

Dominion Presbyterian

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NOTE AND COMMENT

Joint committee appointed last July by British Parliament to inquire into censorship of the drama, reported at London in favor of continuing said censorship and extending authority of censors to music halls.

Dr. F. B. Meyer will return to his old pastorate, Regent's Park Baptist church, London. "At sixty-two," he says, "one rather shrinks from such great responsibility," but added that he felt as hopeful and vigorous as ever. There is great rejoicing among the Baptists of Great Britain over Dr. Meyer's return.

Pole dwellings 4,000 years old have been unearthed in a swamp on the plateau east of Lake Vetter, 120 miles northwest of Stockholm, Sweden. The excavations disclosed petrified apples, wheat kernels, nuts, pottery, flint and horn implements, amber ornaments and wild bear teeth, all in good state of preservation.

The twelfth International Congress on Alcoholism, held in London, declared alcohol and alcoholism two of the real and substantial enemies of moral, artistic and commercial progress of the human race, according to the report of the United States delegates to that convention recently made public by the State Department.

William K. Vanderbilt is planning to build four model six-storey tenements for the accommodation of sufferers from tuberculosis at a cost of \$650,000, not including cost of sites. Roof gardens, open air balconies, and other features designed to fight the white plague will make the tenements distinctive. Moderate rentals will be charged.

The New York Christian Home for Intemperate Men at Mount Vernon has become the centre of aggressive evangelistic work carried on for the especially needy class of unfortunate men coming for shelter and spiritual help. The work of the farm is an aid in building up the physique and a help in providing eggs and vegetables for the tables. Men representing every profession and trade are among the guests and a number of former members at the Home are now giving their lives to Christian service.

By far the largest bequest ever made to the Presbyterian church is that provided for in the will of Mr. John Stewart Kennedy, who died in New York City on Sunday, Oct. 31. The entire amount of his benefactions to religious, charitable and educational causes is over \$25,000,000, the largest single gift ever made in this country, and is distributed among sixty institutions in all. The amount left to the Presbyterian church exceeds \$9,000,000, as follows:—To Foreign Missions, \$2,250,000; to Home Missions, \$2,250,000; to church extension (in New York City), \$2,250,000; Presbyterian Hospital, New York, \$2,250,000; Presbyterian Board of Aid for colleges, \$750,000, and the Board of Relief \$30,000. The American Bible Society receives \$750,000. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Public Library and Columbia University, all of New York, receive each \$2,250,000. Roberts College, Constantinople, receives \$1,500,000. Some twenty educational institutions receive from \$50,000 to \$100,000 each. It is gratifying to know that this multi-millionaire business man of New York had all these beneficent institutions in his mind when making his will. His gifts will bring rejoicing to a multitude of Christian workers and the fruits thereof will continue for generations.

The "First Church of Christ Scientist," New York City, has concluded the investigation of charges which had been preferred against Mrs. Augusta Stetson, its leading practitioner, by the Christian Science authorities in Boston, and has decided in Mrs. Stetson's favor. The investigation was protracted, and the verdict arrived at was adopted by but a small majority. There seems to be—if the usual interpretation of such terms is allowable in this connection—a great deal of "malignant animal magnetism" in circulation among the accused and the accusers. There has been originated a new vocabulary in defining the subtle and intangible forms of offending which is other communions might be described as telebearing, jealousy, unholly ambition and such like. The "first reader" of the New York church is still pursuing Mrs. Stetson and apparently will be satisfied with nothing less than her decapitation. Whether the feeling is so strong on both sides as to result in schism is not clear. In other connections it would seem quite probable.

This paragraph from the Lutheran is suggestive: It used to be that only weak churches were in the city; but times are changing. Last week the Presbyterian Synod of Pennsylvania seriously considered the problem of saving its "rural churches in run down districts." These needs in some sections have become great and are growing greater. Rural churches suffer because their old worshippers die and their children emigrate to the city while a foreign element moves in to occupy the land. In view of the wonderful possibilities of the farm and the great advances in methods of agriculture, transportation and communication the farm is going to become attractive and with scientific farming means of brains and power are going to drift away from the factory to the field. Then what, if the country church is not saved? Not only for the sake of historic sentiment; but as a matter of church economy every rural church must be maintained. This is particularly true in our own church which has always had a large portion of her membership among the rural population. Preserve the country church. It is necessary if we would conserve the future.

The Department of Mines, under the direction of Dr. E. Haanel, has been for some time past engaged in a series of peat fuel tests, which seem to have been fairly successful. The department, for purpose of experiment, procured a peat bog of about 300 acres, near Alfred, on the C.P.R., east of Ottawa, where the peat is of good quality and eight or nine feet thick. Here the Government erected works and proceeded to manufacture fuel by the air-dried process. With this process there is a minimum of apparatus, and as the peat is used the plant follows it. So far, the experiments seem to have been a success, and it is hoped that by next year it will be possible to place the peat fuel so manufactured upon the market at about \$2.25 per ton. It is claimed that one and one-eighth tons of this peat fuel are equal to one ton of coal. But it is not as a rival to coal for domestic use that the most satisfactory results are anticipated, but, as it is pointed out by Dr. Haanel, for gas-producer plants, placed at the point of manufacture of the peat fuel, this will provide a very cheap and satisfactory fuel supply, and can be used as a source of electric power for the country round about. This will be especially valuable where no water power exists in the neighborhood, and ought to provide electric power at very much lower rates than are available at present in such localities.

What precisely is the origin of the expression "a windfall," which Mr. Asquith, Lord Avebury and others use, each with an application of his own, in speaking of burget matters? An old encyclopaedia explains that some families of the English nobility held their land on a tenure which forbade them to cut down trees, these being reserved as the property of the Royal Navy. But any tree which fell down without human assistance they might keep, so that a hurricane causing a great "windfall" was heartily welcome. It seems probable, however, that the expression was simpler in origin. Even an apple that fell to the ground without the trouble of picking it, and which a passerby might often annex without feeling that he was a thief, would be a lucky "windfall."—London Chronicle.

The Irish Presbyterians have secured, after all, the services of the Rev. David Smith, D.D., as professor of theology for the Magee College, Belfast. Dr. Smith is a comparatively young man and is thoroughly furnished for the work to which he has been called. He was a brilliant student, both in the Glasgow University and the Theological College of the Free Church. For a time he was an assistant to Professor A. B. Bruce and was from the first marked out for a professor's chair. Like a sensible young minister he became the pastor of a small country church where, away from the maddening crowd, he could pursue his studies. In this secluded spot he wrote his great book, "In the Days of His Flesh," which, although sold for two dollars, has passed through ten editions. He will suit the Presbyterians of Ulster, for he is strongly evangelical, Calvinistic and earnest; and those who catch his spirit will be ministers of Jesus Christ and pastors under whom the flock of the Redeemer will be well shepherded and fed. Dr. Smith, if spared, will yet do work for the Master which will arouse the church and bless the world.

The summary of the World's Presbyterian churches recently published by the Presbyterian Alliance gives the numbers for 34 branches of Presbyterian and Reformed churches in all countries. The whole number of communicant members in all these bodies is 5,387,324. Other totals are 30,532 congregations, 28,105 ministers, 142,592 elders, 3,917,709 Sabbath school scholars; whole amount of contributions, \$50,808,440. The number of communicants has increased 1,615,244, or nearly fifty per cent. in twenty years. In their foreign missions these churches return 1,361 ordained ministers, 280 medical and 2,250 other missionaries, 739 native ordained ministers, 3,965 licentiate or preachers, 6,375 other helpers and 378,242 communicants. The Presbyterian bodies on the European continent return 219 Presbyteries with 6,333 ministers and 541,604 members; in Asia 11 churches (branches?) and 27,468 members; in Africa, 10 organizations, of which the Reformed Church in Cape Colony and the Orange River State is the largest, 190 congregations and in all 267,068 members. The principal strength of the Presbyterian bodies is in America and Great Britain, preponderantly in North America, where there are 657 Presbyteries, 18,465 congregations, 15,694 ministers, 2,437,451 members and 2,092,825 pupils in Sabbath schools. In Great Britain there are 251 Presbyteries, 5,638 congregations, 5,611 ministers and 1,140,662 pupils in Sabbath schools. The contributions aggregate \$12,693,985 in Great Britain and \$37,961,445 in North America.