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EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY.

It does not lie in our way to give a *resumé* of the general occurrences of the year, or to attempt anything like a forecast of the future. That will be done by many of our contemporaries in every variety of way, and with exceedingly different degrees both of ability and length. Yet we may be pardoned if, for a moment or two, we turn back to notice some few things which in after years may be looked upon as making 1880 remarkable. We need scarcely say that there has been more than the usual amount of wars and rumours of wars during the year that is now closing. The "sick man" has continued very sick, and has given any amount of anxiety and trouble. "Glorious victories" have been duly gained in the East, and have been duly glorified, while South Africa has had its usual modicum of trouble, rising as the year draws to an end to something more than use and wont in the way of border raids and race contentions. Ireland has been, and is, a seething caldron which has once and again threatened to boil over into something very like rebellion, if not revolution. Britain, too, has not been without her troubles, both political and ecclesiastical, and 1881 begins with things in the old world greatly out of joint, but at the same time with indications that there will come, at no distant day, out of this turmoil, benefits which will more than compensate for all the present anxiety and confusion.

In France the prominent occurrence has been the expulsion of the Jesuits, and some of the other unauthorized religious fraternities. This, it will be noticed, whether prudent or the reverse, has not been done at the instigation of French Protestants, nor indeed have these in any way indicated their approbation of the proceeding. As usual the Jesuits had been busy plotting for the overthrow of the Republic, and had been teaching in their schools extreme legitimist and anti-constitutional ideas. Whether it might not have been better to have let them go on and have counter-worked them with better schools and free discussion, we shall not say. This is, at any rate, manifest from the whole proceeding, that the power of the Roman Catholic Church in France is very much a thing of the past, for scarcely a dog moved its tongue when the Fathers were sent upon their travels, and even very ultra-Catholic countries had no great desire to receive those whom France had cast out as troublemakers of the people, and as plotters against the common weal.

The Ritualistic struggle in England has culminated in some of the more pronounced of that class being sent to prison for not obeying the law of the land and of the Church by law established as that law has been expounded by those legally appointed for that very purpose. That there should be in a Church established by civil authority and supported by public funds, ample standing room for every phase of religious opinion from the baldest atheism to the most abject idolatry, may be logically consistent, but before the earnestly religious of every class will submit to the formal and practical declaration thus made that all religions are equally true, that is, that they are all equally false, and all equally useful, they will insist upon universal disestablishment and disendowment, and upon all who believe in certain religious opinions alone supporting these as best they may.

Perhaps the most interesting event of the year as far as Presbyterians were concerned, was the meeting of the Pan-Presbyterian Council in Philadelphia, though the discussions over the Robertson Smith case in Scotland have been far more exciting, and are likely to issue in far more important and widely reaching consequences.

With our own Canadian Church, there has nothing occurred during the year of a very startling nature. Quiet, earnest work has been done. The good seed of the Word has been diligently sown. The various missionary schemes have been vigorously prosecuted and an encouraging measure of success has been graciously vouchsafed. The great Home Mission work has been pushed forward with much energy, and has been supported with a commendable amount of liberality. Along the whole extent of our newer territories this work has been proceeding, and in many of the older districts weak congregations have been assisted to maintain ordinances, though not, we regret to add, to such an extent as could be desired. The work in Manitoba is now assuming very large proportions, and if the Presbyterians of Canada are true to themselves and to the cause with which they are identified, our Church in the future will be among the most powerful and numerous in all that great north land, if not absolutely first, both in spiritual activity and social power. The visit of Dr. Mackay from Formosa, is to be mentioned as one of the most noteworthy incidents in our ecclesiastical year. He has, indeed, brought good news from a far country, and by so doing has stimulated and blessed very many. In many a single congregation the closing year has been noteworthy for a variety of reasons. Harmonious and very blessed settlements of pastors have taken place with some. Successful church building has led others into a great amount of activity, and has developed and strengthened a spirit of zeal and liberality which has had its beneficial reflex effect upon the whole of the other departments of congregational work. God has graciously visited not a few with a special outpouring of His Spirit, and has thereby made their pastors' hearts both glad and grateful. All the Colleges have had a very large supply of students, and these have done much and effective work in the various mission fields of the Church. To accomplish all that could have been overtaken would have required more money than was forthcoming. Still the degree of liberality attained by some was very stimulating, while as a whole, there was an advance on former years all along the line.

We have the fullest confidence that 1881 will shew a still more marked advance in every kind of Church work, and that those who live to look back on its transactions will have still greater reason to say with adoring gratitude and wonder, "What hath God wrought!"

SATURDAY EVENING TAVERN CLOSING.

ALL our readers are, of course, aware that by the Crooks Act the licensed taverns, and groceries that deal in liquors (so far as that branch of business is concerned), are closed on Saturday evenings at seven o'clock. Not without due consideration was this law passed, and experience has amply justified its wisdom and practical beneficence. The licensed victuallers, however, have been moving for its abolition, and for making closing time on Saturdays the same as on the other days of the week. To counterwork these efforts a large and influential deputation lately waited upon the Hon. Messrs. Mowat and Hardy, and very earnestly asked that no change should be made in the direction indicated. It was very evident that though there was considerable diversity of opinion among the members of this deputation as to how far restrictive legislation could with propriety and safety be carried, yet all were cordially at one in their determination to uphold the Saturday closing enactment complained of. Public opinion they all testified was sufficiently educated to endorse and support this provision; and very evidently from the reply made by Mr. Mowat, ministers have very much the same conviction. It is very evident that restrictive legislation in reference to the liquor traffic can only be successful as it is backed by overwhelming public opinion. Gradually, however, that public opinion is coming more and more round in the right direction, and we doubt not but that at no distant day, another step in advance in the way of restriction may be ventured on with perfect safety and complete success.

HOSPITAL FOR SICK CHILDREN.

THE Hospital for Sick Children at 245 Elizabeth street, is one of the most deserving charities in this city. It provides for the accommodation and proper medical treatment of those who have either no homes, or none in which their necessities can be properly and effectively attended to. Those who can afford to pay, are charged moderate sums for what is done for their little ones in this institution; those who can't are not on that account deprived of all help. So far as the liberality of the charitable permit, the destitute and desolate little ones are carefully nursed, and freely receive all the attention and assistance which medical skill and kindness can give for the alleviation or removal of their afflictions. It is a mighty boon for many a hard working mother to be able, by a small payment out of her earnings, to go on with her usual work, and to feel that her suffering little one is far better cared for than could be possible in her own uncomfortable room, even though she were willing to give up her very means of existence in order to attend to her sick charge. We believe that it is contrary to the principles on which this charity was established to make any public appeal for assistance or to canvass either directly or indirectly for subscriptions. We hope we shall be excused if to some extent we trespass against this regulation. Patients are admitted to the hospital from all parts of Canada, and we are convinced that were its operations more widely known, it would both be more generally taken advantage of and more liberally supported. At this season it would be nice and kindly if some would send in toys, either new or second hand, or picture books, or dresses which other little ones may no longer need, to rejoice the hearts and increase the comforts of the little sufferers at 245 Elizabeth street.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.—The Rev. Dr. Reid has received the undermentioned sums for schemes of the Church, viz.: Friend, McKillop, for Foreign Missions, \$2; Thankoffering for Foreign Missions, \$50.

THERE is still considerable agitation kept up in Scotland over the Robertson Smith case, but since the decision of the Commission, this has been much more on the side of the friends of that gentleman than of his opponents. A public meeting of the office-bearers and adherents of the Free Church who disapproved of the proceedings of the Commission, was some time ago held in Aberdeen, at which very strong language was used, and a resolution adopted protesting against the action of the Commission "as a dangerous departure from the well-defined order of government and discipline in this Church, an infringement of the Christian liberties secured by our ecclesiastical constitution, and a precedent subversive of the rights of office-bearers who may at any time fall under suspicion or be identified with unpopular views." Another meeting of the same kind has also been held in Greenock and similar ones are to be held in all the chief cities and towns of the country, while a movement is on foot in Glasgow to have Professor Smith invited to give a winter course of lectures on "Biblical Criticism."

WE have been asked by an esteemed correspondent to give information on the two following points: (1) "Whether the collections at the meetings held by Dr. Mackay of Formosa, are necessarily devoted to Foreign Missions?" (2) "Whether each congregation either conveys or pays the Doctor's expenses to the next congregation." As far as we can ascertain from those likely to speak with authority, the answer to the first question is that all such collections are devoted exclusively to the funds of the Foreign Mission scheme. If any choose to vote some portion of what they raised to the Formosa College, or to the support of the Formosa Mission there can be no objection, but after all it really comes to the same thing. A specific sum is wanted for the College, and all above that would go to the general fund, and as the expense of all the foreign missions has to be defrayed, the more that is given to one the less would have to be taken from the rest of the funds, and if more than was sufficient were given to one mission the surplus would just be taken to meet the expenses of the rest. The second question is easily answered, Dr. Mackay pays his way, and in due time gives account of his collections and outlay. If individuals are in any case kind enough to convey him on his journey without his being obliged to hire, of course that is just so much saved to the funds, and goes to swell their amount.