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OTTAWA, WEDNESDAY, SEPT., 9, 1908

The latest figures show that France as a nation is slowly dying. Alone among nations the deaths last year exceeded the births. In French Canada, happily, opposite conditions prevail. No "race suicide" in that quarter.

The Living Age for September 5 draws upon a new source, The Hindustan Review, for an article on the "Unrest in India." Written by a clergyman at Jubbulpore, it presents a more than ordinarily intimate view of the subject. Its point of view is indicated by the sub-title "The Adolescence of an Empire."

All modern medical specialists recognize the nerve-racking effects of loud, strident and unnecessary noises. Wherefore, it would seem a Christian duty on the part of the individual by example and by precept to reduce all unnecessary noises to the minimum. Nowadays, a person deaf or partially deaf is not without his quid pro quo of compensation.

The report of the sudden and serious illness of Rev. Wm. Patterson, D.D., of Bethany Church, Philadelphia, will be received with sincere regret in Canada, where the former pastor of Cooke's Church, Toronto, is so well known and so much beloved. The press despatch, dated 5th September says: While in the Franklin National Bank, Rev. William Patterson, D.D., pastor of Bethany Presbyterian Church, was stricken with apoplexy. He was removed to the Presbyterian Hospital. The lower part of his body is affected. The patient is reported to be in a critical condition. Rev. Mr. Patterson was for some years pastor of Cooke's Presbyterian Church, Toronto. Since the above was in type more favorable reports of Dr. Peterson's condition have been received, and hopes are entertained of his recovery.

**THE FALL CAMPAIGN.**

We refer not to the large political campaign which some say may not be remote, but to the Fall campaign of the individual congregation. Rightly considered, it ought not be regarded as the minister's campaign, nor the elders' campaign, nor the managers' campaign, but the campaign of the whole congregation. We will not make any list of things which might better be things undone; but we think there should be a more direct and systematic planning for spiritual results—a more direct planning for additional recruits to Christ's unshamed army, and for a deepening of spiritual life in the cases of those already enrolled. Perhaps it would help were we to put in the first place what we so often leave to the last—prayer.

**HELP IT ALONG.**

A new layman's missionary autumn campaign is pending. Help it along. Let it leaven the whole lump of Canadian Christianity. The test of success in the movement will be the extent to which it results in the adoption of the weekly envelope for missions. And the general adoption of the weekly mission envelope may have the other good result of the individual setting apart a certain settled percentage of income for religious and philanthropic purposes. Some of the most consecrated and magnetic men of missions are to take part in the campaign in Canada this autumn. Can any afford to withhold co-operation?

**A GOOD APPOINTMENT.**

The public will hear with pleasure of the appointment by the Dominion Government, of Prof. Adam Shortt, of "Queen's," to the position of Commissioner in connection with the working out of the new Dominion Civil Service Act. This far-reaching Act demands the services of a man of independent mind, of firmness to do the right, and one possessed of an instinctive feeling for fairness alike to the country and to the individual. Such a man is Adam Shortt, of "Queen's." The appointment is complimentary to Prof. Shortt, and not less creditable to those by whom the appointment has been made.

**BRAIN WORK MAKES FOR LONG LIFE.**

Great mathematicians have been proverbially long lived; great judges almost equally so; and it is even probable that something of the same kind might be said for eminent journalists who are constantly called upon to apply their minds to the varying circumstances of the day. The "Lancet" believes that no educational acquirement would be of greater value than that which should give the power of restraining the thoughts from perpetual movement along reflex grooves, and should compel them, day after day, if only for some brief season, to consider the foundations of accepted beliefs and the validity of the arguments which might be urged either in defence or in disproof of them.

**MINORITY RULE IN CONGREGATIONS.**

BY KNOXONIAN.

The theory is that Presbyterians are largely self-governed people. They elect their own elders, deacons, managers, and ministers, and control their own affairs generally, subject of course to the revision of the courts of the Church. The theory is a very fine one. It looks well on paper—a good deal better on paper than it sometimes does in practice. It is a good theory to make speeches about and expound at moderations, inductions and other places where the "true blue" most do congregate. A man who cannot make some good points when showing how beautifully the electing power vested in the people is balanced by the ordaining power of the next court above has no capacity for making points. A man who cannot wax eloquent when explaining our gradation of courts and showing how the injured innocent can prosecute his appeal from a Session up through the Presbytery, on through the Synod until, at last, he reaches the General Assembly—a man who cannot wax eloquent on such a theme has no true eloquence in him. He has no faculty for ecclesiastical fights. A true ecclesiastical orator should soar on this theme as a politician soars when he talks about laying something at the foot of the throne.

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No doubt our system of government has worked fairly well. It has some defects, but what system is perfect? The fact that it breaks down occasionally is no argument against its general excellence. Examine its operations in many countries, and for a long period of time, and it will be found to have worked as well as, if not better than, any other system. This is the true test for any system. One of its most serious defects in practice is that—in spite of the theory that majorities should rule within certain limitations—minorities, as a matter of fact, do often rule congregations. Some congregations are ruled practically by one family. Some by one man, a few by one woman. It would be going too far to assert that in every such case the practical effect is bad, and only bad. Much depends on the character of the controlling parties. Many a struggling congregation has been kept in existence by one family, or by one man, and a few by one woman. Now it one or two persons have more zeal, more energy, more working power, more of the spirit of self-sacrifice than all the rest of the congregation, the few will rule in spite of any theory of church government. Other things being nearly equal, the man who does the most work, and makes the greatest sacrifices, will always have the most influence among Christian people. If any man in a congregation have more grace, more working ability, and make more sacrifices than the whole session that man will have more influence than the whole session. If any man have abilities equal, or nearly equal, to those of the minister, and have a more spiritual mind—and shows more devotedness and self-sacrifice in the work—than the minister,