

The Presbyterian Review.

Vol. XII.—No. 28.

TORONTO, JANUARY 16, 1896.

\$1.50 per Annum

OVER LAND AND SEA.

The Sabbath comes to us week after week with so fair a gift in its hand, so gracious a smile on its face, so Divine elevation in its heart, that it behooves us to make some preparation for so welcome a guest.

We do not fail to set our houses in order, and appoint our tables fittingly when friends whom we delight to honor are expected within our doors. There are days which we all keep with an extraordinary splendor, anniversaries, gala days, fete days. This seventh day festival comes to us from God Himself, the ever renewed expression of His gentle thought of us, His children. Can we do otherwise than greet it with joy and receive it with gratitude?

To prepare aright for the Sabbath we should lay our worldly cares aside. Even if the week has been full of disappointments, embarrassments and perplexities, we shall the better gain strength to enter on another wrestle with such cares and solitudes, by bringing serenity and patience to the Sabbath. This blessed interlude is meant as a truce to the week-day strife and struggle. Let us take the full benefit of it, with thankfulness in our souls. We are in peril of losing, as a people, our sense of obligation to God; our consciences are less sensitive formerly on many points. We need to be toned up, and to have the courage and the faith to hold fast to our blessed Sabbath day.

Have you ever wondered what an impression it would make on one of the ancient Greeks, to stand in our streets and see the electric cars, and locomotives, and fire engines go by? Do you think that he would be any less astonished to find that the gospel, which was counted by his countrymen "foolishness," had turned the world upside down?

The Russians have made a singular discovery in Central Asia. In Turkestan, on the right bank of the Amou Daria, is a chain of rocky hills near the Bokharan town of Carki, and a number of large caves, which, upon examination, were found to lead to an underground city, built apparently long before the Christian era. According to effigies, inscriptions and designs upon the gold and silver money unearthed from among the ruins, the existence of the town dates back to some two centuries before the birth of Christ. The underground Bokharan city is about two versts long, and is composed of an enormous labyrinth of corridors, streets, and squares, surrounded by houses and other buildings two or three stories high. The edifices contain all kinds of domestic utensils, pots, urns, vases, etc. In some of the streets falls of earth and rock have obstructed the passages, but generally, the visitor can walk about freely without so much as lowering his head. The high degree of civilization attained by the inhabitants of the city is shown by the fact that they built in several stories, by the symmetry of the streets and squares, and by the beauty of the baked clay and metal utensils, and of the ornaments and coins which have been found. It is supposed that long centuries ago this city, so carefully concealed in the bowels of the earth, provided an entire population with a refuge from the incursions of nomadic savages and robbers.

A Scotchman named McGregor, living in San Francisco was accosted early one morning by a foot pad who suddenly holding up a pistol, said: "Throw up your hands!" "Why?" asked Mr. McGregor, calmly. "Throw them up!" "But what for?" "Put up your hands," insisted the foodpad, shaking his pistol. "Will you do what I tell you?" "That depends," said Mr. McGregor. "If ye can show me any reason why I should put up my hands, I'll no say but what I wull; but yer mere requaist wad be no justification for me to do so absurd a thing. Now, why should you, a complete stranger, ask me at this 'oor o' the mornin' on a public street ta pit up ma hands?" "Dash you," cried the robber, "if yo don't quit gassin' and obey orders, I'll blow the top of yor head off!" "What! Faith man, you must be oot o' yer head. Come, noo, poor buddy," said McGregor, soothingly, coolly catching the pistol and wresting it with a quick twist out of the man's hand. "Come, now, an' I'll show ye where they'll take care o' ye. Hech! Dinna ye try to fecht, or, ecod, I'll shoot ye. By the way, ye might as weel put up yer ain hands, an' just walk ahead o' me. That's it. Trudge awa' noo." And so Mr. McGregor marched his man to the city prison and handed him over to Captain Douglass. "It wudna be a bad idea to put him in a straitjacket," he said serenely to the officer. "There's little doot but the buddy's daft." And he resumed his interrupted homeward walk.

There are about half a million Presbyterians in the South African communities, and an effort is now being made to federate the different churches for practical work.

In the Norwegian town of Hangesund, which has a population of 6,200 not a drop of spirituous liquor has been sold for 29 years. Many of the inhabitants have never tasted liquor.

A very interesting collection of prehistoric musical instruments lie in the National Museum, Copenhagen. These instruments were found, with many other articles of manufacture belonging to the tribes of Angles and Saxons, on the Jutland peninsula, and were, it may be assumed, among the first instruments of music known to our forefathers. They are horns of bronze, long and slender in shape, bent upward and forward in graceful curves, and ending in large bronze discs, richly ornamented with curious buckle designs. These instruments are called "lures," and are supposed to have been made during the bronze age.

The daily average of inmates for the year in the Edinburgh House of Refuge was about 276. This number is made up of persons whose cases are not met by the existing poor laws—persons of intemperate habits, incurables, and friendless pensioners. In the Night Refuge Department no fewer than 13,725 persons were sheltered and relieved during the year; and in co-operation with the Association for Feeding and Clothing Neglected and Destitute Children, 18,092 meals had been supplied to poor children attending school. Last winter, 42,592 meals were given in the soup kitchen at 1d. each, and 37,534 free meals. Much kind assistance had been given by lady visitors and gifts of clothing from friends of the institution. There is in hand a free balance of £418 3s. 6d.