

# Dominion Presbyterian

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## Note and Comment.

It is said that the great fire in Montreal last week will incur a loss of over \$2,000,000.

A majority of the Presbytery of Philadelphia favour the repeal of the clause prohibiting marriage with a deceased wife's sister.

The Ontario Legislature will be asked at the coming session to authorize the erection of a statue of Queen Victoria in Queen's Park, Toronto.

Sir Archibald Geikie will retire from the post of Director-General of the Geological Survey of the United Kingdom on March 1st. He has filled the office for twenty years.

It was announced last week that Mr. P. D. Armour left \$1,000,000 to the Armour Institute, and that the Institution would probably become a technical school affiliated with the University of Chicago.

The Hon. Lyman Jones, of Toronto; Mr. A. T. Wood, of Hamilton; Mr. George McHugh, of Victoria county, Ontario, and Mr. Robert Mackay, of Montreal, have been appointed to the Canadian Senate.

Two series of curious Babylonian tablets have recently been placed in the Assyrian room of the British Museum. The characters are said to have been inscribed about 2,400 B.C. The tablets resemble dog biscuits.

The accounts from India on the subject of the famine are more satisfactory. According to a telegram from the Viceroy the total number of persons now in receipt of relief is 200,000, of whom 187,000 are in Bombay.

The native Christian community in South India has attained a population of 608,878. Of these 159,797 are communicants. Since 1878 the community has more than doubled it, and the communicants have grown three-fold.

The deaths are announced of two Irish centenarians—one, a man, named Alex. Gordow, at Cookstown, county Tyrone, aged 101 years, and the other, a woman, named O'Doherty, at Draperstown, county Derry, aged 107.

A recent advertisement in an Irish paper says—"Missing, Jane O'Fogerty; she had in her arms two babies and a Guernsey cow, all black with red hair, and tortois shell combs behind her ears, and large black spots all down her back, which squints awfully."

Capt. Horatio T. McKay, the popular Scotch commodore of the Cunard Line, has retired after being thirty years in the service. He has followed the sea since he was twelve years old, and by ability and perseverance rose to the highest position in the Atlantic steamship trade. Capt. McKay is a native of Banffshire.

A letter has been published from the Rev. Dr. Stewart, of Lovedale, who is at present residing in Edinburgh, in which he says it is a pity that those who support the Boers allow themselves to be imposed upon by such words as religion, freedom and independence, when used by unscrupulous and designing men. Messrs. Merriam and Sauer would not, he says, undertake a long voyage home if they did not expect to succeed, through the aid of those who support the Boer cause. It is to be hoped Mr Chamberlain will refuse to see them, and either send them back for an admonition from Sir Alfred Milner or, failing that, give them an introduction to Mr. Stead.

Great Britain will follow the example of other nations by inaugurating the century with a new penny postage stamp. It is understood that the fresh issue, which will appear shortly, will differ from the present only as regards colour, and that the authorities propose to return to the brick red that did duty for so many years.

The interment of the Queen took place in the royal mausoleum at Frogmore, Windsor, where Her Majesty desired to be laid to rest beside her much-loved and lamented husband. Over the door is carved this inscription:—

Farwell, beloved!  
Here at last I will rest with thee,  
With thee in Christ I will rise again.

There has been established in London a research laboratory for the investigation of the nature and cause of cancer, a disease that one never hears mentioned without thinking of its essentially hopeless and fatal nature. Some cases are cured no doubt by early operation, but the mortality from the ailment is not only very great, but it is increasing year by year.

Philatelists will be interested in the new issue of stamps at Malta, particularly the farthing issue. It is of the ordinary size, and brown in colour. The design is a scene of the harbour, with a view of the sea. The watermark is a crown and C. A. Malta is the second colony to issue a stamp of this value, Barbados having issued farthing stamps in 1896.

In closing his evening lecture on a recent Sunday night the Rev. R. N. Thomson, St. Bernard's Parish Church, Glasgow, said it gave him much pleasure to inform the congregation that he observed a lady 94 years of age present, the oldest member of the congregation, and that on a night when many of the younger members were absent on account of the cold.

A volume of sermons is to be issued by the National Free Church Council. It will consist of evangelistic addresses delivered by ministers and evangelists of the Free Churches, such as Dr. Monro Gibson, Dr. Horton, the Rev. G. Campbell Morgan, the Rev. F. B. Meyer, Dr. Clifford, the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, Gipsy Smith, the Rev. J. Tolfree Parr, Dr. Townsend, and others.

The Rev. James Macdonald, of Dornoch, a cousin of General Hector Macdonald, is now acting as chaplain to the 3d Seaforth Highlanders. His regiment is stationed at Cairo, and he holds services in the Citadel, attended by some 700 Highlanders. On New Year's Day he held a service in Gaelic, probably the first ever known in Cairo. It was strange, indeed, to hear Gaelic singing in the Egyptian capital.

The death of the Queen will entail a great many changes as regards royal residences. Buckingham Palace being the official London residence of the sovereign, it is expected that Marlborough House will go to the Duke of York. Osborne House and Balmoral formed a part of the private property of the Queen. The former, it is believed, has been left to Prince Henry of Battenberg, Governor of the Isle of Wight, and the latter to the Duke of York.

The municipalities of Scotland are everywhere bestirring themselves on the question of Sunday trading. Edinburgh has through a private Bill secured the right of regulating such trading. Glasgow is seeking similar but enlarged powers, and representatives from various bodies in Scotland have prepared a Bill applicable to the whole of Scotland. The evil is not confined to Edinburgh and Glasgow. In Aberdeen a census discloses the fact that no fewer than 457 shops were open on Sunday, while a similar count in Dumfries revealed the number there as 41.

A correspondent relates that one Sunday he called at a cottage in the south of Midlothian and requested a measure of milk, which was promptly handed to him. He offered the woman who attended to his wants a few coppers, but she curtly responded, "I canna tak siller on a Sawbath!" He thanked her, and was turning away, when she whispered, "Mon, ye can drap the bawbees in that tub wi' the graith (soapsuds) in't. I'll get them out the morn!"

On occasion of Emperor William of Germany's 42 birthday, the other day, King Edward VII. presented him with a field-marshal's baton, and it will be in the uniform of a field-marshal in the British army that the Emperor will take part in Queen Victoria's funeral procession on Saturday. The King has also presented the Emperor with the insignia of the Order of the Garter, set with diamonds, which the late Queen intended to have given him on his birthday.

Rev. Dr. Alex. Stewart, well-known in Scotland by his pen name of "Nether Lochaber," died on the 17th inst., aged 72 years. Dr. Stewart, who was descended from the historic house of Appin and Ardsheal, was born in Uist and spent his early days in Fort-William and Lorn. In 1851 he was appointed to the charge, which he filled till his death. He was known throughout the United Kingdom as an authority on all matters connected with Highland history and folklore. If he had been spared, Dr. Stewart would have celebrated his jubilee as a minister in the course of a few months, an event which, it is understood, he was looking forward to with much interest.

No important changes have occurred in the Chinese situation. The reply of the Ministers of the powers to the Chinese plenipotentiaries in regard to punishments was delivered on Thursday of last week. It emphasizes the point that the signing of the agreement will be without value, unless good faith is shown by acts, and that it will be absolutely useless to expect the removal of troops or concessions on the part of the allies until China has conclusively proved her good intentions. The reply points out that the military arrangements of the powers depend upon the promptitude with which China executes her engagements. They also demand that the death penalty be imposed on four Chinese functionaries.

No important change in the South African war situation has occurred. Martial law has now been proclaimed in every part of Cape Colony except the district of Cape Town, Simonstown, Windberg, Port Elizabeth and East London. It has also been proclaimed in Timburland, Griguland East and in East and West Pondoland. The most discussed event during the week in connection with the present stage of the war is the announcement by General DeWet that he will have Botha shot the first opportunity. Botha wrote a pamphlet which has had a wide circulation among the Boers. In it he advises them of the hopelessness of continuing the war, and advises them to surrender their arms and go back to work. It is this which has angered De Wet.

As the "Westminster Gazette" forcibly puts it, both in its cartoon and letterpress, the Duke of Norfolk, by his address to the Pope, has got into a pretty mess. The "Westminster Gazette" tells him pretty plainly "it was a pity he did not stick to his moral cart." But the kingdom all round should be thankful that the power of mischief at home is out of the hands of a man who has the effrontery to denounce in Rome the Bible and other religious societies whose aim is to promote the cause of true religion. Said the Duke in his address to the Pope, "Nor can we forbear to express our indignation at the attempts of wealthy proselytising societies to corrupt the faith of the young and poor in this, your city of Rome, and our sympathy with the sorrow thus caused to your paternal heart." This is not bad from this henchman of Cardinal Vaughan, who has publicly stated that one of his objects in his "Catholic Truth Society" is to bring England back to the Roman obedience.