

# Dominion Presbyterian

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## Note and Comment.

A missionary of the Presbyterian church (U. S. South) in China says that many of the Chinese government and private schools now close on Sunday—not to keep the Sabbath holy, but because they see, as some of our people do not, man's need of a rest day.

The Presbyterian missionaries in Canton reported 1,000 converts last year, and 3,000 additions to the various churches. The conditions and examinations for church membership have been made more strict so that membership means much more than it did some years ago.

Lord Rosebery, who is a staunch churchman, has spoken on the government education measure with a courage and frankness that will be approved not only by British Non-conformists, but by thousands of liberal Englishmen of his own faith. He said: "In my opinion, few circumstances have been so injurious to the Church Establishment as the Education Act of 1902. It has raised a bitterness which will long survive the Act. It has raised questions which with regard to the Establishment which were dormant since 1869, when Mr. Gladstone's Irish Disestablishment measure was passed." Lord Rosebery has put into words the opinions of hundreds of his supporters within the Established church and out of it.

The Scottish American Journal records the passing away on the 24th ult. in the 87th year of her age of Mrs. Wm. Stott, who was one of the few remaining links of the past of those who had personal dealings with Sir Walter Scott. Her uncle, the late John Hughes, was a partner with Ballantyne on the reconstruction of the firm after its disaster, and in these days when Sir Walter was working his hardest to pay off his obligations, he almost lived at Paul's Works correcting his proofs so as not to lose an hour's delay in the publication of his later works, by means of which he hoped to discharge his liabilities. John Hughes also aided him in this endeavor, and they both used to remain at the printing office till far on in the night.

It has cost a great deal of determination and no little suffering to give the Bible to South America, but the last barriers opposed are now giving way. Yet so late as December, 1902, the walls of Puquio, in Peru, were placarded by the resident priest with warnings to the people not to accept even as a present, the Bibles which an agent of the American Bible Society had brought to that place. It cost two lives to get the first Bibles into Bolivia, but in November, 1901, the president of that republic warned all residents of La Paz, the capital, by proclamation, the Bible-agents were accorded full civil rights by the laws and must not be disturbed in the peaceful prosecution of their sales. In 1888 a consignment of Bibles to Guayaquil, Ecuador, was ordered to be burnt in the public square, but six years ago a revolution made possible freedom of worship even in Ecuador. In Brazil over 70,000 copies of the Bibles were sold last year. In Chile and Argentina the distribution of Bibles is as open and unmolested now as in any part of the world.

King Edward's efforts as a peacemaker have apparently borne good fruit so far as the affairs of Chili and Argentina are concerned. As is pointed out in a contemporary, Bolivia has recognized the advantage of a peaceful solution of her twenty years' squabble with Chili over the boundary dispute which has often threatened to lead to the fighting which is so beloved of the South American races. But the affluence which had come to the Santiago and Buenos Ayres Treasuries through the mutual disarmament which was rendered possible by King Edward's award, overweighed pugnacity, and convinced the more enlightened statesmen of Chili and Bolivia that their boundary dispute might be similarly arranged. And so King Edward adds another stone to the pile which will mark his memory as the "Peacemaker."

The following paragraph from the Belfast Witness indicates that the people of that city believe very much in good churches and church-going: Twenty years ago church extension in Belfast may be said to have begun in earnest, and since then practically a new Presbyterian church capable of holding 1,000 persons has been erected every year, and taking into account the enlargements of older churches, removal of others to new districts, the seating capacity of Presbyterian churches in Belfast has almost doubled in the time stated. To effect this a sum of almost £250,000 has been raised, mainly by Belfast people, which works out at something over £12,000 a year spent on providing church accommodation in Belfast.

Dr. John Watson (Ian McLaren) whose impending retirement from active ministerial work has been announced, would apart from his reputation as a preacher, his fame as a novelist and his success as a lecturer, have made a name for himself as a raconteur. He is one of the best story-tellers in the kingdom, and his shrewd wit and ready humour animate all his conversation. Dr. Watson is probably the only Nonconformist minister who has two sons holding commissions in the army. He is the son of Highlanders, and all his instincts are Scotch; but he was born in Essex, and lived his first four years in England. His own early inclination was to be a farmer, his father (an Inland Revenue officer) would have had him go to the Bar, but his mother wanted him to be a Presbyterian minister—and a Presbyterian minister he became.

A very remarkable fact connected with missions to the Chinese is thus referred to in the Christian Commonwealth—"The high estimation in which the Chinese now hold Western medical science, entirely through the work of medical missions, is strikingly proved by the fact that Dr. Alice Sibree has gone out to Hong Kong, supported by a fund which has been raised entirely by Chinese gentlemen, who desire to see a maternity hospital established, and Chinese women trained in its wards, and who have given the mission money for the hospital and for the support of a lady doctor for five years. This lady is to be perfectly free to use her opportunities and influence as a Christian missionary, while giving the ladies in Chinese families the benefit of her professional ser-

VICES." The Belfast Witness says: "The fact is creditable not only to the London Mission Society and their agent, it is highly creditable to the Chinese gentlemen concerned. They are presumably not yet Christians, yet they are quite willing that the missionary doctor should have full liberty to evangelise and convert as many natives as he has access to. Much may be hoped from such persons."

Under the caption of "the War Bacillus," in the Christian Observer, Hon. Richard Olney, Secretary of State in Cleveland's second administration, warns the people of the United States against the dangers inseparable from the growth of militarism. He says: "Whatever be the cause—whether necessarily or unnecessarily—the war bacillus has got into the American blood. Under its influence we are changing from a pacific people to a people under arms; are assuming to rival in fighting ability and readiness the great fighting States of Europe, and are bringing upon ourselves and our posterity the onerous taxation and all the other miseries inseparable from great and immediately effective military strength." How to abolish war is a great problem. Mr. Olney commends the objects of the Hague tribunal, but points out that such contrivances cannot reach the root of the matter. He says: "To abolish war, the war spirit must be exorcised. This is an end which may well inspire the best energies of all Christian men and Christian churches. Nothing can promote it so effectively as giving check to the rising tide of militarism in this country. And if our friend from over the seas (Archbishop Davidson) shall contribute to that result by counsel and speech and the powerful influence he deservedly exerts on both sides of the Atlantic, his visit to this country will resolve itself into a mission the beneficence of which it would be difficult to exaggerate."

In London recently Rev. Dr. Horton emphasized the necessity of employing lay preachers for the purpose of reaching the unevangelised masses of the metropolis. He cited the case of a busy workman preaching very effectively to a mission audience. He urged as one of the functions of the church that it should endeavor to find out who among her sons have the gift of preaching and then to insist on training the gift. "There are many among us," he said "young men, possibly young women, who have the gift, and there burns in your heart from time that thought, 'Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel,' and it is really our business to find out who you have the gift, and to enable you to preach. I feel it intensely that London needs preachers not a few. If we had six thousand men in London who had a moderate capacity for preaching—that is, one for every thousand people—this city might be won for Christ, where it is dying for want of preachers. 'How shall they hear without a preacher?' What is the good of men talking unless they are sent, and preaching unless they have a gospel to preach? We want six thousand men whose hearts the Lord has touched, and who find necessity laid on them to preach the Gospel to their fellow-men." Is there not something of this need in the larger cities of Canada?