

Dominion Presbyterian

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Note and Comment.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier is quoted as saying that Parliament will not meet until the first week in March.

In Madagascar silk is the only fabric used in the manufacture of clothing. It is cheaper than linen in Ireland.

The London correspondent of a provincial paper calls attention to the fact that the Queen has never made a public speech.

The Minister of Education has announced that in view of the overcrowding of the four Ontario Normal schools, another will be built at some point between Toronto and the Soo.

The Dominion revenue for the past six months is \$3,579,007 in excess of that for the corresponding period of the preceding year, and the surplus over all expenditures is \$7,589,862.

Representatives of the Lord's Day Alliance and the Dominion Trades Congress interviewed leading members of the Government at Ottawa with a view to promoting stricter observance of the Sabbath in various branches of work under Federal control.

In Europe and the New World the most inveterate gamblers are the Spaniards and their descendants. Among African tribes the Haussas run the Chinese very close; and there are some Kanaka tribes in the South Seas who push the hazard of gambling beyond the grave, and stake their very bones on the last throw of the cowrie shells, which they use as dice.

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman has been addressing meetings of his constituents. Speaking at Cullross, he said it would be a good thing if Parliament for the next half dozen years applied its attention to the subjects of temperance reform and the housing of the poor, and gave less attention to the questions of foreign complications, which had recently occupied so much of their time.

An example of the late Archbishop Temple's directness of speech was his reply to certain students of a theological college of which he was head. The doctor was digging in the garden when a deputation approached and laid bare a terrible grievance. The country folk, it seemed, had not treated the students nicely—"in fact," said the spokesman, "they do not treat us as if we were gentlemen." "Because you're not," said Dr. Temple, and went on digging.

It is rather curious to learn that after all his expensive attempts to suppress the rabbit in Australia the plague is no nearer a cure than ever. The Premier of New South Wales has received a petition from pastoralists and others in the State urging that a committee should be appointed to consider remedies. They also suggest that a reward of \$250,000 should be offered for a means of combating the pest, and a sum of \$50,000 voted for practical experiments.

Mr. Justice Real, of the Queensland Bench, recently expressed a remarkable opinion while hearing a will case in Brisbane. He said that if he had his way he would not allow any man to make a will after he had arrived at a certain age. He had had a good deal of experience of old people, and he found that after they arrived at a certain age they became so much under the domination of the people around them that their lives were not worth living unless they did what they were wanted to do.

The Society of Friends has invited the various Christian bodies in the United States to send delegates to a conference on the "liquor traffic" to be held in Washington in March, 1906. "A temperance conference of the churches," remarks the New York Sun, "would be interesting for the opinions which it would elicit, whether or not an agreement upon a policy could be had or not. The three years and a half before the meeting will be by no means too long for the preliminary discussions and proposals, and a conference called by the Friends ought to be irenic in its deliberations."

If the London Metropolitan Tabernacle is no longer the mighty force that it was in the palmy days of the great Spurgeon, it certainly maintains its position as the church with the largest membership in the Baptist body. Its records for the year tell of 3,563 communicants, and of 21 mission stations and 22 Sunday-schools. "Son Tom," as Pastor Thomas Spurgeon used to be affectionately styled by his famous father, is an apt and thoughtful preacher, and has the earnest sympathy of all the churches in his efforts to keep up the Tabernacle work in a way worthy of the world-wide reputation of the place.

There is talk of a Union between three of the small sects of Presbyterians in Scotland, the Free Presbyterian church, and the original Seceders. The congregations of the last-named body number thirty, and there are many signs that these will have a hard struggle in the future unless some means is found of attracting new adherents. It would undoubtedly be an advantage if these little fragments could be pieced together, but it is a question if it is possible to do so. And even were it possible, it would but retard the inevitable result—the extinction of these small communities, and the absorption of their members into the Church of Scotland or the United Free church.

A brilliant ceremony was witnessed at Delhi, New Year's Day, when King Edward of England was proclaimed Emperor of India. The exercises were held by the Viceroy, Lord Curzon. The great plain outside the city is described as filled with hosts of the king's Indian subjects in holiday attire. Chiefs of tribes mingled in the crowds, and the colors of the different uniforms and native costumes were like the rainbow. The ceremony at Delhi was similar to what was intended for London last June, when the king's sudden illness broke the plans. King Edward's message to his India subjects ended as follows: "I renew the assurance of my regard for the liberties of the Indian

people; of my respects for their dignities and rights; of my interest in their advancement, and of my devotion to their welfare. These are the supreme aims and objects of my rule, which, under the blessing of Almighty God, will lead to the increasing prosperity of my Indian empire and to the greater happiness of its people.

The Presbyterian Standard refers to the notable fact that Greek and Catholic and Protestant are all agreed on the doctrine of the Incarnation of the Son of God, however much they may differ on other doctrines of the Christian faith. The chief reason, that paper thinks, is that the whole subject of the birth of Christ is suffused with the child spirit, with which and about which men cannot quarrel.

The question that has arisen as to the possibility of the Island of Martinique subsiding altogether recalls some curious incidents in the volcanic region of the Pacific. Some years ago Aurora Island, in the New Hebrides, entirely disappeared one night, leaving no trace behind. Seventeen years ago a new island made its appearance in Tonga, and was promptly "annexed" by a loyal British trader, who "boarded" it, waded knee-deep in the soft scoriae to its summit, and proudly hoisted the Union Jack. Falcon Island lived for about a dozen years, attained to the dignity of growing a few banana and cocoanut trees, and then one day disappeared as mysteriously as it came!

Dealing with the solemn subject of "Current Irreligion," Archdeacon Sinclair, who had gained many friends among non-conformists by his consistent endeavors to keep the public life of the city pure, contributes some weighty words to the January number of "The Quiver." "We appeal," he says, "to the men and women of pleasure to respect, at any rate, a great characteristic national institution, and to have some pity on those who have to minister to their selfishness. We implore them not to give up the habit of worshipping God, at any rate, once on the Lord's Day, whether in town or country. We implore them not to encourage amusements in their homes, which cause scandal to the serious and impel the irreligious to greater and more general invasion of the Rest Day."

Mr. Jonathan Hutchison, F. R. S., the distinguished surgeon, sailed for Ceylon upon a four months' tour in that island and the mainland of India. His purpose is to gather materials whereby he may convince everyone that badly cured fish is the cause of leprosy. He is convinced himself, and needs no more facts; this trip is undertaken for the conviction of others. There are about 100,000 lepers in India—a number which has apparently remained stationary for many decades at least, and Mr. Hutchison's self-imposed task, undertaken in his seventy-fifth year, is to ascertain the distribution of the disease, and its relation to fish diet, especially as regards the Brahmin, whose religion forbids him to consume anything that has lived. The bearing of causation upon prevention is here particularly direct.