

THE SPOILS SYSTEM.

The topic of the hour in Ontario is the principles involved in the recent dismissal by the Ontario government of three Toronto license inspectors against whom nothing of a derogatory character has been alleged. The theory in the United States is that "to the victors belong the spoils," accordingly, when the opposing party comes in, all office holders are turned out, and friends of the incoming party appointed in their stead. The result has been demoralizing and corrupting in the extreme, taking away all incentive from officials except that of "making hay while the sun shines." It is to be hoped public opinion in Canada will energetically stamp out all attempts to introduce this baneful system into our Dominion or Provincial politics.

NOTES ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES.

The work of organizing societies is going forward in a satisfactory way. Societies have recently been formed in Claude, Ont., Ophir, Ont., Prescott, Hanover, Ont., Cooke's Church, Kingston, Forest, Ont., St. Andrew's, New Westminster, B.C., Hyde Park, Ont., and Minedosa, Man.

The Presbytery of Westminster will devote one hour at its next meeting to a consideration of the work of societies. Rev. J. S. Henderson, of New Westminster, convener of the committee in the Synod of British Columbia and Alberta, has written to all the presbytery conveners urging them to try to secure at least an hour in which to discuss the work of the young people in their respective presbyteries. Could an hour be set apart to consider a more worthy subject?

The Orangeville Presbyterian Union had a most successful convention recently in Caledon. To Rev. H. Matheson, the energetic convener, is due great credit for the pains he took in making preparation for it. Usually conventions are successful in proportion to the time and thought spent upon preparing for them.

The Rev. J. G. Stephens, of Broadview, Sask., convened the Presbytery of Qu'Appelle, and Rev. Messrs. J. Little, Ellisboro, J. Leishman, Fleming, and R. McMillan, Earlwood, have been appointed to visit congregations within the bounds of that Presbytery with a view to forming societies. This is a movement in the right direction, and good results should flow from it.

A copy of the Manual for 1906 has recently been sent to every pastor whose name and address appear in the assembly blue-book. If any minister failed to receive a copy he may have one on application. It is believed that the Manual for 1906 will be more helpful than any of its predecessors.

The article in the Manual dealing with organizing and maintaining a society, written by Rev. W. R. McIntosh, of Elora, will be printed in leaflet form for general circulation. Copies will be sent free to those who apply for them.

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A farmer in northern India lost his crops through drought; he was starving, and, moreover, he was attacked by leprosy. He lost heart, left his little bit of land, and became a beggar. Wandering into Allahabad he was taken to a leper asylum. There he heard for the first time of Jesus Christ, began to read the Bible, and found in it supply for a long list of needs. The British and Foreign Bible Society has now received from this broken down, leprosy-ridden farmer a thank offering of four rupees (\$1.20), which the man saved for the purpose, steadfastly followed through months, by eating a part only of each day's ration.

Wisdom is sometimes found at the end of a wasted career. The prodigal found it among the swine in a far country.

DEATH OF DR. MACKAY.

In the passing away of Rev. W. A. Mackay, M.A., D.D., the church loses a faithful and able minister; the country an enlightened and public-spirited citizen. His illness had been of long continuance, and the end was not unexpected.

Rev. Dr. MacKay was born in West Zorra in the year 1842, and thus might have expected to enjoy many more years of health, being only 63 years of age. He worshipped as a boy in Chalmers' Church where he has figured so long and so prominently. He received his primary education at the public school of his district, and at the Woodstock Grammar School, under the late Principal Strachan, and in 1867, when he was 24 years of age, he graduated with first class honors from the University of Toronto, after which he took a course of three years study at Knox College.

On December 30, 1870, Dr. MacKay was ordained as a minister of the Presbyterian Church, and in the same year he was inducted into the charge of Cheltenham and Mt. Pleasant, in the Toronto Presbytery. About three years afterwards he was called to Baltimore and Cold Springs in the Coburg district.

On May 7th, 1870, he was inducted into the pastorate of Chalmers Church, Woodstock, succeeding Rev. Dr. MacTavish, whose death recently took place at Inverness, Scotland. That Rev. Dr. MacKay's work in Woodstock met with marked and unusual success is shown by the large increase in the number of members of his church. When he came here the church had only 192 members, now the roll contains the names of considerably over 400.

Between the pastor and his people the most friendly and intimate relations always existed. He took a deep and kindly interest in the affairs of each and every member of his church and congregation, and they in their turn respected and loved him. To the last his thoughts dwelt with his beloved people, as is shown in the following words from his letter of resignation:

"I can only in this feeble way adjure you my beloved friends, young and aged, not to forget the words which I spoke unto you while I was with you. Ministers may come and go, but the ever blessed Savior abideth the same, unchanged and unchangeable. Hear ye Him." The subject of Dr. MacKay's last sermon to his people was "John Knox."

Despite the labor which Dr. MacKay put into his work in Woodstock, he found time to engage in other work, which spread his fame from one end of the province to the other, and far beyond. For many years he was one of the leaders of the work in the interests of temperance and prohibition, and for twenty years was president of the Oxford Prohibition Association, resigning two years ago owing to failing health. For several years he was also President of the Dominion Alliance and his efficient and energetic work on behalf of the worthy cause, both by writing and lecturing resulted in his name as an advocate of great moral reform becoming almost a household word in the province.

As an author Dr. MacKay attained considerable success. His two books, "Pioneer Life in Zorra," telling of the life and struggles of Zorra's sturdy pioneers, and "Zorra Boys at Home and Abroad," which sketches the lives of a few of Zorra boys who have achieved notable success in life, are to be found in very many Oxford homes, and are indeed to be found wherever Oxford's Zorras are known.

The late Dr. MacKay was a prolific writer, several of his theological works have attained much prominence. In 1893 the senate of the Presbyterian church at Montreal conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity "in recognition," as was said at the time. "Of the scholar-

ship evinced in works and services to the church."

A family of three sons and four daughters survive. The daughters are Mrs. (Rev. Dr.) MacTavish of Kingston; Mrs. H. G. Doyle and Mrs. D. Charles Couits of Woodstock, and Miss Emma MacKay at home. Mrs. W. G. Murray, another daughter, was killed in a street car accident at Herkimer, N.Y., about a year ago. The sons are: John F. MacKay, business manager of the Toronto Globe; Robert G. MacKay, of the Chatham News and William D. MacKay of the Woodstock branch of the Traders Bank. Four children died in infancy.

LITERARY NOTES.

"The Gist of the Lesson for 1906," by R. A. Torrey; Fleming H. Revell Company. This vest pocket booklet gives in concise form a useful commentary on the International Bible Lessons for the coming year. We can heartily recommend it as evangelical and practical. May be had from the Upper Canada Tract Society, Toronto. Price, 25 cts.

"The Christian Endeavor Manual," by J. R. Miller and Amos Wells; the Westminster Press, Philadelphia—Besides "Topic Thoughts" for all the meetings of the year, there are in this Manual a great many practical suggestions for Christian Endeavor work. All these helps will be found most useful as well as timely.

"The Westminster Teacher Training Course," edited by J. R. Millar, D. D. Philadelphia; the Westminster Press—Of this little work the editor says: "The course has been prepared with much care. It is believed it will guide teachers in obtaining a wider knowledge of the Bible, of the nature of their work, and of the best methods of teaching." Representatives of the various Presbyterian churches in the United States aided in the preparation of this volume, and it is not too much to say that any one making a study of the results furnished by their labors can not help being greatly benefited.

"The Presbyterian Y. P. S. Manual" for 1906 is a valuable publication which should be in the hands of every member of our Y. P. societies. Dr. MacTavish, in the preparation of this "help," has done his work with ability and discretion, and this will at once be seen on glancing over the pages. The table of contents indicates the scope of the Manual: Young People's Societies and Recommendations of General Assembly, Presbyterian Unions, Organizing and Maintaining a Society, Model Constitution of Presbyterian Guild, Y. P. S. C. E. Topics and Daily Readings, Literary Studies, and half a dozen other important subjects, all dealt with in a brief, but satisfactory manner. The Manual may be ordered from Rev. Dr. MacTavish, Kingston, Ont. Price, 5 cents each; 40 cents per dozen.

In that charming new book, "St. Cuthbert," says The Southwestern Presbyterian, is this most striking paragraph: "The wonder of the reverent and the sneer of the scornful have alike been prompted by the preaching of a candidate. Something strange and incongruous seems to pertain to the performance of a man whose acknowledged purpose is the dual one of winning alike the souls and the smiles of men. He seeks, as all preachers are supposed to do, the uplift of his hearers' souls, while his very appearance is a pledge of his desire to so commend himself as to be their favorite and their choice. Much hath been written, and more hath been said, of the humiliation to which he must submit who occupies a vacant pulpit as the applicant for a vacant kirk."