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Note and Comment.

The Presbyterian Witness, notes the death of two aged people—Mrs. Josiah Fisher, formerly of Musquodoboit, Halifax county, aged 92 years; and Horatio McDonald of St. Mary's, Guysboro county, in the 93rd year of his age. The Halifax Recorder notes the death of Mrs. Addington in Digby at the advanced age of 96 years.

To cigarette-smoking by boys is attributed by a high medical expert in England the deterioration of the classes among which recruits must be sought for the British Army. The majority of the new soldiers sent to South Africa are reported as of low intelligence, and it is said that three years of good feeding will be required to make them capable of a day's work.

The London Times, which has been delving into ecclesiastical statistics, states that the yearly returns of the various sections of the Methodist church throughout the world show a grand total of 48,315 ministers, who have in their charge 89,430 churches and missions. The total membership, with "probationers," is set down at 7,801,311 including 105,452 local preachers. There are 81,580 Sunday-schools, with 804,778 officers and teachers and 6,523,230 scholars.

Cowan Avenue Presbyterian church, Toronto, is after a Nova Scotian for a pastor—Rev. P. M. McDonald of St. Paul's church, Truro, N. S. He is 35 years of age a graduate of Dalhousie University and the Presbyterian Theological College, Halifax, and an excellent preacher. He succeeded Rev. Logan Geggie at Truro, who is now pastor of Dunn Avenue church, Toronto, and only a block away from the church to which his successor has just been called.

Rev. William Ferrie, a venerable Presbyterian minister, died at Monticello, N. Y. on Wednesday, December 30th, in the 89th year of his age. He was one of Scotland's "Disruption Ministers." In 1857 he came to St. John's N. B., and was minister of St. David's Church, till 1861 when he removed to the United States. He ministered for five years to a congregation in Ontario. He was an excellent preacher, an exceedingly active pastor, and very public spirited. He had minute acquaintance with Scottish family histories, and excelled in tracing genealogies.

Cardinal Gibbons' statements to the press when he landed last week were unusually explicit and frank. Commenting on the state of affairs in France, Cardinal Gibbons said, "What benefit France hopes to derive from exiling her own flesh and blood by a law that has not an iota of justice in it, I cannot divine." So thought the Protestants of Europe when the edict of Nantes was revoked and the Protestants of France were hounded to their death or driven forth from a land which never since has failed to suffer because of that lack of far-sighted statesmanship.

The door of the world is wide open to the church. There is not a heathen government on earth, Tibet alone excepted, that forbids entrance to the heralds of the cross. God has remarkably answered the prayer of his people to this end. This means opportunity, and, therefore, responsibility. Never since the Master said "go" has the world been as ready to receive as now. Paul found no such condition in the first century. The Judsons and Careys did not find it a hundred years ago. The twentieth century begins as did no other century of Christian history. The nineteenth was far below it in point of opportunity. Will it end as auspiciously as it has begun? It depends on how we enter the open door.

The week of prayer meetings held last week were for the most part well attended, the services being very enjoyable and helpful. What a pity they could not be followed up by a series of union meetings. It is worth while remembering the history of the week of prayer. It is distinctively missionary in its origin, having been proposed in 1856 by British and American missionaries in India, and, if our information is correct, the first meetings were held in Canada in 1858. The missionaries met together and asked all Christians to assemble together on the first week of each year to pray unitedly and without ceasing for the coming of the kingdom of Christ the world over. The idea met a hearty and instant response from evangelical Christians everywhere, and it is now among the established institutions of Protestantism in all lands.

The Presbyterian minister at Kobe, Japan, writes that only one in ten of the English residents at Kobe attends religious services on Lord's Day. He says these persons not only neglect public worship but violate moral laws. He counsels new comers to set a Christian example to natives instead of descending to heathen levels of loose living. "There it is," says the Belfast Witness, the old story that the greatest hindrance to the spread of Christianity in heathen lands is the unchristian lives of people born under the Gospel. And do not ministers of the gospel experience the same difficulty in Christian communities? The inconsistencies of professing Christians are made the excuse by many people for turning their backs upon religion altogether. And thus, the blessed Master, is wounded in the house of his professed friends.

The Bishop of Ripon computes the population of the world at the beginning of the last century at 1,000,000,000 and the Christian population at 200,000,000—that is one fifth of the whole. In 1897 the population of the world was estimated at 1,500,000,000 and the Christian population at 500,000,000—that is one-third of the whole. He shews that the relative increase in the number of professing Christians was far greater during the last ten years under consideration than during any other decade in the century. Again, in the year 1900 the population governed by Roman Catholics was estimated at 1,500,000,000 and the Christian population at 520,000,000—that is

one-third of the whole. At the beginning of the 100 years the population governed by Protestants was only one-third as large as the governed by Roman Catholics, at the end of 100 years that governed by Protestants was more than double that governed by Roman Catholics.

The Rev. E. D. Maclaren, D. D., Toronto, appeals for men to fill many home mission fields. In the Presbytery of North Bay there are six fields without supply, and in every presbytery in the Synod of British Columbia there are from one to four fields lying vacant. The people are complaining bitterly of the lack of religious ordinances; and in some places other denominations, believing that the Presbyterian church has "gone out of business," are offering to purchase our church property. In the British Columbia Synod alone seven ordained men and six students are urgently needed, and a Hungarian missionary should be at work amongst the people of that nationality along the line of railway west of L-tibridge. An ordained missionary should be sent into Telegraph Creek on the Stickeen River, in the Presbytery of Westminster, and another to the Barr colony in the Presbytery of Edmonton. The cases of special urgency are Trail, Kaslo and Michel or Morrissey, in the Presbytery of Kootenay, Camborne and Princeton, in the Presbytery of Kamloops, and Pender Island and the Wellington district in the Presbytery of Victoria.

The report on the Philippines, issued some time ago by the United States senate, is in some respects a startling document, particularly with regard to the morality of the Spanish friars who practically ruled the islands before the advent of American administration. The report quotes Senor Don Felipe Calderon (educated in Manila by the Jesuits, also a pupil of Archbishop Nozaleda) that he knew a large number of Spanish friars, and says of their morality—"It was such a common thing to see the children of the friars that no one paid any attention to it; and so depraved had the people become in that regard, that the women who were the mistresses of friars felt great pride in it, and had no compunction in speaking of it. So general had this thing become that it may be said that even now the rule is for a friar to have a mistress and children, and he who has not is the rare exception. If it is desired that I give names, I could cite a hundred children of friars in Manila, and in the province everywhere. Beginning with myself; my mother is the daughter of a Franciscan friar. In Pandacan, Isidro Mendez, son of the Bishop Pedro Payo, when he was the parish curate of the Pueblo of Pamar; Colonel Aguilar, of the Spanish Board of Liquidation, son of Father Ferrer, an Augustinian monk; Dr. Gonzales was also the son of a friar. I myself have acted as godfather for three children of friars. I am now managing an estate of \$40,000 that came from a friar for his three children. A family lives with me who are all children of friars. The exception to the rule among the friars was not to have a mistress and be the father of children by her.