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Note and Comment.

Railroads in the United States are enforcing stringent rules against the use of intoxicants by their employees. Among these roads may be mentioned the Wabash, the Burlington, the Alton and Rock Island, the Memphis, the Santa Fe and the Nickel Plate roads. Experience warns the owners and managers of railroads that men who drink at all are not trustworthy employees. Thus the toils close more and more tightly around the American saloon.

The New York Sun states that such poor butter is exported to Porto Rico from the United States, that the Porto Ricans prefer the crudely made and unpleasantly odored butter produced in their own so-called dairies. Judging from the description given of some of the butter exported from New York, and which retails in Porto Rico, at 25 cents per pound, it must be pretty rank stuff. Why cannot Canadian dairymen have a "try" for the Porto Rico butter market, which is so badly served.

Sir A. H. Leth Fraser, says the London Presbyterian, one of the new Knight Commanders of the Star of India, is the late Commissioner for the Central Provinces, and the recently appointed Lieut.-Governor of Bengal, a post which is the premier prize of the Indian Civil Service. He was a distinguished graduate of Edinburgh University, and himself the son of a missionary, he is an elder of the native Presbyterian Church, worshipping with the natives, preaching in Hindustani and dispensing the Communion like one of themselves.

As a memorial of the martyred missionaries of the American Board of foreign missions, who were murdered in China during the Boxer rising, a monument is being erected at the entrance of the campus grounds of Oberlin College in Ohio. When completed it will be an arched gateway along whose semi-circular sides, in tablets of bronze will be memorialised the names of the fifteen consecrated men and women who perished—who gave their lives for China—in that bloody insurrection. The monument, it is anticipated, will be a reminder and an inspiration to all who see it of the Master's commission: "Go ye into all the world," &c.

Intellectually the Protestants of France seem to be wide awake. Here are a people numbering only one-sixtieth of the population of France yet they have obtained such prominence in both the intellectual and political leadership of the country as to demonstrate the superiority of Protestant over Catholic training. The Ultramontan journal *Croix*, of Paris, makes the following confession: "This audacious minority, a mere one-sixtieth, is now dominant in the land of Charente and St. Louis; there are Protestants everywhere in all the branches of government, in the Cabinet, in the highest law courts in the chief university offices.

One recently became President of the Senate; another was close upon becoming President of the Republic itself." The Protestants of France, too, are becoming wide-awake in matters of religion and their ranks are being reinforced by many who are abandoning the Roman Catholic church.

An official of a western (U.S.) railway, which runs through the Rocky Mountains, is convinced that the mountains are always on the move. "We find from actual experience," he says, "in maintaining tunnels, bridges, and tracks in the mountains, that the mountains are moving. It costs a railway passing through the mountains a great deal of money in the course of ten years to keep the tracks in line, and maintenance of tunnels is even more expensive. Drive a stake on the side of a mountain, take the location with the greatest care, and return after a few months, the stake is not in the same location. The whole side of the mountain has moved. This experiment has often been tried, and in all cases the result proves that the mountains are moving. The mountains are gradually seeking the level of the sea." Here is something that may well attract the attention of scientific men.

Preaching recently in Baltimore on "Christ the only Enduring Name in History and the only True Restraint of Society," Cardinal Gibbons sounds a note of warning on the divorce question. He declared divorce to be the social scourge of the nation and likened the country's temporal wealth to that of pagan Rome with its moral and physical decay. He said: "There is a barbarism more dense than the barbarism of the savage tribes of the forest. For the children of the forest, taught by the God of Nature, adore the Great Spirit. I speak of a barbarism which eliminates God and an overturning Providence from the moral government of the world. There is a social scourge more blighting and more destructive of family life than Mormonism. It is the fearfully increasing number of divorce suits throughout the United States. These suits, like the miasms of God, are slowly but surely grinding the domestic altars of the nation. I can conceive no sadder more pathetic that appears more touchingly to our sympathies than the contemplation of a child emerging into the years of discretion, seeing its father and mother estranged from each other. Her little heart is yearning for love. She longs to embrace both of her parents. But she finds that she cannot give her affection to one without exciting the resentment of displeasure of the other. A lady prominent in social life said to me the last year: 'I do not recognize any law, human or divine, that can deprive a husband or wife of the right to separate and to enter fresh espousals when they cannot live in harmony together.' "You speak of your rights and your privileges. But you have not a word to say of your duties and obligations. There can be no rights where there are no corresponding obligations. There are no rights against the laws of God." True and earnest words, worthy of being pondered by Protestants as well as Catholics.

The Aged and Infirm Minister's Fund.

Editor DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN:—If the collections and distributions of the liberality of the Church for the necessities of the saints is a fair statement of the grand object of this Scheme, it apparently does not contemplate assisting able and prosperous ministers to provide for themselves against future contingencies.

The strong are to bear the infirmities of the weak and the Church is to charge herself with the duty of seeing this carried out; but we have not been able to discover that it is any part of the Church's duty to conduct business along the lines of an ordinary Insurance society.

Of course it will be understood that we are not raising the question here as to the propriety of ministers insuring themselves. It is well known, however, that many of our spiritual leaders find principles of insurance incompatible with the higher attainments of the spiritual life and shun them accordingly. Our only contention here is that surely it is no part of the Church's duty to insist upon her ministers insuring themselves and in any case the Church is not the proper agent to transact the business. If ministers desire to insure themselves; let them take their business to some reputable, straight, Life Insurance Society, and not bring it into the Courts of the Church of God. Let the dead bury their dead, said Christ, but go thou and preach the Kingdom of God. How is a Church with divided interests of this kind to accomplish her grand work, the evangelization of the world?

But the Commercial Feature of this Scheme with its elaborate system of Rates and Regulations, not only cripples the success of the purely benevolent department of the Scheme but tends to degrade its general character. All that is Spiritual and distinctively Christian about this Scheme is to be seen at the beginning and in connection with the lay contributions to the fund. The good soon turns to dust and the fine gold to ashes.

Observe the marvellous transformations through which this fund passes in the course of its journey from giver to receiver.

As it leaves the hands of the members of the Church it is simply a free-will offering for aged and infirm ministers; in the offices of the Church it receives certain additions in the shape of interest, donations and minister's rates, becoming now the capital of an Insurance Society; finally it gets into the hands of some one of our aged and infirm ministers, and into the hands of these as pensions of annuities.

And so it comes to pass that whilst it is freely offered by the one party, it is cheerfully claimed by the other; whilst it is given on the score of "necessity" by the one party, it is taken on the score of "rates" by the other. How deplorable is this misunderstanding.

If then, as we take it, the Insurance Feature of this scheme is the author of all this confusion, how would it be in remodeling the scheme to throw overboard this mischievous element and adopt some less cumbersome and more spiritual means for transferring these free-will offerings from the one party to the other.

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