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NOTE AND COMMENT.

Twenty-one years ago Bishop Hannington an English missionary, in Dark-est Africa, was murdered by an African chief at the command of King Mwanga. This year the son of the murderer was baptized into the Christian faith by the son of the murdered bishop. Was there ever a better illustration of the conquering spirit of Christ.

The Canadian Bank of Commerce, Winnipeg, estimates that the farmers of the Canadian Northwest will receive over \$90,000,000 this year from three crops alone—wheat, oats and barley. If the farmers of the Northwest will recognize the hand of a bountiful Providence in the prosperity that has come to them in the good crops, they will not fail to give back to the Lord and to the Lord's cause, out of their abundance, a goodly portion of the blessings vouchsafed to them.

Statistics show that in Germany the number of Catholics who become Protestants greatly exceeds the number of Protestants who become Catholics. From 1890 to 1904 75,978 Catholics became Protestants, while but 16,054 Protestants became Catholics. The Catholic authorities blame "mixed marriages" for the larger amount of a post-tasy. In several of the minor states of the German Empire there have been no conversions from Protestantism to Catholicism, but in every state and every year there are conversions to Protestantism.

We noted some time ago, first the wonderful absence of crime in San Francisco that followed the absolute interdiction of the liquor traffic after the earthquake, and then later the immediate increase of crime on the reopening of the saloons. A companion object lesson comes from Kansas City, Kansas, where a determined official has succeeded in enforcing the prohibition laws of the state. As a result, for the first time in the history of the state, the magistrates' court was held—not merely once, which would of itself have made a new record, but twice in one week—without a single prisoner to be tried. Two hundred saloons have been put out of business, and the jail is empty, and this though but a few months ago the city officials were considering plans for its enlargement.

Recently the statement was published in press telegrams that the Chinese government had issued an edict requiring the observance of the Christian Sabbath throughout the Chinese empire. The Boston Watchman says: "It is also decreed that in all countries where the Lord's day is observed the representatives of the empire shall close their offices for business on that day. Those who are at all acquainted with the condition of affairs in China will at once recognize that this edict is one of the most important steps in recent times in the progress of the empire and in Christian missionary work in that country. It sets the stamp of the government approval on Christianity as the religion of the leading nations of the earth, and gives Christian missionaries a standing before the Chinese people which they have never enjoyed before. The hearts of all interested in the prevalence of the kingdom of Christ in the earth should exult in this step, which presents the Christian's Lord's day for observance to one-fourth of the people of the earth."

The telephone appears to have created a new problem for the Roman Catholic Church. The question has been asked whether it is possible for a priest of the Roman Church to hear a confession over the telephone and give absolution? A number of prelates have expressed their opinion that in emergency the telephone may be used—for instance, in the case of miners cut off by accident from other contact with the outside world, and in danger of death. It has now been taken up by the editor of the "Catholic Fortnightly Review," who declares that "contrary to the opinion of amateur theologians our best authorities hold that confession by telephone would be invalid."

Mr. James J. Hill is known by reputation to most of us as a Canadian who drifted to the States, and who has become the most successful railway man of his day. But Mr. Hill is much more than a builder of railways; his knowledge of affairs on this continent is profound, and his suggestions for the future deserve more consideration than they seem to get. Speaking some time ago at the Minnesota State fair, he said: "There must be a national revolt against the worship of manufacture and trade as the only forms of progressive activity, and that the false notion that wealth built upon these at the sacrifice of the fundamental forms of wealth-production can endure." He follows this up by re-affirming what has often been said by thoughtful writers, that "the first requisite is a clear recognition on the part of the whole people, from the highest down to the lowest, that the tillage of the soil is the natural and most desirable occupation for man to which every other is subsidiary and to which all else must in the end yield." Who, but the farmer and his products are keeping the wheels of commerce and industry in motion?

In the course of an article by Mr. Davenay, in the Paris Figaro, with reference to a meeting of the French Anti-Catholic Union held recently, when M. George Barbey lectured on "Alcohol, the purveyor of Misery and crime," the following account of what drink is doing in France was given: "The ravages of alcohol are frightful. It devastates many of our finest provinces—Normandy, Brittany, the Vosges, Picardy, Maine. The population of the Orne has diminished by 80,000 in the course of the last twenty-five years. Infant mortality increases. In the valley of the Vosges it was necessary in 1903 to replace 60 per cent. of the military contingent. Statisticians have proved that alcohol costs the country an army corps every year. It is the vehicle of tuberculosis. Phthisis kills 150,000 young men annually. Last year there were consumed in France 220,000 hectolitres of stupefying and epilepsy-producing drinks, the consequences of which were crime, madness, misery. It has been calculated that the miners could in ten years buy up all the mines in France with the money that they spend in alcoholic beverages. The fight against the scourge is a work of public safety and of national defence—above all a work of humanity. What can be done? It is impossible to reckon on the state. In a democratic country, especially, we cannot expect from the parliament reforms which the people have not yet demanded. It is important, then, to create in France a public opinion frankly anti-alcoholic."

An article recently published in the Scientific American makes the interesting statement that hay fever is due to the invasion of the mucous membrane of the nose by the pollen of certain plants. This membrane is not equally sensitive in all persons; there are many who are quite immune from hay fever. Different pollens have not the same activity either; that of certain plants is innocuous, whereas that of other species is very active. The irritating action is really exerted by the pollen itself, and not by a bacterium of any kind. At present a hundred and fourteen plants are known to have toxic pollen; wheat, rye, and quite a number of graminæ form a part of them. The active principle of the pollen consists of a granular amy-laceous material, and lasts a long while. It is possible by snuffing up dry toxic pollen, to produce hay fever during the middle of winter.

The London correspondent of the United Presbyterian (U.S.) gives the following interesting facts to the readers of that journal: "Great Britain has a pretty large yearly business in the way of her post office, and it will hardly surprise one to know, that the largest number of letters sent from Great Britain to any one country, is sent to the United States. Last year, there went to your country alone, no less than 397,000 pounds weight of letters and post cards. These figures must be multiplied by thirty-two, if we wish to ascertain the number of separate pieces of mail matter, and if we average the post cards with the letters over the regular half ounce and estimate all at the half-ounce weight, we find that 12,704,000 communications of letter or post card, reached your country last year from ours. Canada is not a bad rival, there having been sent to that country 248,000 pounds weight of letters and post cards, excluding in both cases, book packets, parcels and newspapers. The country that runs the United States closest, is France, which received from Britain 329,000 pounds weight of mail."

Here is an unique and effective view of the Book of Jonah, which we find in the Southwestern Presbyterian: "How many students of the Book of Jonah miss the real point of the book! Absorbed with the physical miracle recounted in it, they pass by the far greater and far more significant one, confirmed as well by Christ, of a spiritual kind. The whole city was converted. This most wondrous of all the Old Testament revivals took place as the result of the simple preaching of the word. 'Preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.' The agent was a poor man, alone, dust-worn and weary, a foreigner, a man who had no desire to see Nineveh saved, for it was his own country's oppressor, a man who had fled from duty when called to it, and who when it had been unwillingly done and the great revival came, went off and bemoaned the result. The means was the simple message, the word of the Lord. There were no special accessories, no proclaiming beforehand advertising, choirs, long-heralded evangelists, machine methods. The simple word, duly delivered, though reluctantly and under pressure, was made of God the efficient means. Here was a greater miracle than that of the 'great fish.' The critics attack the great fish part of the story but they don't speak of the spiritual miracle."