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Notes of the Week.

An anti-gambling crusade is being actively and hopefully waged in Australia. The leading Protestant denominations have banded together for this purpose, and an agitation has sprung up which has taken hold of the popular mind.

A week ago on Sabbath two of our city Methodist churches enjoyed the services of the eminent English theologian and Biblical scholar, Rev. Joseph Agar Beet, D.D. He has been a voluminous writer, having produced commentaries on the Epistles to the Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, Corinthians, Colossians, and Philippians, besides several other works of value. Dr. Beet spent a day or two in the city, and then proceeded to Chicago to deliver a course of lectures before the summer school of the university.

The largest Sunday school in existence is said to be that of Stockport, England. On one Sunday, some time ago, it celebrated its ninety first anniversary by a great annual procession. The first stone of the present building was laid on June 15, 1895. In the procession, which was headed by the Mayor of the town, about 5,000 people joined. Mr. Whetherall—one of the old scholars, who now resides in America—crosses the Atlantic every year in order to join the procession, in which he took part on the last occasion.

Sir John Lubbock, speaking at the Congress of Chambers of Commerce, entered into a striking analysis of the economic aspect of modern militarism. He was sure, he remarked, that a great part of the enormous indebtedness of Europe was due to past wars and to preparations for those struggles believed to be approaching. That debt he estimated at five thousand millions of pounds. Sir John added that, according to his computation, every worker throughout Europe had to toil an extra hour a day as an industrial consequence of this foolish outlay. These sage calculations would seem to justify a hope that some day the pacific philosophy of the Sermon on the Mount may be seen to be economically and politically sound.

The semi-barbaric splendours of the late coronation ceremonies of the Czar and Czarina in Moscow, Russia's ancient capital, furnished no indication whatever of the real state of mind of that great conglomeration of strange people's evidences have been accumulating, and every now and then dark and ominous. Evidences appear of unrest and danger. In St. Petersburg some 20,000 men have become dissatisfied with their low rate of wages, and left work, and the movement is extending to the central and southern Provinces. In Moscow and other large manufacturing centres it is said that a spirit of unrest and insubordination prevails, that gives evidence of the continued vitality of the revolutionary movement.

Sedan, fixed for ever in the European memory as the scene of the central tragedy of the *annee terrible*, has, during the past week, been gathering associations of a quite different order. The General Synod of the Eglise Reformee has been holding its sittings there, and the gathering is likely to become memorable in the history of French Protestant reunion. A scheme has been presented to and accepted by the Synod for a Fraternal Conference to be held periodically between delegates of the

Evangelical party and the "Liberals" who seceded in 1872 on the question of the Confession of Faith. The Synod agreed that "a common assembly of this kind would be of advantage for Protestants of all varieties of opinion, both for the safeguarding of common interests, for defence against the attacks of which they are the object, and for resisting the efforts being made to corrupt the reformation spirit."

A letter in *London Truth* is responsible for the following statements, which, if strictly according to fact, supply a melancholy and most startling commentary on that spirit of militarism which has taken possession of so many European States, and which, if not arrested soon, threatens to involve some of them at least in financial ruin, with all that follows it. The letter says that a revolution is only a question of time; that the taxes are sixty per cent. on all incomes, and that the starving state of the peasantry and the lower classes generally equals that of the French before the revolution. In Sardinia, he adds, mothers are feeding their children on grass and weeds by the roadside, and in all parts there are deaths from starvation. The women straw-workers of Tuscany, it appears, are in open revolt, and everywhere the men and women are reduced to skeletons, and are to be seen carrying their last rags to be sold for taxes.

The Sunday School Union of England has prepared under its auspices a collection of 432 hymns specially for the use of Christian Endeavor Societies. The *Christian World* says of it: "It ought to please everybody. Those who like the solid Genevan tunes will find them; those who, to swing to the other extreme, are satisfied with the puerilities of the American gospel song will find it. The lovers of Calcutta, Nativity, Woolwich-Common, are catered for, as are the followers of Dykes and Barnby, while those who go still further, and like a secular folk-song with a swing will discover 'John Anderson my jo,' 'Believe me if all those endearing young charms,' 'John Brown's body,' 'Trab, trab,' 'The British Grenadiers,' and several Welsh airs like 'Llwyn on.' It needs a little special pleading to justify some of these last. The best we can say is that the melodies are catching, and that if the young singers put their hearts into the hymn they will forget the secular associations."

It is natural to look for the natural product and fruit of any system or form of religion where it both holds and has long held undisputed sway. Such a place is Manila in the Philippine Islands. Here Rome is supreme. In this month's *Cosmopolis* Mr. Henry Norman says of this place: Here the Church has free sway, uninterrupted by alien faith, undeterred by secular criticism. All is in the hands of the priests. . . . The people are plunged in superstition, and their principal professed interest in life (after cock-fighting) is the elaborate religious procession, for which every feast day offers a pretext.

If you would prosper, it is absolutely indispensable that you should be on good terms with the priests. Their suspicion and disfavour mean ruin. The personal liberty of the common man may almost be said to be in their keeping. It is hardly necessary to add that the people, as a whole, are idle and dissipated, and that most of the trade is in the hands of the foreign houses. Altogether Manila . . . is a remarkable and instructive example of the free natural development of "ago-roared priestcraft, and its shapes of woe."

John Howie, the author of "Scots Worthies"—a book which occupies in Scottish religious literature a place akin to that held by "The Pilgrim's Progress" in the spiritual literature of England—has had to wait more than 100 years for a memorial. He died in 1793, but it was only on Saturday that a granite obelisk to his memory was unveiled near the lonely farm of Lochgoon in Ayrshire. The ceremony was performed by Sir J. N. Cuthbertson, a well known Glasgow layman, who candidly confessed that "John Howie and his friends were not the cheerful and joyful Christians which one delighted to see nowadays." Among the other speakers of the day was Professor Hastie, of Glasgow University, whose Higher Criticism tendencies would doubtless have disturbed the author of the "Scots Worthies" not a little. Upwards of 600 pilgrims visit Lochgoon every year to inspect the covenanting relics treasured there, and make acquaintance with the desolate environments amid which a notable book was written.

At the opening of the new Welsh University lately the Prince of Wales, who performed the ceremony, made very conspicuous his friendly feeling towards Mr. Gladstone. At the lunch, the latter, after felicitous references to their Royal Highnesses, spoke of the present age as being "appropriately signalized by the foundation of Universities." "There never was a time," he said, "when it was more urgently necessary that the principle of mental cultivation should be thrust into the foreground and held up on high before the entire community, for we live in a period when what I may call wealth-making conditions are multiplied to an enormous extent. . . . Wealth is acquiring a still greater hold upon us. Wealth is a good servant, but a bad master, and there is no master who has had the power of degrading the human being more than the unchecked dominance of wealth. Against the dominance of wealth a University represents the antagonism which is offered to it by mental cultivation." The unchecked pursuit of material interests, he concluded, constituted one of the greatest social and spiritual dangers of the age.

The completion of his cabinet by Mr. Laurier relieves the enthusiasm and interest which have been pent up since it became known that the party now in power, of which he is the head, had been successful in the election just past. Seldom has any leader in Canada had such an array of talent to select from as that which Mr. Laurier has had at his disposal. It could not in the nature of things be expected that everybody will be satisfied, and no man's favourites left out. We are glad to observe, however, that the selection made of men to hold cabinet offices commands the approval not only of the party now in power, but of the great majority of the public of all parties. Even spleen itself cannot but admit that for character and ability the ministry chosen has never been surpassed, if it has been equalled, in the history of Confederation. Because of its character much will be expected of it, its responsibility is great in proportion to its ability and the opportunity it has to serve the country. We shall not indulge in the proverbially uncertain work of prophecy, but we may express, and we do express, the confident hope that the legitimate expectations of the country will not be disappointed by the record yet to be made of the men in whose hands are now placed, in the providence of God, the destinies of this Dominion.

PULPIT, PRESS AND PLATFORM.

Tennessee Methodist: That life moves in a very large orbit when it aims to have power over men through the power it has with God.

Lutheran Observer: People who leave their religion at home when they go away on a vacation usually have so little to leave that they never find it again upon their return. By their loss, however, they are not much pauperized.

The Interior: There may be higher traits in God than those exhibited on Calvary, but no seer or sage has ever imagined them. Take the sacrificial purpose out of Cavalry, and the sublime beauty and divine glory is gone out of the gospel.

James Stalker, D.D.: A man may know that he is without God if he is without prayer. Prayer is the simple expression of the desire for God. It is by prayer we invite God to come in to occupy His throne, and when He is in prayer is inevitable.

Cumberland Presbyterian: He who promptly expresses his opinion at all times and upon all questions, is not necessarily the bravest man. There is a superior courage often in a discreet and modest silence, particularly when the expression of an opinion would create more heat than light.

F. W. Farrar, D.D.: Between us and His visible presence—between us and that glorified Redeemer who now sitteth at the right hand of God—that cloud still rolls. But the eye of faith can pierce it; the incense of true prayer can rise above it; through it the dews of blessing can descend.

Sunday-school Times: Duties never conflict. God has but one duty at a time for any child of his to perform. If we are doing the one duty God has for us to do at the present moment, we are doing just right. If we are not doing that one duty we are at fault, no matter how good or how important the work we are doing.

Winnipeg Tribune: One would expect that a convention composed of nearly one thousand men, who are supposed to do the thinking for the Democratic people of the republic, could be relied upon to act with circumspection, sound judgment, and the greatest deliberation, especially in the matter of nominating a candidate for the president of the United States. But instead of this we see the oratory of a youth carry the convention off its feet, and this convention, apparently without reflection, proceeds to nominate him.

Christian Instructor: The same old power! The other day we heard of a young man, who had begun a course of thievery from his employers, being so impressed with a sermon on the case of Zaccheus that he immediately went and confessed his thefts to his employers and restored, if not fourfold, yet what was required. He is now using all his energies though pursued by a kind of persecution, to make known that gospel which saved him. So the gospel has lost none of its power. It can, by the blessing of the Spirit, reach out and save to the uttermost. Millions of souls are alive on earth to-day to testify to the omnipotence of the gospel of Christ. It is the "power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."