

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

Vol. 23.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 31st, 1894.

No. 14

Notes of the Week.

In speaking of the eightieth birthday of the eminent Greek scholar and historian, Ernest Curtius, a Berlin paper reports that he has, among his memoranda, a paper in which he was censured while a schoolboy for being backward in Greek.

Sir George Trevelyan, replying to a deputation from the corporations of the cities and large towns of Scotland, urging the extension to them of power to close at ten, indicated that the only difficulty in granting their request lay in the practical block of Scottish business in the House of Commons.

Since the death of Oliver Wendell Holmes, there are only four surviving members of the class of 1892 of Harvard: Dr. Edward L. Cunningham, of Newport, R. I.; the Rev. Samuel May (the class secretary), of Leicester; Dr. Samuel F. Smith, of Newton, the author of "America," and Charles S. Storrow, of Boston.

With regard to the reports of peace, between China and Japan, there seems to be no very good foundation beyond a general desire on the part of the European powers that the contest should not continue longer. On the other hand, the arrival in China of a large amount of arms from Germany, and the putting of the fleet in good condition, indicate that there is a very general resolve to continue the fight.

A special committee of Aberdeen town council has reported in favour of applying to Parliament for powers to municipalise the retail liquor trade in the city. It is proposed that five years after the passing of the act all licences shall vest in the council, and that on a requisition of a fourth of the constituency every three years thereafter a poll shall be taken on the question of continuing the sale of drink, two-thirds having the power of veto.

The University of Chicago announces, in its department of comparative religion, special opportunities for those intending to be missionaries. For the winter quarter of the present year it offers a three month's course in Hindi, under the direction of the Rev. Fulton J. Coffin, who was engaged in practical mission work among the people of India for several years. This course is an addition to those on the religions of non-Christian people.

A British officer who has had, apparently, some experience in the East of Asia, commenting upon the Chinese and Japanese soldiers, says it "would be as reasonable to pit brave men armed with pitchforks against brave men armed with rifles as to pit, man for man, the Chinese in their present condition against the Japanese. Of all native and colonial troops, I would, next to Ghoorkas, prefer a regiment of Japanese. They are brave, temperate, patient and energetic, and at this moment the Chinese, whatever might be done with them, are 200 years behind the times."

By way of anticipation, we may notice now, as a help to prepare the way for it and keep it in mind, that the churches of the Presbyterian Alliance have agreed to observe the week, beginning on Tuesday, November 27th, and ending on Monday, December 4th, as a time in which the members of these churches should unite in special intercession for the conversion of the world. It is a great work which Christ has given His church to do, and there is no way by which she is so likely to be endowed with power to accomplish it, as by earnest, united prayer to God, in the name of Christ, to whom He has promised the heathen for an inheritance, and the uttermost ends of the earth for a possession.

Professor Swing left on his table a sermon, nearly completed. His people came together in their accustomed place, Sabbath, Oct. 21st, to hear it. It was read by Mr. Lyman J. Gage, the distinguished financier. Like all his sermons it contained passages of surpassing beauty. His pen paused in the following sentence: "We must all hope much from the gradual progress of brotherly love—" The Central Church will now go out of existence and its members fall back to their nearest affiliations. No attempt will be made to secure a successor to the departed preacher.

Before another issue of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN can reach our readers the meetings to be conducted by Mr. Moody will have been begun. The committees charged with the necessary preparatory arrangements are hard at work, and no doubt everything will be in such readiness when the time comes that the good work will go on without delay or hitch of any kind. Meetings for prayer are to be held in advance, and it is hoped that in answer to prayer, and by the blessing of God upon the efforts put forth, the cause of true religion in the city will receive such an impulse and extension as will long be seen and felt.

People in Ontario at least will breathe more freely now that the inhuman monster who perpetrated the Listowel butchery has been run to the ground and is safely lodged behind prison bars. The annals of murder in Canada can hardly furnish another so fiendish. If our people were given at all to lynching they would make short work with him. Whatever apology can in any circumstances be made for lynching, the punishment due to crime is never so impressive and deterrent as when it comes down upon the head of the criminal with all the calmness, firmness and solemnity of the legal forms of law and justice. The chain of evidence completed by his full confession leaves not a shadow of doubt as to the identity of the criminal and no chance of his escape from the clutches of the law.

Mr. John W. Foster, the ex-secretary of state, for the United States, who has just returned from a trip around the world, brings a strange story with him. He says that one of the Japanese delegates to the Parliament of Religions, held last year at Chicago, carried back word to his people that Christianity had been found to be a failure, that the Western nations were dissatisfied with it, and in their attempt to find something better they had called the Parliament. There they had considered Buddhism and found it superior to the faith of Jesus, and America was ready to adopt Japan's nobler religion. Mr. Foster says the Hindu and Mohammedan delegates carried away similar impressions, and are even now planning missionary movements to convert this country to their respective faiths.

The opening on Thursday evening of the Fred Victor Mission Building for the special uses for which it is intended marks another important event in the history of the philanthropic work which happily is extending in Toronto as the needs of the city grow. It has been erected by Mr. Hart A. Massey in memory of a son who was during his short life an earnest worker in the mission field. It will be operated by the Toronto City Mission Society of the Methodist church. About one-third of the building has been rented by the Central Lodging House Association. This part is supplied with bath-rooms, lavatories, reading-room, smoking-room, and all essentials for affording accommodation to 225 lodgers. There is a mission hall sufficiently large to seat about 500. There are also separate apartments, designed for such uses as a restaurant, a savings bank, an employment bureau, a "baby shelter," a boys' gymnasium with bath and dressing-room, and rooms for women's and girls' work. There are also rooms for classes,

board meetings and all work connected with the mission, even to a "drunk's room," for the unfortunate wayfarer unfit to be classed with the respectable lodgers. If by this and similar institutions, devised and wrought by the different Christian churches and philanthropic citizens of means, Toronto can prevent the poverty, vice and heathenism which have grown up in large cities in the old land and in the United States, it will be an untold blessing not only for it but for the whole country.

The daily reports from the retreat of the Russian royal family in Livadica cannot but awaken a sympathetic interest in the minds of all who read them. The Czar, the Autocrat of Russia, as helpless and feeble in the last struggle with death as the meanest of his subject; his son dying before his eyes; his wife prostrated with mental anguish; the hurrying of members of the royal family to the scene of suffering, sorrow and death; the uncertainty which hangs over the future; a royal princess renouncing her religion in form that she may share a throne, but in her heart clinging to it, and apparently ill at ease;—all make a dark background and gruesome contrast to the hurried marriage which hardly appears so much one of love as of convenience. The humblest home, where health and happiness dwell together, need not at present envy what is perhaps the mightiest royal family in Europe.

The Conference on Sabbath Observance held on Monday afternoon and evening of the 22nd inst., in Central Presbyterian Church in this city, in point of attendance was not a success. The audiences, considering the importance of the subject, that it was intimated in all the Presbyterian pulpits of the city, that it was held under the auspices of the Presbytery and by direction of the General Assembly, were painfully small. The speakers who were appointed to address the meeting did their work admirably, and all who attended were well repaid for doing so. The subject was so well presented and is so important that we hope to refer to it on an early day. In the meantime it is much to be desired that when a conference on a subject so closely affecting the cause of religion and the public well being in every way is announced, all who are really interested and can possibly do so should show their interest by their attendance.

In number forty-second of volume seventy-second in its issue of October 18th, the *New York Observer*, the first religious newspaper established in New York city, which up to that time had faithfully and lovingly clung to the old-fashioned newspaper form, made its first appearance in a new, attractive and more convenient shape, thirteen and a half inches long by nine wide. On the first page of the first number in its new form appears an interesting sketch of its origin and history. It began with the purpose "to record the triumphs of Christian philanthropy and to animate the efforts of all who are engaged in the great work of benevolence. Its change of form," it says, "will cause no change in the spirit and purpose of the paper." It adds: "Many of the prominent pastors in Presbyterian, Reformed, Protestant, Episcopal, Baptist and other pulpits in New York city and vicinity gave it their sanction and encouragement, and it claims to have to-day upon its subscription list the names of more clergymen of different denominations of Christians than any other religious paper." "It represents," it says, "as it always has done, the conservative element in all the Christian bodies; and has endeavored, in common with the American Bible Society, the Tract Society, the Evangelical Alliance and kindred organizations, to cultivate a spirit of kindness and co-operation, which tends more than formal resolutions and declarations to produce practical Christian unity." This is a worthy, even a noble aim, which we desire to make our own, and we wish for this veteran confrere a long and prosperous career in promoting it.