

Dominion Presbyterian

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Note and Comment

Everyone is very much encouraged by the reports of General Methuen's two great victories. Decided action is a relief after the seeming uneventfulness of the past ten days.

It is said that the buried city of Pompeii has not yet yielded up half of its artistic treasure. At the present rate of progress seventy years will elapse before it is thoroughly unearthed.

A friend of McGill University has offered to contribute a sum of money to establish a new chair in memory of the late Sir William Dawson. The offer is conditional on the provision that Lady Dawson will enjoy the income during the remainder of her life.

Emerson has characterized "fashionable religion" as the kind which "visits a man diplomatically three or four times—when he is born, when he marries, when he falls sick, and when he dies—and for the rest never interferes with him." How long will it be before that kind of religion disappears forever?

The Osservatore Romano, the semi-official organ of the Vatican, referring to the Dreyfus case, asked recently, "Why should the Church be blamed for not exposing the cause of a Semite accused of treason?" To which the London Times replied, "Who founded that Church but a Semite accused of treason?"

While Christian men everywhere will be grieved over the news of the illness of Dwight L. Moody, they will be glad to know that his state is not so serious as at first reported. Mr. Moody has been working beyond his strength; and no man can do that without paying the penalty in the end. A good period of rest, it is to be hoped, will bring back health to Mr. Moody.

The postmistress at Lady Gray, Cape Colony, showed great bravery when the Boers appeared and took possession of everything. She denounced them in such vigorous terms that they fled, but not before they had repeatedly posted proclamations annexing the district, which the postmistress had as repeatedly torn down, displaying at the same time Sir Alfred Milner's proclamation against treason.

The cultivation of fruit trees along the highways of France is being extended each year, the government having adopted this practice as a source of revenue, so that now roadside fruit cultivation has become an important branch of national industry. This practice, it seems to us, is worthy of imitation in Canada. The cultivation of fruit trees on road allowances would serve a double purpose; it would insure a revenue from the fruit, and at the same time serve to beautify the country.

It is an interesting fact that Queen Victoria, though a member of the Church of England, is also a communicant of the Church of Scotland. Near her Highland home is the Church of Crathie. Its worship is the simple Presbyterian form. The people sit when they sing and stand when they pray, and the sermon is the principal part of the service, and Her Majesty listens most attentively. Norman MacLeod was her favorite preacher, and his prayers for the royal family always touched her.

"The Scotch enjoy one great advantage over us in their church life," says the Michigan Presbyterian. "Their ministers who go to country churches are not treated as if they belonged to an inferior order of the ministry in consequence. In this country a city congregation usually looks suspiciously, if not contemptuously, on a country pastor, although in intellect and piety he may be the peer of any of his brethren. In Scotland some of the most eminent preachers, theologians, ecclesiastics, pastors, never had a city charge, and no one thinks less of them in consequence. In this respect Scotland is vastly ahead of us." We fear Canadians are not any better than their American cousins in this regard.

The ritualistic clergy who refuse to discontinue the use of incense have been told by the Archbishop of York that "the position taken up by the clergy who definitely refuse to give obedience was one of simple Nonconformity. They were Nonconformists in the truest sense of the word. By adopting this position they must inevitably shut themselves out from that fellowship with their bishop and with their brother clergy which would be their natural right, and they could not expect to be dealt with by their bishops in the same way as those who had fulfilled their ordination promise." This is rather hard on the ritualistic clergy, who hate Nonconformists with intense hatred.

Christian Work says: "Although the army canteen has been established in this country under the aegis of the United States Attorney General and in spite of the law, they have been managing this thing better in Canada. In that country to the north the sale of intoxicating liquor in the army camps of instruction has been prohibited by general orders since 1881. In October of last year, the Minister of Militia, having been informed that the regulations were not strictly enforced, issued strict orders that the law must be enforced in its entirety, and now we are told by The Montreal Witness that "not one drop of intoxicating liquor is allowed to be sold at any of the military camps of Canada." We are glad to note that when they have a statute in Canada they enforce it. The nullification of statutes does not seem to form one of the prerogatives of the Attorney General's office in the Dominion." A good word for Canada and her government!

The lines of railway now existing in Asia form a total length of about 30,000 miles, of which two-thirds belong to British India. The portions of the Transcaspien and Transsiberian railways already constructed represent a length of 3,200 miles. In China, a number of European syndicates have obtained concessions for 8,600 miles of railroad, which will traverse regions which are rich in mineral and vegetable products; these lines are for the most part in course of construction. The Chinese government has about 300 miles of railway, these lines being very productive, especially that from Peking to Tientsin. Japan is well provided with railway communication, having 3,200 miles. French Indo-China has at present but 120 miles, but French possessions in Cochin China, Annam and Tonkin will shortly have 2,400 miles, which will develop the mineral and agricultural resources of these countries. The Dutch Indies are well provided, Java alone having 1,000 miles. In British India the greatest length is to be found; here there are 21,000 miles of railway. As to Persia, there are as yet no railroads of any consequence, but Turkey in Asia possesses 1,500 miles, and 600 miles are in construction or projected.

The South Africa republic and the Orange Free State are neighbors, and are now united in the war with Great Britain, but they are remote from each other in their political organization and principles. The constitution of the Free State grants citizenship on equal and easy terms to all white men, makes all citizens eligible to office, guarantees freedom of speech and the press and of public meeting, establishes religious freedom and equality, and makes the courts independent of the legislative and executive department. The president is elected by all the people. The legislature consists of one house, and has power to amend the constitution in two annual sessions and by three-fourths majorities. The constitution is really English in its spirit and principles.

Miss Anna Swanwick, who died last week at the age of eighty-six, was one of the pioneers of the higher education of women, as well as an active worker in other social reforms. Miss Swanwick became dissatisfied with the kind of education given in the girls' school of her day, and went to Germany to carry out her plan of study. There she gained remarkable proficiency in German and in Greek. On her return to London Miss Swanwick became known as a translator of Schiller and Goethe into English. Her fine rendering of Faust is one of the best translations of Goethe's masterpiece. Still more serviceable have been her translations from the Greek. Her English version of the dramas of Aeschylus holds a high place, and has passed through many editions. Miss Swanwick also produced several original works. She had a share in founding Girton College, Cambridge, and Somerville Hall, Oxford, and in opening the lectures in King's College, London, to women. The University of Aberdeen quite recently conferred on her the honorary degree of LL.D.

Instead of arranging for a woman's section at the Paris International Exhibition of 1900, the Dominion Government have decided to publish a handbook for distribution, which will give statistics and information regarding all departments of women's life and activities, and concerning the organizations with which they are connected. The preparation of this work has been entrusted by the Government to the National Council of Women of Canada. The volume will be divided into sections on Charities and Reform, Education, Trades and Industries, Social Work, Professions and Careers, Art, Literature, Church Work, Indian Women, and Immigration, each of which will be undertaken by a Sectional Committee and Convener. In order to facilitate the work of these sections, a list of questions has been prepared and is being sent out by Miss T. F. Wilson, Corresponding Secretary of the National Council, to persons likely to have the requisite experience and ability for replying to inquiries bearing on the various departments named. It will greatly aid the Council in its work if those possessing information which will be of interest for such a handbook, will send their names and addresses (post free) to Miss T. F. Wilson, care of Auguste Dupuis, Esq., Paris Commission, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, before Dec. 1st, and indicate the section regarding which they could furnish answers to our questions. The Government intends to furnish an apartment as a rest room and information office for the use of Canadian lady visitors to the exhibition. Lady Aberdeen is editor-in-chief of this Canadian Woman's Handbook.