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NOTE AND COMMENT.

The Tsar has defined the constitution of the new Council of the Empire, half the members of which will be elected. Its powers of legislation will be equal to those of the Douma, and both bodies will meet annually.

The Prince and Princess of Wales, having completed a five months' tour of India, sailed on Monday on board the British battleship *Renown* for Egypt, where they will spend a week. Thence they will go to Athens to meet King Edward and Queen Alexandra.

At a meeting on the 7th inst. of Liverpool Sefton Park Presbyterian congregation, the congregation of which the Rev. Dr. Watson was pastor for 25 years, it was agreed to invite the Rev. Andrew Boyd Scott, B.D., of Sherwood U. F. Church, Paisley, to fill the vacancy.

A missionary recently sent out to China writes that one of her greatest pleasures is hearing the Chinese sing in the chapel. "The voices are not always sweet, the music not always accurate, but they sing the praises of the true God, and that harmonizes the whole. May I live to see the day when the heathen in China shall be as few as are the Christians now."

The first organized census of the British Empire has been taken and the results issued in a Blue Book. The empire consists of an approximate area of 11,908,378 square miles. This is more than one-fifth of all the land on the globe. The population is roughly distributed as follows: In Asia, 300,000,000; Africa, 43,000,000; Europe, 42,000,000; America, 7,500,000, and Australasia, 5,000,000. The whole population is 400,000,000. Of these 54,000,000 are whites.

In Scotland, as in other countries, ministers live to a good old age. A contemporary says: "Rev. Adam Ross, of Perthshire, is in the 90th year of his ministry, and 96th of his age, and still wonderfully vigorous. Dr. Frew, of Stirling, began his ministry in the reign of William IV. For seventy years he has ministered in one congregation, St. Ninian's, and recently conducted a service of an hour and a half in that church! Ministers ought to get their life insurance at half price.

There are objectors to Torrey and Alexander in Philadelphia also. The minister of the leading Covenant Church in that city has sent out an elaborate statement of his reasons for not co-operating. The methods of the evangelists, he holds, are utterly unwarranted by Scripture, in the following particulars: (1) The singing of the gospel concomitant with the preaching of it. (2) The use of uninspired hymns in divine worship. (3) The use of instrumental music in the praise of God."

Of the twenty-nine books which appeared in the Bookman's list of best selling books during the year 1905, thirteen were written by men, eleven by women, three were collaborations in which husband and wife worked together, one was a collaboration of three women, and one, "The Breath of the Gods," was written, says the Bookman, "by an author whose sex and identity is still a matter of conjecture to the reading public at large."

Mr. Robert E. Speer, of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions (North), has published a table showing the per member contributions to foreign mission work of the leading churches of the United States. The following are his figures: Methodists, forty-five cents per capita per annum; Episcopalians, forty-eight cents; Baptists, sixty-three cents; Presbyterians, \$1.04; Congregationalists, \$1.11; Reformed, \$1.29; United Presbyterians, \$1.77.

The department of health in New York City has been analyzing drugs sold at the retail stores, and finds nearly all are adulterated. Most of them are below the standard. The uncertainty makes it impossible for the physician to prescribe intelligently, since he does not know how much of the pure drug will be found in the adulterated compound. We need not only better laws on the subject, but the law should also provide better means for the enforcement of the penalty.

The policy of the new French ministry has been outlined as follows: "The government intends to carry out the church and state separation law with inflexible firmness and establish the responsibility for resistance to the taking of inventories. Concerning Morocco we intend to follow the policy of the preceding ministry, hoping that the equity and dignity of our position will permit an early and satisfactory solution." The cabinet approves of the French-Russian alliance.

The greatest catastrophe in the history of European coal mining occurred on March 10 at Courrières in Northern France. An explosion of firedamp carried destruction and death throughout what was regarded as the most scientific mine in France. The deafening explosion was followed by the cages and mining apparatus being hurled from the mouth of the mine, together with a burst of flames. Eleven hundred men perished, and all Europe was profoundly moved by the magnitude of the disaster.

Henry Clews and Company have issued the ninth annual number of that excellent little pamphlet the "Investment Guide," which is one of the most compact and useful published on investment matters. Interesting facts as to earnings, expenses, canalization, dividends, and so forth, of railways and industrial corporations abound in the short space at the disposal of the compiler. The one hundred and ten pages may be said to contain a remarkable amount of concentrated information that will prove of great value to investors and speculators.

Says the Herald and Presbyter: "Prospects for union between the Presbyterian churches, North and South, are brightening. We judge this from the activity of those opposed to it. Something has wakened them up. The Central Presbyterian has an article by Dr. Vaughn on New School Theology, and promises another on the differences between the Old and New School. The assumption of these articles is that they ought to frighten the Southern Church. We doubt whether they will frighten any except the few who enjoy being frightened by such things.

The story of the British punitive expedition in Africa, and of the United States' victory over the Moros on the island of Jolo, does not make pleasant reading. In both cases a horde of fanatical and ill-armed human beings were mowed down like wheat. The victory was complete—altogether too complete—and too bloody also. We know that it is not safe to pronounce off-hand against these things at this distance, and lacking fullest information, but surely there is a better way. And surely patience and a little more humanity might have found it.

The South Wales Daily Mail has had several articles of late that aim to sum up the results of the great revival in the principality. While there is acknowledgment that all the converts have not endured, and that there has been a reaction noticeable in some places, yet it is stated

as beyond doubt that the great religious awakening has touched the whole circle of the life of the people for good, that church enterprises of all kinds have received a great impetus, and that the converts have exhibited "an almost unhopd-for fidelity." The total number of converts is conservatively estimated at 90,000.

A studious missionary, writing from China in regard to changes in the schools, says: "The most obvious fact that I have noticed is the marked resemblance of the whole thing to our mission schools. If I had not known otherwise, I should have supposed that I was in a mission school." Another marked evidence of change is that the younger Chinese are going abroad for education. Japan is now getting the majority of such students, but it is believed by observers that a fair proportion of these students will find their way to American and European colleges. In this regard China is following in the footsteps of Japan.

Glasgow has been claiming the second position among the great cities of the empire. An official report of the census of four years ago, just published, does not justify this claim. Calcutta, it is stated, comes next to London in the matter of population, then follows Bombay, and after Bombay comes Glasgow, the respective numbers in the three cities being 848,000, 776,000 and 761,000. It is recalled in the Blue Book that the population of Calcutta in 1710 was 10,000 or 12,000. Its growth, in two hundred years, to its present size, is a standing testimony to the prosperity of Britain's Great Eastern Dependency.

A pitiful case is reported from Chicago, remarks the Presbyterian Standard, of a divorce case in which, after the divorce had been granted, a boy of 13 was given the hard alternative to choose his father or mother. The child broke out in a paroxysm of weeping and refused to discard either parent. The divorce that breaks simply the marriage tie is had enough in all conscience, but when that tie has been strengthened by the birth of a child, it is something like inhuman to separate the child from one of its parents and to throw the necessary cloud of odium over its young life.

A notable feature in the recent elections in Great Britain is the remarkable fact that all the members for Wales, without exception, are Radicals, and sure to vote and plead for Disestablishment in Wales, which, indeed, was one controlling motive in the Welsh election. A Welsh member of parliament says: "The Nationalist majority in Ireland is as nothing to the overwhelming unanimity of Wales." Now, no sensible man can deny that a church which the great bulk of the people disavow and desert cannot be state established and state endowed consistently with righteousness. In Scotland, where almost the whole population is Presbyterian, the case for establishment is quite different.

It is calculated that there are in the new House at London 65 Congregationalists, 30 Wesleyans, 14 Baptists, 22 Presbyterians, 14 Unitarians, 8 Calvinistic Methodists, 7 Primitive Methodists, 7 Friends, and 3 United Methodist Free Churches. There never before were so many non-Episcopalians in the House, and almost all of them of evangelical communions. Surely this gives a great opportunity for legislation in the interests of New Testament Christianity and of social reform. Two hundred of these Nonconformist M.P.'s were entertained to dinner, at which the announcement was made that no separate Nonconformist party will be created in the House of Commons.