

Dominion Presbyterian

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Note and Comment.

In 1899 there were in India only 797 ordained Indian ministers of the gospel, but last year there were 1,010.

Buddhist priests in Japan are frequent purchasers of the Bible. In one case, a priest had not the money, but begged it in order to get a copy.

Longfellow writes of "leaving footprints on the sands of time," but thousands of years ago our savage ancestors left their nail-prints on the pottery they fashioned, which are the delight of antiquarians to-day.

Russian government has decided to make the metric system of weights and measures compulsory, and the Minister of Finance is now engaged in considering the time and manner of introducing this reform.

The driest place in the world is that of Egypt between the two lower falls of the Nile. Rain has never been known to fall there, and the inhabitants do not believe travellers when told that rain falls from the sky.

In speaking of the social side of English political life, Lord Salisbury said the other day that there is really very little of it. He has never so much as spoken to John Morley, and never even saw Mr. Parnell.

Southwest Africa does not appear to be an inviting field for colonization. It extends along the coast for about 930 miles and has an area of 322,000 square miles, but its population does not exceed 200,000, of which only 2,600 are whites.

Dr. W. A. P. Martin, president of the Imperial College in Peking, who has lived in China nearly fifty years, denies the common story that the dowager Empress of China is of humble birth, and says she comes from a noble Manchu family.

Not until recently have the Japanese book-stores been willing to carry the Bible in stock, for fear of offending their Buddhist patrons. Now, however, bibles are so eagerly sought that they are kept on sale in all the prominent book-stores in Japan.

At the annual cane rush in the Massachusetts' Institute of Technology a promising young man, chairman of the freshman class, was crushed to death; another partially lost the sight of one eye. Such sports make young men, not more manly, but more brutal.

Mark Twain quietly remarked, at a recent banquet given him. "It seems a most difficult thing for any man, however well prepared, to say anything about me which is not complimentary." Thus Mark pays a compliment to the veracity of the human race.

The Church Union celebrations in Scotland are to be followed by a legal fight, the leaders of the Free Church minority having decided "to proceed at once with an action of delator in the Court of Session, so as to end as soon as possible the existing complications."

Here is an astounding statement made by Rev. S. D. Cox: "In 1807 there were 1,700 Mormon missionaries. The gain of Mormonism is that one year was 63,000 converts, and this when the total number of Mormons was less than a third of a million. During the same year the efforts of over four million Presbyterians, Methodists and Congregationalists did not secure more than 50,000 converts, or 13,000 less than the Mormons alone secured."

Japan has just got four new warships, the aggregate tonnage of which surmounts that of the eleven Japanese, as well as that of the twelve Chinese warships present at the fight in the Yellow Sea. Japan will soon be the greatest naval power in the Far East.

The man that discovered coal, one hundred and nine years ago, Philip Ginter, is to have a monument of coal, erected on the spot at which the discovery was made, Summit Hill, Penn. If everybody's monument was of the same kind as his works, some people wouldn't be pleased.

The name of Sir Arthur Sullivan, who died in London last week, may not be added to the list of the world's great musicians, but he gave innocent amusement and refined pleasure to great numbers of his fellow men. He had talent, if not genius, and he made good use of his powers.

The cross is the emblem of suffering and service. For Christ it meant that he suffered, the just for the unjust, and gave his life in service, a ransom for many. For the Christian, the cross which he is to bear means suffering for Christ's sake, and devoted service in his name and for his glory.

A Chinaman, bound recently, with a sword held to his throat, when asked, "Are you a believer in Jesus Christ?" firmly replied, "Yes, I am a Christian." He escaped death, and when asked afterwards how he could testify so boldly, answered that he had just been reading about Peter's denial.

Queen Victoria's New Year's list of honours is likely to be a long one, as it is expected to include rewards for service in South Africa. Among the rumours is a peerage for General Buller, and that he is to take the title of "Lord Buller of Ludysmith." It is also expected that the late Home Secretary, Sir M. W. Ridley, will be raised to the peerage.

The Agent-General of Cape Colony says that of four and a half million pounds spent abroad during the war and in previous years, by that colony, less than £300,000 went to the U. S., and most of that was ordered by sub-contractors and inability of British firms to fill orders in time accounts for most of that sum.

There are said to be about 1,000,000 habitual drunkards in the United Kingdom, and over 50,000 persons are arrested in Scotland every year for being drunk and disorderly. Nearly 100,000 bushels of grain are used every year by the manufacturers of drink. This enhances the price of bread, and necessitates the expenditure of large sums of foreign grain.

Mr. Archibald Blue, of the Statistical Department, Ottawa, has for some time past, been giving close attention to arrangements for taking the fourth Dominion census. According to the wording of the act bearing on this subject, the enumeration should be made about the first of the year, but the practice heretofore has been to fix a date in the first week of April.

Professor Mackinnon opened the Celtic class in Edinburgh University with a lecture on the Campbell's of Argyll. The origin of Campbells he said, went back beyond the period of written records. The late Duke of Argyll considered himself of Dalriadic blood, but the native genealogist in a long pedigree traced the line to the Nemedians, one of the pre-Gaelic tribes that at one time ruled in the land. The name of Campbell first appeared in Scottish record, not in Argyll but in Stirling; in the year 1263 a Gillespie Campbell received a grant of the lands of "Menstran and Satesney" from Alexander the Third. But that the family had lands and power in Argyll long before this date was undoubted.

General Secretary John Willis Baer of the United Society of Christian Endeavor, has recently been elected chairman of the standing committee on Home Missions of the Synod of New York. He is also a member of the General Assembly Committee on the Twentieth Century Fund.

The Queensland Legislative Assembly has just indulged in a continuous sitting lasting seventy-two hours. This beats the Mother of Parliaments in a canter. The longest recorded sitting of our House of Commons began at four o'clock on Monday, January 31, 1881, and continued until the following Wednesday morning at half-past nine, thus lasting forty-one hours and a half.

A well-known authority on bacteriology says that all kinds of diseases may be traced to the eating of unwashed fruit, and particularly unwashed grapes. After washing some grapes which had stood for a long time in a basket on a fruit stand, the man of science found that the water contained tubercle bacilli in sufficient quantities to kill a guinea pig in two days. Two other guinea pigs which were inoculated with the germ-infected water died within six weeks.

In one window of the Toronto Telegram office there may be seen a printing press, which, from an historical as well as a typographical point of view, is a curiosity. It is a very old style hand press, and was used to print the Upper Canada Gazette, in York, (Toronto) 100 years ago. The framework is all of wood, and on one side hangs a clumsy hand roller, much the same as those used on the proof presses of today. The capacity was 120 impressions per hour, in curious contrast to the 48,000 per hour of the immense Hoe press "Goldwin Smith," which stands in the same room, and is now used to print the Telegram.

The unfurling of the flag is becoming a feature in the history of schools in New Zealand. In some districts it is made a public holiday; every available flag hangs from the public buildings. The children with their teachers march in procession. At the township of Kaihu lately a grand flagstaff was erected at the schoolhouse. The children met at church. At the school they sang the 100th Psalm, and "Sons of the Sea," and after prayer the Union Jack was unfurled amid great cheering. Then "God Save the Queen" was sung. Afternoon tea was the next feature. The children were again entertained in the evening, and when they were sent home the grownups enjoyed a social hour.

Perhaps the most remarkable man drawn out of retirement in Edinburgh to do honor to Principal Rainy the other day was Emeritus Professor Masson, of Edinburgh University. He is known to the world by his great "Life of Milton," and to a long succession of Edinburgh students as the popular Professor of English Literature. Like his fellow professor for more than a generation in Edinburgh, Professor Campbell Fraser—he was a probationer of the Free Church, and his great reverence for Chalmers is well known. In his address at the Rainy presentation Professor Masson coupled the name of Welsh with that of Chalmers as holding a high place in his affection and this recalls an incident of Masson's career as student in the class of Welsh. Young Masson, then only sixteen years of age, had to write a paper for Professor Welsh. It was a regular class paper. When Dr. Welsh examined it with the other students' papers he was so struck with its surpassing excellence that he did not trust his own judgment in examining it. He sent the paper to his colleague, Sir William Hamilton, whose criticism coincided with that of Dr. Welsh, as he wrote of the exercise:—"This is not the work of an ordinary student; it is the work of a genius." Soon after this Masson left theology to edit a paper in Aberdeen, which did good service for the Free Church at the time. After that he continued his literary career in London, and came back to Scotland to the Chair of English Literature in Edinburgh.