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NOTE AND COMMENT

The oldest Lutheran congregation in the United States is known as the First Lutheran Church of Albany, N.Y. Its history dates back some 250 years. Since 1794 it has had fifteen pastors.

There are now seventy-seven Presbyterian churches in Brazil alone, with 6,999 communicants who contributed, in 1906, nearly \$90,000 for home support and mission purposes.

The Philadelphia Ledger is emphatic in demanding that the words "In God we trust," be restored to their place on the coins. It says: "Consulting art is well; consulting fitness is better; consulting the deeply-founded convictions of a nation is best."

John Nathan beat his wife with a shovel in New York because she would not give him twenty-five cents to buy whiskey. He must now pay a fine of \$1,000 and serve five years in prison. Some drinks come high, even when you don't get them.

Russia has added to the causes of divorce "leaving the Orthodox Church." The law already provided that if a Russian left the State Church, his children would be taken away from him and placed under the care of those who would bring them up in the Orthodox faith. Now a man or woman who leaves the State Church in Russia incurs the possible loss of all his family.

A railroad track may be safely crossed by keeping a good lookout and hurrying over it, but it is not a safe place on which to loiter or to camp, or to go to sleep. There are places where necessity may call a Christian to go and where he may go safely if he keeps a good lookout and hurries through. But to loiter, to camp, to become wonted and to feel at home in the place of danger, the saloon, for example, is to invite disaster. "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation."

Canadian Churchman: It is incredible that on the sixth of December in the year of grace 1907, an application was made in court, in the Province of Ontario, which disclosed that the Scotch "Wee Frees" maintained a mission in this province, a missionary coming over for several months in each year to convert us. Well, we trust this benefaction by a worthy deceased farmer of Huron will do good and not stir up needless strife in the Presbyterian Church of Canada.

Early in December a new building was dedicated for what is known as "Christ's Mission" in New York City. The mission is under the charge of Rev. James A. O'Connor, formerly a Roman Catholic priest, and more than a hundred priests and monks have been received into it upon their desire to leave the Roman Catholic body. Here they have been cared for and instructed in a home-like Christian manner, until their fitness has been determined for religious or secular work. Many of these are now engaged in pastoral, missionary or evangelistic labors in connection with the various Protestant Churches. The meetings have always been attended by Roman Catholics, many of whom have been converted to the evangelical faith. The work of the mission has been to lead souls to personal faith in the Savior, and great good has been accomplished.

Here is a question for men to answer, says the Cumberland Presbyterian: Where are the boys? Dr. Washington Gladden recently called a meeting of Columbus, Ohio, pastors to consider this question. Dr. Gladden himself expressed the opinion that the Church is losing its hold on the boys because they see their fathers leave most of the church work to their mothers. Hence they conclude that it is unmanly to have an active interest in the church. Before it is too late, fathers, you would better be asking yourselves the question. Where are the boys and why are they where they are?

The correspondent of the North China Herald of Shanghai, who visited the recent famine district, in his closing letter upon the conditions there, wrote: "Throughout my travels I did not experience any manifestation of that anti-foreign feeling which is commonly supposed to exist among the mass of the inhabitants of the interior. Beyond a very natural curiosity—which would be evidenced in any country in the world in similar circumstances—the demeanor of the people of Kiangpoh would not discredit the highest forms of civilization. I am persuaded that this is in a great measure due to the action of the few missionaries throughout the district, who are gentlemen of the most estimable character and worthy of the great calling to which they belong."

The work of Charles Steizle, secretary of Church and Labor in the Presbyterian Church of the United States, has been so productive of good results that the Congregationalists have decided to appoint an industrial secretary to do similar work. All these things, says the Lutheran Observer, are giving practical emphasis to the fact of the interest of the Church in the labor problem, and in the so-called "laboring man." The fact is that unless physically or mentally disabled, a man cannot be a Christian, in the fullest sense, unless he is a "laboring man." Labor, in one form or another, is an essential part of a normal life, and is demanded of every one who would fulfil his duty in the world. But while we are all one in the eyes of the Lord, yet the labor problem, and all that it involves, is too important and too insistent for the Church to treat as though it did not exist, and the move of these two great churches is worthy of note.

The Lutheran Observer claims to be shocked with some features of modern progress in Palestine, for that paper says: "With all our love for the modern, and for progress, there are some things that jar on the sensibilities. We would like to keep some things as they have been through all the ages. It is particularly true with reference to our feeling toward the Holy Land, and it comes with somewhat of a shock to read that Jerusalem is to have its electric light plant and a line of automobile busses. There is to be a trolley, or, at least, one is projected, between Jerusalem and Bethlehem—and all this with the official permission of the Sultan of Turkey. A few miles of railroad have already been built in Palestine, and electric lights are not altogether new to the country, but the whole thing is so utterly incongruous with the Palestine which travellers have made familiar to us, and which has been looked upon as living commentary on the Scripture story, that these modern things seem almost like a desecration."

The attorney for the Anti-Saloon League in Chicago states that 199 saloons were closed by the recent election in that city. "The Prohibition party certainly has reason to feel glad," says the attorney. "We are on the main line now and will sweep the country at the forthcoming presidential election." The prohibition question came up in the Chicago City Council recently, when the aldermen, by a vote of 40 to 28, passed an ordinance, making a section a mile square "dry." It is located in the southwestern part of the city. More than half of the area of Chicago is now "dry." How many wards could be made "dry" in Ottawa?

In the midst of the almost universal strife and gloom which prevail in Russia, well-nigh the only bright spot is found in the free circulation of the Word of God. And, hence, it is with peculiar pleasure we read that last year the British and Foreign Bible Society circulated no fewer than 501,124 copies or portions of Scripture in Russia, with 35,600 more in Siberia, making in all 594,124 volumes within the dominions of the Czar. As indicating the polyglot nature of the work, it is well worthy of being noted that among the many languages represented were not only Russian and Slavonic, but Finnish, Polish, German, Lettish, Estonian, Lithuanian, Yiddish, Hebrew, Swedish, Armenian, Chuvash, Votyak, Chinese, Japanese, French, English, Persian, Turkish and Turki.

The Rev. Wm. Swann, of Fortune, Newfoundland, writing to Dr. Sutherland, of Toronto, under date of November 29, sends his first remittance on account of missionary contributions, and relates the following sorrowful story, all too common among the brave fishermen of Newfoundland: "Newfoundland has suffered severely this year through storms, causing in some places much loss of life and poverty. Recently a schooner belonging to our neighbor settlement, Grand Bank, went down in some unknown way, carrying with her sixteen men and leaving between forty and fifty children fatherless. One poor woman, a member of our congregation, is left with eight children, ranging from thirteen to two years of age. In another small settlement there are, I think, eight widows and more than thirty orphan children. These bereaved ones have to be helped in their time of need."

A lady missionary from the United States, who has spent twenty years in India, recently gave her impressions of India and conditions there to the directors of the Foreign Missionary Society of the Presbyterian church of the United States. She compared the conditions now with what they were when she went to India, twenty years ago, and told how the barriers of caste seem gradually to be breaking down. Mohammedans, who then required a separate table and special food at social functions, now prefer to partake of the foreign tea and cake, and a separate table is no longer set for them. Mrs. Cochran, Secretary for India, reported a discouragement and an encouragement. The country is threatened with the greatest famine in her history, many of the crops having failed on account of drought, and a pest of insects having attacked those that did mature. But a light seems to be breaking upon political affairs as India now has native representation in the national council in London.