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Note and Comment

Special to Subscribers.

The attention of every subscriber is directed to the offer contained in our announcement on Page 511 of this issue. We trust that all our many friends in every part of the Dominion will take advantage of it. We should like nothing better than extending subscription dates in every case. Help us by helping yourself.

The Health Board of New York city states that in the last quarter of a century there were 16,713 deaths, and that of this number four had reached the age of one hundred years or over.

An English paper says that the chapter of Alpine tragedies has opened ominously. Experience seems to count for little in respect to mountaineering. Last summer Mr. Aston Binns and Mr. Norman Neruda were among the victims. Each was a splendid Alpinist. This summer Victor Merscen opens the death roll. He has during the past decade performed numerous climbing feats. When ascending Mount Gesanese, in the Austrian Alps, a huge boulder came rolling down and hurled him into the ravine.

A Washington correspondent says: "The new Apostolic Delegate to Canada, Archbishop Franconia, is well known to the Church authorities here, and the appointment is regarded as an important one, owing to the position of the Church in public affairs in Canada, particularly in the Province of Quebec. Archbishop Franconia was brought up in Allegheny, Pa., and for some time was connected with the Franciscan Fraternity there. Later he was vicar-general of St. John, N.B., thence going to Rome and being advanced to a high place near the Pope.

"Don't tell your boys that farming is the noblest of the professions, and the one vocation a man should follow. I raised up four boys, and I never said such a thing to one of them, and yet they are willing to stay on the farm. Make them see that there's something for them and they'll stay with you." So, wisely, writes one who evidently knows boys.

The Catholic publication house, the Holy Joseph, in Paris, recently published a work of 570 pages, entitled "The Danger of Protestantism," which made the Protestants practically responsible for all the ills of modern France.

Two more Gladstone books are promised. One of these is a paper by Mr. G. W. E. Russell on Mr. Gladstone's religious development, read some time ago at Christ Church, printed for private circulation, and now to be published by Messrs. Rivington. The other is the memorial sermon preached by Canon Scott Holland, which will appear through Messrs. Longmans.

Mr. Bagot's discussion of the question, "Will England become Catholic?" which the Living Age of July 29 translates from the Italian review, the Nuova Antologia, is noteworthy for the emphasis with which it answers in the negative the question which it puts, and the facts which it presents in support of that view. Mr. Bagot is an English Catholic, but he wrote this article in Italian, and it is here done back into English of unusual force and lucidity.

The London Baptist says that of the 24,000,000 people of South America. It is estimated that 20,000,000 have never seen the Bible.

A table in Science shows that Canada leads all other countries in the extent of her forests. She possesses 799,230,720 acres of forest-covered land, as against 450,000,000 acres in the United States. Russia is credited with 498,240,000 acres, about 48,000,000 more than the United States. India comes next with 140,000,000 acres. Germany has 24,347,000 acres, France 23,466,450, and the British Islands only 2,695,000. The table does not include Africa or South America, both of which contain immense forests.

Religious rhymes offer a wide field to the collector of oddities. Here are a few choice lines culled from a tract which has an extensive circulation in England:—

On Sunday I am happy,
On Monday full of joy,
On Tuesday I have got a peace
The devil can't destroy.
On Wednesday and Thursday
I'm walking in the Light,
On Friday it is heaven below,
And the same on Saturday night.

The tract states that only a Christian can sing this effusion!

An imposing demonstration in honor of Calvin was recently held in the city of Geneva, which he raised to the proud position of "the Rome of Protestantism." A memorial tablet was affixed to the house which now occupies the site of Calvin's house, in the Rue Calvin, with the inscription: "John Calvin lived here, 1543-1564." The church in which he preached is called the "St. Peter's of the North."

An ecumenical Foreign Missions conference, similar to the conference held in London in 1888, will open in New York April 21, 1900, and continue until May 1. One day will be devoted to a consideration of woman's work, one to a discussion of the relation of students and other young people to Foreign Missions, and six days to a consideration of the general interests of this great enterprise. The Presbyterian Church in Canada is well represented on the General Committee in the persons of Rev. W. Moore, D.D., Ottawa; Rev. R. P. Mackay, M.A., Toronto; Mr. Hamilton Cassels, Toronto; Rev. P. M. Morrison, D.D., Halifax, and Rev. Alexander Falconer, Pictou, N.S. The recent death of Dr. Morrison leaves a vacancy that will doubtless be filled later on.

Our esteemed contemporary, the Presbyterian Witness, copies our Toronto correspondent's remarks about the doing away with the Preparatory Course in Knox College, and then goes on to say:—

"It may be well to remind our Toronto friends that they are following Halifax—at a distance. We have had no 'Preparatory' here. Our students in theology are, with few exceptions, university graduates. This has been our position for many years, and we have found it advantageous. We mean no reflection on Knox, and we congratulate it that at last—thirty-five years after Halifax—it is able to do without the 'Preparatory' and to insist on a university course. The position of the Montreal College is undoubtedly peculiar and deserves special consideration."

The late Dr. Chiniquy made it impossible for the Roman Catholic Church to claim that he had, when he came face to face with death, returned penitently to the Church. But whenever there is the slightest chance such claim is made. The latest is the case of Miss Cusack, who was widely known as the "Nun of Kenmare," whose death occurred recently. Everywhere Catholics are told that she returned to "the mother Church" before she died. Of course the statement is not true.

Our old friend, Rev. Samuel Houston, M.A., of Kingston, at present visiting in Ireland, has been delivering several practical addresses on "Canada: Her History and Her Resources," which cannot fail to be useful to his adopted country. The Belfast Witness writes in warm praise of the one given in the lecture room of the Second Presbyterian Church, Broughshane, at the close of which a hearty vote of thanks was tendered Mr. Houston.

This is how the Parliamentary correspondent of the Yorkshire Post describes Mr. Joseph Chamberlain's attitude and expression in the House of Commons: He persistently wears that waxen, fixed, Sphinxen air, impenetrable and provoking, that defies analysis. You can tell when Mr. Balfour has anything on his mind; he is as susceptible as a schoolgirl, and displays his feelings as readily. He will laugh and chaff, or be stern and nervous. He gives you a cue. But you will get as much satisfaction on what is passing in the alert brain of Mr. Chamberlain by looking at him as you would do by staring hard at Cleopatra's Needle. We know he is a man with quick emotions, only he has the wonderful faculty of hiding them. There you see him in the crowded House lying back with a cold, chilly, even sinister, expression, his eyes probably closed and never an eyelid moving. He is immovable. That is what makes Mr. Chamberlain so strikingly interesting a personality. When a bitter bolt flies at him he slowly opens his eyes, very deliberately fixes his black-rimmed monocle, slowly rises, stands by the table, and in a hard, dry tone reads his reply from a type-written sheet of paper. Then he relaxes his eyebrow and the eyeglass falls away; he sits down, folds his arms, and he is as pale and expressionless as a carved Egyptian figure.