

# Dominion Presbyterian

\$1.50 Per Annum.

OTTAWA

Single Copies 5 Cents

## NOTE AND COMMENT

Writing of Gipsy Smith's visit to Pittsburg the United Presbyterian says: It is doubtful if any evangelist who has conducted meetings in this city has had so large a hearing from men, or has made as deep impression on them, as has Gipsy Smith. It may not be easy to account for it, but it is undeniably true.

Thomas Edison again claims to have perfected a storage battery capable of being economically used in the operation of street cars and other vehicles. It is to be hoped that this battery will be more successful than its predecessors, and that we may some day bid farewell to the unsightly and dangerous trolley system.

One of the first missionaries, sent out by the American Board, says the Herald and Presbyterian, wrote a leaflet on the claims of the people of Asia for missionary aid. A young physician, Dr. Scudder, read the tract by chance while waiting to see a patient. As a result, the Scudder family have given to India thirty missionaries and 529 years of service. Fruitful seed, certainly.

"Service, not lordship," has been the predominant trait of the great men of all classes, through whose lives and labours the foundation and superstructure of the British Empire have been raised. Men who combine humility of spirit with nobility of character and indomitable courage and industry have been, are, and will be, the true master builders, whether in Church or State, so long as time lasts.

The Boston Herald some weeks ago discontinued its "comic supplement" to the great delight of many of its readers. The Herald has since added to its features a weekly article on the International Sunday-school lesson and a comment on the weekly Christian Endeavor topic. We have a number of excellent evening papers in Canada that would be greatly improved and made much more acceptable in many homes, if they also abandoned the vulgar "comic supplement" which disfigures their Saturday issues.

By a decree issued at Peking, all China is informed that, from the Emperor downward, everybody must obey the edict affirming the fulfillment of a constitution, which is set for the eighth year of the reign of Hsuan Tung, which reign begins officially on Jan. 22. "Let reign begin officially on Jan. 22. Let no vacillation or indifference be shown," runs the decree, "but let everybody quicken his energies so that the constitution may become a fact and tranquility prevail universally." This is excellent theory, and it rests with the best elements in China to see that it is borne out in practice.

Local Option has justified its merits in many municipalities, says the Canadian Baptist, and the electors in all but two places where repeal was recently attempted, have declared by vote that they desire to remain under its law. This is significant; and we do not see how the Ontario Government can much longer decline to remove the three-fifths incubus. Given a fair field and no favor, Local Option bids well to extend on every hand. But it seems unreasonable that its extension must be sought against the odds of that un-British and un-democratic three-fifths clause.

We are now told that the report of earthquake shocks on the Canadian and American coast was a "fake." There were no "quakes." At Johannesburg, South Africa, they had a slight shocking, but no damage resulted.

In response to diplomatic overtures from China, all powers having treaty relations with the last-named country agreed that on Jan. 1 they would prohibit their subjects from exporting into its provinces either morphia or hypodermic syringes, which had been used by many Chinese as substitutes for opium smoking, from which they had been cut off by the imperial edict of 1906. Japan, foremost of nations in protecting its own people against opium, was the last nation to agree to this humane proposal, on which depended the success of the Chinese Government in its efforts to rid its people of the opium curse.

For many years the British and Foreign Bible Society has employed three Italian colporteurs in Sicily. Last year they sold in the island more than ten thousand copies of the Scriptures. After the appalling disaster at Messina it was feared that Colporteur Giuseppe Greco, who was stationed in that city, had perished. The Society's agent at Rome, the Rev. R. O. Walker, has received, however, a letter from him dated December 31, in which he says: "Surely I must call myself fortunate in having escaped with my life, and my family also, from the catastrophe which took place on the night of December 23." Provision has been made for a distribution of Scriptures gratis among the wounded and refugees.

The state of Mexico is no longer what it was, from the Roman Catholic standpoint. Last June, in the city of Guanajuato, over 600 Protestants met in a convention of Sunday schools and young people's societies. Thirty years ago this same city stoned the Protestant missionaries who tried to establish a mission there, and they were besieged for a whole day and night before being rescued by the Government troops. Now the governor himself met and cordially welcomed a committee of the convention. It seems that today, says the Christian Guardian, Protestantism is a real factor in Mexican life, and one result of it is seen in the religious tolerance which now exists in the country; for which Mexico was not formerly noted. For all of which the church of God has reason to give thanks.

London, the world's great city grows apace. There was a gain of 905,505 years of life-capital during the year 1907. This is the year covered by the latest report, issued on January 8. It was the year of London's lowest death rate. The figure fell to 14.6 per 1,000, which was lower than that of any other big city in the kingdom or in any other part of the world. Other main facts which appear in the report of the medical officer of health are: The marriage rate (17.0) in 1907 was slightly below the rate of the preceding year (17.1). The birth-rate (25.6) in 1907 was the lowest on record in London since the institution of civil registration. The infant mortality in 1907 was also the lowest on record, a result to which the comparatively low temperature in the third quarter of the year largely contributed.

The Chinese Christian Association of Montreal last week adopted the following resolution: "Gratefully acknowledging the great progress of true Reform in China and among the ubiquitous Chinese, specially in the attempted abolition of opium, and also the growth of a sentiment against gambling—the two great evils since idleness is doomed and declining along with several lesser evils—we would hereby, while praying for the fullest success of the coming anti-opium conference in Shanghai, renew our hope for the effective enforcement of the Canadian opium prohibition law on the 21st Chinese New Year's Day, as also the speedy removal of the gambling curse in Montreal and elsewhere, as entailing much suffering and a cause of much wrong-doing to which end we ever offer our earnest aid." The resolution is signed by Chan Nom Seng, Chairman of the Reform Committee. An anti-gambling pledge has also been proposed, but it is hoped that will be included in the wider Christian reform platform.

The New York "Evening Post," had recently a scathing denunciation of the excessive costliness of everything connected with the indulgence by the city rich of the lonely child, and follows it up by a much-needed exposure of the books, especially the children's books, written to minister to this vicious tendency. In part it says: "In families with narrow means these books might be distinctly pernicious. Sensible people sometimes wonder why our millionaires indulge in such vulgar ostentation. The reason is plain; they do not know any better. With very limited intelligence and education, they lack the wit or the imagination to conceive of other ways of 'keeping up with their incomes.'" The prayer of Agar, "Give me neither poverty nor riches," is more needed in these days. Republican simplicity never exalted, either in Venice or the United States. But in the latter there used to be, and there is still, a remnant of people who strive to live in simple ways, whatever their income may be.

The practice of human sacrifice in India, though much less common than formerly, has not wholly ceased, as cases of it are still occasionally reported from remote districts. But anyone who worships his heathen gods in such cruel rites runs large risks of being called to account and punished in accordance with British law. The Calcutta "Scotsman" says: Within the last few days a case of human sacrifice has come before the sessions court at Chota Nagpur. A bunia of the Ranchi district, on the Loharaga plateau in this province, purchased one of the small hamlets which are dotted over the tableland. His fields turned out to be so fertile that he determined upon a sacrifice to the local goddess. With great craftiness he engaged a boy to catch birds for him, and then luring the lad into the jungle he set two of his cultivators on to commit in ceremonial form the sacrificial murder, and himself made the offering of blood to the goddess. The boy was missed, however: the police tracked down the men who had set upon him, and on their confession the bunia was charged with the crime. The sessions judge at Chota Nagpur accepted his plea that human sacrifice was part of his religion, and reduced the charge of murder to one of homicide. In the end the bunia was sentenced to transportation for life.