

# Dominion Presbyterian

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## Note and Comment.

The earliest mention of shoes is in an Egyptian papyrus, written about the year 2200 B. C.

One hundred and nineteen persons lost their lives in the Swiss Alps last year, a much larger number than in 1900.

A library of 18,000 volumes, all written by women, has been left by a lady bibliophile who has just died at St. Petersburg.

It is proposed to endow a cot in one of the children's hospitals in London in memory of the late Miss Kate Greenaway.

The revenue of France from indirect taxation in the year 1901 shows a deficit, as compared with the Budget estimates, of no less than £4,440,000.

Almost since Bloemfontein has been captured a theatrical company has been playing there without intermission, and has been doing a good business.

The Department of Education of Mexico has suppressed the teaching of Latin in the great preparatory school, substituting for it a thorough course in English.

In New Zealand there is absolutely no distress, but general prosperity. Industries are flourishing, and the number of factory hands has doubled in five years.

Lack of rain is causing grave fears for crops in several parts of California. There was no rain in the greater part of December and only a trace has come thus far this month. The result is that in the southern countries all the crops are suffering severely.

The Rev. Principal Rainy, D.D., the great Scottish ecclesiastical statesman, celebrated last week his seventy-sixth birthday. Dr. Rainy began his ministerial work in 1851 at Huntly, and was appointed Principal of the New College, Edinburgh, twenty-seven years ago.

Mr. John Morley, says the "Daily News," has been almost entirely engrossed of late in his biography of the late Mr. Gladstone, which is well advanced at the printer's. In reading the proofs Mr. Morley has had the assistance of Mr. G.W.E. Russell, while he has had help from several old friends, notably Mr. Charles Stewart Parker. It is now believed that the Life will be ready during October of this year.

The Lutheran Observer says: Dr. John G. Paton did a noble service for the world when he pleaded for a law, to be enacted by all civilized nations, forbidding the sale of firearms, opium and intoxicating liquors to the islanders in the South Pacific. We are glad to know that such a law has been passed by the United States Senate, and only awaits the action of the House of Representatives. Other nations are understood to be ready to co-operate in such a prohibition.

The life-saving service of the United States is very efficient. Last year they assisted in saving 422 vessels, with cargoes valued at \$3,000,000. They warned 231 and aided 548 others. Only 17 lives were lost from the wrecked vessels. They patrol the coast when there is danger.

The soldier in the German army is now taught how to put together a novel form of military boat. The materials consist simply of sixteen lances in ordinary use and an outer cover of strong sail cloth supplied with loops, through which the weapons are placed. A handful of soldiers can not only put it together in a very few minutes, but are able to pull it to pieces at a moment's notice.

A sketch of Ralph Connor appears in "St. Andrew," a Scottish Church journal, December 19th, 1901. The Reviewer, in the same issue, says: "So far as 'The Man from Glengarry' is concerned I can speak only from a perusal of a few instalments of the tale as a serial in the American "Outlook," where it gave me the impression of a breezy, "preachy" story not perhaps of the highest order of art."

The sovereign who reigns over the smallest monarchy in the world is the King of the Cocos, a group of Islands near Sumatra. These islands (states the "Siccle") were discovered about 300 years ago by the captain of the Keeling, but were comparatively little known till 1825, when Mr. Ross, an Englishman, visited them, was struck by their beauty, and took up his abode there. It is his grandson, M. George Reiss, who now holds sway over the Cocos.

The expedition investigating the site of ancient Babylon has discovered the throne room of the great King Nebuchadnezzar, an enormous place about 66 feet broad and 170 feet long, the entrance being immediately opposite the alcove on which the throne stood. On each side of the throne on the north side of the hall are richly coloured architectural adornments. The expedition has also discovered a large number of inscribed bricks. These have been translated, and are found to be letters, psalms, contracts, for the study of the Old Testament.

It is stated that Professor Paul Ehrlich, of Frankfurt-on-the-Main, has been enabled to devote himself to a special study of the disease of cancer in consequence of a bequest of the interest for three years of a sum of 500,000 marks dedicated to this purpose by a Frankfurt banker, the late Herr Theodor Stern. Other sums contributed by private individuals will bring the amount up to be devoted to this special investigation of cancer by Dr. Ehrlich to 40,000 marks or £2000 a year. In Berlin there exists a special committee for the investigation of cancer, which studies pathological accounts of cases and collects statistics and medical literature on this subject. Professor von Leyden is at the head of the committee, and Professor von Kirchner, of the medical department of the Ministry of Public Instruction, is one of its members.

The linen manufacturers of Berlin have now submitted a petition to the Reichstag, in which appear the following statements with regard to the various fruitless attempts made in Germany to produce linen equal in quality to Irish linen. In former years the opinion was held that the better quality of the Belfast linen was due to the superior methods employed in the manufacture. Now, however, it is known to be the fact that the quality is to a considerable degree attributable to the peculiarity of the Irish climate. The comparative warmth and the dampness of the air, and the fogs, form the principal factors in the bleaching process, which cannot be made up for in any way in Germany. The German linen mills have established this fact by very expensive and difficult experiments. One firm brought over about twenty Irishmen, hoping to produce a fabric similar to the Irish linen, but all to no purpose.

A quaint but very forcible appeal was recently made in a missionary address by an American preacher, in which he indicated how much a hen might do for missions if the products of her industry were consecrated year by year to that end. This whimsical suggestion has been actually embodied in one of the projects of the Twentieth Century Fund in New Zealand, where it is proposed that all people who raise chickens shall devote a hen and her products for twenty months to the cause in question. It is estimated that at least ten thousand hens will be set apart for this purpose in the colony, and that in the period indicated there ought to be 2,400,000 eggs produced, worth 25,000 d. ls. Every church member ought to be able to contribute to this great enterprise of missions at least half as much as an industrious hen might accomplish, working steadily through the year for this cause.

The mining of phosphate rock constitutes the only real mineral industry of which Florida can boast, says George H. Eldredge, in Mining and Metallurgy. Some building brick is manufactured in the State, and Florida is our only important domestic source of supply for Fuller's earth, but these industries are comparatively unimportant. The first discovery of phosphate rock was made in the vicinity of Bartow, about thirteen years ago, and 3,000 tons of rock were produced in that year. In the following year the pebble deposits of the Alafia and Peace Rivers were discovered, and a small portion of the 4,100 tons of phosphate shipped that year was river pebble. From this small beginning the industry has grown until in 1899 nearly three-quarters of a million tons of phosphate rock was produced. This is nearly 200,000 tons, or about 30 per cent more than the largest production ever obtained in South Carolina in any one year, although mining in that State has been carried on since 1867. In the twelve years from 1888 to 1899 inclusive, the production of phosphate rock has amounted to 4,362,799 long tons, valued at the shipping point \$15,960,117.