

# Dominion Presbyterian

1.50 PER ANNUM.

OTTAWA, MONTREAL, TORONTO AND WINNIPEG

SINGLE COPIES, 5 CENTS

## Note and Comment.

Bishop Thoburn relates the following: "Bishop Foster once visited a beautiful temple in India. He asked the attendant how long it would all last. 'Not long,' he said. 'Why?' asked the bishop. And the attendant, lifting his eyes to the southwest and scanning the whole horizon, uttered the one word, 'Jesus.' May God hasten the prophetic day!"

The Alike of Abeokuta, an African ruler recently visiting England, said, in a brief address in his own tongue, given on a public platform, that he was pleased to see for himself the great interest that England really took in Africa. He had seen the great ruler of England, the King himself, and he remembered that the King's mother, Queen Victoria, had given his late father a Bible as a symbol of England's greatness.

Only twice in the history of American Methodism, says the Pacific Presbyterian, has the office of bishop been declined. About seventy five years ago, Dr. Fisk, president of Wesleyan University, declined the position. At the time of his election he was in Europe. It is supposed that the state of his health led to his declination. Dr. Day, of Syracuse University, who declined the office recently at Los Angeles, was the second.

The Rev. Hugh Pedley of Montreal, writing recently to the English Congregational authorities, said that Dr. Rowland had forecasted the possibility that ere long there may be in Canada a church that would include "Presbyterian orderliness, Methodist enthusiasm, and Congregational freedom." "That possibility," adds Mr. Pedley, "is nearer and more distinctly outlined than when he wrote."

Bishop Pinkham, of Calgary, who, by the way, is a Newfoundlander, declared recently that he regarded the Church Union movement with feelings of the most intense satisfaction, especially as it was a great step in the direction of another union for which he had been praying for years. "I have no question in my mind," he said, "but that the proposed union of the Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational Churches will materialize, and that this will eventually lead to a union between ourselves and them."

Marshal Yamagata, who is to take the field in supreme command of the Japanese troops, is the Moltke of Japan, but he has a personal influence over his troops which the great German General never attempted to acquire, and in this, more nearly resembles our "Bobs" when he was Commander-in Chief in India. One story which is told concerning him shows how devoted he is to the highest ideals of courage and honour. A Japanese brigade in the China War was repulsed in a desperate attack. He rode amidst the men as the battalions reformed, told them that the honour of Japan was at stake, that he was going to launch them once more to the attack, and that if they again were repulsed he would not endure the disgrace, but would commit hara-kiri. The assault was pressed forward.

The President of the English Baptist Union, in his opening address, called attention to the growth of the Free Churches in England. Three hundred years ago, he said, they were one in thirty of the religious population of the country; a hundred years ago, one in eight; to-day, one in two; and in fifty years they would be two to one, or, rather, by that time their witness to liberty would be crowned with success, and the Anglican Church, freed from the bondage of the State, would unite with the Free Churches in every conflict for righteousness and truth.

Early in the present month there will be a conference of missionaries in South Africa, at which, in all probability, some 200 or more missionaries from various parts of South Africa will be present. All the denominations are joining. In view of the report now in circulation in this country that no missionaries will be allowed to work amongst the Chinese who have, and are being, imported to work the mines, this conference will be of great interest. It will also be interesting in view of the changed relationship of the white and black races in South Africa.

The Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour has now reached vast dimensions. The British National Convention held in London at Whitsuntide, was a gigantic gathering of Christian forces from all the Evangelical Churches, and was attended by delegates from all parts of the world. There are in Britain now 7,412 affiliated societies with a membership of 220,000, and it is estimated that some 12,000 attended the London meetings, including 2,500 delegates, who were hospitably entertained by the Christian people of London.

The problem of maintaining interest in and attendance at the mid-week prayer meeting, is receiving a good deal of attention in religious journals. The Christian Observer in a recent issue makes some practical suggestions that deserve attention. That journal says: "The mode of conducting the prayer meeting deserves most careful thought by the minister. It should hardly be a little Sabbath service in the middle of the week, with a sermonette as the main part of it, although Scripture exposition and meditation should have a considerable place. It should rather be the social prayer and fellowship service. A good deal of hearty singing is an excellent feature. Quite a number of brief, pointed, earnest prayers should be made. In some cases the meeting should be thrown open for volunteer prayers or remarks, although this custom has to be carefully guarded. The Scripture lesson and exposition should be as devotional as possible, and the whole service should be simple, scriptural, spontaneous and uplifting. The minister should exalt this service, and rest not till the people feel the need of it. He should consult his officers and people as to methods for its efficiency, and he should most sedulously avoid getting into ruts on the one hand, and guard against levity and sensationalism on the other hand. If the prayer meeting is worth keeping up at all, it is worth making the very most we can of it." There is food for thought in all this, for the mid-week prayer meeting should and can be made a

training school in many lines of Christian work for church members, and especially for young church members.

The Earl of Harrowby, a prominent English Episcopalian, at a meeting of the Church Reform League, advocated a retiring age for bishops on the lines of the system which prevails in the army and navy service of the country, and urged that parishioners should have a greater voice in the selection of the clergy and some control over the character of the service in the church. He also referred to the "growing alienation" between the country clergy and their parishioners, and predicted that if something was not done to check it "disestablishment must come." This is a serious warning. The Earl further added: "The church was thought, rightly or wrongly, to be the Church of the rich, and not the Church of the masses. It was the Church of the fashionable, so many of the clergy catered to the desires of the few rather than of the many. Our Church was the richest in the world, and yet paid its clergy salaries which the well-to-do would be ashamed to give their servants." This is very plain speaking.

Fighting the liquor traffic by means of local option laws is taking a wide and effective range in the United States, and notably in the South. Backed up by a strong and united public opinion, these enactments are proving very effective in curtailing, and in many cases paralyzing, the men engaged in the traffic, so much so that the whiskey producers are taking vigorous measures to fight the temperance people and protect their industry. The distillers of Kentucky some time ago decided that the product of whiskey for this year should be limited to an amount one third that of 1902. The spread of local-option prohibitory laws is assigned as the reason for this decrease. In other quarters also is heard good news. Alarmed at the spread of emity to this vile business the Whiskey Trust is organizing for a vigorous National and State campaign of defense. Large funds are to be raised, and lobbyists will be placed at the National and State capitals, who will be constantly on the alert to prevent the passage of laws hostile to the liquor interests. This means, of course, that all possible political and financial arguments will be used to coerce lawmakers into obedience to their behests. It is an encouraging thing for Christian and temperance people to see the liquor fraternity thoroughly alarmed. It should encourage them to keep up the fight.

Abraham Lincoln said to Mr. J. B. Merwin (still living), on April 14, 1865, the morning before his assassination: "After Reconstruction the next great question will be the overthrow of the Liquor Traffic." Protection and the rotten species of politics and politicians it produced, seems to have forced the temperance question into the back ground, but the spread of the local option plan of dealing with the liquor traffic, indicates a genuine revival of live temperance sentiment and effort in the United States, which may ere long bring the martyred Lincoln's idea to the front.