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NOTE AND COMMENT.

Recent reports from the Old Land of the pitiable condition of the unemployed and of the growing feeling of unrest among whole sections of some of the great cities, make anything but pleasant reading for Britons beyond the seas.

Dr. Plumer once said that there is one subject "upon which men joke, but upon which devils never joke, and that is the subject of future punishment." Flippant talk about hell is one form of profanity.

An English holder of Japanese bonds, by way of insurance of their value, has contributed twenty pounds to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel for missionary work in Japan. He thinks his bonds will be safer if Christian influences prevail in the Island empire.

The number of baptisms so far reported by the China Inland Mission during the current year is 878. These converts live in twelve different provinces of China which shows that the Christian movement is not checked by mountain or river or language barriers.

The Southwestern Presbyterian notes that during the yellow fever siege in New Orleans four very efficient doctors were Dr. White, Dr. Blue, Dr. Green and Dr. Lavandier! "These men," it says "made a rainbow of promise all the time, and the hope they inspired has been realized."

A beloved brother of the Episcopal ministry in New Orleans, says the South-Western Presbyterian, brought a hearty laugh on himself the other day in one of the meetings of the Protestant pastors in connection with the evangelistic revival services now in progress. He reported that a brother of his church had said to him: "What is the use of it? You can't revive an Episcopalian!" The good minister said that he would try to show his friend that it could be done.

From New Zealand comes word of a great work of grace sweeping over that country. The New Zealand Baptist says the reports from various sections read like reports of the Welsh revival. A report from one town, Waikahi, says that for months conversions have been frequent in all the churches. Night after night the churches are crowded. Persons ranging from 74 years of age to 12 have been converted. Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists and Salvationists are praying and working together. The out-door meetings have been largely attended. Through conversions of well-known men, the revival is the talk of the town. In the mine, on the street, in the hotels, and every where men gather, they talk of the movement.

The recent municipal elections in Glasgow, Scotland, turned largely on the temperance question, and the temperance party won. As a result the new Lord Provost, Mr. Bilslands, adds another to the list of teetotal chief magistrates. Glasgow has not in the past been partial to total abstinence, and the "Glasgow Evening News" is only able to recall two of Mr. Bilsland's predecessors who took up an equally determined stand. These were Lord Provost Collins in 1877, and Lord Provost Chisholm in 1890. In 1893 Mr. George Rough, of Dundee, on his election as Provost of that town said he was then the only teetotal chief magistrate in Scotland. Now there are more than 50. Who will say that the total abstinence movement is not making progress in Scotland?

The plebiscite which has resulted in raising Prince Charles of Denmark to the throne of Norway, was a strange mingling of the modern with the ancient. Indeed the whole story of the separation of Norway from Sweden shows how slender a hold the old ideas of monarchy have on the people, and what marvelous progress has been made toward the era of world-peace. That a stronger country should consent to the secession of the weaker without appeal to force, and that the people of the seceding country should choose a king by a ballot of the people, would have been thought a dream of millennial times a century ago. It is a tribute to the genuine Christianity of both Sweden and Norway, and of their rulers and it holds promise of great things in the future.

What will British Liberals do with the education question? Here is a suggestion by a British M.P. Speaking at a meeting in London on Saturday, Dr. Macnamara, M.P., said they were within measurable distance of a general election, and there might be a Liberal majority. We should then, he said, obtain a settlement of the education question, which should be permanent. Adverting to the burden imposed on the London County Council, he urged that if the public found the greater part of the money, they should have the greater part of the control. It was not a question of church or chapel, as he would bring all schools under public control. The State could not give denominational teaching all round, because there were too many denominations in existence. He did not want the schools be secularised, because hundreds of thousands of poor children would not come under any religious influences whatever. A writer in a British paper recently took the ground that all the schools should be made public schools under public control, and that wherever religious instruction is wanted it should be furnished by the religious denominations.

In a recent public address in England, Sir Frederick Treves, baronet, distinctly defines his position as to the use of alcoholic drinks. He places alcohol in the category of a dangerous poison, which in the case of many alcoholic beverages is made more poisonous by the presence of fusel oil, found in brands of liquor consumed by many of the poorer classes. He also notes as a significant and encouraging fact that the medical profession are gradually abandoning the use of alcohol as a medicine. Here is a paragraph from the baronet's address, which is worth remembering: "As a work producer alcohol is exceedingly extravagant, and like other extravagant measures, it is apt to lead to a physical bankruptcy. It is well known that troops cannot march on alcohol. I was with the relief column that moved on to Ladysmith. It was an extremely trying time apart from the heat of the weather. In that column of some 30,000 men, the first who dropped out were not the tall men, or the short men, or the big men, or the little men—but the drinkers, and they dropped out as clearly as if they had been labelled with a big letter on their backs." He ridicules the plea that alcohol is a protection against cold and adds the following testimony as to his own experience: "Having spent the greater part of my life in operating, I can assure you that the person of all persons that I dread to see enter the operating theatre is the drinker. I share with the late Sir James Paget his absolute dread of the secret drinker." The testimony of so great an authority should have weight with all thinking people.

Sir Campbell Bannerman has formed his government. The principal offices are filled as follows:—Mr. Asquith becomes Chancellor of the Exchequer; Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Home Secretary; and Sir Edward Grey, Foreign Secretary. The Colonial Secretary is the Earl of Elgin, Foreign Secretary. The Colonial Secretary is the Earl of Elgin; the Secretary of War, Mr. Haldane, and the Secretary for India, Mr. John Morley. Mr. Lloyd-George, as President of the Local government Board, will introduce a singularly vigorous element into the new Cabinet. Mr. James Bryce becomes Chief Secretary for Ireland, and Augustine Birrell, the brilliant essayist and litterateur, President of the Board of Education. Sir Henry Fowler, as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, will be an experienced Cabinet minister, while Lord Aberdeen, though not in the Cabinet, will make, as he made years ago, a popular and hard-working Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. Altogether, it is a fine Cabinet.

"There never was a civilization that became prosperous that did not start on the road toward Sodom." The Canadian Baptist which publishes this trite quotation, says the indictment is true, as can be abundantly proved from the history of the nations. And the pity is that it is true not only of civilization, but also in various ways respecting individual men and women. Our contemporary adds: "One of the dangers of prosperity is the giving of free reins to living that tends toward life and conduct wholly unbecoming to the followers of Christ. Blessed is the man who has the will and heart and strength to resist those temptations that invariably accompany commercial success and material good fortune. And more blessed he, who, while enjoying prosperity in the realm of temporal affairs, is inclined and able to turn such advance to good account for the kingdom of God among men." Why should so many people, in times of prosperity, forget that God is the author of their prosperity—"He is the doer and giver of all good"—and that they are stewards of this bounty? Men forget this, put why should they?

Under the tutelage and influence of Japan China is preparing to adopt a constitution for the empire on modern lines. A commission of special ambassadors is at present studying the constitutions of Great Britain, the United States, Japan, France, Germany and Austria, the object being to adopt the best features to be found in each, so far as they can be made applicable. Yu Chian Chang, who is now in the United States studying the constitution of that country, recently said: "When these special ambassadors have finished their work and submitted the draft of the constitution for China to the Emperor, China will step out of the ranks of absolute monarchies and enter that of the constitutional empires." He also said that this departure from ancient usages was due to the gradual spread of Japanese influences over the empire. He said that Japan had urged China to modernize her laws and government and thus form a strong alliance of the yellow races in the Far East. When this is accomplished some of the great powers will have to reform their treatment of China. Great Britain will have to wipe out the opium traffic she has so long forced upon the Celestial empire. The United States and Canada will have to remodel or repeal their exclusion laws, and some of the European powers will have to surrender the territory they have fished from her in recent years. Henceforth China will have to be treated as one of the great powers.