

Dominion Presbyterian

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Note and Comment

Dr. Stalker, in speaking at a bazaar held at Crieff, suggested that the interest of members and elders in missions would be greatly increased if some tourist agency could be got to organize trips on a large scale to the mission fields in Africa and India. He had never known a Christian man go out and see the work on the spot who did not ever afterwards have a real enthusiasm for missions.

Mr. Ruskin, who is now eighty years of age, until recently did not look anything like that age. Now he is reported to be ageing very rapidly.

The use of individual cups in the communion service is the subject of an approving editorial in *The Lutheran Observer*. The editor speaks of being present at a service in which the individual cups were used, and says: "The quiet solemnity with which all this occurred removed every vestige of prejudice and apprehension which we previously entertained in regard to this method of administering the Holy Supper. It was really more solemn and impressive than the old method, and we advise any pastors who have doubts and prejudices in regard to this improved method of administering the sacrament to attend on such an occasion in order to judge of its adaptation and character for themselves."

The Presbyterian Banner, having noticed the tendency to shorten the sermon from that of a generation ago, remarks:—"The sermon has grown shorter partly because other portions of the service have grown longer. The devotional part of the service has been extended by the introduction of responsive readings, and more time is also given to music. The chief reason, however, for the shortening of the sermon is the changed condition of preaching. In former days the pulpit was largely a means of instruction. But the general diffusion of intelligence and the abundance of books and papers have brought the pulpit and pew more nearly to a level, and have largely relieved the pulpit from the work of giving instruction. The short sermon is of a piece with the short speech, the short editorial and the condensed book. The age is practical and swift, and is impatient of tediousness and delay. If a man has anything to say he must come to the point quick and say it."

A writer in the *Medical World* brings out the fact that if a mechanic had begun to labor on the day when Christ was born, and had worked every working day from that time until to-day, and had saved a dollar a day, he would not yet be a millionaire. He would be worth only a little under \$699,000; more accurate, \$591,898. The writer questions whether any one comes near making a million dollars by his own labor in his own life. It takes the million to make a million.

Sixteen of the powers have signed the protocols of the arbitration and mediation treaties at the Hague.

A bill for the protection of the public from adulterated and unwholesome beverages has, says the *Derald and Presbyter*, become a law in New York. It makes the sale of adulterated fruit syrups a misdemeanor. A reason urged in favor of its passage was that children accept in good faith as healthful drinks any beverage sold to them, and that children are entitled to protection. This is true, and the protection should include more than summer drinks. We read recently a Sabbath school book issued by a respectable publishing house which was full of poison. Many things which older persons can read without harm are dangerous for children. There is a law against obscene literature, but many things which the law allows should be prohibited. Parents, pastors and teachers must be on guard.

According to Ian Maclaren, the meanest man on earth is one who disowns his mother because she is poor; the next meanest he who disowns his church if it be poor.

Queen Victoria appears to have made, by proxy, a good school mistress, as well as sovereign, judging from the fact that when she ascended the throne more than 50 per cent. of the British public could not write their names, while now only 7 per cent. are in that lamentable condition of illiteracy.

On Sept. 25th the Rev. Principal MacVicar will read a paper on "The Selection and Training of Theological Students," at Princeton Seminary, before a meeting of the Association of Theological Seminaries, connected with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States. Principal MacVicar will then attend the Pan-Presbyterian Council, which convenes at Washington on the 27th inst. The Principal has already been an active member at six meetings of the Council.

Dr. Matheson, whose devotional sentences so often find place in our columns, has resigned the charge of St. Bernard's Church, Edinburgh, to give his time entirely to literary work. It will be remembered that Dr. Matheson is totally blind, yet he gives such views of life and such visions of beauty as are seen by few who are blessed with full natural sight.

The Evangelist has positive views on the subject of ministerial vacations. It says the choice of place, of environment, of occupation for those who have not a fixed residence for vacation time, sometimes becomes troublesome, and mistakes are costly. For every man a change of scene is really most essential. But the rule should be, "Avoid the crowd!" No minister, especially no young minister, is properly recreated in a throng. Where men of any sort do congregate, is the place to stay away from.

The Rev. Alexander Balmain Bruce, D.D., professor of apologetics and New Testament exegesis in Free Church College, Glasgow, since 1875, died in Glasgow on the 8th inst. He was born in Perthshire in 1831.

News has reached England of an unparalleled incident in Chinese missions. In a village three miles distant from Ningapota Buddhist temple, with its idols and some very valuable lands and gardens, have been voluntarily assigned by deed of gift to the Free Methodist Mission for its own use. The headmen of the three neighboring villages have given their written consent to the establishment of the mission.

Robert G. Ingersoll, the famous agnostic lecturer, died at his summer home on the Hudson, Friday, July 21. He won a wide reputation as a lawyer and lecturer, and was more brilliant and shrew than deep. His attacks upon the Christian faith were not formidable. They were more attacks on a caricature of the Christian faith than attacks on the faith itself. His great mistake was his opposition to what he did not understand. In his home relations he was kind and agreeable, and as a citizen he had many good qualities. His influence on religious faith was small among thinking men.

An exchange says that Dr. Andrew Bonar was out in Mr. Moody's garden at Northfield at early morn one day, talking with his host. Along came a band of happy students, who shouted out: "We've been having an all-night prayer meeting! Can't you see our faces shining?" Dr. Bonar turned to them and said, with a quiet smile and a shake of his head: "Moses said not that his face shone." This suggests a truth that lies deeper than most of the thought in our church life to-day. True piety never packs itself on the back. It never, like Jack Horner, cries: "What a good boy am I!" Henry Varley, the well known English evangelist, exclaims with deep impressiveness: "We are living in the days of a noisy, superficial profession of Christianity!"

The Dominion Presbyterian had the pleasure of a call this week from the Rev. Prof. Hamill, D.D., of Assembly's College, Belfast, Ireland. Dr. Hamill is on his way to Winnipeg, where he will deliver a series of lectures on "The Fatherhood of God." On leaving Winnipeg two weeks will be spent sightseeing as far west as the Rockies, after which the Professor will attend the Pan-Presbyterian Council at Washington.

The awful results of the child-marriage abuse in India can be hinted at, but not expressed, by the fact that, according to a recent census, there were nearly a half million married infants under nine years of age, and over 250,000 widowed children under fifteen years of age in India, doomed by the customs of the country to the ignominy of a life-long widowhood. By and by, perhaps, English might and English civilization will put a stop to this awful state of affairs.