

# THE MARITIME PRESBYTERIAN

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## The Maritime Presbyterian.

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Twenty millions of people, it is often said, die in India every year, from the bites of serpents. The probability is that the number is much greater. And yet the serpent is looked upon as sacred and the natives will not kill them. Animals and insects of almost all kinds are regarded with veneration. To feed them is a merit, because one may be feeding the spirit of a dead ancestor, for the same reason to destroy them is a sin. This superstition is one of the reasons why India is so cursed with pests of all kinds. One of the good results of the introduction of Christianity and the overthrow of superstition, will be that these will be destroyed and life made at once more safe and more comfortable. Thus will the gospel bring blessing temporal as well as spiritual.

An esteemed correspondent writes regarding prohibition, complaining of the "muz zling" of so large a part of the religious press, and speaking in high terms of the Montreal *Witness* for its brave and noble stand on this question, as well as on all great questions that affect the well being of our people and country. Modesty bids us withhold his complimentary references to our own pages. With regard to the traffic he indignantly remarks, "This cursed unrighteous traffic is slaughtering our people by the thousand yearly. Is it any wonder that unrighteousness prevails in political circles, indeed in so many circles when the religious press, in general, is so silent upon the greatest wrong ever perpetrated under heaven. - I am glad that the Jesuit question is opening the eyes of thousands to see what

men will do to get into place and power. It is good to see that the religious press offers no uncertain sound on this question, but why is it so silent on a question that is even of more importance. It is bad enough to be robbed of our civil and religious liberties, but surely it is not so cruel as to be robbed of the lives of thousands of our people. And yet this can go on and so little protest be offered by our religious press. Oh, the 'cruelty of silence' when a man or a paper should speak out."

Amid the discouragements of the present it is well to look at what has taken place in the past. In 1600 Giordano Bruno was burned at the stake in Rome. What was his crime? He was a Dominican Monk, a great student. He contended for freedom, for liberty of thought, for the privilege of free discussion and free speech. He lectured far and wide and criticized with severity some of the tenets of the Church of Rome. This could not be permitted. Men must speak as Rome teaches or be silent. He was taken and burned at the stake. But what a change to-day: On the 4th of June, amid great popular rejoicing, a statue was unveiled in his honor on the spot where he had burned. Pope and Inquisitors are still in Rome and had they the power the fagots would be lighted and men still burned at the stake, but they are powerless. They can only look and mourn while the world's progress goes steadily on.

Conventions! Conventions! large, larger, largest! All organization take their rise in some busy brain, they begin on a small scale. Then a few workers meet to consult as to the best ways of carrying on this work. Then they gather from a wider sphere in larger assembly, until they embrace the world, and to-day we have world's conventions of temperance workers, world's missionary conferences, world's Presbyterian and Pan Anglican Councils, world's Y. M. C. A. conventions, and there has just been held in London

THE WORLD'S SUNDAY SCHOOL CONVENTION.

It met July 3rd, over 900 foreign delegates