

# Dominion Presbyterian

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## Note and Comment

The Pope created thirteen new cardinals last week, but there are no Americans among them, as thus far announced.

The faculty and students of McMaster University, Toronto, set aside one day each month for the study of missions.

Dr. Paton, the apostle of the New Hebrides, reports that a C. E. Society in one of the islands has won a whole village to Christianity.

Mr. H. M. Stanley is trying to raise £5,000 for a bronze monument to be erected on the site of the tree under which Livingstone's heart is buried.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier states that the cost of the prohibition plebiscite up to June 23, 1899, was \$192,541, and that about \$1,000 additional would, it is estimated, meet all outstanding liabilities.

Mrs. Stanford, of California, has executed deeds of gift to the university named for her son to the estimated value of \$30,000,000 but reserves control of the property during her life. This is no doubt the largest single gift ever made to an educational institution.

The New York Independent of last week made some startling charges against the Christian Mission Alliance, whose president is Rev. A. B. Simpson. Complaint has come from several trustworthy sources, and not from the immediate sufferers, that its missionaries have been allowed to suffer cruelly. It is true that the alliance makes no pledges of support to its missionaries; but it claims to distribute the funds that come to it. Members of the board say that they have no reports to show how the money is expended, or how much is received. It is claimed that many pledges are made by those who are unable to redeem them, and that many things that are pledged at Old Orchard, as stocks, are overvalued, so that the real income is far less than the amounts pledged. We hope that the matter is not so bad as charged, and that the affairs of the alliance may be placed on a satisfactory basis.

The pastor of the Protestant Church of the Saviour in Madrid received lately into communion Don Pascual Pabiete, a native of the Philippines, a man of influence amongst his own countrymen. The story of his conversion is remarkable: Although quite innocent of any connection with political movements, he was suspected by the Spaniards, dragged to Spain as a criminal, and then banished to a fort in Africa, where he was much ill-treated. When, however, his innocence was established, he was permitted to return to Madrid. Here he began to attend Protestant meetings, with the result that he saw the errors of Romanism, in which he had been brought up. He has been working at a translation of the New Testament into the Tagal language, under the direction of an agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and has completed three Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. He is going back to his own country as a Protestant evangelist.

Professor McGiffert, it is stated, will leave the Presbyterian Church without standing trial for heresy on the charges which have been preferred in connection with his book. It is said that he will join the Congregational Church.

A Free Church cathedral, says the Outlook, is the name which an English paper gives to the new church to be erected at Brighton, in England, for the ministry of the Rev. R. J. Campbell, the young man who has so suddenly come to the front as one of the great preachers of our time. If we are correctly informed, he was originally a churchman, and is a graduate of Christ Church College, Oxford, where he had a distinguished career as a scholar. He is not much more than thirty years of age, but has moved the city of Brighton as it has not been moved since the preaching of Frederick W. Robertson. Plans are now prepared and on exhibition for a new church in that city to cost \$350,000. It will be perhaps the most expensive church edifice among the Nonconformists of England. It will accommodate about two thousand people. Nonconformist churches in London which would naturally be compared with this are the Westminster Chapel, near Buckingham Palace; Mr. Spurgeon's, Dr. Parker's, and the Union Chapel at Islington. The first three are larger than the one projected.

It is a strange story that is told by the Rev. John R. Sykes, general agent of the American Bible Society in China, concerning the secret causes of the palace revolution of last summer. Our readers, says the Presbyterian Banner, will remember the edicts issued by the Emperor, abolishing the essay system of examination, establishing a board for the translation of books on western learning into Chinese, and abolishing useless offices both in Peking and the provinces. The palace revolution and the resumption of power by the Dowager Empress, Tzu Hsi, called the attention of the world to China. Though this revolution and the repeal of the progressive edicts are doubtless to be regretted, they are not to be wondered at if, as Mr. Sykes says, the Emperor was actually discussing with his advisors the advisability of making Christianity the state religion of the empire. He declares that the Emperor was, and is, if he still lives, a Christian; that he spent much time in the daily study of the Bible, and frequently retired to a quiet place to pray to the true God. He also says the Emperor appears to have gone deeply into the study of various forms of Christianity, for he sent messengers to the store of the Bible Society to inquire for books treating of the differences between the Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches. This is not the first time this story has been told, but it comes now more prominently before the Christian people of America. If the story is true it adds a new interest to the prisoner of the palace and furnishes one more chapter in the biography of the most remarkable woman in Asia.

Mr. Otto Beringer, a young man of about thirty years of age, has charge of the most responsible part of the building of the long telegraph line that is to connect the Cape of Good Hope with the Mediterranean. Starting from the Cape the line has been carried to Lake Tanganyika, where it will connect with the line

that the Congo State is building up the Congo from the Atlantic to the lake. The line will proceed northward through German territory along the shores of Victoria Nyanza to Uganda, and thence all the way through British territory to the Mediterranean. For a distance equal to that between New York and San Francisco the line passes through an undeveloped country in which a white face has rarely been seen. The total force employed in the work consists of ten white men and about 1,000 blacks. It is divided into five equal parties, the first of which, under Mr. Beringer and his white companion, surveys the route and clears a trail of about fifteen feet in width. The second widens the clearing to sixty feet or more, taking out the jungle and cutting down all trees which might fall and break the wire. This is necessary, for there will not be linemen every few miles when the line is in operation, and repairs will be extensive. The remaining three parties dig the holes, set the poles, and string the wires. The work is proceeding at the rate of about two miles a day. The poles are all of iron. The shortest of them are fourteen feet high, and higher ones are used where it is necessary to make the spans of unusual length. Where rivers or gullies are crossed a span of 600 to 750 feet is not uncommon. Mr. Beringer has advanced his surveys and first preparations about 220 miles beyond the point reached by the constructors, and is now enjoying a flying visit to England.

The prospects for the federation of the Australian colonies are now very bright. The chief obstacle to the success of the movement for some time has been the opposition from New South Wales. Only a year ago a vote resulted unfavorably, and ever since the Premier, Mr. Reid, has been actively at work in overcoming the opposition. That he has been successful the recent vote amply proves. The returns so far as received show about 100,000 for and 80,000 against the federation proposals. This is not only a substantial majority in favor of federation, but it is more than sufficient to fulfill the condition that federation should not be adopted unless 85,000 votes were recorded in its favor. One factor in the gaining of this success was that Mr. Reid obtained, at a conference of the colonial Premiers in February last, some additional concessions in favor of New South Wales. A significant feature of the vote is that the majority is a rural one. Sydney polled a majority of only 100 in favor of the federation scheme. The vote was a referendum, and was taken on a bill passed at the last session of the Legislature. There is now only one other colony in which there has been very strong opposition to federation, and that is Queensland. In that colony a vote is to be taken on September 2, and in Victoria in the latter part of August. The recent vote in New South Wales will undoubtedly have a strong influence on these two votes, and the outlook is very favorable to an early consummation of the federation of the colonies. This will be another step in the consolidation of the British Empire. Until the contiguous colonies had united there could be no possible hope for the realization of Imperial federation. Whatever form the unity of the British Empire may assume in the future, such proofs of the unity of the parts cannot but work for Imperial solidarity at home and prestige abroad.