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NOTE AND COMMENT

Gladstone, in a speech in the House of Commons in May, 1881, referring to the liquor traffic, said: "This traffic has wrought more harm than the three great historic scourges—war, famine, and pestilence, combined."

An important treaty is said to have been entered into between France and Japan, guaranteeing their respective interests and the status quo in the Far East. It is regarded as another triumph for British diplomacy.

The Mikado has given permission to found a Catholic university in Tokio, to be manned and managed by the Jesuit Fathers. The professors will nearly all be either English, Irish or American. The Mikado has also given the Jesuit Fathers permission to erect a new church in the Japanese capital city.

The Flying Rollers is a new sect in Oregon. They believe that Joseph, the carpenter, Mary, his wife, and Jesus Christ are all on earth, and will shortly make their presence manifest. They have many believers in their weird theory. The Holy Rollers and the Tongues of Fire sects have died out, and their noisy demonstrations at the meetings are heard no more.

The evangelistic meetings in Montreal, led by Dr. Torrey, which closed a few days ago, are said to have done much good. Spiritual life in many churches was quickened. The number of conversions is, of course, not known; the number professing to have entered upon the Christian life is 2,375, and seventy-five churches have received accessions to their membership.

The Irish bill has been given its first reading in the House of Commons. It provides for an administrative council, mainly elective, controlling eight government departments but not the police. It has been received with general discontent, both in Ireland and England. The Irish bishops and priests being openly hostile to its provisions.

Denis Kearney, who headed the agitation against the Chinese in California, twenty-five years ago, died there recently. His practice of haranguing the crowds that gathered to hear him in the vacant portions of San Francisco gave him the title of the sand-lots orator. He had a large following at that time and was practically the ruling factor in San Francisco politics.

A striking anti-opium demonstration has been held at Canton. Students in uniform, carrying banners, denouncing the use of the drug, and accompanied by Chinese and foreign bands, have been perambulating the streets for two days, distributing leaflets. The procession was led by a mounted Chinese boy carrying a pipe. Chinese merchants who approved of the demonstration presented five banners.

Some Italians were converted in Hartford, Conn. They went back to Italy in order to tell the glad news of salvation to their relatives there. They started a meeting in a place where there had been none and got a missionary at a station thirty miles away to ride over and preach once a month. They now have a church there. Having thus done their duty to their kindred they returned to Hartford and resumed their business.

The editor of the Clarion, which claims to be "an infidel paper," says of Rev. R. J. Campbell's book, "The New Theology," that "The New Theology is God and my Neighbor, with the soft pedal on. It is Thomas Paine in a white tie. It is the Ingersoll fist, muffled with a boxing glove. It is the 'Clarion' rue, worn with a difference. Mr. Campbell is a Christian minister and I am an infidel editor; and the difference between his religion and mine is too small to argue about."

The excavation of Herculaneum is soon to be resumed, with the purpose of unearthing the whole of the buried city. The work is to be wholly under Government auspices, and will have a thoroughly national character, though the assistance of foreign scientists will be accepted. What marvels will be revealed in an archaeological line it is impossible to forecast. Possibly there will be comparatively little added to the sum of knowledge of the times, but treasures of inestimable value are sure to be unearthed.

In New York City the women teachers in the public schools have instituted a movement to secure for women, salaries equal to those paid to men occupying similar positions. The Cumberland Presbyterian endorses the movement, saying: "In our judgement the question of sex should not enter into the amount of salary paid. Whether men or women, the schoolteacher or one in any position should be paid in proportion to the value of the service rendered." Ability to teach and results should be the guiding principle.

Rev. R. J. Campbell's "New Theology" balloon seems to have collapsed. The London papers are apologizing for having given it attention. The morning Post says: "Mr. Campbell's book has occupied our columns to this extent because it is talked about and will therefore, under modern conditions, be read, or at least bought. But it remains perfectly true that, if the book were to be treated on its merits, it would not be reviewed at all, for it is not worth it." In plain language the balloon has burst and the sensation it was intended to create has fizzled.

Speaking of the appointment of Rev. Dr. Falconer, principal of the Presbyterian College, Halifax, to the presidency of Toronto University, the Maritime Baptist says: "The Maritime Provinces may feel proud of this new recognition of their ability to furnish the kind of men required for presidents of universities and colleges, but Dr. Falconer's removal from Halifax will be felt in these provinces as a very distinct and real loss. However, we are glad that Dr. Falconer is to remain in Canada and devote his fine abilities to the upbuilding of the educational interests of the Dominion."

"What right has any government to penalize a civil servant because of his political opinions or to make political faith a test of appointment to a position in the civil service?" asked Mr. J. S. Willison, editor of Toronto "News," in the course of a recent address, before the Canadian Club of that city, on the subject of Civil Service Reform. Mr. Willison said the crying need was the protection of the civil service from politicians, always looking for opportunities to unload incompetents on the service. He deprecated any government control that meant partizan appointments.

In Switzerland, says the Scientific American, since the introduction of electric railways, a new and somewhat strange industry has been established in the Alpine districts, namely the quarrying of glacier ice for distribution in the large cities. Certain of the Swiss communes or districts have been able to grant concessions of their glaciers for this purpose, and considerable sums have been expended in constructing ice slides or troughs, in which the blocks of ice, many of them being of large size, blasted out of the glacier are transported to the vicinity of the stations for conveyance, in carefully refrigerated vans or cars, to Lyons and other large cities remote from the Alps.

Belgium, a Roman Catholic country, has abolished, by statute, 2,227 Sunday trains. The result has been, as the Minister of Railways informs us, that there has been more than 50 per cent. decrease in fatal railroad accidents due to any fault of the employees. Switzerland was the first European country to enact and apply practically the Fifty-two Weekly Rest Day law for every railway and trolley laborer. That was five years ago. At the end of the first twelve months the report showed a whole year without a single fatal accident on railway or trolley! When will the railway men of Canada and the United States learn the lesson taught by the experience of Switzerland and Belgium!

The Presbyterian Standard tells us that Henry Drummond gathered about him at Grosvenor House, London, Sunday after Sunday, half a thousand of the restless, wealthy, cultured class, and more than once he took for his text, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The result was that Drummond always found that they simply leaped to hear about Jesus Christ. He made grass to grow upon the mountains. He assumed that with all their wealth these wealthy classes were weary and hungry for something that mere wealth could not give. Our contemporary adds: "We believe that if Christian men and women would speak out boldly and testify tactfully of the power of Jesus Christ to satisfy the hunger of men and women, they would be astounded at the tragedy of spiritual emotion waiting for just such a testimony."

At a banquet recently given in Boston by leading officials of the Massachusetts Federation of Churches to the Rev. Thomas Law, secretary of the English Council of Free Churches, it was stated by one of the speakers that "there is less unbelief in Boston to-day than ever before, and this is strikingly noticeable among educated men and women. Unbelief is still noticeable in what might be called the lower stratum of life in Boston," continued the speaker, "but even there compared with what previously existed, there is scarcely any to-day." The guest of the evening, the Rev. Thomas Law, told the local clergymen assembled that unbelief was also decreasing in England and that evangelistic movements were growing steadily in the United Kingdom. In West London, he admitted immorality was strongly entrenched in a class of society there, and he heartily approved the exposure of it by the Rev. Dr. Vaughn, but beyond that instance, he said the moral atmosphere was clearing.