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NOTE AND COMMENT

The combined circulation of the religious press of the United States is reported to be 15,269,067 copies weekly.

Last week two girls, one nineteen and the other eighteen, with a brother of fourteen, were taken alive from the ruins of Messina, after having been entombed eighteen days.

The difficulty with liquor laws is said to be that they are ahead of public sentiment. To which a contemporary suggestively adds: "That's what's the matter with the Ten Commandments, too."

Andrew Carnegie's gifts for the past year to various institutions and objects, total \$7,437,600, the largest being \$5,000,000 to the Carnegie Foundation. To the Great Britain hero fund he gave \$1,250,000.

There is widespread dissatisfaction with the working of the Old Age Pension Fund in England, chiefly because the corporations and the nobility are cancelling the allowances they have heretofore made to employees over seventy and advising them to apply for government aid.

The British Museum attained last week the 150th anniversary of its opening. It is said that there are twenty-five miles of bookshelves in the Museum, and in the printed books department, which is the largest in the Museum, there are about two million volumes. The annual increase of volumes under the Copyright Act is roughly 50,000 volumes.

A London pastor, who is fond of golf finds that the people of Britain spend on golf balls alone, apart from the upkeep of links, etc., as much as they do upon foreign missions. The discovery had given him a great shock. By self-denial in the one matter of this single form of pleasure, the treasuries of all the missionary societies might overflow.

The Montreal Witness sees nothing but good in men of the different denominations associating with one another in the Laymen's Missionary Movement. Our contemporary says: There is no harm going to follow this making of the unity of the church a visible and living fact. This is what is being accomplished with the most natural and noteworthy success by this laymen's movement.

It is surprising that when the multi-millionaires, or very rich are donating or bequeathing so many tens of millions, they should give so very small a portion of it to directly religious purposes. These men undoubtedly are aware of the fact that the Christian religion is the most powerful of all agencies in preserving an enduring condition of society, and yet they do not seem to recognize it in the distribution of their wealth.

Mohammedans are abstemious. The Hindus are a temperate race. Investigators into the recent troubles that have broken out in the most populous part of the British Empire now report that the consumption of strong drink is the cause of many of the disturbances that have occurred. The liquor traffic, around which the great British nation throws the protection of her legislation, is the deadliest enemy of the empire that fosters it.

At Lloyd's ten guineas per cent. was paid on "risk" to pay a total loss in the event of the Russian dynasty ceasing to exist within the next two years.

In Kilmarnock there are five Established Churches, with six clergymen and one assistant. Ten United Free Churches with ten clergymen, and at times two assistant ministers. Then three other Protestant Churches, each with a clergyman, making in all 22 ministers with 18 places of worship.

In Siberia, twice as large as Europe, very little missionary work has been done. Some preacher travelled through Siberia, holding meetings, and saw the great necessity and opportunity for evangelistic work in that country. The German Baptists have now in West Siberia two communities; and through the generosity of an American lady, the first Baptist chapel in Siberia, in the city of Omsk, will be built. There is an enormous field for Christian activity ripe for the harvest, asking for workers.

A Southern contemporary thinks that a church is like a watch: "soon ruined if not kept running." Therefore keep it going. If there is no pastor, let the elders keep up the services. Let them read sermons. "Yes, but the people will not come. Some of them will not come, but the best of them, the most earnest workers, those who love the church most deeply, will be glad to do anything that will promote the honor of their Saviour. And God will recognize it."

We have a high esteem for our Episcopal brethren, remarks the Presbyterian Standard, but no respect whatever for their exclusive pretensions. If they really wish union with other bodies, the thing for them to do is to throw away their crochets, and get down to the bed rock of Scripture. Let them come with the noble platform of their own great Chillingworth, "The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible, is the religion of Protestants," and they will find the heart of Evangelical Christendom responsive to their plea.

The Bishop of Uganda has just published two volumes which tell the wonderful growth of the Gospel in that region. Now, at the end of eighteen years the number of baptized Christians in Uganda is over 60,000, of whom more than 36,000 have been baptized within the last five years. The communicants number 18,000. Of Mackay he says: "His faith, his courage, his zeal, his intellectual capacity, his untiring industry combined to form one of the most remarkable characters of the age in which he lived. It will be long ere the impress which he left on the lives and characters of the Baganda will be effaced."

It is a mockery, says Cardinal Vaughan, to ask us to put down drunkenness by moral and religious means, when the Legislature facilitates the multiplication of incitements to intemperance on every side. You might as well call upon me as the captain of a sinking ship, and say, 'Why don't you pump the water out!' when you are scuttling the ship in every direction. If you will cut off the supply of temptation, I will be bound, by the help of God, to convert drunkards; but until you have taken off this perpetual supply of intoxicating drink, we never can cultivate the fields.

Cumberland Presbyterian:—It is safe to say that most of us are interested in promoting both goodness and happiness among men; but, unfortunately, it is our own happiness and our neighbor's goodness with which we are so greatly concerned. Suppose we reverse the process. Seek goodness for yourself and happiness for your neighbor and both you and he will be both good and happy.

The centenary of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, New York, has been celebrated with much enthusiasm. The church has 2,081 members, under the pastorate of Dr. Ross Stevenson. It supports and aids two missions, a large settlement house, a country house, and a large number of educational, charitable and relief agencies. To carry on its work it employs a force of fifty-seven clergymen and paid workers, of whom nine are in China and Persia, and six in missions in Alaska and other States and territories. The value of the church property is \$2,500,000. Under the present pastorate of seven years the church has contributed on an average \$320,000 for the support of its work. The present building was erected in 1875, under the preaching of Dr. John Hall, "the young Irishman of the golden tongue," as Beecher described him. It cost \$850,000.

A letter in a popular British journal states: "I am a Rationalist, an Agnostic, and a Freethinker. . . . I make this statement with all the seriousness that should accompany expression on such an important subject. That if I were stranded on an island and doomed to live in solitude, the one book that I should wish to have by me for constant study and reference would be the English Bible. For I know of no book that has so helped me in the past, and promises to be a steadfast guide in the future. After years of study, the profundity of its psychological message astounds the intellect, and the apparent sincerity that resounds through all its chapters adds a fervent tone. Besides, for simplicity and beauty of word and phrase it undeniably holds the monopoly of all the most trenchant, the most ennobling, and the most inspiring of the verbal possibilities of the English language."

The Chicago Daily Tribune has published its annual summary of the benefactions of the year. The figures run into the millions and compare favorably with those of other years. More than ninety millions have gone towards bettering the physical and temporal condition of mankind. Colleges and educational institutions have received no less than \$40,000,000, whilst religious organizations (apart from the contributions of their regular maintenance) have received \$5,000,000, which amount is also the total for museums and art galleries. Libraries received \$1,000,000. Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller and Mrs. Sage head the list of philanthropists. These millions will work wonders in and through the institutions which have been wisely made the beneficiaries of large and needed sums, and the benefactors should receive hearty thanks and warm appreciation. However, perceiving the disparity between the gifts to educational institutions and those to religious organizations, we are tempted to repeat the question of a contemporary: "In view of the supreme importance of the spiritual is it not time to deepen and broaden the channel through which the religious bequests are flowing?"