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THE DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN

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C. Blackett Robinson, Editor.

OTTAWA, WEDNESDAY, MAY 30, 1906.

Dr. Robertson Nicol says that his own impression is that any minister over 50, however efficient and eloquent, has no chance of being called to a vacant congregation.

The following extract from a letter to the London (Eng.) Presbyterian reveals the high place Dr. Monro Gibson occupies in the esteem of readers in Great Britain: "I strongly recommend you to read Dr. Monro Gibson's books—all of them. You will find them most helpful. You know something of him as a preacher, no doubt, and probably have heard him as our foremost platform orator (if there are any 'orators' now-a-days). But in his books you come in contact with the sound scholar, the trained theologian, the cultured man of letters, and the pleasant, safe guide. Saneness and common-sense radiate his pages. I have just read 'A Study of the Book of Revelation' (Stockwell). It is on quite a line of its own, and gives you a new idea of that wonderful book. 'The Devotional Use of Holy Scripture' is most suggestive and delightful reading. But get them all."

An outline of the work to be carried on at Northfield for the summer of 1906, which has been issued by those in charge, schedules four conferences and two summer Bibles schools. Extensive preparations have long been under way for these gatherings and strong efforts have been put forth to make them comprehend all the major branches of Christian enterprise. They are in thorough harmony with the standards which have governed the Northfield meetings in the past. The exact date of the conferences are: Student conference, June 22 to July 1, inclusive; Mount Hermon school twenty-fifth anniversary, June 30 to July 3, inclusive; Young women's conference, July 5 to 15, inclusive; summer school for Women's Missionary Societies, July 17 to 24, inclusive; summer school for Sunday school workers, July 21 to 29, inclusive; General Conference of Christian workers, August 3 to 19, inclusive; post conference addresses, August 20 to about October 1.

THE BIBLE VS. LESSON HELPS.

There is "food for thought" in the view expressed by Rev. J. F. Dastan, in the Dominion Presbyterian, respecting Sabbath school helps. No Sabbath school teacher of experience will undervalue properly prepared helps, designed to promote and assist Bible study, but when these helps tend to displace the Bible itself from the Sabbath schools, then it is time to raise a warning voice and discover just "where we are at." What Mr. Dastan suggests is pertinent. There is room for a rallying cry. "Back to the Bible." In many Sabbath schools all over the country, we have reason to believe, children in five cases out of six have simply discarded the Bible, taking their lesson helps to the school instead. The logical result must be in many cases, perhaps in a majority of cases, that the lesson helps, not the Bible, are what is studied, that is, when any real study takes place. Why should not every Sabbath school scholar be required to take his or her Bible to the school, leaving the helps at home, for, the original and main purpose of the helps was to promote Bible study at home, not to be a text book. The Bible is the great text book, and when helps are substituted for it, it is inevitable that the teaching imparted must become formal and mechanical, lacking the spiritual inspiration, which should be expected from study at first hand of the Bible itself.

A Sabbath school teacher of thirty years experience informs us that he has long since given up the plan of taking lesson helps to his class. He has come to look upon these helps as an aid to study of the lesson at home, but when he comes before his class on the Sabbath the Bible is the text book, and results have justified the method he has adopted. The method would be more effective, he is satisfied, if the scholars could refer direct to the Bible, instead of to the helps, during the short time given to teaching the Scripture lesson.

Our correspondent has done the right thing in bringing this important matter to the attention of those interested in Sabbath School work, and it is hoped the Assembly and its Sabbath School committee will give the matter some serious looking into. It is not necessary at present to discuss the practicability, or otherwise, of the plan he has suggested, or the relevancy of his answer to the objections that have been made to his suggestions. The points to be noted meantime are: (1) the importance of giving the Bible the first place as a text-book in Sabbath schools; and (2) relegating the lesson helps to their proper place in the home as aids to the study of the Sabbath School lessons. Of course it would solve the difficulty, from our correspondent's point of view, if the committee would cease to print the lesson verses in detail, thus compelling direct reference to the Bible.

The committee having in charge the reception and entertainment of the commissioners to the General Assembly at London expect 375 to be present. The visitors will see the "Forest" City at its best.

THE JUNE MEETINGS.

The church parliaments will presently be in full swing throughout Canada. These occasions are good for the men who meet; for the cause they represent; for the localities where they assemble. Good for the men who meet, that they may be sharpened by the individualities of other minds, and broadened by being compelled to acknowledge there are points of view other than their own worthy of attention. Good, also, for the causes they represent. Bureaucratic routine administration needs to be brought under review, to the end that rulers, whether permanent or temporary, may know they are the servants, not masters, of the denomination. Good, likewise, for the localities visited. They have the opportunity of meeting or hearing and seeing the best men of the church; while those who are hosts have not unskilfully made valuable and enduring friendships.

There will be much tabulation of statistics and figuring on percentages of numerical increase and decrease. It will be well if there be also an earnest effort to look beyond mere prosperity in temporalities, and to make estimate of the spiritual harvest of the year.

THE OLD TIME REVIVAL.

"L." in the Herald and Presbyterian, reminds us that in the "new-time revivals" the methods of former years are used, with the same happy results:

It has been a question with not a few earnest Christians whether we have not passed the age of "the old time revival." Of course, as a matter of fact, the old-time revival cannot be the new-time revival, and vice versa. Every generation has its own revival, or lacks a revival. But the question has reference to the motives presented to the ungodly, and the truths to be presented for the production of conviction and the assurance of faith. It is admitted that, in many instances, there is a wide departure from the use of the truths and motives formerly presented, and consequently the result must be different. It is notably true of Dr. R. A. Torrey that, in his evangelistic tours, he is using the old-time truths and the old-time methods, and it seems to be equally true that he is seeing the "old time revival." This was true in Australia, it was true in Wales, it was true throughout England, and it is true in his work in Canada and in the United States.

As a slight token of appreciation of the work of the members of the university commission, the university senate has decided to confer the honorary degree of LL.D. on Canon Cody, A. H. Colquhoun, Rev. Bruce Macdonald and J. W. Flavell. Degrees will also probably be conferred on President London of the university, Very Rev. Father Cushing, C.S.B., president of St. Michael's College, and Rev. Dr. MacLaren, principal of Knox College.

Love is the "open sesame" to every one's heart. All doors open at its approach, all treasures are laid at its feet.