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Note and Comment.

One and all the Japanese papers believe in the justice of the British cause and the certainty of the final triumph of the British arms in South Africa

President Jordan, of Leland Stanford University, lecturing at Chicago recently prophesied the twentieth century would see the downfall of Great Britain.

Sir Charles Nicholson, who has been called the "Grand Old Man" of Australia, is now in his ninety-second year. He emigrated to Australia in 1834, and is the sole surviving member of the first Australian Parliament.

Dr. John G. Paton, who is about to visit Britain, is just now in Washington endeavouring to induce the Government to prohibit its citizens from selling intoxicants and guns to the New Hebrides natives. The British have long pursued this policy.

The induction of Rev. William Patrick, D.D., to be principal and professor of theology in Manitoba College has been fixed by the Presbytery of Winnipeg, to take place in Knox Church, Winnipeg, on April 19. Dr. Patrick sailed from Scotland on Saturday last.

In an interesting booklet just issued by Sir George B. Bruce, it is stated that in 1830 the number of Presbyterian congregations in London was only twenty-four. In 1883 they had increased to ninety-six. The total membership in 1890 was 7,087; in 1898, it was 22,585. The Presbyterian income in 1890 was £35,484; whilst in 1898 it had risen to £106,404. This satisfactory rate of increase was fully maintained last year.

Britain wanted to borrow £30,000,000. The great aggregation of people who have loanable funds pressed £35,000,000 upon her and begged her to content herself with that. And this was at a time when there appeared to be grave possibilities of war with one or more European powers. Evidently the money-lenders are satisfied with such guarantees of repayment as the national wealth and the national defences afford.

A book just published on men and things in South Africa has a typical story of Kruger and his ways of thought. He received one day two applications for grants of land, one from the Reformed Church, the other from a Jewish community. Both were granted, but presently the Jews complained that their piece of land was much the smaller. Kruger at once replied—'The others believe the whole Bible, and, therefore, receive an acre of land; you only believe half, and so are granted only half an acre. Why, therefore, complain?'

We see it stated in an exchange that a party of China Inland missionaries spoke of the income of the Mission coming in answer to prayer, in a sense in which this is not true of the denominational societies. Judging from the persistency with which appeal is made for this Society, this claim is not justified. If we mistake not, says the Canadian Baptist, this Mission has more agents engaged on the home field in pressing its claim than almost any other. We do not say this in disparagement, but in the interest of fairness.

It is said that Da Vinci would not touch the canvas for his great masterpiece, "The Last Supper," until the vision of Christ had flooded his soul. Just such inspiration do all of us need for the real duties of life "the greatest of which is no greater than the least" as compared with the spirit in which all should be done.

The Topeka Capital experiment has proved to be a splendid investment from the business point of view, which is to gain a big subscription list and advertising patronage. As a literary enterprise or as a newspaper it is a very large bubble soon pricked. The very first glance of the paper was sufficient to demonstrate the fact that Rev. C. M. Sheldon had mistaken his calling when he tried to run a newspaper. It is quite a relief to know that the affliction terminated at the end of the week.

Mr. Sims Reeves, the famous tenor, writing in a weekly paper, recommends Condy's Fluid for the throat. He says that a third of a teaspoonful in a tumbler of water, if used as a gargle every morning, will clear the throat and brace up the uvula. Mr. Sims Reeves, like the late Mr. Spurgeon, is very much opposed to all kinds of lozenges for the voice. But when the throat is inclined to be dry he recommends sugar and water or a little glycerine. Ministers may find a useful hint in this paragraph.

The veteran Dr. Edward Everett Hale has resigned his charge of the South Congregational Church, Boston. He has been minister there for forty-four years, and has now been elected pastor emeritus by the church meeting. Dr. Hale is almost the last of the renowned Boston society of thinkers and men of letters. Emerson, Lowell, Longfellow, Holmes, Hawthorne—all are gone. Some of them were lovingly commemorated by Dr. Hale in "James Russell Lowell and His friends," a chatty volume published last year.

Rev. William Nixon, D.D., emeritus minister of St. John's Free Church, Montrose, is not only the "father of the Free Church of Scotland," but the oldest surviving Presbyterian clergyman in the kingdom. Dr. Nixon was ordained in 1831, twelve years before the Disruption in the Church of Scotland, and thirty-one years ago was Moderator of the Supreme Court of his Church; he was a close friend of the late Dr. Begg, and he took an active part in the anti-union crusade in the early seventies. Dr. Nixon, who is in his ninety-ninth year, enjoys fairly good health, though unable to do much out of doors.

A Polish Jewess who married a Polish Jew was subsequently divorced in accordance with the communal law. Coming to England she represented herself as a widow, and was then wooed and won by a "Cohen." Now, a "Cohen," as one of the tribe of Aaron, must not marry a divorced woman. On discovering the real facts this man not only ceased to live with her, but he refused to maintain her. The magistrates, however, before whom he was brought, refused to recognise the communal law, and several times sent him to prison for non-maintenance. The man has been advised (says the "Chronicle") to apply to the Divorce Court for a decree of nullity of marriage. Will the Divorce Court recognise the communal action? The case reproduces curiously a problem set by Mr. Zangwill in "Children of the Ghetto."

The monster convention of the Society of Christian Endeavour is to be held at the Alexandra Palace from July 14th to July 20th. Preparations are being made for an attendance of 40,000, of whom at least 5,000 are expected from America. Australia will also be largely represented. Among the speakers already engaged are Dr. Clark, founder of the society, Dr. Lorimer, and the Rev. Charles Sheldon, author of "In His Steps." The Rev. F. B. Meyer, of Christ Church, Westminster, will preside.

No man has less false modesty about his early career than Colonel Hector Macdonald. Shortly after Omdurman the Prince of Wales expressed a desire that the hero of the day should be presented to him, and the introduction shortly afterwards took place at the Marlborough Club. "It is a curious thing, Colonel Macdonald," said his Royal Highness "that we should never have met before." "Pardon me, sir," replied Scot, "may I say that we have?" "Indeed, and when?" queried the Prince, who prides himself on never forgetting a face. Colonel Macdonald half stood to attention, and then astonished the group of Generals and equestrians by remarking with a smile, "I was corporal of the guard the day your Royal Highness landed in Bombay."

Mr. J. S. Moffat—son of the famous African missionary, Dr. R. Moffat—who was born in South Africa, and has spent nearly all his life there and who is surely antipathetic and competent witness, in writing to a friend, says—"Personally, I can say that if God does not give Great Britain entire and complete victory it will be to me one of those insoluble enigmas under the shadow of which we have to walk in this dark world until the dawning of the new day when all clouds shall be dispelled. I believe that Great Britain is entirely in the right, and the Boers entirely in the wrong. The question as it now stands is this—'Are we British and Blacks to be under the heel of a Boer domination throughout South Africa, or is every man, be he British, Black, or Boer, to live at peace with his neighbour, with equal rights and equal laws, under the flag of Great Britain?'" Mr. Moffat holds tenaciously to the opinion that the best diplomacy in the world could not have prevented the war, for all Boerdom since 1881 were determined to drive the Englishmen into the sea.

Professor Rentoul of Melbourne has dissented from a clause in the Basis of Union as adopted by the recent Victorian Assembly. His reasons have been published, and they certainly raise some serious questions. The particular clause to which he objects gives, he says, to one fifth of the congregations of the United Church of Australia and Tasmania, the power to oppose and obstruct any change however slight, in reshaping, re-stating, simplifying or abridging the subordinate standard of the Church's Creed. This, says Dr. Rentoul, is quite a new thing in Presbyterian legislation and would be fatal to the principle of the church's freedom, self government and growth. He says that some of the decision of the Westminster Assembly itself, whose Confession is thus so hedged about, were carried by a majority of one. This numerical proportion of one-fifth, he says, quite arbitrary. Moreover, as he points out, the new clause ignores and leaves wholly out of view the rights of majorities. Dr. Rentoul thinks it would be better to trust for progress to the general growth of the Church's Christian consciousness, without these arbitrary checks and painful suggestions of separation.