

Dominion Presbyterian

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NOTE AND COMMENT.

The Scotch Presbyterian Mission in Kafaria, South Africa, has had a most eventful year. There has been a great revival, during which over 150 were admitted to the candidate classes for membership. The church building was in a bad condition, and it has been repaired at a cost of about \$1,000, the money for which was contributed by the natives.

If men rob God of His honor on the Sabbath they will be robbed on the same principle of their day of rest. The reasoning is plain as A B C. If sport is allowed on the Sabbath the sanctity of the day is destroyed, and when the sanctity of this day is destroyed, the law barrier to Sunday toll is swept away. And our workmen are doomed to 305 days of toll in the year.

Officially there were born in Manhattan in the last year 59,196 babies, of whom 29,843 were boys and 29,353 girls. No better illustration of the cosmopolitan character of New York's population can be afforded than by the fact that of this total only 11,903 had both parents American. Of the 47,674 infants of foreign extraction only 1,781 were of mixed foreign parentage, the rest 47,293, having parents of the same nationality. The race which scored heaviest was the Hebrew, with more than 14,000. Next comes the Italian with 11,298.

That the Hindoo child-marriage evil has not been over-exaggerated by missionaries is evident from the latest Indian census, which shows that in Bengal alone there are 538 widows who are less than 1 year old; there are 651 between the ages of 2 and 3 years, and 1,756 between 3 and 4, while between 4 and 5 the number is 3,861. No less than 34,705 widows are between 5 and 10 years of age, and between the ages of 10 and 15 the enormous total is 75,500 widows. In the presidency of Bengal almost every fourth girl is a child-widow.

That which is called a new cure for tuberculosis is attracting considerable attention in medical circles. The Brooklyn Eagle states that the announcement is made by the New York Post Graduate Hospital in a recent circular that this vegetable compound has been accepted as a positive cure. That it has proved effectual in many cases there it no doubt; that it will so prove in all cases the public will be slow to believe. Dr. Russell, the discoverer of the remedy, says that he is assured that it is a valuable addition to the diet, that it has been used with remarkable results, but that sufficient time has not elapsed since it came into use to justify sweeping statements as to its value in all cases.

The Catholic Record of London, Ont., is a staunch friend of the temperance movement, and in its columns are often found some of the strongest arguments for this reform. In a recent issue it says:—"But we are glad to note that the army of 'good fellows,' who begin by drinking an abnormal amount of whiskey and end ordinarily as physical and moral derelicts, is not getting many recruits. The road-house is going out of fashion. So is the saloon, we believe so far as the Catholic is concerned. This is as it should be. May we still further listen to the advice of the Church and hasten the day when the drink-dispenser will be unknown as a member of any Catholic parish."

In view of the fact that Americans are commonly inclined to regard South Europeans as inferior in civilization, mentality and morality to the Anglo-Saxons, it is matter of interest to learn, says the St. Louis Christian Advocate, that the Sunday laws of Spain are said to be more rigidly enforced than those of the United States. In many municipalities in this country there are no Sunday laws; in many others, they are practically a dead letter through the indifference or inefficiency of officials charged with their execution, but in Spain there is some evidence to show that the Sunday laws are rigidly enforced, to the letter in fact, both by the police and by the officials responsible for the execution of the statutes. More forms of labor are regarded as necessary work in Spain than in the United States. But Spain enforces her laws against unnecessary work on Sunday.

Because of the shrinkage of the Peter's pence fund, owing to the decrease in contributions from France, the Pope is still practicing measures of economy. He has withdrawn financial assistance from the clerical press in Rome and throughout Italy, with the result that several dailies will suspend publication.

During the last five years John Bull's indulgence in intoxicants has been undergoing a marked and progressive decline, which during the past twelve months was represented by a drop of nearly £5,500,000 from the total of the previous year's drink bill, and a deduction of little less than £17,000,000 from the expenditure of 1889. If this rate of diminished consumption could only be maintained for a score of years, the United Kingdom would certainly take a very high place among the most temperate nations of the world.

"It is stated 'on authority' that as an immediate result of the Czar's rescript for liberty of worship, in which he specifically abolishes the religious disabilities of Roman Catholics in Poland, in the governments of Siedlec and Lublin no less than 26,000 persons have renounced allegiance to the Holy Eastern Church and returned to their ancestral confession. It is stated that the Polish press has been forbidden to make any reference to the subject, and that the Russian Church authorities are taking stringent measures to check the exodus. The 'Moscow Gazette' anticipates that the reversions to Romanism in Poland may reach half a million. Now this may all be so. Nevertheless it is a fact, unless all reports are untrue, that M. Pobiedonosteff, alarmed at the exodus of Christian men and women from the true fold, is eager to check it, and is assiduously working to that end.

The Scottish correspondent of a London paper says—"Dundee is the latest of the big cities to succumb to the demand for a service of Sunday cars. Last week the rate-payers by a majority of over 4,000 in a plebiscite poll of somewhere under 30,000, declared themselves in favour of their inauguration, and the Lord Provost pronounced the majority a decisive one. On Sunday last, which, as it happened, was a very bright and bracing day, a limited service was provided, and was fully taken advantage of. On the same day I was greatly interested in hearing the town's band playing at the pavilion on the links at the little town of Montrose, about an hour's train journey north of Dundee. Such things are common enough in England but that this should be done in Scotland, in a town of the dimensions of Montrose notwithstanding that the local band confines its performances to sacred music, is to be taken as a sign of the times."

A prominent missionary worker in the United States was recently heard to remark: "The more I know of Cuba, the more I am impressed with the opportunity for mission work there." The Southwestern Presbyterian says: "He was right; that opportunity is just seven hundred miles long and sixty-five miles wide. It is found in every city, town, and hamlet, for everywhere the people are ready to listen and many to believe. The Cubans are naturally a religious people. Atheists and infidels are extremely rare. Spiritualism and other vagaries run riot, yet it is rather a feeling after something better than this which they have, and not an abandoning of religion. Perhaps 90 per cent. of the men are never seen within a church, yet this is rather a silent protest against existing abuses and errors than otherwise. All public men from the President down, wish to see some church established in every nook and corner of the island and give equal protection and aid to all.

An Englishman, Mr. Havelock Ellis, recently tabulated the comparative output of eminent science men by the three British kingdoms thus—"In science Scotland stands very high, Ireland extremely low. The distribution of scientific men is as follows.—English, 84; Welsh, 2; Scotch 21; Irish, 1; Scotch-English, 7; Scotch Irish, 2; English-Irish, 1. In order to realise the extraordinary preponderance of the Scotch over the Irish contingent, it must be remembered that until the present century the population of Ireland has been much larger than that of Scotland." The Belfast Witness refers to the inferior position held by Ireland in the following terms:—"Now some failures of the Irish may be unjustly set down to the Roman Catholic religion, being really due to race or other circumstances. But this failure in science is probably due to the religious factor, for the Roman Church discourages the study of modern science, and seems really afraid of it. Hence the success of Roman Catholics in other directions, such as languages and mathematics."

The following description of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church (appearing in the "Christian World") will interest all who remember the late pastor, Dr. Jihn Hall—"Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York, is, without exception, the most beautiful church I have ever seen. It was built regardless of expense, but everything is in the most perfect taste. It is one of the finest specimens of ecclesiastical architecture in the world. There is a striking novelty in the arrangement of seats which surprises English visitors—the side galleries slope down several feet at the pulpit end of the church, and the front rows of seats in the area are considerably lower than those in the centre, but the result is, of course, that every member of the congregation has a full view of the preacher. There are two features of the service which are unfamiliar to the British church-goer, but which always strike me as being wisely arranged and well worthy of imitation—the morning service begins with the singing of the Doxology, and a brief prayer is offered when the offertory is handed in by the deacons. In England, if we use the Doxology at all, we finish with it, but how inspiring it is to hear a great congregation begin the morning worship with 'Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!' And I verily believe that if English ministers offered a short prayer on the presentation of the offertory, thanking God for His gifts, and solemnly asking His acceptance of our offerings, small gifts would be heartily ashamed of their meanness, and collections would largely increase."