

day-school stop on the way to spend those pennies for cigarettes and brandy chocolates. She asks parents to cooperate with the Union in its efforts to suppress the evil.

Our own observation has convinced us that the habit has increased enormously among even very small boys of late. And what is perhaps worse is the fact that no one would ever have any reason to suspect the existence of an anti-cigarette law, so open and above-board and so constant is the violation. It is acknowledged on all hands that this vice is surely sapping the foundations of physical strength and vitality in the rising generation—in fact poisoning the very fountains of life. Is it not high time that the matter should be taken in hand by the strong men, and especially by the men in the pulpit?

#### The Waste of Intemperance.

It is estimated that Great Britain's drink-bill last year was \$712,074,000, which would make an annual cost of \$91 for every family in the United Kingdom, counting five persons to a family. In "Christian America" matters could hardly be considered any better, comparatively speaking. The bill is annually about \$1,200,000,000, not including the cost of inebriate asylums, hospitals, criminal courts, and other results.

What a sacrifice to a baleful appetite! What an inexhaustible source of vice and crime! And not one good thing comes of it all!

#### "The Missionary Crisis."

DR. ARTHUR PIERSON, editor of *The Missionary Review of the World*, has been very widely and severely criticized in the religious journals for a statement made in an editorial in the January number of that Review. This statement was "that at no time during the half century now closing have missions to the heathen been at greater peril of utter collapse!" This has been contrasted with the "glowing pictures of the mission-

ary outlook" that have been furnished by the same editorial pen. In defending his position in the March number of that review, Dr. Pierson says:

"But there is no contradiction. The outlook was never so hopeful; the risk was never greater than to-day. It is the hopeful and promising outlook which makes the risk so great. . . . And it is just now that the Church, as a whole and on the whole, does not respond. Everything calls for advance, yet almost every organized Board is crying *Retrench.*"

We have no sympathy with the "pessimism," and none with the premillennialism, against which the critics inveigh, but there are times of backsliding and of declining interest in the Church when she fails to come up to her duty, and her work ceases for the time being to move forward. The evidence is overwhelming that the present is such a critical period in the life of the Church. We are in touch with many of the leading missionary organizations, for both home and foreign work, and the appeals that come to us indicate a feeling almost of desperation, in view of the immense field open, the vast debts already incurred, the apathy of the churches, and the forced retrenchments. Brethren, let us study the situation fully and fairly in order that we may lay firmer hold on God the Holy Spirit, who is the Helper! Bad as the outlook may temporarily be, Christ is going to win the day and to win the world.

#### The Inaugural Ball and Address.

THE letter of President-elect McKinley to the "Inaugural Committee" at Washington, begging them to dispense with the "Inaugural Ball," is a remarkable expression of the Christian sentiment of this country. It is as follows:

CANTON, O., January 23.

INAUGURAL COMMITTEE, WASHINGTON, D. C.

*Gentlemen:* It has come to my knowledge that you propose to expend something like \$50,000 for what is known as the Inaugural Ball, to be held on the evening following my inauguration. While I appreciate fully the spirit that has prompted you to project a ceremonial of such magnitude, allow me to say, with the sincere hope that I will not be misunderstood, that it is unbearable for me