

Dominion Presbyterian

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NOTE AND COMMENT

The Winnipeg general hospital board has decided that patients who are suffering from any ailment as a result of which they are liable to injure themselves, will not be admitted to the institution unless accompanied by a keeper.

The birth-rate in England and Wales last year was 26.5 per 1,000, a fall of 0.2 compared with 1907 and of 1.6 compared with the average of the previous ten years. Marriages reached 14.9 per 1,000, a drop of 0.9 compared with the average for the previous ten years; and the death-rate was 14.7, which is 0.3 below the 1907 rate, and lower than in any year on record.

Says the Christian Guardian: French Protestantism is making but slow headway. The recoil from Roman Catholicism in France has been so tremendous that all religion has fallen into disrepute. Within the last ten years we are told that more than 1,500 priests have left the Roman priesthood, but they have not united with any other church, and probably never will. With all its astuteness the Roman hierarchy has made an awful failure in France, and the end is not yet.

The cultivation of the poppy has ceased in a number of the provinces, and in Szechuan, which is the largest producing area in China, an edict was issued that no poppy was to be sown last autumn. Writing from this province, a missionary says: "Is it not truly wonderful? This great centre of opium now for the first time within memory finds itself without a crop of opium. Not a blade of opium have I seen, but instead one sees wheat, vegetables, etc., all growing, with prospect of cheaper foodstuffs next year."

It is claimed that fish and turkeys have been found in New York cold storage houses three years old. Eggs placed in cold storage in April last have only just been sold. The object was to force up prices. The danger to the health of the community is very considerable. Cold storage products deteriorate after a time, but they are sold as fresh, and the purchasers do not know what is the matter with them. The time has evidently come for the Government regulation of cold storage plants, whether owned by beef packers or others.

What is the matter with letting people take care of their own children? asked a member of the Chicago School Board, when the question of employing "school nurses" was under discussion. The answer, when stripped of verbiage, was that there are now so many foreigners in the city that it is unnecessary to have school nurses in order to maintain decency, protect other children from disease and enable these children of immigrants to get the benefit of the schools. It is a part of the tremendous price the public is paying for permitting immigration.

The Zionist Movement continues to enlist the interest of Jews, especially in Europe. The idea is to colonize Palestine with Jews and thus relieve their distressed condition as found in great cities. There is also a sentiment about Palestine that obtains nowhere else. The roots of Judaism strike deep and to live and die in the Promised Land is an ambition strong as a call from God. Dr. Van Dyke writes of such a colony founded by the Rothschilds some thirty years ago. It is located in the upper basin of the Jordan and was doing fairly well when the Doctor saw it on his recent visit to the Holy Land.

Encouraging reports come from China concerning the suppression of the opium traffic. A physician of the British Legation at Peking, who has charge of a hospital where many opium sufferers are treated, says that eight-tenths of the officials and the three-tenths of the people have stopped smoking.

The Biblical Recorder, speaking of the Laymen's Missionary Movement Convention recently held at Greensboro, N.C., says that the layman is awakening to his opportunity. He has come to see that he cannot serve God and Mammon, but that he can serve God with mammon. The movement appeals with particular force to the business man. It broadens his conception, it calls not only for concentration but for capacity, and demands the strength of the strongest. It shows the greatest returns for financial investment, emphasizes the fact that the King's business is not only business but that it pays.

It is said that Mr. Carnegie is seriously considering the matter of giving aid to all the medical schools of this continent, in order to promote education and research. Mr. Carnegie has repeatedly and positively declared that he intends to die poor. "What to so many is thought the easiest accomplishment, indeed difficult to thwart, is with the steel king a troublesome procedure. Unless he changes his programme of expense, the time to have fulfilled his wish has long since passed, as he is growing richer daily. Like the man who is worried over his corpulency, it has become a hard matter to reduce his surplus."

The new Imperial Legislative Council of India, in which the natives have a larger share in the government, met for the first time last week. The Viceroy's Council now has 370 members, of whom 139 are elected. For years the British have been gradually giving the natives a larger share in the government, and this fact, of itself, is one reason of the agitation and minor insurrections, since the giving of increased influence naturally results in demands for greater concessions. Lord Minto informed the new council that the efforts of the revolutionary press would be checked, and dwelt on the anarchy and lawlessness of the last few years which has been seeking to subvert not only the authority of the British Government, but also that of the local rulers of the native Indian states. There will probably be a suppression of a number of native papers and a control of others in the interest of authority and order.

The work of the British in the Sudan, with Khartoum as its centre, is one of the glories of the nation in hearing the "White Man's Burden." Twenty-five years ago, Gordon lost his life in an unwise movement under Gladstone, and the Mahadists made the country one of the plague spots of the world. Under Lord Salisbury, Kitchener went to Khartoum with a British army and Egyptian troops, which the British authorities had trained. The re-establishment of British authority was followed by a college, "Kitchener's School," of Kipling. To-day Khartoum controls a million square miles of territory, from which slavery has been banished, where peace is maintained among the natives and justice administered. Railroads are being built, and progress has been as rapid as in any country on the earth. The character of the Sudanese has changed. Instead of a degraded and abject set, they have become more independent, and are rapidly acquiring practical learning, and adopting modern methods of agriculture. The success of government in the Sudan is one of England's great gifts to the world.

Those who have studied the effect which the foreign missionary enterprise has upon church activities at home, says the Michigan Presbyterian, have not for a moment shared the fear of some who think that the giving of large sums for the foreign work would so cripple the church that other causes would be neglected. On the contrary, the Laymen's Movement is giving the church the greatest impulse it has ever had for Christian work at home. As some one said: "The tide that lifts one boat will float every boat along the shore." The zeal for the honor of Jesus Christ and the passion for souls that are moving the church to give a few millions for missions are fires that will not exhaust themselves in one great enterprise. They will kindle new enthusiasm for Home Missions, church erection, education and Sabbath schools. In fact all the activities of the church will be helped and quickened into new life by the Laymen's Movement.

It is time we had learned to separate between inspiration and infallibility, remarks the London Christian World. We have an inspired church and an inspired Bible, but there is infallibility in neither. In all matters of debate there is only one final authority to which we can appeal. It is the authority on which science rests; and with a security to which no church councils or dogmatic systems can pretend. It is the authority of the human consciousness divinely guided in its upward way; the consciousness which is ever growing and ever learning; which discovers its mistakes and repairs them; which opens itself to every new truth, and finds a place for it in its system of things; which believes in the essential unity of all truth, and in its one eternal Source. Rome, in rejecting that criterion, shows itself the greatest of heretics and, unless it reform, will perish of its heresy. It will be in the degree to which Protestantism accepts the criterion and lives by it that it will succeed in proving itself the religion of the future.

Some time ago a Baptist Congress was held in New York which was well attended by ministers and laymen. It is understood that there is wide liberty accorded to all. Speak as you think, frankly, fully. You will not be hauled up or pulled down for heresy. "Soul liberty" is the motto. There is the fullest courtesy accorded on every hand. It is said that at the latest session of this Congress views were uttered which are not commonly held among Baptists. For example, President Faunce, of Brown University, one of the notable leaders of the denomination, declared that one of the fundamental principles of the Baptist denomination has been freedom from ceremonial restrictions. Ritualism is not a yoke that Baptists are bound to wear. The New Testament grants absolute liberty from prescribed ritual. We have no evidence that Jesus ever prescribed a ritual form. President Faunce said that Baptists are known the world over for the importance attached to a ceremonial. It seemed to him that the attention given to baptism was disproportionate to the importance of the service. The spiritual element should always be supreme; important. Let ceremony be secondary. The traditional Baptist view was, of course, ably defended, but it is significant that Dr. Faunce and others should support a view which will startle conservative Baptists. We may fairly add that though Presbyterians are remarkably free from ceremonialism, they would not lightly part with baptism in the form in which they are accustomed to have it administered.