

Dominion Presbyterian

\$1.50 Per Annum.

OTTAWA

Single Copies 5 Cents

NOTE AND COMMENT

The proposed migration of Doukhobors from Saskatchewan to British Columbia, may not materialize. Conditions in the settlements have improved and the colonists are more disposed to remain.

The old Methodist Mission House at Port Simpson, B.C., was destroyed by fire at an early hour on Monday of last week, and with it was destroyed what was recognized as the finest collection of old Indian curios to be seen anywhere on the coast, one room of the mission being given up for that purpose only.

On Thursday of last week Turkey became a full-fledged constitutional monarchy when the new Turkish Parliament held its first session. This Parliament was provided for in the constitution granted by Sultan Abdul Hamid last July, and is the first body of its kind to meet in the empire for over thirty years. The life of its only predecessor was brief, but great hopes are entertained for the success of the new-comer.

The Russian Douma has approved a national loan of \$225,000,000. The fact that the government asked the approval of the Douma is a long step in advance, as it is an entering wedge to the control of the finances. The reason for the concession is that foreign bankers seemed unwilling to lend any further large sums of money without the approval of the Douma. In case of a revolution a loan thus approved is more likely to be paid.

Plans for the union of the Presbyterian church in the United States, with more than 1,800,000 members, the Reformed church in the United States, with a membership of 290,000, and the Welsh Presbyterians, numbering more than 170,000, have been perfected by a committee composed of leaders of the three denominations, appointed while the Federal Council of Christian Churches was in session in Philadelphia. The committee found that all could unite without any sacrificing its creed or form of government, and the members will recommend to the highest body in their respective churches an absolute union. It is believed the merger can be effected in less than a year.

A valuable report on the alcohol monopoly in Russia has lately appeared in Germany (Dr. David Lewin, Das Branntweinmonopol in Russland, Tubingen, 1906). This monopoly of the State has to do only with the sale, and was established in 1892 by Count Witte. While in deference to the temperance sentiment of the time, it was announced as a temperance measure. The report of Dr. Lewin shows quite conclusively that it is purely a financial measure. In the territory covered by the government monopoly the number of places of sale increased three times as fast as the population from 1897 to 1904, and the consumption per capita increased from 15 per cent. from 1899 to 1906. Further, owing to the fact that no liquor is sold to be drunk on the premises, drunkenness in the streets, and especially in the family, has largely increased. All local efforts for prohibition are repressed by the central authorities on account of the needs of the treasury.

Mr. Asquith, Premier of Great Britain, announces that, while the attempt of the House of Lords to prevent important legislation, and the reform of the Upper House, will be regarded as an issue, Parliament will not be dissolved because an irresponsible chamber has vetoed certain bills. The next session will be an important one, and the intimation is that an appeal will be made to the country in a year.

The Herald and Presbytery says:—Of course! There will be intoxicants sold and drunk in dry towns and counties, as there will be gambling and burglary and arson and murder, but it is ridiculous to claim that the law which prohibits the saloon can not as well be enforced as any other statute, and the community which has a public sentiment strong enough to vote out the saloons can keep them closed and can reduce the sale of intoxicants to the minimum.

Ontario citizens are apt to be somewhat self-complacent in their views of Ontario morality, and there are few but what look upon Ontario as "the banner province." To all such the remarks of Judge Ermatinger to the Grand Jury at Sandwich will come with an unpleasant shock. The judge took occasion to remark upon the prevalence of profanity in public places and elsewhere in the province, and asked the Grand Jury to consider the matter. The jury accordingly made its presentment; and after bearing testimony to the correctness of the judge's view, both as regarding Windsor and other portions of Ontario, they recommended that the law be more strictly enforced. Why should it not? asks the Christian Guardian. What possible benefit can come to a community from allowing their streets and public places to be cursed with a stream of vulgar and profane language? This is not a matter of religion alone, but of common decency, and there is no community in our Dominion where the habit prevails, which would not be better of a strict enforcement of the law against such offences.

The following is a complete list of the Presbyterian members of the Union Committee in attendance at the recent meeting in Toronto: Rev. Principal Patrick, D.D., Winnipeg; Rev. Prof. Bryce, Winnipeg; Rev. F. B. Duval, D.D., Winnipeg; Rev. J. L. Murray, D.D., Kincairdine; Rev. J. R. Battersby, D.D., Chatham, Ont.; Rev. J. Somerville, D.D., Toronto; Rev. J. H. Ratcliffe, D.D., Toronto; Rev. Prof. Kilpatrick, D.D., Toronto; Rev. R. P. MacKay, D.D., Toronto; Rev. E. D. McLaren, D.D., Toronto; Rev. D. Strachan, B.A., Brockville; Rev. John Hay, Renfrew; Rev. W. D. Armstrong, D.D., Ottawa; Rev. D. M. Ramsay, D.D., Ottawa; Rev. W. T. Herridge, D.D., Ottawa; Rev. Principal Springer, D.D., Montreal; Rev. A. T. Love, Quebec; Rev. President Forrest, Halifax, N.S.; Rev. Thomas Sedgwick, D.D., Tatamagouche, N.S.; Rev. Edwin Smith, D.D., Mid Musquodoboit, N.S.; Rev. E. D. Millar, D.D., Halifax, N.S.; Rev. D. MacOdrum, Moncton, N.B.; Rev. James Ross, St. John West, N.B.; Rev. T. C. Jack, D.D., North Sydney, N.B.; Rev. A. Falconer, D.D., Pictou, N.S.; Prof. Dyde, Kingston; Rev. R. D. Fraser, D.D., Toronto; Mr. W. Paul, Montreal; Dr. R. Murray, Halifax; Judge Forbes, St. John, N.B.

The Bishop of London, who has gained a wide fame for activity in practical work, is now busy in the effort to engage the co-operation of the young men of his diocese—including those of the public schools and universities—in church work. He proposes to form a "bishop's band" of such young men, who can be called upon to do whatever work may be requested of them. He says he has been struck with the predominance of old men and the lack of young on the boards and committees. This he thinks should not be. The young should be qualified and ready to take the places of the old when they go and carry on their work without a halt.

In a few days we will all be writing 1909 in place of 1908. And just before this change of date comes Christmas. Perchance we are not wont to think of the connection between the two events. But the wonderful fact is that the birth of Christ gives the world its chronology. What an unconscious witness to the power of Christ, what an undesigned witness to the truth of Christ, is this dating all events from His birth! As a simple signature; all civilized time is baptized into the name of Christ. And every annual change of date is a fresh signature and a new baptism. And in making the change we repeat and perpetuate the fact,—the marvelous fact that the birth of Jesus gives the time-measure for all civilized races. Like the stamp on Caesar's coin it witnesses to whom the ages belong. This thought duly recognized and pondered may give larger meaning both to Christmas and New Year's.

The Rev. R. E. McAlpin, a missionary in Japan, gives the following as a Japanese idea of the reasons for missions. It will probably be new to many of our readers:

"Last year a new primary government school was opened just beside us, and presently I succeeded in opening a class with the teachers for Bible and English study, which continued till some wearied of it this spring. No harm at least was done; on the contrary their acquaintance and goodwill was gained. With a view of a like attainment with the 400 pupils, I recently offered some small prizes to be awarded by the teachers. Yesterday the principal called to thank me, and in our friendly conversation which ensued he expressed the desire, as a private individual, that more of a belief in some sort of religion might be infused into the neighborhood. 'But,' he continued, 'you may not know it, but the fact is that four out of every five around here still mistrust and even hate your religion. And they finally believe that the reason for your endeavors is money—that for each convent gained, you receive fifty or a hundred yen reward. So the more active you are, the more greedy of gain they consider you!' He went on to say that the same notion held among teachers; if one were too alert to be helpful, they thought he was after an increase of salary; that this actually hinders men from being as useful as they otherwise would! This is on the street where missionaries have lived and mingled with the people for twenty years! And yet some people think of Japan as almost Christianized! Do you wonder that we sometimes grow 'weary,' both in the correct and also slangy sense of the word?"