

RELIGIOUS.

PRESBYTERIAN.

Rev. Dr. Burns arrived home last week from British Columbia, whither he went at the close of the General Assembly at Winnipeg.

The Foreign Mission Committee (Eastern Division) met in New Glasgow on Tuesday.

Rev. Dr. Somerville, the well-known Scotch evangelist, was presented, at the close of the last Free Church Assembly, with his portrait. Sir Wm. Collins, in making the presentation, declared that there was no missionary in modern times who had travelled over so large an extent of country as Dr. Somerville.

Preparations for the meeting of the Presbyterian Alliance in London next year are actively in progress.

METHODIST.

The Methodist Local Preacher's Mutual Aid Association, of Great Britain, has memorialized the several Methodist bodies in favor of union.

According to the Methodist Year Book the number connected with the several branches of Methodism in the United States is 4,322,763.

Last year the membership of the Methodist Church of Canada was increased by 15,106. Of this number 745 were added in this Province.

Rev. Dr. Savage, a well-known Methodist preacher of Ontario, has been engaged during the past two years in organizing Bands of Christian Workers throughout Canada. With a number of assistants he opened a mission in St. John a couple of weeks ago, which bids fair to be very successful. It is hoped that he will see his way clear to visit Halifax.

The opening of an indoor camp meeting took place at June St. church, New York, on the 1st instant.

The Methodist Camp Meetings are being held this week at Berwick.

Dr. J. C. Hartzell, assistant-secretary of the Freedmen's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in a paper read recently before the Cincinnati Methodist Preachers' meeting, is reported to have said: "The spirit of caste, which socially, educationally, and religiously ostracizes the Negro in the Southern States, must be met by the constant and decisive protest of the Methodist Episcopal Church in its Southern work. Slavery was an incident, a mere matter of method in the subordination of the blacks to the white. The real thing is the subordination. Before the war it was slavery; just after the war it was modified peonage; now it is by limited citizenship an ostracism. No matter what the method, the thing insisted upon is enforced subordination. Against that, both civilization and Christianity protest, and manhood rebels. The Chattanooga incident in which colored students were rejected from a Freedmen's school, and afterward the decision reversed by the Freedmen's Aid Society, is the providential broaching of the most important issue now before not only the Church, but also the Nation."

CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

Rev. Mr. Harley, Curate of Christ Church, Windsor, is taking a two months' holiday. The Rev. gentleman is not enjoying the best of health, and it is hoped that the rest may quite restore him.

Rev. W. C. Wilson, of Springhill, has succeeded in building up a splendid congregation in that growing town, and the miners thoroughly appreciate his kindly sympathy, as well as that of Mrs. Wilson, who ever brings the sunshine into the homes of the sick and suffering.

We regret to learn that the Rev. Dr. Nicholls, of Liverpool, is sick. Dr. Nicholls is one of the oldest and most revered of the Church of England clergymen in this Province, and churchmen of all shades of opinion have learned to respect him for his calm and unbiassed judgment and his intellectual attainments.

The great question which is now agitating the minds of the clergy and laity throughout the diocese, is the election of the bishop, Dr. Edgehill having positively declined to accept the position. The Bishop of Algoma would unquestionably be elected, were the election left in the hands of the laity, and we fear that a dead-lock will result if the clergy persist in the support of a candidate, who, notwithstanding his many personal virtues, is known to hold extreme views. What the church wants and what churchmen desire, is a bishop capable of overtaking the work of a large diocese, a man intellectually and physically vigorous, one who is capable of harmonizing the several shades of opinion within the Church, and, above all, one who can appreciate the self-sacrificing work of the clergy, and, at the same time, realize the difficulties with which the laity have to contend, especially in small parishes.

The missions of the Church Missionary Society, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and the Episcopal Board of Missions in Japan, have been organized into a native Church, with constitution and canons. It is to be known as "Japan Church." Bishop Bickersteth says: "In regard to the name of the church, contrary to my expectation, by an overwhelming majority, the Japanese decided in favor of Nippon Sei-Kokwai, which means Japan Church, that is, a church which is suited to the Japanese."

BAPTIST.

The three young evangelists who conducted special services in the Free Baptist church for about a fortnight, are engaged, this week, in holding services in the Baptist Vestry, Spring Garden Road.

Rev. Mr. Cline, of the First Baptist church, is enjoying a well-earned rest in the upper provinces.

"TILL THE SEA GIVES UP ITS DEAD."

Written for THE CRITIC on the death of the three young midshipmen of H. M. S. *Canada*, who were drowned in Bedford Basin on Sunday, 10th July, 1887.

The wild waves sing their requiem,
The sobbing sea makes moan
Above the three poor sailor lads,
The storm has made its own
The false winds wail their death song;
But the seagulls shriek their woe;
From many hearts in a distant land
Soft tears of sorrow flow.
No mother's kiss their dead lips press,
No last hushed words are said,
No tears bedew their lowly brows,
But the sea weeps o'er its dead.
Think of the tender mothers' hearts,
Broken and bowed with grief;
Think of the sudden, awful close,
Of the young lives, ah! how brief.
The yearning hearts across the sea,
Where many dear ones dwell—
The eyes that long to look their last,
On the face they love so well.
But the sad sea holds them close and fast,
Entombed in its ocean bed;
There peacefully they lie asleep,
"Till the sea gives up its dead."
Even tears, a distant offering,
Reach not the watery graves,
Of those three hapless midshipmen,
Who lie beneath the waves.

F. W. S.

UNDERGROUND AT MIDNIGHT.

'Twas on a damp and somewhat chilly evening during the present month, that, in company with several of the young students of the School for the Blind, the Rev. W. C. Wilson, Wm. Reese, the foreman of the Springhill mines, and Alexander Robbins, I took my first railway trip underground, and, as many of my readers have never enjoyed a similar experience, I will briefly note some of my impressions of this midnight pleasure trip.

When our party gathered in the engine house, at the mouth of the great western slope, we found everything in readiness for our descent. Down the slope, which is about fourteen hundred feet in length, are two narrow-gauge railway tracks; the cars, which are coal-boxes, four feet long, three wide, and three feet deep, being drawn up the track by a strong wire cable, which is wound on a great reel by a powerful link engine of three hundred horse power. Getting into the cars and squatting ourselves on the floor, foreman Reese gave the order to start, with the precaution for us to lie low, as the beams over our heads were within easy reach. Tobogganing is said to be pleasurable on account of the spice of danger with which it is associated in most minds, but it is anything but a pleasurable sensation to be one of a party in a train of three coal cars, freighted with human beings, which is gradually being lowered into a pit at an angle of thirty degrees, and to know that the safety of the party depended upon the strength of a cable not more than an inch and a quarter in diameter. It, however, stood the test, and in due time we arrived at the bottom of the slope, with eight hundred feet of mother earth or mother rock above our heads. The seam of coal into which we had descended, lies at the same angle as the slope down which we had come, and is fourteen feet in thickness. From the bottom of the slope a level or tunnel, about nine feet high and seven or eight feet in width, extends on either side. In one direction a railway track has been carried for nearly three quarters of a mile, while, in the opposite direction, the track is over a mile in length. The level during the daytime presents a busy scene of activity—coal-laden cars drawn by horses, driven by sturdy lads of from twelve to fifteen years of age, are constantly being drawn to the bottom of the slope, whence they are dragged up the inclined plane to the surface, and at the same time empty coal cars are being constantly lowered and carried off in either direction to be re-filled. At night-time the coal cars cease to run, and the horses, thirty-one in number, are comfortably stabled in their underground stalls, munching their oats as contentedly as horses are wont to do in stables on the surface. One of the animals in the stable has been in the pit for eight years continuously, and it was noticeable that his coat, like that of all horses not exposed to the weather, was beautifully soft and smooth. Foreman Reese informed us that the mine was overrun with rats, which lived upon the fodder which dropped from the horses' mangers. They had endeavored to get rid of these pests by bringing into the mine a colony of cats, but the proverbial nine lives of these animals did not hold good in a coal mine, as they seldom lived more than a few months after being brought from the surface. Walking along the track in the level we came to the foot of one of the balances; these are tunnels driven up from the level parallel to the main slope; on either side of these balances excavations are made, called boards, and as soon as the coal from the balances, boards and cross tunnels, have been carried away, the pillars, which have been left as supports, are cut down and the coal secured. We ascertained that, as a rule, the coal was left standing within a hundred feet of either side of the slope, but that the coal from all other parts of the mine was removed. Having been shown a rock bearing the perfect impression of a fern leaf, Mr. Reese took the party to the place where such fossils were procured. In mining phraseology, these layers of rock, with are over and underlaid with coal, are known as "faults," and they sometimes cause considerable trouble in mining operations. Inquiring how the mine was drained, we found that a great hole, or well, forty feet in depth, had been dug below the level, and from this the water was carried to the surface by a steam pump. At the Springhill mines three seams of coal are being worked, and, in order to save time and expense, these are connected by tunnels driven through the solid rock, through which the coal