

TWO JAPANESE STATESMEN.

The February number of the Chinese Recorder contains a most interesting article from the pen of the Rev. H. Loomis, agent of the Bible Society in Japan, in which he gives a sketch of the early life and services of two of the most enlightened and influential statesmen in Japan to-day, Count Inouye and Marquis Ito. But the most interesting fact in regard to these great statesmen is that as young men, in 1864, when it was still a crime for a Japanese to go abroad, they made their way to London, determined to obtain the learning of the Western world. Strangers and penniless, they were providentially brought in contact with Mr. Hugh Matheson, a noble Presbyterian merchant, under whose roof they found a home for two years, during which time they were privileged to see daily what the Christian religion does for our Western family life. Though neither of these men have ever become professing Christians, the influences of Mr. Matheson's Christian home have not been lost. Especially is this true of the Marquis Ito, who is serving for the third time as prime minister of the empire. It was through his assistance a few years ago a Bible was presented to the Emperor, and two years ago, when an effort was made to eliminate religious instruction from the schools, Marquis Ito opposed the measure, and through him, though it became a law, it is practically a dead letter.

THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE.

The closing address of the United Free College, Glasgow, was delivered by Principal Hutton, whose subject was "The Doctrines of Grace: their Place and Claim." He said the doctrines of grace were the catholic heritage and deposit incorporated with the leading theologies of Christendom. During the decadence of evangelical and Presbyterian life in Scotland under the domination of Erastianism and Moderatism, it was left to a small remnant to become the martyrs of their defence. The doctrines of grace were the pulpit warp and woof of their direct ancestors, the Seceders, and the Free Church; the men of 1843, held fast and proclaimed the same doctrines; and the same was true of many they left behind. What he now wished to plead for was increased attention to these great themes. They believed in man ruined by sin and redeemed by grace, and the doctrines of grace could be no second consideration either in preparatory studies, personal discipline, or pulpit and pastoral work. They had, happily, a condition of preponderating pulpit or studious efficiency, of aggressive evangelism, of increased personal interest in the truth, of awakened jealousy for the faith in Christ; but was there not on the other hand in the spirit of not a little they read a shrinking from the hardness of thought and pulpit life, or a falsetto on the key of fashion, or a cheap superficial boldness on the top of some wave? Was there not a shading away of the vital features of sin, an emptying of the great words of terror and purity, condemnation, justice and holiness of their divineness? Was there not a tendency to depreciate old thought, and to make oracles of the new, to flourish the newer phrase until it became a cant. And if they

were to be jealous of the doctrines of grace, ought they not also to be jealous of the Scriptures in which they were contained. He could not doubt that the evangelical higher critics believed their views to be in harmony with the doctrines of a true inspiration. It was said there was no theory of inspiration laid down in the Confession, and that they needed and ought to have none in coming to the study of Scripture. He was sceptical of the existence of such equipoise, neither did he think they could as Christians approach the Scripture without some latent theory. Inspiration, if they could say no more of it, is a Divine intervention in the provision of Holy Scripture, was a generic attribute not to be withheld or hesitatingly applied, but to be affirmed of Scripture as such. The vital question was—Does Scripture mislead? To this question he replied that they might say with confidence its great Author and Editor took care of that. If God had to do effectively with the choice and use of the human element of successive ages, it was idle to depreciate its service, as though it were a non-conductor of inspiration. The element, with its limitations and forms as used by God, had never been less than a light to the feet and a lamp to the path of man. How God is immanent in His works and in the chosen vessel of man and his history, how God has incarnated Himself in humanity, we cannot define. How He has entered into human language and breathed His Spirit into a special literature of grace, incorporating His wisdom with that of man, using him, yet respecting his nature, was not the least mystery of the manifestation of His ways. He had sought to emphasise the inspiration of the Scriptures as the fountain of the doctrines of grace. If the Scriptures were not of God, neither were the doctrines of grace, and if these had no foundation "we are yet in our sins."—Christian Leader.

CENTURY FUND NOTES.

Ministers and local treasurers will please remember that returns should be despatched to Rev. Dr. Campbell, Perth, Ont., on April 29th.

Though schedules have been mailed to every minister and treasurer so far as known, some may not have received them and some may have mislaid them. The minimum of information needed is as follows: (1) Amount subscribed by congregation, including minister, and by S. S., Y. P. S., &c., for Common Fund (2) Amount subscribed for debt fund (3) Amount collected for Common Fund (4) Amount collected for debt fund. Ministers are specially entreated to see to it that the filled-in schedule, or at least this minimum information, is sent on 29th.

Sabbath Schools that have used banks should have them returned by 28th, so that the gross amount contained in them may be reported through the minister, or local treasurer, on the 29th.

It is impossible to over estimate the importance of having complete returns (*Word even from those congregations that could do nothing*) before the Executive meets, as it is intended that it shall meet, on May 3rd. Let there be faithfulness then, in attending to this little but momentous duty.

R. CAMPBELL.

THE LORD'S DAY ALLIANCE.

The Rev. J. G. Shearer, the indefatigable Secretary of the Lord's Day Alliance, has again visited Ottawa. On Sabbath he preached in Bank Street church in the morning and in the McLeod Street Methodist church in the evening, where he also addressed a mass meeting in the afternoon, giving a synopsis of the progress of the work since his last visit to Ottawa and said that the outlook on the whole, was very favorable. In particular, he noted the fact that many prominent laymen were in sympathy with the objects of the society.

At the meeting of the Dominion Lord's Day Alliance, held at the Young Men's Christian association Monday afternoon, Rev. J. G. Shearer, of Hamilton, field secretary, reported that he had travelled through Manitoba, the Northwest Territories, British Columbia and Quebec recently in the interests of the alliance. The receipts amounted to \$1,100. This sum was larger than the expenditure. He said that in the west public sentiment regarding the work of the alliance was becoming stronger. A movement had lately been made by the alliance looking to cooperate with organized labor for the preservation of the day of rest. Branches of the Alliance had been organized in all the provinces except Prince Edward Island.

Mr. W. M. Blakemore, of Montreal, representative of the Quebec Lord's Day Alliance, gave an account of the closing of the French theatres in his city on Sunday. Archbishop Bruchesi had issued a manifesto, approving of the platform of the alliance. This manifesto had great influence over the Catholics of Montreal.

Hon. Keziah Wood, of Moncton, N. B., representative of the New Brunswick alliance, and Hon. Wm. Ross, of Halifax, representative of the Nova Scotia alliance, presented reports of the work in their provinces.

The Alliance passed a resolution of satisfaction and appreciation of the work of Rev. Mr. Shearer and decided to contribute \$500 annually towards his salary, besides paying expenses. The Ontario Alliance engaged Rev. Mr. Shearer and has been paying all his salary up to the present.

It was decided that a Dominion convention of representatives from all the provinces should be held at Hamilton on Tuesday, June 25. The special object of the convention will be to consider the question of deciding under what auspices the literature of the alliance should be issued. Other important matters pertaining to the work of the alliance will be discussed.

The following officers were re-elected: President, Senator Allan; vice-president, Rev. D. M. Ramsay; recording secretary, Rev. John Scanlon; field secretary, Rev. J. G. Shearer; treasurer, Mr. George Hay. The executive committee will be the same as last year, except that the name of Mr. D. J. O'Donoghue will be substituted for that of the late Rev. J. C. Campbell.

Among those present were, Revs. Dr. Moore, Dr. Armstrong, D. M. Ramsay and Mr. George Hay.