

# The Dominion Presbyterian

IS PUBLISHED

AT 232 ST. JAMES STREET, MONTREAL

TERMS

\$1.50 per Year, in Advance

The Mount Royal Publishing Co.,

C. BLACKETT ROBINSON, Manager

Saturday, October 14th, 1899.

The yoke of duty is always galling. A man who has no greater incentive than "I ought," will never want an excuse for abating effort. He will invariably be too tired to attend prayer meeting, and his neighbor's claim upon him will become insignificant in the light of personal comfort.

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The man who gives up the struggle because he knows the ultimate issue will be against him loses the reward that struggle was meant to bring to him. Victory is only one in a chain of events, and any one of those going before it may be equally valuable with the last one.

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It is a positive pleasure, to some people to be morbid. It pains them to be the bearer of good news; but if they can give an evil turn to a dream, or suggest an unfavorable symptom to a sick person, or arouse the fears of anxious ones, they are happy. We have heard of one of our creatures of whom this was characteristic, but then they were spirits, and did not bear a good reputation among mortals. Is demonic possession still existent, and are these examples? But then they are very often active Christian workers! Are they masquerading?

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"Our Church will stand a little blood-letting," said a shrewd elder the other day, "we are dying of inaction." That is true of a good many churches. The one in question was a large city congregation, but the disease is not confined to city churches. Often a small country charge is ready to fall to pieces with dry rot. There is need that we recognize the absolute necessity to put to use the talent entrusted to us. We need men who will lead us into action. We need this for our own sake, quite as much as for the sake of our neighbor.

## The General Presbyterian Council.

Will some one suggest a short name for that body that has repudiated the old name of "Pan-Presbyterian." To write out its present title takes up considerable space of a valuable lifetime, and when written out it suggests Pope's famous description of the Alexandrine line.

The recent Council has not commended itself to all men. The committee of arrangements did not take us sufficiently into confidence, and we made up our mind to get even. Then the programme gave us an excellent opportunity. It dealt with subjects that we had already heard discussed, and some of us had even discussed them ourselves. It had nothing new to say upon these topics, and the stale treatment of questions, whose age at least should have secured for them gentle handling, so aroused the wrath of one irascible member, an editor,

by the way, that he turned himself loose, and denounced the whole thing suggesting that it needed a rest. But they just went on with the discussion, and agreed to meet again in four years, with no promise of better things then.

Making due allowance for our own prejudice and pique, and for the newness of the thing to the irascible editor, these were good things said and done at Washington during the meeting of the Council. The reception in the White House, and the social event in the Corcoran Gallery were notable events. Already the wife of a delegate has had it announced that she was presented to the President of the United States. They know how to make the most of the social function in Washington, and that part of the programme, at least, was thoroughly enjoyed.

The sermon was conservative, and seemed to voice the sentiment of the Council. Now and then the placid surface seems to have been broken, as on the occasion when an English delegate gave a spirited description of the somewhat questionable methods adopted by the Romanizing element in the Church of England. It was not down on the programme, but this member seemed to think it ought to be. Then, too, a South African delegate wished the Council to adopt a resolution that would frown upon England and smile on Oom Paul, and when it would not do this, declined to have anything more to do with them. But these did not disturb the peaceful tenor of the discussion for long.

We note with satisfaction that Principal Caven has been chosen for the President of the Council for the next four years. He has always been recognized as one in the very forefront in the work of the Council. It is eminently fitting that the position lately given him should be more openly acknowledged.

## The Fifty-Sixth Opening.

The corridors of Knox College are again lively with the voices of the students. Many of them have come straight from the mission field, and they bear the marks of the summer's toil in their faces. Some are strong and fit; others are careworn and in no condition to enter upon a hard season of study. These are the men who take life in all its phases, seriously.

The opening day was threatening, and in part accounted for the half-filled hall. It is a new experience to deliver the opening lecture to empty benches, and the effect was decidedly depressing. There were altogether too few of the theological students there. We recognize the strong temptation there is to yield to the solicitations of certain friends in the mission field, probably backed by the Superintendent, to spend at least one more Sabbath among people who will have no regular supply for the next six months. We know that it is an even stronger temptation to hear the home folk plead for at least a few days before College begins. And yet every theological student should make it a point of honor to be on hand on opening day. He owes it to his College.

The opening lecture this year was by Principal Caven, but as he was unavoidably absent, Prof. Ballantyne read the lecture the Principal had prepared. Of course one missed the peculiar force that marks all Professor Caven's personal utterances, but the lecture lost less, perhaps, at the hands of the one chosen to read it, than it would in any other hands. It was no perfunctory performance.

The title—"The Influence of the Classroom upon the Spiritual Life of the Student," while not exactly a misnomer, did not designate the subject matter of the lecture so happily as Dr. Caven has trained us to expect. He dealt with the theological professor, and with his conception of the truth he was com-

missioned? and with the reflex influence of this conception on the life of the students under him, rather than with the life of the student per se. The position was taken that the theological professor is equally responsible for the spiritual development and for the intellectual training of the men in his classes. The immediate effect of the tone of classroom predilection should be an elevation of the spiritual life. The student should grow in grace as he grows in mental status and equipment, and the man in the professor's chair should be one of the most powerful agents to assist in that spiritual growth.

Professor MacLaren presided, and with him, among others on the platform, were that we have grown accustomed to see there score and ten mile-post. One other fact, that we have grown accustomed to see there, was missing, and on enquiry we learned that Dr. Gregg has been for some days confined to his room.

The Board held a meeting on the morning of Opening Day, at which we understand it was decided to appoint a strong committee to consider the names of men who may be thought eligible for the new chair, it is hoped, may be established in the near future. The Senate met on Thursday, but report the business as largely routine in its character. The promise for large classes is good, but it will not be till enrollment day, usually in the second week of college, that the full list can be obtained. One who intended to return will not be in his place. Mr. Bennett, whose tragic death in British Columbia, where he had occupied a mission field this summer, was recently reported, was a member of the Preparatory Classes. The other classes are reported as filling up slowly.

## The Pope and Education.

There has been recently in France other things beside the Dreyfus "affair," and among these other things is a widespread discussion on education. The French have had the uneasy feeling that they are being outdistanced in the race for commercial supremacy; and some of their leading men are inclined to think that the fault is in the nature of their educational ideals, and in their system of education. It is another form of the battle of the ancients versus the moderns, the classic versus science. The same thing goes on to some extent among ourselves. Mr. Grant Allan wrote an article some time ago, in which he maintained that the kind of education given at Oxford was useless, and quite recently we read an article in a leading English journal in which the position was taken that the strength and beauty of the education given at the older universities is that it is useless, that it does not aim at direct commercial results but tends to impart a rich refinement and build up a nobler manhood. On such a subject there will always be difference of opinion; but it is important that no one tendency should have supreme sway. The most intelligent representatives of physical science and of a "practical education" will admit the need of other disciplines, and the worth of the humanities.

The point with which we are concerned just now is that the Pope, in a recent encyclical to the French clergy, has given his contribution to the discussion of this complicated question. According to the Journal des Debats he could not have condemned more categorically the work accomplished in France during the last twenty years. The Pope does not hesitate to demand a return to the Latin speeches and verses which he has himself cultivated so carefully. He lays little stress on Greek, the language of the New Testament, but gives the first place to Latin, while he recognizes that it is impossible in these days to ignore altogether the elements of physical and natural science; and "He says nothing of living languages, doubtless because Latin is a living language for him and plays