

Dominion Presbyterian

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NOTE AND COMMENT.

The first recorded Thanksgiving was the Hebrew Feast of the Tabernacles.

The first national English Thanksgiving was on September 8, 1858, for the defeat of the Spanish Armada.

There were but two English Thanksgivings in the last century. One was on February 27, 1872, for the recovery of the Prince of Wales from illness; the other, June 21, 1897, for the Jubilee of "Victoria the Good."

Twenty more bodies have been found recently by the searchers among the San Francisco ruins. They were all found in the debris of one house, in which fifty persons were known to have been, and of whom only seven had been accounted for.

In one unbroken nocturnal flight the European bird known as the northern blue throat has been proved to travel from Central Africa to the German Ocean, a distance of 1,690 miles, making the journey in nine hours.

The Pope has made public and approved the report of a commission appointed by him to consider questions raised by higher critics respecting the books whose authorship is commonly attributed to Moses. The report is conservative and judicious in its brief replies to the questions submitted to it.

The Government of Victoria, Australia, proposes to purchase a million acres in the western district of Victoria for closer settlement. The House of Representatives last week passed a bill authorizing an amendment to the constitution for the payment of old age pensions from special customs duties.

The Pope is urged, in a widely circulated letter, to authorize, in the interest of the archaeological investigation, the opening of the tomb of the Apostle Peter, in the Cathedral of St. Peter, Rome. According to Roman Catholic tradition, the body of the apostle was interred in this tomb. It is hoped the Pope will authorize the opening of the sepulchre.

"A new substitute for nickel, called 'Patrick metal,' is being placed upon the English market," says "The Scientific American." "The feature of this metal is that it is silver-white right through, and retains its bright appearance permanently. The metal does not tarnish with use—in fact, it becomes brighter. It retains a high degree of polish, and will not rust even under the most unfavorable conditions, nor oxidize easily. It is malleable when cold and can be easily moldered or brazed."

In France scientific temperance is regularly taught and examined in all the State schools. In Belgium temperance lectures are ordered to be given from time to time, in all State schools occasional temperance lectures must be given from time to time by order of the government, and it is intended shortly to introduce systematic temperance teaching as an ordinary school subject. In Austria the Education Department of Vienna have directed temperance lectures to be given from time to time in all State schools, and, further, that all libraries maintained for the use of teachers shall contain a certain number of books treating scientifically of the injurious effects of alcohol.

The Sunday School Chronicle and other publications are vigorously discussing a volume recently published by an English clergyman, entitled, "Should Christians Make Fortunes?" Such men as the millionaire, George Cadbury, and the eminent non-conformist leader, Dr. John Clifford, have taken part in the discussion.

A railway disaster occurred at Grant-ham, England, last week very similar to the Salisbury horror. The engineer of the Scotch express ran his engine through the station against signals, and took the curve at forty miles an hour instead of ten. The engine dashed over an embankment and turned turtle, the coaches piled on top, and the whole took fire. Ten persons were killed and many injured.

Mr. William T. Ellis, the religious editor of the Philadelphia Press, who left last May for a tour of the world to investigate the work of missions, is now in the mountains of Japan, where he is recovering from a serious illness. Mr. Ellis is rapidly recovering and hopes soon to begin his series of articles treating the missionary aspects in Hawaii, Japan, Korea, China, Philippines, Singapore, Ceylon, Siam, India, Egypt, Palestine, Turkey and Persia.

Cairo in Egypt is now practically the centre of the Mohammedan religion. Here for nearly one thousand years has been the chief theological seminary where ten thousand students are now studying the religion of Islam and its laws, ritual, apologetics, etc., and from this place they go forth to spread that religion into other lands. The English Church Missionary Society has here a mission station and publishes "The Orient and Occident" in Arabic, which has a large circulation and is an effective missionary agency.

Rev. F. S. Collier, the Manchester clergyman who is in this country on a visit, declared in a public address that he was shocked at the profanity he heard in Canada. "We have men in England who can swear," he said, "but for obscenity of language you beat us. You are foul-mouthed in Canada. We have foul language in England, but you are obscene. I say this because it ought to be said." The worst of it is that we cannot deny the charge. No one can walk the streets without hearing the worst kind of language possible.

The Liberal party in England is negotiating with Russia for an understanding with respect to Tibet, Persia and Afghanistan. The difficulty is that Russia never keeps her agreements when she finds it convenient to ignore them. Great Britain might now settle the boundary questions in her own way, and Russia would be powerless to prevent it. But she can negotiate, and by fair promises prevent Great Britain from fixing the boundaries itself, and then ignore the settlement when convenient. Compromise and settlement are always desirable when dealing with an honorable opponent who will keep his word. In the present case, however, Great Britain will probably find herself bound by inconvenient stipulations, while Russia will not be impeded in her advance southward. Since she cannot push southward in her present political condition, she is ready to agree not to do so, and when she recovers will throw the agreement to the winds.

The celebration at Shanghai, next April of the centenary of Protestant missions in China, will be one of the greatest events from a Christian standpoint that will take place in any land during 1907. It will call together missionaries, evangelists and teachers from all parts of the empire, bear testimony to unity in the midst of diversity and weld still closer the Christian forces, Canada, United States and Great Britain will be represented at the anniversary.

In the "Contemporary Review" Sir Alfred Pease, Administrator in South Africa, publishes an important article in reference to the Natives, which ought to be well considered by the home churches on account of some strictures on missionaries and their methods. What applies to Africa applies to India and China. Sir Alfred writes in sympathy with missions, and acknowledges the good done in South Africa, especially by such men as Livingstone. But he refers to the matter so often alluded to the native Kaffir untouched by missions, is a good-natured, trust-worthy fellow, while the so-called Christian Kaffir is insolent and unreliable; he has learned not the virtues of Christianity but some of the faults of nominal Christian civilization. (Sir Alfred says many missionaries are narrow, ignorant of the native's feelings and point of view; they do not see that the Kaffir is a crown-on child, and must be treated much as children are, with kindness, mixed with firmness and discipline. Sir Alfred is severe on the folly of dressing the natives in British clothing, which is to them most unwholesome and unclean. The importance of this subject is enhanced by the fact which the writer states that the Kaffirs are a virile race, fruitful and capable of great advances, so as to be a menace to our colonists and our rule, unless they are wisely handled. These are no globe-trotter's rash remarks, but the serious opinions of a competent man.

The first Continental (European) Conference of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, held at Prague, Bohemia, August 14-16, was attended by nearly 120 delegates, of whom about 120 were from the churches of Bohemia and Moravia, and fifteen or twenty from other lands. The American churches were represented by two delegates of the Western section of the Presbyterian-Reformed Alliance, one of the United Presbyterian Church and one of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Most of the considerable number of papers read related to Bohemian subjects. An account of the great Welsh revival was sent by the Welsh Calvinistic delegate, two could not be present; a Scotch delegate, two English delegates and the Rev. Dr. James I. (10-1) of the Reformed Church in America, read papers, and the cause of the General Presbyterian Alliance was presented by Dr. Matthews, its secretary. Dr. Good hopes for much good to accrue both to the Bohemian churches and the Reformed Presbyterian Alliance from the influence of this conference. It will encourage the Reformed church of Bohemia and Moravia in its struggle against Roman Catholic supremacy, and it will aid the Alliance in reaching its aim of getting into closer touch with the churches in Europe. Dr. Good regards it as a very hopeful sign that the Bohemian Reformed Church has no nationalism in it. What nationalism there was has died out, and the rising generation of preachers are active, earnest and evangelical.

Truth assimilated will lead a man Godward; but truth diddained will drive him to destruction.