

Dominion Presbyterian

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NOTE AND COMMENT

"It is significant that in the Spanish Parliament recently a member dared to urge that "freedom of religion should be granted instead of toleration, that civil marriages should be recognized and the cemeteries secularized."

The tutor of the son of the Khedive of Egypt is a young Englishman by the name of George Robb. He is a Wesleyan in religious faith and practice. His pupil is ten years of age. The Khedive himself was tutored by an Oxford University graduate.

After a little more than a hundred years, there are now more than a thousand ordained male Protestant missionaries in India, and a native church with a membership of more than a million. The ratio of Christian increase, moreover, is four times as rapid as that of the population at large.

The Chapman evangelistic campaign opened in nearly all of the 25 churches in and around Boston and Dr. Chapman with his force of 60 evangelists and singers is actively at work. Much preparatory work was done and the daily papers are rendering notable service in the promotion of the campaign.

It is said that five hundred and ninety-nine thousand dollars was given last year by the native Christians in foreign lands for the work of the Lord. This shows a noble sense of giving when we consider that many of them earn only a few cents a day. There are about a million church members in the foreign field.

If Christian men had given to education what they had lost in speculation, every Christian college in the world would be abundantly endowed. Less ventures and more benevolence would be at once "more redolent of sweet perfume," and more advantageous to the world. Endowing colleges is better than gambling in grain and stocks.

In six years, that is, since the Boer war, Wesleyan missionaries in the Transvaal have gathered out of hethenism and baptized no less than ten thousand natives. The number of full members has risen from 8,794 to 17,007, and those on trial from 3,506 to 6,395. Perhaps, after all, the war did something to prepare the soil for the Gospel.

The man who can preach the gospel in Chinese today has the highest privilege given to man in these opening years of the twentieth century. The man who has a genuine message and can deliver it with power will have as sympathetic and appreciative an audience in China as he will find in the United States, and the results of his preaching will be just as gratifying.

The Government of British Columbia has just created a game preserve of 450 square miles, to be known as Goat Mountain Park. It is about sixty five miles north of the United States boundary, and lies along the summit of the Continental Divide. Besides the preservation of wild animals, the reservation will preserve the timber about the head waters of numerous streams. The land is not valuable for agriculture, and the ownership by the Government should be maintained.

According to The Congregationalist, the price paid by the poor of Chicago for coal by the basket above the retail price per ton reached a sum equal to the total contributions to the five principal charitable organizations of the city. Truly the destruction of the poor is his poverty.

It is estimated there are 20,000,000 Mohammedans in China, of whom about nine-tenths are in four western provinces; Peking has 100,000. The largest group of them in Central China is found in Nanking, where there are more than three thousand Mohammedan families. They have twenty-five mosques and are now building a large, handsome one outside the city gates.

Nantes, France, is a famous city, where many events have taken place and many important scientific experiments have been made. Its municipal council has offered a bounty to the city employees. Hereafter any of these in good standing will receive \$20 down on marrying, and \$10 a month for each child until the latter is fourteen years old. The decline in the increase of the population of France has occupied the serious attention of physicians, publicists and the clergy, and this is undoubtedly one of the results.

China's millions garbed in mourning, white and blue, red buttons banished, bells and musical instruments silenced, barber shops closed, schools closed, weddings forbidden, officials prostrate and wailing daily in temples, all over China, before the tablets of the late Empress Dowager and of the Emperor who "ascended upon the Dragon to be a guest on high"—these tokens are required by the imperial code. It is pleasant to hear that missionaries and Chinese Christians in many places respectfully improved the occasion by special sermons and prayers for the new government.

From out the death chamber of the Empress Dowager at Peking, there floats a sad whisper of unhappy last hours of an imperious old woman who saw herself helplessly facing the unknown. Whatever dread crimes history must record by her name, who can resist a throb of pity for great Tze Hei, poor Tze Hei! "I had thought of her as a monster," said a woman missionary, after standing with the crowd on the wall of Peking gate in 1901, to see the royal retinue return from flight; "but when I saw her face as she looked up with an expression of womanly interest—a face intelligent and not unkindly—I lost my former feeling. I said to myself, 'How you have been deceived by evil counsellors!'"

A correspondent of the Cumberland Presbyterian, writing from Edinburgh, says: Now, here is a most striking fact, that Scotland, with all her unemployed, with all her poor, with all her drunkenness, observes the Sabbath day most scrupulously. On Saturday nights, both in Edinburgh and Glasgow, the streets are a seething mass of people, many of whom are idle, drunk, and indifferent. But on the morrow, what a change! All shops are closed, no games are played, the streets are cleared of Saturday night's mass, while well dressed, quiet folk move in an orderly manner to the various churches of the city. One's impression is that a city, and a nation, have not forgotten to "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

The Congregationalist tells of an English layman who has been a Sabbath school teacher for more than fifty-five years who has accumulated a library of expository and theological books weighing four tons. How the spirit of commercialism is invading even our libraries—using tonnage instead of tomes in describing their size! The same teacher has the manuscripts of 2,000 lessons which he prepared, and has them classified and indexed. He must be a prodigy of thoroughness and system.

Statistics just issued rank Ireland fourth among the nations in the volume of trade in proportion to her population. Holland, Belgium and Switzerland are the only countries which exceed her. In the two years, from 1904 to 1906, Ireland's total exports and imports grew from \$510,000,000 to \$569,000,000, and the export of eggs alone went up by \$4,000,000. The export of poultry from 1904 to 1907, increased by \$1,100,000, and the export of pork products by more than \$5,000,000. While her foreign trade is growing, trade at home is also flourishing. In spite of the bad times. A return which has just been issued shows that the deposits and cash balances in joint stock banks on June 30 last were \$252,980,000, which is the highest on record, and \$12,645,000 in excess of the figure a year before. The figure in 1888 was \$151,550,000.

Messina is to be rebuilt. The Italian Government has decided on this course, and will further its effort. It seems to be a mistake. It is true that the site is the natural location for a city, and is unlikely that another earthquake will occur immediately. But this is the centre of the most dangerous earthquake region in the world. The people of this region have frequently suffered, and the loss of life has been great during centuries past. It was greater at this time, because there were more people to suffer, and more and higher buildings to be thrown down. The difference between building a great city in an earthquake region and using the land for agriculture is radical. In the latter case there are few people, and these are likely to be in the open air, or at best in low houses. Even though another earthquake may not occur for a hundred years, it seems that the loss of 160,000 lives is too much for a century.

A new Baptist body has recently been organized with its centre of strength in Arkansas and Texas. It calls itself the Baptist General Association, and it consists of some churches which have left the Southern Baptist Convention, and a few Illinois churches which formerly held allegiance with the Northern Convention. The reason for this split is an objection to the maintenance of missionary boards, which the seceding churches hold to be not Biblical as they are not specifically mentioned in the New Testament. Mission work, they hold, must be performed by the individual churches sending out their missionaries. They are also opposed to theological seminaries. This leads the Interior to say that "It had as well be set down as a definite fact that the 'regular' Baptists of the country now make three denominational bodies instead of two, as formerly, for the Baptist General Association organized a year ago has taken on all the character of a separate autonomous denomination."