

Dominion Presbyterian

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Note and Comment.

It is in Inverness-shire that the Gaelic language has its firmest hold. Out of a population of 90,104 there are 11,722 persons who can converse in no language but Gaelic, while 43,281 are acquainted with both Gaelic and English.

The debt on the foreign mission fund—eastern section—amounting to \$12,000, has been cleared off. United Church, New Glasgow, gave over \$1000, and was followed by James Church, of the same town, with \$500.

London has long laid itself open to the charge of proving unfaithful to the memory of its great dead. It is a charge which is being wiped out. Within recent years Chaucer, Milton and Bunyan have been remembered, and the London County Council has just seriously considered a scheme Mr. Richard Badger has promoted to do justice to Shakespeare's association with the city.

The following motion has been placed before the presbytery of Sydney, C. B. "That presbytery take immediate steps to designate laymen approved by the presbytery to conduct services where, hitherto, only ordained men have been in the habit of so doing." This is already done in some places without special authorization by presbytery.

Canon Christopher, of Oxford, Eng., the octogenarian champion of the missionary cause, has just held his annual missionary breakfast. The venerable host, in welcoming the gathering, remarked that twenty-seven years ago a lady now 90 years of age placed at his disposal the means of giving the first of these annual breakfasts, and it was due to her generosity that they had been continued ever since.

At the last session of the Illinois General Assembly a law was passed prohibiting the sale of cocaine in any form, except on physician's prescription, and the State Board of Pharmacy is now engaged in putting it into effect. At about the same time Georgia, Pennsylvania and Texas also passed anti-cocaine or anti-narcotic laws, and twelve or fifteen of the States all told have now placed such legislation on their statute books. The campaign against these drugs has been taken up with very great vigor by the American Pharmaceutical Association and will be waged on a national scale.

In the Italian Chamber of Deputies a few weeks ago, one of the Ministers, questioned regarding the possible invasion of Italy by religious Orders expelled from France, stated that the Government would continue to apply vigorously the laws for the suppression of religious congregations. It seems an extraordinary thing that it is the Government of Roman Catholic countries alone who are moving towards the suppression of these pseudo-religious organisations. Some year ago Spain found it necessary to put her foot down, then Austria. France of late has been at work in a similar direction in her own protection; and now Italy is preparing

to make defence against them. It is only in Protestant countries like England, Germany and the United States, that these religions are treated with tolerance. The Belfast Witness remarks that as far as England is concerned, it almost looks as if the Government desired to encourage rather than restrict the secret societies of Rome.

The missionaries of various boards, American and British, laboring in the province of Fukien, China, of which Foochow and Amoy are the chief cities, have been moved to call for special prayer with reference to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the province in which they live. To this end they have formed a union, consisting of those who pledge themselves to pray once a day for the object, seeking others to join their union and arranging for special meeting for prayer in all parts of the province.

In Louisville, Ky., recently a Presbyterian minister commented on the irreverent air with which many churchgoers enter or leave the sanctuary. The evil is common in a great many churches. The Christian Observer says that to one who has been raised in the East, where reverence is shown in the sanctuary, and audible conversation is not practiced, the lack of decorum in entering church in the West is an unpleasant experience. It is to be feared that want of reverence for the sanctuary and its services is growing in more places than the United States.

There is a wonderful change in the religious status in New England, says the Christian Observer. In days gone by, the population was native born and Puritan. But in the last three years over sixty thousand Italians and perhaps fifty thousand Austro-Hungarians have settled in New England. The percentage of foreign population in some of her cities is remarkable. In Fall River, foreigners constitute 86 per cent. of the population; in Holyoke, 83; in Lawrence, 83; in Lowell, 78; and in Woonsocket, 83 per cent. Even in Chicago and New York, the percentage is only 77, and in San Francisco only 75. These figures are really startling. There is great room for foreign mission work in these cities on the part of the evangelical denominations in New England.

It is nearly four hundred years since John Knox was born, and the Presbyterian churches of Scotland are determined to mark the occasion. Overtures have been intimated in the United Free Church Presbyteries of Aberdeen and Glasgow, and in the Presbytery of Aberdeen, and the movement is bound to meet with a hearty response from both Churches. By the timely bringing of the matter under public notice an adequate celebration in 1905 should be ensured. One thing is important, says the correspondent of the Belfast Witness: "There should be no effort on the part of any one Church to claim a monopoly in the heritage of John Knox. All of Scottish descent have their share, and not least the Presbyterians of Ireland. The memories of Knox's struggle are as needful to-day as ever they were. What is wanted is a great voice like his to

penetrate to the heart of the people, and to stir them out of their religious indifference. If there is no such voice at the present let Knox's voice speak next year from the past."

In an article published in *Munsey's Magazine*, Mr. F. Cunliffe Owen says, King Peter of Serbia, is under the ban of the civilized world. The reason for this treatment of King Peter is his failure to disassociate himself from the assassins of his predecessor on the Serbian throne. When the murderers proceeded to proclaim Peter Karageorgewitch as King, he was made to understand that before any foreign Government could entertain the ordinary diplomatic relations with him he must clear himself of the imputation of having been the instigator of the outrage. King Peter has, however, failed to comply with the recommendations conveyed to him by the Emperors of Austria, Germany, and Russia, as well as by King Edward. He remains surrounded by the very men whose hands are stained with the blood of his ill-fated predecessor, and they continue to occupy the highest offices in the Government and at his Court, exercising a predominant influence over his policy. The only natural inference is that the assassins of King Alexander hold Peter in their power, and that they possess documentary evidence of his complicity in their crime.

As already stated in these columns all the counties of Nova Scotia are under local option prohibition of the liquor traffic—in virtue of the provisions of the Scott Act in some counties and of the Provincial license law in others—the city and county of Halifax alone excepted. The provisions of these laws, however, are ingeniously evaded by the liquor dealers, who send out parcels of liquor by express to the prohibition counties where it is sold clandestinely to those who want it. An attempt at legislation to meet this evasion of the law, was made at the session of the provincial legislature just closed, but it failed—there was grave doubt as to the competency of a provincial legislature to enact such a law. The situation is a peculiar one, but it does seem as if there should be power somewhere to enact and enforce legislation to prevent evasion of the provincial laws. The fact that such methods have to be adopted by the liquor dealers to "get round" the "Scott Act" and license laws of Nova Scotia indicates pretty clearly that the prohibition involved in these laws does prohibit to an extent which places the liquor traffic in a very uncomfortable position. The Presbyterian Witness, speaking on this question, says: "As to the bill which was rejected a few days ago, we hope its constitutionality will be carefully considered. It is not well to ask for a measure which the Legislature has no right to grant. But surely some measure ought to be devised to prevent the disgusting, dangerous and culpable practice of peddling liquor in prohibition municipalities. It is necessary to ask the intervention of Parliament so be it. Parliament will hear the voice of reason. Sir Wilfred Laurier if we remember rightly offered such amendments of the Scott Act as might be agreed upon. It would be eminently fitting that the Parliament and the Party which enacted the 'Scott Act' should enact this invaluable amendment."