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NOTE AND COMMENT

The ceremony of placing the memorial bust of the Rev. Dr. Thomas Guthrie in the Church of the United Martyrs and St. John's congregations Edinburgh, was performed by Lord Guthrie.

Rev. Dr. Sinclair, of St. Andrew's Church, Winnipeg, said in a recent address that Dawson City was as upright in morals as Winnipeg, if not more so. He spoke highly of the Yukon people as a whole.

Not much is said about it, but the custom of burning the bodies of the dead instead of burying them is growing steadily if not rapidly. It is stated that in the United States last year 34,500 bodies were burned in 33 crematories. No other country approaches this in the number of incinerations.

"I remember," said a minister, "asking a Japanese student who had come to Yale, 'When you first read the Gospels, what was the strongest impression made upon your mind?' He at once replied, 'It was Christ's journey up to Jerusalem. Oh, the courage of it!' he said. 'Christ was the one Man of history of Whom it is true that He never knew what it was to fear.'"

Temperance is assertive, especially in Great Britain. People are not afraid to run temperance hotels, and some are coining money by so doing. One may go all over the Islands and Western Europe and stop every night, if desired, in good temperance hotels or pensions. And yet in Canada we are often told that hotels can not be carried on profitably without a "bar."

The death is reported of Mr. William Forbes, a well-known missionary in Scotland, to ballet and chorus girls. Mr. Forbes, who was seventy-seven years old, was affectionately referred to in theatrical circles as the "Father of the Fairie." His death was from pneumonia and heart failure. A Scotsman by birth, he became an evangelist forty-two years ago, and over thirty years ago commenced his work among the chorus and ballet girls.

No class of people has profited more by the temperance wave than is sweeping over the United States, says one of their own best papers, than the negroes of the South. Their improvidence, thriftlessness, unreliability and inability to overcome poverty are largely due to the saloon. Their crimes may be traced in almost every case to the same source. No wonder the best representatives of the race are calling for a "second emancipation," in the immediate and absolute destruction of the saloon.

An alleged improvement upon the "international" language, "Esperanto," is the result of the labors of a subcommittee appointed by the international committee on artificial languages which met in Paris, under the presidency of the famous chemist, Professor Ostwald, in 1907. This new "interlanguage" is called "Ido." It has its dictionaries, grammars and readers, prepared for the use of readers of eight or nine existing languages. It has been described as a "quintessence of European languages" and its advocates claim that it is simpler and easier to learn than "Esperanto," and that many are adopting it. Prof. Otto Jespersen says it is a "purified Esperanto, freed from the arbitrary word-coinaiges and word-clipping of that language, its illogical and insufficient rules of word-formation, and its clumsy alphabet."

The King has presented to South Africa, the table, inkstand and pen which he used when he signed the South African Union Act. The Commission giving the Royal assent to the Act, bearing the King's signature, will also be sent to South Africa for preservation among the archives.

The motor "bus" has invaded Palestine, and with the completion of a carriage road between Jerusalem and Nablus it is now possible to travel comfortably in two hours from Jaffa to the ancient Shechem. Another indication of progress is the suggestion by some enthusiastic Zionists to hold a World's Fair at Jerusalem.

A new Irish temperance movement is called "The Catch-my-Pal Union." The name is descriptive of the method and spirit of the undertaking. In one of the places where the Union has gathered headway a man looked through bar-rooms for some of his friends, and found no one but the bar-keepers. His "pals" had been caught by the Union, to which he immediately joined himself.

Canada's naval plans laid before Parliament provide for the construction of three cruisers of the improved "Eristol" class and four destroyers of the improved river class. The cost of the cruisers is estimated at \$5,750,000, and that of the destroyers at \$1,500,000. The annual cost of maintenance is estimated at \$2,000,000. Two of the cruisers will be assigned to the Pacific and one cruiser and the four destroyers to the Atlantic Coast.

With the accession of young King Albert to the throne of Belgium, there is promise of a more just and humane administration of the Congo State. In his first speech from the throne the new King declared that the Belgian nation wished a policy of humanity and progress enforced in the Congo, and that a mission of civilization must be a mission of civilization. No one, he added, had a right to doubt the intentions of Belgium.

According to missionary statistics, Africa is fast losing the right to be called the Dark Continent. In it are to be found to-day 2,470 missionaries, assisted by 13,089 native Christian workers. There are 4,789 places of worship, 221,856 communicants, and 527,790 professed adherents. In the 4,900 missionary schools are 203,390 pupils. There are ninety-five hospitals and sixteen printing establishments under missionary conduct and control. A chain of connected missions reaches from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean; and in Uganda, which thirty years ago was a pagan and unexplored country, one-half the 700,000 population are enrolled as Christians. Cape Colony has 200,000 Christians out of a total of 700,000.

The South Pole is to be sought by a British expedition, to be known as the "Scott Expedition," to which the government will contribute \$100,000. Captain Scott commanded the British expedition of 1900-1904, in which extensive explorations were made. British explorers have done most of the work in the Antarctic, often using New Zealand as a base. The Scott expedition will sail from England in July, and force its way to the farthest point which can be reached by ship next winter, which will be the antarctic summer, and then proceed over the land of the antarctic continent toward the Pole. With the experience of Lieutenant Shackleton, who went within a hundred miles of it, this expedition may be expected to succeed.

The mummified body of a man was found, not long ago, at Stamford, England. At first the body was thought to be that of the wife of the Black Prince, but a black-letter document found in the coffin proved that the remains were all that was left of a priest named John Staunford, who lived during Pope Boniface IX.'s time, 1389-1404. The Anglican claim to continuity of Church life since pre-Reformation times has thereby received a severe jolt, for the body was claimed by the Roman Catholic authorities, and reinterred in their cemetery.

Much interest is felt in England in the recent experiments at Aftofts colliery on the explosibility of coal-dust. It appears to have been demonstrated that air charged with fine coal-dust may be dangerously inflammable, comparing in destructive effect with explosions of fire-dams. In one experiment a small cannon was fired electrically in the mine to raise the dust, and then a larger cannon was fired to ignite it. The resulting explosion is described as terrific. It has also been demonstrated that stone-dust spread upon the floor of the mine tends powerfully to arrest, or limit, the explosion of the coal dust.

The "Student Volunteers," who held their quadrennial convention at Rochester, New York, from December 29th to January 2nd, are a body of young men and women from the higher institutions of learning in the United States and Canada, organized for the purpose of promoting interest in foreign missionary work, and furnishing recruits for foreign mission fields. During the last four years 1,283 of these "volunteers" have sailed for mission fields, under the auspices of various missionary societies; and the yearly contributions of the organization for carrying forward mission work amount now to \$127,000.

In characteristic German fashion, Professor Eduard Meyer, of the University of Berlin, has been investigating the question, "What is the oldest date in history?" He has come to the conclusion, by the study of ancient Egyptian calendars, that the most remote date of which the world at present has knowledge is B. C. 4241. As far back as this, Professor Meyer states, he has evidence from the monuments, but prior to it there are references to lunar years alone, which are not regarded as trustworthy. The Peruvian dates, as shown in the art remains in the Valley of Chimoano, in the Andes, go no further back than B. C. 3500.

Reference was made last week to the new map of the world on a scale of 1 to 1,000,000, which is to be prepared by international co-operation through governments and geographical societies. No map of the entire world on a uniform large scale has ever been made. Even the French, while they have mapped their possessions in Asia on a scale of 1 to 1,000,000, are making their African maps on half that scale. By adopting a proportional scale the conflict of divergent units of measurement, such as those of the French and English systems, will be avoided. Uniformity is also to be secured in the representation of contour, the colors and degree of shading for elevations, representation of water, land, etc. It is agreed that the Roman alphabet shall be used in all lettering but the selection and spelling of names will be that of the locality. Hence, Florence, in Italy, will appear as "Firenze," and many other European names will have forms strange to Americans. This will be the rule for the official maps. Copies made by private publishers may follow the usual names and spelling.