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NOTE AND COMMENT

By a majority of more than 80,000 votes in a national referendum Switzerland has decided to prohibit the manufacture and sale of absinthe. This will mean a heavy loss, at least temporarily, in revenue to the country, but a great moral gain.

One of our contemporaries asks the pertinent question, "Why is it so eminently proper to teach Darwin, Huxley, Spencer, and Mill in the public schools, and so enormously wrong to teach Jesus?" If it be true that the ethics of Christianity are the purest the world knows, why should they not be taught to the children in our schools? Is there any good reason for omitting them?

After five years' work, Australia's great transcontinental rabbit proof fence has been completed. Its length is 2,636 miles, and the cost of its erection has been nearly \$1,250,000. It is furnished at intervals of five miles with systems of traps, in which hundreds of rabbits are captured and destroyed daily. Inside the barrier there appears as yet no trace of their presence.

The British Weekly says: "The movements for union in Canada, Australia and New Zealand have arisen mainly through three causes, viz: (1) The desire to achieve the hope of Christ; (2) the demands of Home Missions (many settlers never hear the living words of Christ); (3) the activity of Rome (recently the ruler of the Jesuits visited Australia and everywhere Romanism is seeing expansion).

The official figures of the general elections in Ontario on June 8, place the Conservative majority at 95,634. The figures are as follows: Total vote polled, 470,208; polled by Conservatives, 277,914; polled by Liberals, 182,293; polled by Independents, Laborites and Socialists, 10,014. Majority of Government over Opposition, 95,634. Majority of Government over Opposition and Independents, 85,620.

The Ontario government has decided to establish forest nurseries throughout the province in the neighborhood of lands which are not suitable for agricultural purposes. These nurseries are to be made the centres of reforestation for the particular areas in which they are situated. The government are also arranging to utilize the services of students of the university who are taking courses in forestry.

The Baptists in Europe are making every preparation for the European Congress at Berlin, which meets at the end of August, in connection with the Baptist World Alliance. It is only within the last half-century that Baptists have been at work on the Continent. The pioneer was J. G. Oncken, a German, whose work rapidly spread, until Baptist communities can be found in Germany, Hungary, Russia, and the Scandinavian countries. The growth since has been remarkable. There are over 38,000 members in Germany; over 24,000 in Russia; over 43,000 in Sweden; 16,000 in Hungary, and a like number scattered through other countries. At the close of 1907, there were 144,461 church members and 110,524 in the Sunday Schools. There is a newly formed Russian-speaking union, comprising nearly 100,000 members, and living largely in Southern Russia. — Missionary Review.

The old-age pension bill has passed the British House of Commons with only ten dissenting votes. The bill gives a pension of \$1.25 a week to persons over seventy years of age whose income is not above \$2.50 per week. It is, therefore, a measure of poor relief. It is feared by its opponents that this is only the entering wedge, and that the age limit will be lowered and the pension increased. The passage of the bill is due largely to Mr. Asquith, the Prime Minister.

The New York Christian Advocate, speaking of summer vacations, declares: "Happy are the persons who are in as good health after a summer vacation as they were before it." This is rather rough on summer vacations, and yet, in many cases, there seems only too good ground for the suspicion that some summer vacations are the reverse of helpful, either physically, mentally, or spiritually. There seems to be no good reason why this should be so, except our native foolishness. The helpful vacation must be a wise vacation.

Perhaps no occupation is so little understood by those who are not in it as that of farming. Few people realize how much intelligence, patience, and executive ability successful farming demands. A well-known British preacher, referring to this subject recently, very wisely said: "Farming is a trade, and like any other calling has to be learned. It is absurd for city clerks or shop assistants to imagine that, without any practical knowledge, they can succeed in farming, whether in England or in our colonies. They might as well dream of entering a surgery and dispensing drugs, or commanding a battleship as of undertaking the work of a farmer without the necessary training and experience."

The Episcopal (Anglican) Church in the United States, says the Belfast Witness, had passed an ordinance opening their pulpits to the use of other Christian ministers on fit occasions. Five of these ministers shortly after seceded to the Roman Catholics. One of these, Dr. McGarvey, stated that this fraternal and Christian ordinance (for such it is) was the cause of his secession. It now appears that the purpose of all the five was practically formed previous to the "open pulpit" canon. The action of these clergymen, however regrettable, is honest and effracted compared with the conduct of Anglican "priests" at home, who, while eating the bread of a Reformed Church, are surreptitiously leading their people into the Roman camp.

An enormous demonstration, estimated at from 300,000 to 500,000 persons, invaded Hyde Park on Saturday night with a hundred bands and a hundred and twenty speakers, and demanded that Parliament pass the Licensing Bill at once. Among the speakers were Dr. Oldfort, Lord Kinnaird and Mr. Winston Churchill. There was a remarkable scene when, at a given signal all the bands struck up the hymn, 'Onward, Christian Soldiers,' in which the demonstrators joined. The proceedings came to an end with the passing of a resolution demanding that both Houses of Parliament pass the bill without delay.

It is happily suggested that the erection of drinking fountains at frequent intervals in the public streets of our towns and cities would lessen the temptation of thirsty citizens to seek refreshment in the barrooms.

Referring to the Tercentenary Celebration, Rev. Mr. McMillan, of St. Andrew's Church, Winnipeg, is reported in the Tribune as saying: "Quebec reminds us of the richness of our national debt to the past. We have not only the history that has been made in Canada, but we enjoy the result of most of the history of Europe as well. The literature of Europe is ours, and the music and something of the art. We inherit the reformation and revolutions and the battles by sea and land. In fact Europe owes much of her liberty to America, for it was the overflowing of immigration and example of new experiments in government that taught the people to demand the rights of man. The Canadian, whose face is set towards the future, forgetful of the past, is both ungrateful and unwise. The celebration should further unite the hearts of the two races who live side by side in Canada. There are many precedents for regarding such an admixture as full of hope. There are few of the countries of Europe but have profited by the intermingling of several racial and religious elements. Switzerland, the most notable country in Europe for its size, speaks four languages and is jointly divided between Protestant and Catholic. The French Canadians have twice saved Canada to the British Crown. There are no more loyal Britishers than they."

On Sunday 19th inst., there commenced at Malpeque, Prince Edward Island, the religious services which marked the opening of the celebration of the centennial anniversary of the founding of the Presbyterian congregation of Princetown. In 1808 Rev. Dr. John Kier, the second Presbyterian minister to settle on the Island, arrived from Scotland and took charge of the congregation of Princetown and Bedouet. Ordination being an event that had never before taken place on the Island, the people for miles around were present. The services were conducted partly in Gaelic and partly in English. At the time of Dr. Kier's settlement, the whole of Prince county and a part of Queen's may have been said to have constituted his parish. The doctor labored faithfully and successfully until his congregation became the model congregation of the Presbytery. In 1858, while attending a meeting of the Synod in Truro, he died suddenly, in the 79th year of his age, and in the 51st of his ministry in Princetown. In the previous year his jubilee had taken place, and the large gathering from all parts of the Province and from neighboring Provinces gave evidence of the high esteem in which the venerable doctor was held by the Church generally. As a Christian, as a minister, as professor of theology, as President of the Board of Foreign Missions, he ranked high in the regard of his brethren, and of the whole Church. His successors in Malpeque were Rev. Robt. Laird, Rev. George McMillan, now of Kenerville; Rev. J. M. Fisher and Rev. E. J. Rattee, the present incumbent. Sunday services included sermons by Rev. Professor D. J. Fraser of Montreal, grandson of Rev. Dr. Kier, and by Dr. Kier's successors, Messrs. Laird, McMillan and Fisher, also addresses by other clergymen and by Miss Annie Montgomery, missionary to Persia. The centennial proper began on Tuesday, when tablets were unveiled to the memory of Dr. Kier and to the late Miss Charlotte Montgomery, missionary to Persia.