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Note and Comment.

The viceroy of India reports heavy and beneficial rains in many parts of the peninsula. The number of persons on relief has fallen to 3,000,000.

Principal Rainey will be nominated as Moderator of the United Free Church by Dr. Moir, Moderator of the United Presbyterian Church, and his seconder will be the Earl of Moray.

A very strong hint has been conveyed to Dr. Leyds that the French government has no desire that Mr. Kruger should visit France. What that astute and unscrupulous diplomatist may do remains to be seen.

It is stated that there are no less than four new life insurance companies in course of formation in different parts of this country. Two are to have headquarters in Toronto, one at Vancouver, and one at Winnipeg.

The Speaker of the Imperial House of Commons, in addition to his official residence in the Palace of Westminster and of special allowances for his private secretaries, and so on, receives \$25,000, with a pension of \$20,000.

Roumania would appear to be the most illiterate country in Europe. The last census shows that in a population of about 6,000,000 nearly 4,000,000 can neither read nor write, and that only a little over 1,000,000 have any education at all.

The names of Strathcona and Mount Stephen will never die in Montreal. Their noble gift of half a million to build the Royal Victoria, one of the grandest hospitals in America, rank them with Peabody as philanthropists, and examples to the world.

Reports from the Paris exhibition state that all the Canadian exhibits of furniture, carriages, office and school desks, have been eagerly purchased by Parisians. Canadian cheese is now advertised as a specialty by the best Parisian grocers.

The most recent evidence that abstinence conduces to longevity is supplied by a circular issued by one of the great assurance societies announcing that total abstainers of two years' standing will be allowed an immediate reduction from their premiums.

Dr. Almond, in the current "Nineteenth Century," says he believes the injury done by the occasional cigarette to growing boys is an evil that calls for immediate and stringent legislation. He remarks that the School Boards seem powerless to prevent this "really gigantic evil."

It is announced in London that Rev. James Gray, the leading Presbyterian minister in Pretoria, who before the war denounced Mr. Kruger's system of government from the pulpit, has been placed by Lord Roberts in charge of the official library and the remaining Transvaal archives at Pretoria.

During London's jubilee over the relief of Mafeking a humorous policeman was asked in the thick of the crowd by a harassed pedestrian to tell him the nearest way to Charing Cross Hospital. "Call 'or 'three cheers for Kruger,'" responded the cheerful guardian of the peace, "and you'll be there in no time."

A Young Woman's Temperance Union has been formed in Truro, with about 40 members. It is stated that one of the pledges these young ladies will incorporate in their by-laws is that they will not associate with, nor walk on the street with, nor in any way countenance any young man who persists in using liquor or tobacco, or who is known to use profane language.

A cablegram has been received from Dr. Howard G. Barrie, the representative of the Young Men's Christian Association with the Royal Canadians, to the effect that he is on his way home on the Idaho, which touched at the Cape Verde Islands on Wednesday, and expects to be in Halifax on the 30th.

John Alexander Dowie, of Chicago Zion notoriety, has been meeting a very unfriendly reception in London, and other cities of England, in his efforts to spread his unsavory teachings. It is surprising that he should have any following at all, but in every land and city there are some people who are ready to be deceived.

Mark Twain, in making his last speech in Great Britain before leaving for America, maintained his reputation to the end. He told a delightful tale of a little girl who wrote to him saying she liked the name Mark because Mark Antony came in the Bible. He replied that since Mark Antony got into the Bible he was not without hopes himself.

Kruger is a total abstainer and drinks his toasts in milk. He eats very fast and has three meals a day. At midday he was, while at Pretoria, generally alone at table, as it is not the custom of the ladies of the house to take their meals at the same hour, as the men, who are served before them. Kruger appears to have governed his house with an iron hand that was not covered by a velvet glove.

Protestantism is the hope of France. Three hundred French priests have left the Catholic church in the last two years. One of them, Abbe Bouvier, says that in parts of France the population is more Protestant than Catholic in thought. One of the best things we have heard from the Exposition was that it was used to effect the distribution of 300,000 Gospels and Testaments.

The Independent Belge says the Ottoman government has just completed its census of the adherents of Islamism. The total number of Musselmans is said to be 196,000,000, of whom 18,000,000 belong to Turkey in Europe, 99,500,000 to Asia Minor, Beluchistan and the Indies, 20,000,000 to China, 36,500,000 to the North and Northeast of Africa, while 23,000,000 are spread in groups more or less numerous throughout the other countries of the world.

Helen Keller, the interesting blind and deaf mute, has passed the entrance examination to Radcliffe College. She has chosen the French, English and German courses, and in addition the course in history. The examination papers were made out, using the raised point system, and she wrote the answers upon a typewriter. At the lectures she is accompanied by Miss Sullivan, who sits close behind her and gives her in the manual language, whatever the instructor may be saying.

The printing of the British Museum Authors' Catalogue is now completed up to the end of 1899. The compilation of this enormous work has occupied 20 years' incessant toil, and has entailed a total cost of \$200,000. The catalogue comprises 400 large thick volumes and seventy supplements. The staff which has been engaged upon this work is now devoting its attention to the compilation of a subject index, which it is estimated will keep them fully occupied for another ten years.

The question whether college women marry was answered by one of them in the affirmative with the support of abundant statistics. Another girl graduate has gone further, and sets out to prove that college girls marry better and make better wives and mothers than those who have not the advantage of a college education. This is the conclusion arrived at by Miss Mary Roberts Smith, associate professor of sociology in Leland Stanford University. She compared the records of 343 married college women with their sisters, and found they had more children, were healthier and more prosperous.

The great coal strike is off. The men have been granted nearly everything they sought, and their demands were not unreasonable. The operators will not lose a penny; they will take it out of the public. The public will grumble less at paying a trifle more for coal if they know the increase will go to make easier the hard lives of the miners.

In Sweden the government is waging a strong and serious fight against drunkenness. Not content with passing severe police laws and carrying them out vigorously, it arrests every relapsed drunkard and locks him up in a house of correction, where he is thoroughly dosed with alcohol, it being mixed into every portion of his food and drink, until he is so utterly disgusted with the taste of it that he cannot bear the smell of wine or whiskey for a long time. It is claimed for this original and drastic cure that it is permanent in nine cases out of ten.

The Presbyterian Standard says: Oliver Cromwell was a Protestant and England was a Protestant nation. Italy was a Catholic nation and the Waldenses were Protestants. Cromwell told Italy that the Italian Inquisition had to stop murdering his fellow Protestants, "whose bones lay scattered on the Alpine mountains cold." And Italy stopped. The powers are all, with the exception of Japan, Christian nations. Christians of all sects have been murdered in China. We hope that there will be some Cromwell found whose words to China will be remembered as long as Cromwell's blunt message to Italy was.

A short time ago, during some digging operations in Chester, England, an interesting relic of the Roman occupation of Great Britain was unearthed. This was a section of lead piping, supposed to have been laid about the year 79 A. D., and was utilized for the purpose of carrying water to the Roman camp. About twelve months ago a similar piece of piping was unearthed near this same spot, but its origin was disputed. This new discovery, however, sets all such controversies at rest, since upon the piping are plainly inscribed the words "Cneoius Julius Agricola." This relic is additionally interesting since it is said to be the only inscription extant bearing the Roman Governor's name.

A Roman Catholic writer of some note is raising an alarm in France over the advance of Protestantism. In an article in the "Pays" he says: "A day will of necessity come when they will drive the cure from his church, the bishop from his cathedral, and every Catholic from public office." It is only to be hoped that Protestantism is making the progress this writer supposes. It is said, however, that the Protestants of France have an influence altogether out of proportion to their numbers. This is true in all countries where Catholics and Protestants are fellow subjects, on anything like equal terms, and should carry very serious suggestions to the Catholics.

Mr. McLeod Stewart has issued an address to the electors of Carleton County, in which he announces himself as an independent Conservative candidate, with the following platform:—1. I shall support and urge the early construction of the Georgian Bay canal. 2. I shall urge and strongly support a rapid trans-Atlantic service with its natural concomitant cold storage system, which shall benefit the farmers immensely. 3. I shall support a cable line between the Dominion of Canada and the great commonwealth of Australia, which has just been organized by Imperial charter, and which has been so strongly and ably urged by my friend, Sir Sanford Fleming. 4. I shall with all the vigor and energy and such ability as a kind Providence has given me, support and advocate the erection of a fire-proof geological museum in the capital of Canada, which is in the metropolis county, which I am desirous and ambitious to represent." As it is desirable that the House of Commons should contain a larger number of independent members, Mr. McLeod Stewart has our best wishes for success in his present contest.