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NOTE AND COMMENT.

The four hundredth anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther will be celebrated this year.

It is announced that Mrs. Russell Sage has given \$1,000,000 to the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute at Troy, and \$1,000,000 to the Emma Willard School for Girls.

The Salvation Army have gained a firm footing in Japan, mainly because a number of Japanese have taken kindly to their methods and shown enthusiasm in the work entrusted to them.

An organist who rushes his choir through a hymn because he does not like the tune and wishes to be out of it, may be a master musician, but shows himself a child as a choirmaster.

The man or woman who borrows or appropriates a hymn book from a neighboring pew and neglects to replace it violates a proper church etiquette, and gives unnecessary trouble to others.

Several sponge farms, all of which are paying concerns, are to be found in the Mediterranean. Until recently sponges have been simply collected from the sea floor, where they have flourished in a wild state, but of late years they have, like oysters, been cultivated.

The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Milwaukee is responsible for the statement that his church will soon find a way by which married Anglican clergymen may be admitted into the Roman priesthood without abandoning their wives. Rome, it is said, never changes, but the temptation, in this case, seems too strong.

It has been found that within the area with which the United States has to deal there are spoken some three hundred languages as distinct from each other as French is from English, and that these languages can be grouped in some fifty or sixty families. We can make a very good showing in this regard within the boundaries of the Dominion.

Count Witte is desirous of getting back into Russian politics and to that end is endeavoring the conciliate the masses of the people by denying the stories of his vast wealth. A friend, exploiting the count, has publicly recounted the Countess Witte's charities to the poor. She gives 250 dinners daily to the needy of the district where they live, besides free suppers, boots, and warm clothing. It is a sorry showing, says the Christian Work, when a woman's kindness becomes the political capital of her husband.

The storm of controversy evoked by Dr. Marcus Dods' condemnation of lazy ministers is being used to influence the decision as to the principalship of the New College, says the Belfast Witness. It is pretended that the Highlands, and especially since Dr. Dods spoke, will not tolerate him as principal. Accordingly, Dr. Alexander Whyte, and Professor Orr of Glasgow, are being suggested. The leading article in the "British Weekly" last week seems to be a veiled advocacy of Dr. Whyte, though, of course, his name is not mentioned. During the week the students of the New College have shown in no uncertain way that their hearts are set on having Dr. Marcus Dods. And when all is said, his claims are supreme and undeniable.

The Salvation Army held a great "swearing-in" ceremony at Exeter Hall a couple of weeks ago. This was the first meeting of the kind held by the Army in London, and in all some 1,200 recruits were "sworn in". They came from the various corps of the Army within the Metropolitan area.

The tragic death of Sir James Fergusson in the Jamaica catastrophe has caused deep regret, says the Scottish correspondent of the Belfast Witness. For Sir James Fergusson was one of the most distinguished of public servants. He was a fine soldier; he was a born administrator; but he was, above all, a Scottish Churchman of the finest mould.

Bereft indeed is the Church of Scotland, for three of her leaders have fallen in one week. There are vacant places around the table, and a vacant place on the front cross-bench. The Procuratorship and the Junior Clerkship will have to be filled up at the Assembly in May. Rev. Wm. Simpson, of Bonhill, is a candidate for the clerkship. He and Dr. Gillespie have the field to themselves so far.

Rev. James Sibree, principal of the London Missionary Society College at Antananarivo, Madagascar, writing of the revival spirit that has lately manifested itself in Madagascar, resulting in many conversions, says: "The recent awakening in the Betsileo province, and, to a less extent, in the central district of Imerina, has shown us that underneath the somewhat stolid exterior of the Malagasy there are depths of feeling which can be stirred, and that in many instances the Spirit of God has been working among them. We have seen deep contrition and sorrow on the part of many, and have heard most touching and earnest appeals from the lips of others testifying that 'power from on high' has come upon them."

Bishop Warne writes from India: "The Charmars are a caste in Hindu social life, just above the caste from which most of our Methodist Christians have come. They are named from the word *Charmar*, meaning skin and leather, which indicates that they are workers in leather, but as a matter of fact, the greater number of them are cultivators. From them we have had a goodly number of converts, and a number of our best preachers and workers, but the converts are frequently bitterly persecuted by their relatives and friends. A very remarkable anointing of spiritual power is being given to our native preachers for their work and it is also coming upon our missionaries. Our need is tremendous as we face hoary heathenism. Pray for us."

Daily papers as text-books for the public schools of a city is new. Philadelphia papers report it as an experiment to be tried in that city. They would surely furnish a wide range of topics. Shorn of their murder trials, their divorce suits, their political scandals, their gleeful, gruesome comments on crime and their perverted depiction of athletic sports, we can see that a real educational force could be made of the saner, sounder portions of their pages. But how could childhood's eyes be kept from reading the whole mass? We have known mothers who hid the papers away from the eyes of their girls. Will schools that use such issues as text-books be acceptable to such mothers? Even in Canada details of crime get into our papers rendering them unfit reading for the family circle.

The Canadian West has a world-wide reputation as an exporter of high-class grain, "the best wheat in the world," Canadians say; but the wheat is only a part of the riches of the great west. It is also producing great quantities of cattle and sheep, and its beef and mutton will before long bulk largely in the markets of the world. One Winnipeg firm alone last year (1906) shipped 73,500 head of cattle and 41,000 sheep, most of which were western bred.

It is interesting to note the increase of lunatics in our time, says the Presbyterian Standard. It is out of proportion to the growth of population. Lord Roseberry in opening an insane asylum in London recently said he found great difficulty in his searches to find a satisfactory explanation for the fact. He threw out the suggestion that the cause was possibly the impossibility for many people to keep pace with the times in which we live. In the rush of the age the equipage of mind and body is destroyed through inability to stand the strain of the strenuous life.

In the latest encyclical the Pope takes the same old position. Again and again the Pope harps on the rights of the hierarchy, by which he really claims that the Church shall be above or beyond the law. Mr. Combes shows that from the Roman Catholic standpoint the Pope is quite logical, but that his ideal is quite incompatible with that of the Republic. The very essence of the Roman Church, he points out, is inimical to freedom. Therefore he thinks the present Government has made a mistake in attempting any sort of compromise. Says the Belfast Witness: "It appears to us that the French Statesmen here makes a strong point. The Pope is logically acting out the principles of his Church, but those principles are incompatible with lay Government and national freedom. That is our contention as to the Government of Ireland."

Rev. Dr. James Orr, professor of theology and apologetics in the Free Church College, Glasgow, Scotland, will deliver a series of ten lectures in New York, beginning April 9, 1907, on "The Doctrine of the Virgin Birth." The lecturer comes under the auspices of the Bible Teachers' Training School—Dr. Wilbert W. White, president—and the lectures will be given in the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian church. Dr. Orr has become widely and favorably known through several books recently published, among which is that entitled "The Problem of the Old Testament," which received the \$6,000 Bross prize at Lake Forest University recently. Dr. Orr is acknowledged generally in this book to have presented the strongest case for conservative criticism in respect to Old Testament problems. This series of lectures will be the more unique because twenty-five prominent scholars of Great Britain and the continent, as well as several in the United States, are contributing papers each on some particular phase of the subject. These papers are to be submitted to Dr. Orr some time before he lectures. Thus a piece of team work on this most important subject will be produced. Among those who are contributing are Dr. Cowan, professor of church history, Aberdeen University; the Bishop of Durham (Dr. Hanley Moule); Professor Street, of Cambridge; and Dr. Sandy, of Oxford. Dr. Orr's engagement in New York continues from the 9th of April until the 19th. He expects to remain in the country until the 5th of May, and arrangements are being made for him to lecture in one or two other parts of the country.