

# Dominion Presbyterian

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## Note and Comment.

When Dr. Drummond was called to St. John's Wood Church, London, G. B., the membership did not reach 200, but during his seven years' ministry, he succeeded in raising the congregation to a position of strength and influence which has been maintained and extended under his famous successor, Dr. Munro Gibson, a distinguished son of Canada.

Evidently, there is less of race prejudice in England than probably anywhere in America. This, says the Canadian Baptist, is illustrated by the case of the Baptist church in Twickenham, which has called a well educated negro to be their pastor. At his reception, members of all the denominations in the town were present. Naturally he referred to the different sentiments towards his race in the United States.

An interesting visitor who is now in England is the Rev. T. K. Chatterji, who since 1889 has been the pastor of the Bhowanipur Church, the leading native church of Calcutta. A Brahmin by caste, it was not until he reached manhood that he accepted the Christian faith, and when he was twenty-eight years of age he was baptised. For many years Pastor Chatterji has carried on successful work in Calcutta in a church which is now self-supporting.

The population of the Indian Olympus is generally estimated at 300,000,000 gods and goddesses. Even among deities of this kind changes are taking place such a millennial census would probably reveal. Already, according to a writer in the "Leisure Hour," the head of the whole Pantheon is on his death-bed, so to speak. Brahma, the first person of the Hindu Triad, the Creator of the world and Lord of all, is now worshipped in only three or four places in the whole of India.

Dr. J. C. Gibson, of England, who has had an extended experience in missionary work at Swatow, China, in a graphic article on "The Character of the Chinese," thus sums up his estimate of that interesting people: "The study of life and character in China, pagan and Christian sets before us a great people, with fine capacities and powers, stained by grievous faults and enslaved by foul vices, but waiting only the quickening Word and the touch of the liberating Spirit to rise to a new and splendid life." These words will stimulate and cheer the hearts of all who have a real interest in the great work of evangelizing that great country.

The first experiment in the application of the turbine engine to ocean steamers is to be tried in connection with a vessel now in course of construction at Messrs. Workman, Clark & Co's, Belfast, Ireland. This is one of the Allan Line steamers, and it is expected to be ready in July. This firm is going ahead in shipbuilding, and this will represent a new development. Of course the engines will be manufactured by the patentee, who resides at Newcastle-on-Tyne. The experiment will be watched with great interest. It is claimed for the engines that

they can develop greater speed than the present style of engines with the same coal consumption, and that if that is increased, the speed can be increased.

A judge in New York state, in rejecting the applications of sixty foreigners for citizenship, gave the following reason for so doing: "I will not naturalize any person who comes before me and is unable to speak the English language sufficiently to make himself understood. I will compel him to answer questions which I deem essential to good citizenship, and if he fail to make satisfactory answers I will refuse to grant the necessary papers. When a man has been in this country five years and is unable to talk our language, in my opinion he is not fit to be admitted to citizenship." The Morning Post of Boston says the judge's reason is a "sound" one. It suggests the propriety of Canada being careful as to the terms on which she will admit immigrants, who cannot read or speak the English (or French) language, to full citizenship. It is too much, perhaps, to expect old people to acquire a knowledge of our language, but by means of schools young people can very soon acquire an educational qualification.

The London correspondent of Belfast Witness suggests that "The Thunderer" is poorly edited; and in illustration of this alleged fact quotes a petty and spiteful attack made by that paper upon non-conformity. Anent religious work in densely populated centres it said: "As a matter of fact, in these teeming centres of population Nonconformity makes little way. Were it not for the church they might relapse into utter heathenism." Dr. Clifford, a prominent Baptist minister, meets the Times' assertion by adducing the case of West Ham, saying: "A more pertinent illustration of a teeming centre of population could not be found. Over 266,000 people dwell in West Ham, and the returns are—Established Church, 17,643; Non conformist Churches, 28,197. Those returns are exclusive of other services, such as railway missions, &c., amounting in all to 3,089 attendants, and also of the Romanists, whose figures are 6,592. I ought not to omit the fact that 3,322 of those attending the Established Church were men; but 7,736 men were found in the Free Churches; and whilst the women were 6,066 in the Established Church there were 10,108 in the Nonconformist Communions." If figures count for anything these figures are somewhat decisive.

Last year a shipbuilding trust was organized in the United States. Instead of being a legitimate enterprise it turned out to be an enterprise organized in the interests of men who were in a hurry to get rich, and a subsequent law-suit indicated pretty plainly that the promoters expected to grow rich by fleecing the investing public. Recently a suit was brought by certain minority stockholders against the Trust for gross mismanagement of its affairs and a general disregard of the interest of the stockholders to the profit of the promoters. One of the witnesses, Mr. Dresser, stated that as underwriter for this Trust, he had offered the bonds to the public and had sold six hun-

dred thousand dollars' worth of them. He testified that for the Bethlehem Company's property, which had cost Mr. Schwab seven million dollars, Mr. Schwab had received ten million in bonds and eighteen million in the two kinds of stock. Then the report was given out that the Shipbuilding Company had made \$1,160,000 of profit in the first three months—a report whose effect would be to attract purchasers. Not long after this came the reported failure of the Trust, the threat of the foreclosure of these mortgages which had been issued to the "promoters," and which would involve entire loss of the holdings of other stockholders, and the suit of which we have been speaking. Noting these facts the Christian observer says it presents a vivid picture of the extent of wrong to which men may be carried who indulge a lust for wealth. The paper adds: "We are well aware that God does not settle all his accounts with men in one year, or even in this life. And yet in the experiences of the last few months there have been events to suggest the question whether our God is rebuking this spirit of covetousness."

The census of religious life in London, the modern Babylon, indicates that the week night prayer meeting in that city is dead or dying. "How is it with ourselves?" queries the Belfast Witness. The question may apply to a good many places as well as London—even to some places in Canada. An American writer complains that the prayer-meeting is killed there by mismanagement. He says—"In an age which with ever more positive insistence demands reality and vitality in religion, the typical prayer-meeting has continued to be a formal and set exhibition of platitudes in prayer and in remarks. It has suffered from all the stiffening straitness of routine. The result for thousands of churches has been an unspeakable achievement in rapid dullness, and even a strong and vigorous conscience has a pretty hard task in compelling a man to go to a meeting of that description. Resuscitation is possible only by injecting into the meeting genuinely live spiritual life. That is not a very definite prescription, but each pastor will have to fill in the details of it for himself. When any pastor makes his midweek service responsive to the real problems of real Christians, he will have a steady attendance at the meeting, possibly not large but big enough to defy dissolution." This, says the Belfast Witness, is one of our failures in church life. "Presbyterian ministers too often make the week service a mere preaching, giving part of an old sermon. A prayer-meeting should be brief, bright and devotional, enlivening, as far as possible, the sharing in it of the worshippers, and with good hearty singing. Does the choir always attend prayer-meeting? It should." This is something for Presbyterian ministers in Canada to think over.

The Christian Endeavor World has a column devoted to reports of societies organized among convicts. A prison does not seem a favorable place for Christian work. Yet probably no other two years of Paul's life were more fruitful than the two he spent in his Roman prison.