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Toronto, Feb. 3, 1898

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Rev. Dr. John Hall has withdrawn his resignation of the Fifth Ave. Presbyterian church, New York, pastorate, at Rev. Dr. Hall's the unanimous request of the congregation. Hitherto he has declined the services of an assistant, but it is now expected that he will consent to the appointment of a colleague who will relieve him from much of the pastoral and pulpit work of the heavy charge. The action of his people shows that he is as warmly enshrined in their hearts as ever.

Dr. Walter Ross Taylor, Convener of the Free Church Sustentation Fund, has issued a vigorous appeal for more Free Church liberality towards the fund and predicting Sustentation Fund a serious shrinkage unless steps are taken at once to make up the deficiency. In the criticism his statement has evoked the decline is attributed by many to the falling away from orthodoxy in the Church and to the growing desire for disestablishment. The criticism will probably result in the Fund recovering lost ground.

It has been announced definitely that Lady Henry Somerset has retired from the Presidency of the National British Lady Henry Women's Temperance Association, on Somerset Rottros account of ill-health. She is also for the same reason withdrawing from all public work.

Two interesting points were made clear at the annual meeting of the Council of Seventy held recently at Chicago. In To Stimulate dealing with the popular study of the Bible Study. Bible it was shown, while the Bible was very poorly taught, or entirely neglected in a very large number of the colleges of the United States, both the

amount and quality of Bible teaching showed a most encouraging contrast with the conditions of a decade or more ago. The Council was able to take credit for this advance very largely to its own exertions on behalf of popular Bible study. Its interest in Sunday School work was reported as unabated, and a committee was appointed to make a careful examination of all the material for study in the Sunday school now published, with the view of effecting improvement where such may be deemed necessary.

By a typographical error it was announced last week that the annual Conference of Knox College would open on the Queen's College 7th of February, etc. The sentence ought Conference. to have read "Queen's College"; the Post-Graduate Conference at Knox College being held this week. The Gathering at Queen's University promises to be very interesting; the speakers will number among them several strong men and the topics to be discussed are of great importance.

For many reasons Prof. Geo. L. Robinson, of Knox College, is fitted to lecture on "Palestine," but chiefly on Lecturo on account of his residence in the East and Palestino. his travels in the Holy Land. His appearance, therefore, on Saturday before the students of Toronto University brought a large and interested audience together. Dr. Robinson gave a graphic description of life in Palestine, the habits and pursuits of the people, the climate, and of objects of historic and Biblical interest. The lecture was illustrated by lime-light views.

The annual report of the Directors of the Prisoners' Aid Association reveals a labor of love carried on among a class Work Among of people whom none will deny are Prisoners removed from Gospel influences, whose claims are too often forgotten or repudiated. Alongside the due and proper punishment for crime—and there must be rigorous punishment, fitting the offence—is brought the Gospel of love, the effort to reclaim and to re-habilitate character, to give back to the State good subjects and to win for Christ precious souls. Surely such work deserves more public notice and more help from the Churches than it has received in the past. The scope of the work can be gathered from these extracts from the report:—"The Sunday schools conducted every morning at the Central Prison, Woman's Reformatory and City Jail has been carried on uninterruptedly and by a full staff of teachers, and during the past year has been steadily carried forward in all the departments. Other religious services have been conducted as usual and have been much appreciate. Disappointment is expressed that the year had not been marked by the inauguration of important legislative measures in the interest of prison reform, including the establishment of cumulative sentences, indeterminate sentences, the parole system, the Massachusetts probation system, and a scheme for aiding discharged prisoners, prisoners' aid societies and aiding the organization and maintenance of a board of charities and correction. The report expressed gratification that the Boys' reformatory would be moved from Penetanguishene,