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NOTE AND COMMENT.

At the recent meeting of the Congregational Total Abstinence Association in London reports showed that out of nearly 3,000 ministers, 2,650 were known to be total abstainers.

On the 5th inst. the Church Commission awarded the Training Colleges in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen to the United Free Church, and all Foreign Mission Funds (amounting to 150,000 pounds sterling) and real property contributed for specific missions.

John R. Mott, who has been visiting the colleges of South Africa in the interests of the World's Student Christian Federation sailed from Durban, Natal, June 14, for Rio Janeiro, where he will attend the convention of the Young Men's Christian Association, of South America, in July.

The most powerful man in China is Viceroy Yuan-shi-Kain. He recently visited Paoing-fu, made the rounds of the temples dedicated to local divinities, and, taking the idols therefrom, threw them into the river. It is indicative of the present religious temper of China that the people took the matter as a joke, saying, "The Viceroy is giving our gods a bath."

Some action will be taken by the Colonial Committee of the Free Church Council in connection with the intolerant treatment meted out to the Rev. John McNeill, of Glasgow, while on a recent preaching tour. When at Malta Mr. McNeill's services, which were being held in the Theatre-Royal, were stopped owing to the action of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Malta.

Whether church union among the three bodies in Canada that are seriously considering it becomes a realized fact or not, all may rejoice at the growing spirit of unity and cordiality that is manifest on every side. The old spirit of dissension and suspicion as between the denominations is going, where it has not altogether disappeared, and such is about ready now to credit the others with a spirit of honesty and sincerity and devotion to high ideals at least equal to its own. That growing confidence and appreciation is what will finally kill schism.

As a result of the local elections in Nova Scotia last week the Murray Government was sustained by a large majority. The Government papers claim 33 out of the 38 members of the new legislature, but this counts as one of the 33. Mr. Campbell, of Kings, whose election meant the defeat of Hon. Mr. Wicksaire, a member of the Government. Mr. Sawyer, who ran as the colleague of Mr. Campbell, on the independent platform of Temperance and political purity, polled a large vote, but not quite large enough to secure his election.

In a note about those in attendance at the last General Assembly the London Free Press says:—"The oldest commissioner must surely be the venerable Dr. Gregg, of Knox College, still alert and interested at four score and ten. Principal MacLaren, Principal Gordon, Principal Scriver and Principal Patrick are not unworthy of the men who went before. The youngest college principal is Dr. Falconer, of Halifax, the son of the moderator. There are a half dozen other members whose public services go back through a half-century.

In China the Canadian Methodists have eleven foreign missionaries, six of whom are medical men. There are two hospitals and a third is under the control of the W.M.S. There is a large printing and publishing house doing a splendid work, and capable of almost unlimited development. The openings for evangelistic and educational work are simply wonderful.

The Chinese typesetter is hampered by the fact that he has to work with eleven thousand types as against the single hundred that suffice for the English printer. To do this, he must classify his types in some way, and he does it by a classification of subjects—animals, flowers, furniture, clothes, and so on—in some three hundred lockers; even so he can not set up a thousand characters in less than three hours. This arrangement by subjects reminds us that the first Latin and English vocabularies were arranged in the same way; so are modern conversation books in foreign languages; it was only by degrees that what seems to us the simple plan of thorough alphabetical arrangement came into vogue.

A few weeks ago Mr. Andrew Carnegie visited Peterborough, England, to which city he has given a handsome library. The freedom of the city was conferred upon him, his name being the first on the freeman's roll. The casket containing the certificate was part of an oak beam which had been taken from the cathedral during the recent restoration. Mr. Carnegie publicly expressed his great pleasure at the fact that the lavish and recherche luncheon given by the mayor had been provided without any intoxicants, and later on the famous millionaire and philanthropist summed up his advice to the general public, and working men in particular, in the words "Don't drink, don't smoke, and use the Free Library."

"Japan has in 50 years come out of seclusion and hiding as a hermit nation and taken her place among the foremost nations of the world," says the Missionary Review. There has never been any like instance of rapid progress. Forty millions of people made the Chinese Empire, with 400 millions, sue for peace, and actually made the Russian Empire, with over 100 millions, stagger. There is not a power on earth today that would like to cope with the Sunrise Kingdom. And Japan offers the grandest opportunity for missions that the Orient supplies. If that nation, so impressive, could be thoroughly evangelized and made a missionary people it might become the witness-giving nation of the East, and mould the continent of Asia.

The French Cabinet has prepared a programme of constructive legislation and intends to press it vigorously. The separation of Church and State is regarded as settled by the recent election. Even the higher authorities of the Church at Rome seem to be convinced that further opposition is useless, and that they had better get what they can out of the present law. The withdrawal of State support for the Church will be gradual. The Cabinet intends to provide old-age pensions for workmen, but also to deny the right of workmen in the employ of the government to strike or leave its service except with permission. The case is analogous to that of the army. Men are not compelled to take employment under the government. If they do, it is a part of the contract that the government shall be able to enforce service, and refusal to perform the duties assigned will mean punishment as in the army. This is the true theory of government employment.

The Rev. W. Mahon, of Wakefield, in a lecture on the "Sagacity of Plants," gave some interesting details of plant life. Some plants, he said, were not moral; many were fly-traps; some seemed to keep public-houses, with all the allurements of those places. The way in was easy, and visiting insects found the honey intoxicating. But the way out was difficult, and in some cases impossible.

The church of God and the drink traffic have nothing in common. Instead, they are diametrically opposed to each other. The church stands for righteousness, is to bless men and promote every good and pure thing. The liquor traffic is the enemy of all righteousness, is the enemy of God, debauches all on whom it can lay its cruel hand, and is the master curse of humanity. It is the church's duty to make unceasing war on the liquor traffic, to smite it in the name of the Lord, and destroy it. "There is no discharge in this war."

In the end of 1904, the Presbyterian Church in India was formed by the union of the missions working there under various branches of the Presbyterian church. In March, 1905, the Presbytery ceased to meet as the Presbytery of Indore of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, and began to meet as the Presbytery of Malwa of the Presbyterian Church in India; in October the Synod of Rajputana and Central India first met; and in December the General Assembly had its first meeting after the short one at which the union was consummated; and, as so much remained to be done, agreed to meet on the 14th of December, 1906, instead of after three years, as is to be the rule. The General Assembly was called to meet next at Indore.

The Rev. Dr. G. D. Matthews, of London, general secretary of the Alliance of Reformed Churches, has been making a close study of the question of the falling supply of ministers, and he reaches the conclusion that the decline is almost universal. Since 1900, he finds the ministerial supply in the Presbyterian Church of the United States has declined 8 per cent.; in the United Free Church of England 13 per cent. These percentages of decline are said not to be so large as they were in the five years preceding 1900, but there is held to be little justification for the claim of some alarmists that there has been a falling off of 75 per cent. in the number of candidates for the ministry, though some authorities hold that the number of such candidates is now no more than two-thirds of what it was a decade ago.

One of the signs of the day is the revival of the old-time demand for the Bible as an adjunct to the hotel bedroom. Ten or twelve years ago every room in a hotel of any pretension had a Bible on its bureau. Then it was the practice of most hotels to include a Bible in the list of necessary furniture. Gradually the people who were back of the enterprise lost interest and the books disappeared. It now seems that many persons, particularly commercial travelers, complain of missing them. Frequently they read a chapter before going to bed just to drive away the blues, but now they never get a chance to look inside a Bible. One Toronto hotel-keeper has realized the need for a revival and has given an order for several dozen Bibles. "It shall not be said that any man stopping at my house is driven to perdition for the want of a Bible" is the way in which he puts it.