

# The Presbyterian Review.

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Toronto, September 26, 1895.

## Another Step in Advance.

THE readers of the REVIEW will be pleased to notice in this issue a column of Montreal notes, taking somewhat the form of an Eastern letter.

We are pleased to be able to announce that hereafter from week to week, these will appear in the columns of the REVIEW, a special letter bearing on the Churches' life and work in Montreal and the East, this department will be conducted by the Rev. Professor Scrimger, D.D., of Montreal College, to whom may be sent any matters of general interest occurring in those districts.

Professor Scrimger is too well known by the Church in Canada to require any introduction on our part and we feel sure that the announcement will be received by our readers with deep satisfaction and that the establishment of this department will prove of inestimable value to the Church generally.

## The Revised Version.

The Provincial Synod of the Anglican Church during its recent meeting in Montreal, discussed a motion to allow the use of the Revised Version of the Bible in public worship when it might be thought desirable; and almost unanimously refused to grant any such liberty. Doubtless they felt there were good reasons for this refusal at the present time at least. Fortunately the Presbyterian Church is under no restriction in this matter and any minister who chooses to do so may adopt it as often as he pleases in the public church services, as well as in private, without waiting for the leave of any Synod or Assembly. It may not be generally known that the only sanction ever given for the use of the Authorized Version in Scotland was that of Charles I. in connection with Laud's unfortunate attempt to force the Book of Common Prayer on an unwilling people. The Westminster Directory of Public Worship, by which our Church is supposed to be guided, does not specify any particular version but simply provides that the Scriptures shall be "read in the vulgar tongue out of the best allowed translation." As a matter of fact many ministers have made occasional use of the Revised Version and have been deterred from doing so more frequently only by their unwillingness to disturb the more aged among their people who can hardly be expected to take very kindly to it. There seems, however, no good reason why those who prefer it should not introduce it in some of the services, such as the prayer-meeting or the Sunday evening service, without further delay. At these services the aged whose ears are most likely to be offended by the unfamiliar sound, are least numerous and the younger generation will the sooner become accustomed to a version which, with all deductions made is undoubtedly a great advance on the old. There is no need to wait for ecclesiastical approval. That may never be given, and if the new version can-

not make its way among us without that it will never do so with it. It is well to bear in mind that the copyright for the New Testament, at least, will soon expire and the circulation of it is likely to be stimulated by a considerable reduction in price. The Church generally ought as early as possible to enjoy the full benefit of the very best version that scholarship has been able to provide.

## Australian Echoes.

It is interesting and helpful to hear of the work in which sister Churches are engaged, and of the special efforts put forth in distant corners of the great vineyard. This is especially the case with respect to the Presbyterian Church in the Australias, where many serious social difficulties confront the Church. The great Australian evil is gambling, and against it the Church has set a resolute face. The passion for gambling has reached every class of people, so that the farmer, the squatter, the miner, as well as the town and city "sports" indulge it to an alarming extent. Moral suasion has thus far been of no avail, but so glaring has the bad practice become that even supporters of a modified form of gambling have been compelled to acknowledge the gravity of the evil, and a curious remedy has been proposed. It is that gambling should be regulated by legislation and be formally controlled. The details of the *modus operandi* by which the State could control the gambling habits of a people have not come to hand, but it is very doubtful whether a measure could be devised which could reach and regulate betting between man and man, or which could prevent the incurring of debt, the loss of money, by betting on horse races. *But there is a more serious objection to such legislation, and the Anti-Gamblers of Australia are quick to perceive it; it is the fact that legislation would mean practically the licensing of the evil and the protection of it by law.* The arguments for and against the licensing of the liquor traffic tell here and have been made use of on both sides.

This great question and the condition of the poor in Australia have opened the eyes of the Protestant Churches to the need of co-operation among themselves and of having a recognized basis from which to attack the open evils from which the community, as a whole, suffer. Consequently there have been thoughts awakened of a union of the Churches and a public congress has been held, the discussions at which proved to be of exceedingly great interest and value. It was recommended that united services be held in townhalls on Sabbath afternoons, and in country towns, that churches should unite for evening services; the minister relieved from duty by the arrangement to devote that evening to mission work or other pastoral or presbyterial duty. One result has been a concerted crusade against gambling and a movement for the suppression of the sweating system. There are many expressions to be met with in our Australian intelligence, of a most sanguine hope that the non-Episcopal Churches may find feasible means for a federation under which the work of the several churches would be more efficiently and easily conducted.

The echo of these throbbings has reached Scotland and has drawn from the venerable leader of the Union idea a shrewd opinion of the prospects of Presbyterian Union in Scotland. He asks the question "Are we making any progress in Scotland toward the Union of Presbyterian Churches?" And this is the answer he sends to his Antipodean brethren:—"In one respect we are; the Free Church and United Presbyterian Church