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NOTE AND COMMENT

If moderate drinking led to more moderation, and that to total abstinence, it would not be dangerous. The trouble is that it leads to more drinking and intemperance. Fifty years ago in France, the people drank freely of light wines, using little strong drink. The wines created a thirst for intoxicants, and now strong drink has a firm hold on that people. Light wines are no longer satisfactory; distilled liquor and drunkenness are the common thing.

There are churches and persons who have really been much straitened by the business depression, says the United Presbyterian, but there are many places where the stringency is made use of for shutting up pocketbooks and curtailing gifts and quotas when it is mere sham. If Christian people would do so, they could easily provide congregational and board treasuries with the funds needed, and in some cases badly needed, to do the work in hands. Let us have done with shamming.

Sir Oliver Lodge, the noted scientist, claims to have discovered a process whereby it will be possible to abolish the London fog. A syndicate has been formed to test the discovery on a large scale, at a cost of about \$10,000. No difficulty was experienced in securing funds for the experiment. Sir Oliver claims to be able to dispel banks of fog by electrical discharges, the currents acting directly on the constituents of the fog and dissolving it into millions of minute particles.

The Census Bureau at Ottawa has issued an important statement regarding the quantities and values of Canada's field crops for last year. An area of 27,505,463 acres of crops has yielded a harvest which, computed at average market prices, has a value of \$432,553,000. The total value set upon the wheat harvest in the West is \$72,424,000 and in the rest of the Dominion \$18,804,000. The values of all field crops by provinces are as follows: Nova Scotia, \$20,083,000; Prince Edward Island, \$9,408,000; New Brunswick, \$18,402,000; Quebec, \$80,896,000; Ontario, \$185,308,000; Manitoba, \$66,660,000; Saskatchewan, \$57,614,000; Alberta, \$14,522,000, and figures for British Columbia are not available.

Dr. Mair, advocating Presbyterian Reunion, says:—"Surely there never was a field better adapted than Scotland for the formation of one compact, powerful Church. It has the happy distinction among the nations of all but solidly holding the same doctrine, worship, discipline, and Government. From John o' Groat's to Maidenkirck it is Presbyterian at heart, and is of one heart and mind regarding the work to be done and the urgent need of doing it. Regarded with veneration by kindred Churches far and wide, it behoves Scotland to show itself worthy. Its spiritual influence, reaching as it does to more regions than can be named, ought everywhere to have free scope for greater power, unimpaired by unhallowed divisions." Dr. Mair adds, that the two principles of the two great Churches—the national recognition of Christianity, and the Church's spiritual freedom—could be embraced and reconciled in one great united Church of Scotland.

A German expedition engaged in making excavations on the supposed site of ancient Jericho—a collection of mounds in the vicinity of the village of Ericha, near the Dead Sea—are reported to have encountered the exterior wall of the vanished city at a depth of eight feet below the surface.

The Year Book of the English Congregationalists shows that the denomination in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland has 4,918 churches, 497,662 members, 715,371 Sunday school pupils and 20,103 teachers. The members are 1,221 less than in 1907, and the number in Sunday schools has fallen off by 13,976. The decrease in church membership in Wales, which considerably more than offsets the gain elsewhere, is attributed to the continued reaction from the Welsh revival four years ago. The twelve theological schools have 570 students and 56 professors, giving on an average more than one teacher to seven theologues. These twelve schools sent forty-two men into pastorates last year, averaging three and a half from each school.

In the western part of Lake Erie, off the coast of the county of Essex, writes J. I. Bell in the Canadian Magazine for February, lies Pelee Island, sometimes called the Vineyard of Canada. It is the largest of a group of fertile islands, most of which are south of the international boundary. It, however, is in Canadian waters, and with the exception of Middle Island, a small island of about 100 acres which lies adjacent, it is the most southerly point in Canada. It is in the same latitude as Northern California, Northern Pennsylvania, Northern Portugal and Southern Turkey. One-third of Spain and three-fourths of Italy are further north, and Fishing Point, its southern extremity, is fifty miles nearer the equator than the most southerly point of France.

If the Church is said to be losing hold of the people in England, it is not so in Scotland. A Church of Scotland Minister has made an inquiry, and the published results are stated thus:—"Before the Disruption in 1843, the communicants' roll of the Church of Scotland was one in seven of the population. Today it stands at about one in six. Adding the communicants of the United Free Church, the proportion stands at one in four. Adding the communicants in other Churches, and their adherents who are not communicants, the proportion should be brought up to at least one in two." That is half the population are in Church connection—a state of things far above that in England.

The Rev. Dr. J. Monro Gibson has just sent to the Rev. J. Morgan Jones, of Cardiff, the superintendent of the Calvinistic Methodist forward movement, a letter in which he commends the movement to the support of all Christian people. Dr. Gibson says he has known something of the work from its commencement, and he adds: "I looked upon the late Dr. Pugh, who took the lead in the forward movement, as one of the most apostolic men that ever lived. He left a delightful pastorale in order to throw himself into his mighty undertaking, and, as a matter of fact, he gave his life—a great life, for he was a man of rich and varied gifts—not only to it, but for it, all too rapidly wearing out his robust constitution in the exacting service."

Our contemporary, The United Presbyterian, says: "The 'breakfast' which were once peculiar to the church folk across the sea, when promoting religious work, have been so widely imitated in our country—perhaps under other names—that there seems some basis for thinking them overdone. It is not gracious to criticize an agency so promotive of good fellowship, but it is not complimentary to Christian zeal and devotion that men and women must be feasted before they can be gotten together and started on work for Christ." So far as our observation goes this social adjunct to religious or benevolent work has not been overdone in Canada. Indeed in giving an impetus to the Men's Missionary Movement, recently inaugurated, the "banquets" held at different points have had an excellent effect.

We find the following in that bright Free Baptist paper, The Morning Star, of Boston, Mass: The Journal and Messenger declares that the mission of Baptists is to maintain the exclusive right of Baptists to the Lord's table. To invite other Christians to sit with them would, it says, "put Baptists where the Free Baptists are today—without a mission." We thought the mission of Free Baptists, so far as it has consisted in welcoming all Christians to their Father's table, had rather been magnified than minimized in the last few years. Certainly it has witnessed the acceptance of that practice by a large majority of the Baptists themselves in England and America. The Journal and Messenger is not only not at the rear of the Baptist procession—it is not in it by a long way. A neat retort, and even if a little sharp, well deserved in the circumstances.

Speaking of the claims of the high churchmen, and their disposition to read all others than themselves out of the church, it is not a little amusing to see their strivings for recognition by Rome, and the way in which they are met. The following is taken from the editorial notes in "The Churchman": "The 'Sacred Heart Review,' commenting on the Rev. L. B. Ridgely's 'Christianity and the Catholic Church in China' in our issue of December 5, feels aggrieved that 'the Episcopal Church has established itself in that country (China) under the title of the Holy Catholic Church' and finds reason to believe that 'the deceitful tactics of the Episcopal Church have caused trouble between Catholic converts and its own.' The efforts of our bishops in behalf of a Christian co-operation that 'does not exclude Roman Catholics' exasperate the 'Sacred Heart' and the invitation to the Roman Catholic Bishop of Hankow to send representatives to the preliminary conference moves its editor to wonder how 'any self-respecting person should be expected to give his support to the deceitful measures adopted by the Protestant Episcopal Church. Its invitation to the Catholic clergy under the circumstances is—we will not call it by its right name, but will simply say that it is a violation of good taste, that quality on which the Protestant Episcopal Church, albeit unjustly, especially prides itself.' The assumption that there was a place for Roman Catholics in Christian co-operation seems to 'The Sacred Heart Review' presumption. To the Lutheran Observer, from which we make this extract, it seems not so much a question of taste as of faithfulness to the Christian ideal."