

the stability and self-support of the native churches, and to encourage them in direct labour for the evangelization of India. 4. To prepare the way for an Organic Union among the native Presbyterian churches in India.

The Conference, or Council of the Alliance, meets every three years, the fifth Council having been held last December in Calcutta. This Council seems to have been the most important of the whole series. Action was taken on the subject of a united Presbyterian Church for India, by the adoption of bases for union in local organization and in doctrine and polity. The way to this action was prepared by the appointment, by a number of the presbyteries, of members for a General Committee on the subject of union, which submitted a report to the Council, which the Council adopted. The basis of union will be submitted to the presbyteries and to the home churches for approval. Our India exchanges report the proceedings briefly, but do not give the articles of agreement. That the home churches will cordially approve the effort to secure union is hardly to be questioned. The principle of co-operation and union in the mission field has been settled by the concurrent deliverances of General Synods and General Assemblies on both sides of the Atlantic, and the action of the Pan-Presbyterian Council has been one of cordial approval.

AFRICA AND EUROPEAN INFLUENCE.

Mr. Joseph Thompson, the African traveller, gave a recent lecture to the Y.M.C.A. of St. Cuthbert Church, Edinburgh, on "The Results to the African of European Intercourse." There were about 2,000 persons present. In the course of his remarks, Mr. Thompson said he was able to say from his own observation, and not merely from missionaries, what had been the nature of the result to the African of European intercourse, and to put a pin into the beautiful iridescent bubble which his hearers had had so often placed before them. He would unhesitatingly affirm in the plainest language, that, so far as our intercourse with the African race was concerned, instead of it being a blessing, it had been little better than an unmitigated curse to them. There were, no doubt, many things full of promise, but as yet merely of promise. Our commerce with Africa had consisted chiefly in gin, gunpowder, and guns, alongside

of which the good we have tried to achieve was hardly discernible. Taking as a whole, our trading stations on the greater part of the west coast of Africa, instead of being centres of elevating influence, were centres of corruption, moral and physical. Trading ships were laden with gin out of all proportion to the carriage of useful articles. He then spoke of the success of the Mohammedan missionaries in some parts of Africa as compared with the failure of the Christian missionaries. The reason of the success of the Mohammedans was that they only presented that amount of good which the negro could comprehend and make part of himself. On the other hand, the Christian missionary, instead of simplifying the presentation of the Gospel, had generally done his best to stupefy the negro with views and doctrines which were largely incomprehensible. Once the negro was educated in the right manner, there would be splendid results, as the negro, with all his intellectual deficiencies, is very religious. His hearers might ask whether, seeing that European intercourse had had such results, they should not retire from Africa altogether. His answer was, "No, a thousand times no!" On all sides he saw signs of the approach of a better day, for the negro men's eyes were being opened to what was doing in Africa. Governments were becoming more and more alive to the evils of the present system, and were striving to check the liquor traffic which had been established. The sympathetic ear of the Houses of Parliament was open, the churches of all denominations were lending their aid, and merchants were becoming alive to the fact that they were engaged in a traffic of which they should be ashamed. The Royal Niger Company and the Imperial British African Company were working in the right direction, while the efforts of the missionaries at Lake Nyassa and other parts of Africa were all tending, he hoped, to good results in the future.

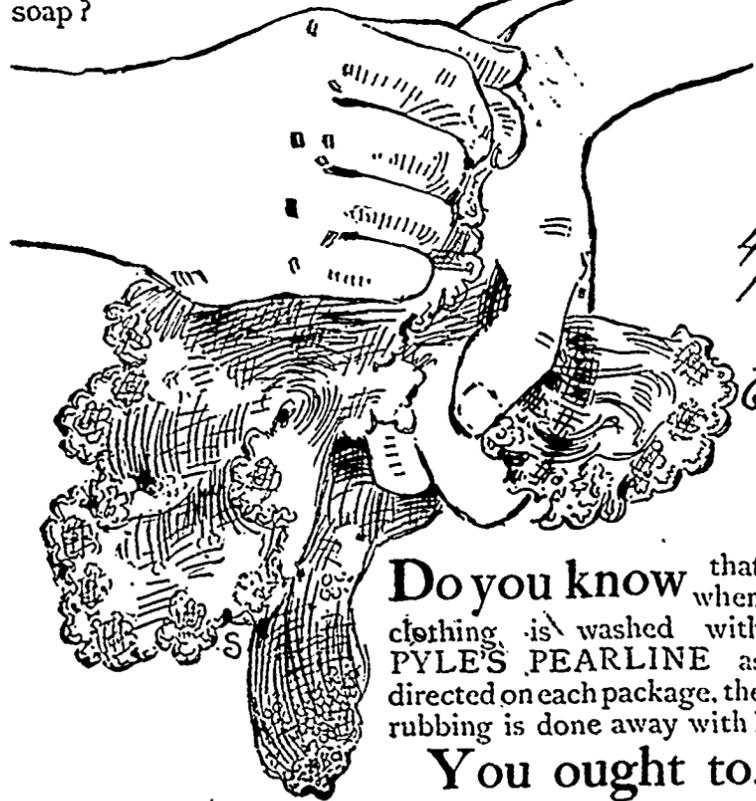
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