Chinese Missions. Thus in the most difficult and dangerous places the great commission is being executed, "Make disciples of all nations." This promises to be a great missionary century.

Referring to the recent "cocking main" at Woodstock Rev. Dr. MacKay, in his sermon on Sunday evening, said: "I have read of heathen Chinese gambling over beetles and watching rats drowning in a tub. I have heard a negro illustrating the demoralization of Southern slavery by telling how they used to tie cats together and enjoy seeing them tear out each other's entrails. I have often heard of Spain brutalized by her bull baiting exhibitions, and now we have the enlightened town of Woodstock ahead of negro, Chinese or Spaniard, guzzling beer and whiskey and gambling at a cockpit. And some of them would have us look up to them, yes, up to the cockpit aristocracy of the town."

If each Christian would each year win one other to Christ, how quickly the Kingdom of Christ would extend. Dr. Torrey says: "If there were but one Christian in the world, and he, by twelve months of earnest work, could win another to Christ, and each of those would win another during the next year, and so on, it would require but thirty-two years, or less than a single generation, to win all the earth's billion and a half of population to the Lord." People are led into the kingdom one by one, not *en masse*. The work of saving souls is an intensely personal matter. The process is described by our Lord in our parable of the great supper when the servants were sent out into the highways and byways to press men to accept the invitation of the king. That is Christian work—"to every man his work." How far short of their obligations in this matter do so many professing Christians fall!

The Dutch cabinet, in the queen's speech lately read before the States General of Holland, made known the purpose of the government to introduce a bill for the better observance of the Lord's Day. As stated in that outline of governmental polity, its purposes will be to secure to all laborers, even to those employed upon the railways, absolute cessation of toil. It calls for the suspension of all business, and the losing of such amusements as require the labor of others to constitute the entertainment; so that if adopted, it will not only shut up the factories and the forges, but the theatres and beer gardens. The Chicago Interior remarks that this move comes after a very long experience of "Continental Sunday."

Winter before last, when the anthracite coal miners were on strike in Pennsylvania

and fuel became a scarce and costly article, many schemes were suggested, both in Canada and the United States, for utilizing peat as a substitute for coal. We do not hear very much about these schemes now. The Boston Transcript, however, tells the public that in Ireland peat is being actually converted into brown wrapping paper. A large mill has been established at Colbridge, County Kildare, which has for some time been engaged in converting Irish peat into wrapping papers of various grades. The mill site is on the River Liffey, about twenty-five miles from Dublin, near the eastern margin of the great bog of Allen which extends westward about seventy miles to the River Shannon. The process of converting the peat into paper is a wonderful metamorphosis. Carts are engaged hauling the raw peat from the bog, where it is dug, direct to the mill. Then begin the various processes of cooking with the necessary chemicals until it becomes reduced to the condition of pulp required, after which the methods followed are very similar to those of the ordinary paper mill. It is somewhat of a singular sight to see the black peat fresh from the bog thrown into the mill at one end and follow it to the other end where it emerges as paper. It is claimed for the new industry, this latest discovery, that it will prove an opulent mine of wealth among the Irish people.

A considerable degree of interest, almost akin to excitement, has been created in religious circles in England, by a recent utterance of the Anglican Archbishop of York, on the question of rapprochement between the English church and the Nonconformists. He did not propose organic union, but his references to Nonconformists were of the most friendly character, suggesting that they and Anglicans "may well be workers together with Him" (the Lord Jesus), and urging that the latter should "recognize" the former as "our fellow-workers in the Kingdom of God." Very significant is his remark: "It may be that the true fulfilment of His (Our Lord's) Prayer, at least for the present, lies not so much in modifications of doctrine or in assimilations of order and organization, as in closer spiritual fellowship; in a clearer conception of our Christian brotherhood; in a more earnest endeavour to live as brethren; to look not everyone on his own things, but every man also on the things of others; to be fellow-workers with Christ." Strange to say these kindly references of the Archbishop of York to Nonconformists, and his expressed desire that common ground should be sought for closer spiritual fellowship and co-operation in Christian work, has given serious offence—"pointed hearts" to extreme Anglicans, notably the High Church party, whose lesser lights are criticising him with great vigor. On the other hand Nonconformists generally—ministers and the press—welcome and reciprocate his utterances in the most friendly terms—the London Presbyterian saying: "No one who has read his Grace's recent address can fail to be profoundly thankful that such an utterance should come from such a quarter at the present time. Who can tell whether it may not prove an epoch-making pronouncement?"