

Ministers and Churches.

Our Toronto Letter.

Here we are already past the middle of the first month of the second year of the twentieth century, whose coming in created such a stir. Man can dam back great rivers like the Nile, can even curb and dyke back the ocean, but time defiantly and resistlessly rolls on its mighty flood to the abyss of eternity, and none can stay it. This thought must both impress and sober every thoughtful mind. But we must call a halt to moralizing.

The subject of temperance, as a result of the referendum vote, has again come prominently to the front. On Thursday last, after a preliminary meeting to arrange the most successful method of attack, two hundred earnest men and women interviewed Premier Ross and the Ontario Government, to present and urge upon them their view of the present situation as to temperance, resulting from the vote of December 4th, and emphasize the necessity of giving speedy and satisfactory effect by legislation to the unmistakably expressed wishes of the people as given at the polls. What the deputation asked was that the government should, as speedily as possible, give effect to a resolution passed by an overwhelming vote at a meeting held here on Dec. 16th, composed of the Executive of the Dominion Alliance, the standing Committee on Temperance and Moral Reform of the Methodist General Conference, the Standing Committee on Church Life and Work of the General Assembly of our own Church, the standing Committee on Temperance of the Congregational Union, and a number of gentlemen selected by leading workers of the Baptist, Anglican, and other denominations. This body must be admitted to be fully representative of the temperance and religious sentiment of the country.

The resolution referred to, asks for "the abolition of the public bar, the treating system, and drinking in clubs, and the imposition of such other restrictions on the liquor traffic as shall most effectively curtail its operation and remedy its evils." Mr. F. S. Spence, Secretary of the Dominion Alliance, Rev. Dr. Carman, Rev. Dr. Dickson of Galt, and Rev. Principal Sheraton were the chief spokesmen of the deputation. The speaking and presentation of arguments was decidedly good and effective. The premier replied at more than usual length, and in an encouraging tone, but confessed his inability to say anything definite until he should see how far he could depend upon the support of members of the legislature both among his own followers, and of those who, politically, might differ from him on other subjects.

It is to be regretted that Hon. Mr. Harcourt, without waiting till the government's course had been decided on, has to an interviewer who asked his view as to what should be done in the situation, expressed an opinion which on the face of it would indicate so far as he is concerned, action falling far short of what most temperance workers would think might be justly expected and will insist upon. For this Mr. F. S. Spence takes him to task in one of our daily papers in a strong and vigorously worded letter, in which he points out that, in Mr. Harcourt's own constituency, the vote for abolishing the bars was 1875 to only 350 against. We trust that the legislation taken will be thorough-going, and that Mr. Ross will not fail in getting abundant support.

At the Massey Hall meeting of the Temperance League on Sunday the 11th inst, the speaker was Rev. Hervey Wood, Field Secretary of the National Temperance Society of New York. In his address, he mentioned seeing statistics when in Britain, showing that 64 per cent of the mortality among children there was due to the drink traffic. It was the enemy of the home, of society, and of the Kingdom of God.

A kindred and also vitally important subject for all that affects national well-being in the highest sense, is Sabbath Observance. The great encouragement given by members of the Dominion Government, to those who are labouring so strenuously to secure the Sabbath as a day of rest and worship for all classes, as reported in our daily papers in this city, is among the most hopeful signs of our time for the good of society and of the Dominion. An admirable little publication in connection with this subject

is "The Lord's Day Advocate." The last number is packed full of information on this subject, most of it highly encouraging, and all who wish to know both how Sabbath observance stands and how the cause is progressing should read it. There are two men, by the way, who are serving well the causes with which they are identified and through them, the country, Rev. J. G. Shearer, General Secretary of the Lord's Day Alliance, and Mr. F. S. Spence, Secretary of the Dominion Alliance.

On next Sunday will begin to be carried into effect, the scheme for a series of University sermons to be given fortnightly thereafter in connection with the University of Toronto. Of Presbyterian ministers whose names are given to take part in this course of sermons, are those of Rev. Dr. Herridge, Rev. Dr. Barclay and Rev. Charles W. Gordon. This is an interesting new departure in connection with Toronto University, and it may be taken as an indication of growing regard among students of all departments in divine things, and much good may be expected to result from such a course of sermons by some of Canada's best known preachers. Of a different kind, but still interesting, as illustrating the spirit of the University, is a course of six lectures to be given partly by professors, and partly by others, on a variety of popular subjects. "Some Canadian Ideals" is the subject of one to be given by Rev. C. W. Gordon. The proceeds derived from these lectures are to be devoted to the Convocation Hall fund.

At this writing the Annual Missionary Conference of the Victoria College Missionary Society is being held in the chapel of that institution. This society includes the professors, and most of the students, and its object is the systematic study of the problems of missions, and the inspiration of its members to greater zeal in that great work. The whole field of Methodist missions is passed under review, and interesting addresses are given by men perfectly familiar with the different fields.

Now is the season for annual congregational meetings. A large number of city churches have already held their meetings for the past year. It is very cheering to find that, in almost every case, the reports for the Year past are all of the most hopeful and encouraging character as regards every department of work. So also we presume and hope it will be found in other cities and towns, and in rural congregations as well. It is earnestly to be hoped that when the church year closes, the balance to all the schemes of the church may be found on the right side.

Death has again made fresh blanks among the older ministers of our church. After a very short illness, Rev. Dr. Proudfoot of London, well known some years ago as an active member in the courts of the church, as a strong, vigorous preacher, and until lately as lecturer in Knox College, in Pastoral Theology and Church Government, has passed away. On Saturday morning 10th inst, he was seized with apoplexy, and without regaining consciousness died on the following Wednesday morning. Still more sudden was the death of Rev. Geo. Cuthbertson, also long and well known in the church, in the western part of Ontario especially. On the same evening on which he died, he attended a social gathering of the choir and session of College street church, and made an address. While almost the whole of Rev. Dr. Proudfoot's ministerial life was spent in London, Rev. Mr. Cuthbertson held pastorates in Winterbourne, St. Thomas, and in Wyoming 25 years. For 25 years he was clerk of the presbytery of London, and on the formation of the presbytery of Sarnia, he became its clerk and continued to be until his retirement five years ago, since when he has resided in Toronto.

Eastern Ontario.

Rev. Geo. Weir, Avonmore, has been elected President of the local public library board.

The ministers of Smith's Falls, have organized a ministerial association.

Rev. Donald McKeerroll, of Sutton and Rev. Mr. Martin, of Cannington, exchanged pulpits last Sunday.

Rev. H. Taylor, of Lochwinnoch, has been presented by the ladies of Sand Point, through Mrs. Warren and Mrs. Wm. McLean, with a handsome pair of bear skin cutter robes as a token of good will and appreciation of his faithful service as pastor.

Rev. Dr. Herridge, Ottawa, is to preach at the anniversary services of St. Andrew's Presbyterian church, Perth, on Sunday, Jan. 25th.

Rev. D. N. Coburn was assisted by Rev. Mr. Hamilton, of Osabruck Centre, at the prayer meetings in the Presbyterian church, North Lunenburg, last week.

There was a general exchange of pulpits at Brockville on the 11th inst. Rev. Mr. Strachan preached in Wall St. Methodist church, and Rev. Mr. Laird in the Baptist church.

Rev. J. T. Tanner, B. A., will hold a weekly bible class in the historical old hall at the residence of the Misses McLennen, South Lancaster, each Thursday evening, for the study of the bible, beginning in Genesis.

Rev. Mr. Currie, of St. John's, Almonte, commenced a series of sermons on the book of Genesis last Sunday morning. In the evening he preached a sermon for young men.

At the annual meeting of St. Andrew's church, Williamstown, a very satisfactory report was presented. The managers were re-elected, caretakers salary was raised, and now an effort is being made to increase the pastor's stipend.

At the annual meeting of the St. Paul's church, Smith's Falls, the session report, as presented by the pastor showed the congregation to consist of 130 families and 50 other young people, making a total membership of 302. During the year there were 11 marriages, 14 baptisms and 14 funerals.

At the annual meeting of Cooke's church, Kingston, of which Rev. Alex. Laird is pastor, the managing board reported the church free from debt and a small surplus on hand. It is the intention to purchase a new organ this year.

The induction of Rev. W. McIntyre took place at St. Matthew's church, Woodlands, last week. Rev. Mr. McCallum, presided, Rev. Mr. Weir of Avonmore, was the preacher, Rev. Mr. Coburn, of Lunenburg, Rev. Mr. Harkness, of Cornwall, and the Rev. Arch McIntyre were also present.

Rev. Dr. Bayne and family, of Pembroke, intend to take a trip to the Rocky Mountains next summer finishing up with a visit to friends in Vancouver, Banff and Winnipeg. Few pastors are better entitled to a lengthened holiday than Dr. Bayne, who has a large congregation to look after, is in frequent demand for outside work, and never spares himself.

At the annual meeting of Knox congregation, Lancaster, most encouraging reports were presented. The session, numbering in their midst three over 80 years of age, remain intact, and all the old officers were re-elected. The church contributed the following amounts to the several schemes:—Home Mission, \$102.58; Foreign Missions, \$68.21; French Evangelization, \$31.17; Colleges, \$29.75; Stipend Augmentation, \$42.65; Widows and Orphans, \$17.95; Aged Ministers, \$18.18; Assembly, \$7.12; Dr. Leddingham, \$34.50. At the conclusion of the meeting the Ladies Aid served tea to all present and a pleasant hour was spent.

St. Andrew's congregation, Perth, is in a good position financially, having wiped off the balance of indebtedness on their new church building; and it is intended to enlarge the school room. At the annual meeting, after devotional exercises by the pastor, Rev. A. H. Scott, Mr. F. L. Michell was invited to preside when reports of a most cheering character were presented from the managers, treasurer, and the various organizations carrying on the congregation's work. The removal of Mr. Charles, the former S. S. Superintendent rendered necessary the choosing a successor, and Mr. John Crookery was duly elected to this responsible position. Mr. Scott for the session remarked that some work done in a church could not be put down in figures or statements. The spiritual work was emphasized. The missionary enterprises were referred to, and announcements were made concerning arrangements for the fifth anniversary dedication of their new edifice.

The reports presented to the annual meeting of St. Andrew's, Almonte, showed the flourishing condition of the congregation. The managers reported gross receipts of \$3,010, all expenses met, and the debt reduced by \$639. The amount now due on the organ, the only liability of the congregation, is a little less than \$250. The new managers are R. L. McDonald, J. W. Wylie, P. McCallum, T. J. Reid, M. R. McFarlane and W. H. Black. Mr. Black was elected treasurer. Messrs. D. G. Hamilton and W. P. Robertson were appointed auditors for 1904. Votes of thanks were tendered to the choir and to the