

PRINCIPAL CAVAN.

Interesting Resume of His Fifty Years' Ministry in Canada, Including Those as Head of Knox College.

Among the fathers of Presbyterian confederation, that part of 1874 which gave such strength and vitality to Presbyterianism in Canada, enabling it to go forward courageously to its great work in the west, Principal Cavan stands supreme. He was Moderator of the General Assembly in that historic year. He has seen most of the leaders of the church of those days fall in the path of duty. Within the past few months almost the death of such men as Grant and Robertson has emphasized the fact that a new generation must take up the work of the fathers.

It was with feelings of special thankfulness for the sparing of Principal Cavan as an active and dominant force in the history of the church, that his friends celebrated the 50th anniversary of the founding of Knox College in 1853. In his honor at Knox College, a banquet was given, and a number of his friends were present. In his health he said in part:

Of course, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, you do not expect me to review my life to-night or to attempt anything like an autobiography. That would be, I am afraid, a very tedious proceeding for this evening and not very profitable or instructive. The Chairman has stated that I began my ministry in the little town of St. Mary's. I did so exactly 50 years ago, and was received by a kind people in a very new part of the country and at a time when things were not advanced as they are at the present day. St. Mary's was lodged in the wilderness. The roads which I had to travel around about it were very often blazed roads. I had two congregations, six miles apart, and the greater part of the way was through the woods. The young generation here do not know what a blazed road is, and I need not take the time to explain it. The people were very kind to me, and it is most interesting to me to think now of the appearance which my congregation presented when they were dismissed on the Lord's Day. In five minutes the woods had swallowed them up, and I saw nothing more of them until the next Sabbath.

After serving about fourteen years, I was asked to come to Toronto on the resignation of a very distinguished man whose work I was afraid to touch that of the late Professor Young. He had taught for ten years in Knox College, teaching both the Testament and the whole scope of New Testament work and philosophy, and, I think, some other departments as well. He resigned in 1865 in order to take charge of the high schools. He was a high school inspector, and, as some of the gentlemen here present know, did very excellent work, which had been of permanent value to the Province, in that capacity.

I came here as quite a young person. I am not going to tell you my age exactly, but I was quite young at the time, and I did what I could. I know, in the most imperfect way. That was in 1866, and I have been working away for good or evil during these 36 years.

Knox College has existed since 1844. It has been now 58 years in operation. When I came to it the professors were Dr. Willis, Dr. Burns, and, I may say, Professor Young, for in three or four years he came back. These eminent persons have all passed away. Dr. Willis was a fine, acute, theological scholar, a fine Greek scholar, well read in patristic literature, and in the post-Reformation literature. Dr. Burns was a man of marvelous energy, who never knew he was getting old; indeed he never did get old. Professor Young had qualities as a teacher which, I think, my distinguished friend who has honored us with his presence to-night, Professor Watson, would endorse what I have said about Prof. Young. He was a man of marvelous intensity and enthusiasm in all his work. After teaching for a second term of three or four years, of course he went to the university, where he continued to teach philosophy until his lamented death. These are all gone, and three other professors with whom I have worked are gone. My young friend, first my student, afterwards my colleague, Mr. Thompson, an admirable man, after a few years of the teaching with poor health, passed away. Dr. Ingles, after one year, left us, taking a pastorate in Brooklyn, and long ago passed into the better land, and last year—this is a recent sorrow—we lost our young friend, Professor Douglas. You understand, therefore, that while I look back with pleasure, with a measure of satisfaction, although of humility, to my connection with the college, it is tinged with sadness when I think of these admirable men, two of them fathers who received me as their son and treated me with great kindness, the others beloved colleagues also.

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Knox College had graduated 146 candidates to the ministry before I had anything to do with it. Since that time, that is since 1866, it has graduated 583. The whole number of its graduates is 729. If there is anything that I am proud of, and you will pardon the use of the word, it is that I have great pleasure wherever I go all over the Province in meeting ministers—I call them young ministers, although some of them are not young now—who have been with me in the classes of Knox College. Not only so, but the college has had the satisfaction of being on the best of terms with all the other theological schools in the church, and, further than that, our intercourse with the theological schools of other denominations in Toronto has been most kindly. It gives me great pleasure to see around me to-night eminent gentlemen representing these colleges, men whom I greatly esteem, my friend Principal Sheraton and the Chancellor of Victoria, and my friend Chancellor Wallace. It has been a great pleasure in connection with university work and other educational work from time to time to meet these honored brethren.

UNDERGROUND AUSTRALIA.

Most Enchanting Scenes on a Candle Being Lighted.

Among the numerous minor cave systems found in New South Wales, none are more remarkable than those situated at Oakley Creek, in the heart of a country rich in mineral wealth, gold, silver, and tin being frequently found, also diamonds and other gemstones. The entrance to the caves is situated in a sequestered nook, and might be unsuspectingly passed by anyone not aware of its real character. How it was discovered has never been explained, but the first explorer must have been possessed of considerable nerve, for the opening is very small, only large enough to enable a moderately-sized person to crawl through, and when the visitor has safely accomplished this feat he finds himself encircled by Cimmerian darkness. But directly a candle is lighted a wonderful transformation takes place, and a most enchanting scene, formed by multitudes of dainty, fantastically-shaped stalactites and stalagmites becomes revealed to view. The floor is one vast deposit of carbonate of lime, and from the roofs and sides of the calcareous cavity the same mineral hangs pendant in strange conglomerate shapes, that are sometimes artistic and sometimes grotesque. Right at the entrance is a solid white block, which has been formed from the constant drip of the limestone, and which, from its supernatural appearance and resemblance to the human form, has been christened "The Ghost." In this large cave there are four or five chambers, all similarly formed. In the main eastern one a dwarf fissure communicates with the upper crust, through which a tiny stream of light issues, which only tends to make the intense darkness a greater source of apprehension. The large cave leads to another, known as "The Blow Hole," the mysteries of which have never been penetrated. The entrance is by a crevice equal in size to the outer opening to the caves, but on throwing a stone in some seconds elapse before it is heard to strike the bottom, a sufficient admonition to even the most venturesome of the abyss within, to explore which would be literally walking into the jaws of death. Those most familiar with the caves express an opinion that if the blow hole were properly explored another series of subterranean passages or chambers would be discovered.

A Truism.

When the undertaker is sent for, he generally comes to grief.—Philadelphia Record.



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