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NOTE AND COMMENT

Booker Washington speaks of the wide spread closing of saloons in the South as a "second emancipation" for the negroes.

In passing an ordinance to prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquors to aboriginal Indians the Legislature of British Guiana has, like the Governments of Canada, New Zealand, and Natal, shown a wise consideration for the welfare of the native population.

The Rev. Robert Kilgour, M.A., of the Church of Scotland's Indian Mission, has been appointed editorial superintendent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and has entered upon his new duties, which include the supervision of a staff of translators numbering many hundreds.

Sir Ralph Williams, who succeeds to the Governorship of Newfoundland, first came into note as an explorer in Patagonia and Central Africa. Since 1888 he has been successively in South Africa, Gibraltar, Barbadoes, and the Bechuana-land Protectorate, where he was Resident Commissioner from 1901 to 1906. For three years he has successfully administered the Windward Islands.

Baron Kato, the Japanese ambassador here, says there is not a word of truth in the mischievous rumor that Japan is anxious to sever the Anglo-American alliance. The correspondent declares that far from being alarmed at Great Britain's undertaking with Russia and the United States, Japan did her utmost to promote them, being convinced that they would strengthen the Anglo-Japanese alliance.

Politically speaking, it is still far from plain sailing in Persia, as the following news item from Teheran would indicate:—The Shah has informed the Cabinet that promulgation of the Constitution is impossible, and that all his efforts must be directed to upholding his own power. The Shah added that he would compel the re-opening of bazaars at the cannon's mouth.

The need of prohibition in Winnipeg was demonstrated a few days ago when scores of Galicians, crazed with drink, held high carnival in the foreign quarter. From one point three fights could be seen at once, and so hard had the police to work to keep the poor creatures from killing one another that they had time for few arrests. At Peralta drink wrought the same havoc with Russian and Polish miners.

Mr. G. K. Chesterton, replying in the London "Daily News" to the attacks on Romanism made by Dr. Horton and the Rev. J. Hocking, remarks that while workhouses, prisons, asylums, and theatres may need inspection, if there is one class of thing that in our gigantic social toils we may be allowed to let alone, "it is the hard and simple lives which a very few people live by their own free will. Men are driven to a workhouse; and men may be tempted to a tavern; but no man would go into a monastery except for the same sort of exceptional private reasons that make him go into a vegetarian restaurant. Every reform has its proportioned place. I myself burn to rescue Dr. Horton from the tyranny of teetotalism. But I should defer that victory until we have both rescued England from the tyranny of sweatens and landlords."

After June 1 no woman can legally enter any saloon in the State of Washington. The new criminal code makes it a misdemeanor for the owner or employee of any "drinking saloon or music hall where intoxicating liquors are sold," to "knowingly permit to enter such saloon or sell or give any intoxicating liquor to any female person." The same rule applies to any common drunkard or any person in an intoxicated condition or any felon.

One of the glories of Scotland has been its parish school system, the dominion occupying a place in the community only second to the Minister. The church and schoolhouse stood side by side and religion and learning went hand in hand. It will surprise many to learn, as we are told by the Belfast Witness, that there has been a decay of religious instruction in the Scottish schools. There is an association for the inspection of such school instruction, and at a recent meeting the fact of the decay and the importance of counteracting it was strongly emphasized.

There are now 155 distinct sects in the United States, last year having added 12 to the number. Some of the subdivisions are as follows: Lutherans twenty-four, Methodists eighteen, Baptists fourteen, Mennonites twelve, Presbyterians twelve, Catholics eight, Reformed Church three, United Brethren three, Disciples two, Protestant Episcopal two. The smallest reported body is a communistic one having one church and eight members. It would be hard to define the difference between some of these bodies, and their existence seems to indicate that the spirit of unity in many quarters is not yet strongly developed.

A Coventry (England) firm has produced a watch by which it is possible to tell what constellations are visible at any particular time, and the relative positions of the sun and moon. It shows the ordinary time, and strikes the hours and quarters in the same way as a clock. The time of sun-setting and sun-setting is set forth on one of the several dials. The advent of the seasons is also announced, together with the tides. There are altogether seven dials, four being on one side and three on the other. The watch being not more than 2 7/8 in. in diameter is little larger than the ordinary time-keeper. Over four years have been occupied in its production, and the value set upon it is nearly a thousand pounds.

According to Dr. Brunon, in the Normandie Medicale, the population of Brittany is being decimated rapidly by alcoholism. Alcohol in some form has become a part of the staple food of the home. Bread, coffee, and brandy form the basis of the dinner, and frequently even the coffee is absent. The more distressing feature of the case is the lamentable effect this use of alcohol has on the young. The infantile mortality is enormous. Of fifty children who had come to the free dispensary of Dr. Brunon, two began to drink coffee and alcohol before they were a month old, four at three months, two at five months, five at eight months, one at ten months, five at eighteen months, fifteen at a year, and nineteen at three years. As a consequence, he says:—"The population of France is diminishing, rural populations degenerating, crime and insanity are increasing, and industry is on the decline."

An Education Commission is at present sitting in Natal, and most interesting evidence was recently given before it by the Senior Inspector of Native Schools. It appears that the natives of Zululand are twenty years behind those of Natal in education. Most of the schools are conducted by missionaries, and many of them receive grants in aid from the Government. There are more native female teachers than male teachers, as the position is more attractive to a native girl than other occupations. The Inspector advocates the establishment of schools in the native locations or reserves where they could be taught practical agricultural knowledge, but he does not favor the teaching of scientific farming to the natives.

"A Working Novelist," writing about the income derived from his profession, says:—"Today there are not twenty novelists in England who are making a thousand a year; there are not forty who are making five hundred. Comparing the profession of literature with medicine or the law, it is a very poor profession indeed. The successful lawyer or doctor makes a far larger income than the successful novelist. The average lawyer or doctor makes a far larger income than the average novelist. I am not saying that the profession of novelist is not a far nobler profession than that of a doctor or a lawyer; but regarded from the Besantine standpoint as a moneymaking proposition it is inferior indeed."

For some time past the Japanese have been engaged in exploring the waters northward of the island of Saghalien, which Russia has used as a convict settlement of recent years, and of which the southern portion now belongs to Japan. The Japanese explorer, M. Matshushima, has just discovered an island, which has been unknown hitherto; it is a desert island, although there are signs of fertility. The Japanese have taken possession of this new island, and have announced their intention to establish on it a fishing station on a large scale. So far the Russian Government has not made any move in the matter, and it remains to be seen whether Russia will acquiesce without a protest in Japan appropriating an island in the Sea of Okhotsk.

The estimated length of the Georgian Bay-Montreal Canal is 360 miles. Nearly \$600,000 has been spent in surveying and getting information as to the necessary structural work. The canal is to go by way of French River, Lake Nipissing, and the Ottawa River. It is to give a waterway with a depth of 21 feet. The estimated cost is \$105,000,000. Of the total length of the proposed waterways considerably over half is now navigable for large vessels. A considerable portion of the rest is classed as restricted navigation—i.e., places where the river is less than 500 feet wide, and where a certain amount of work will have to be done in the way of dredging, etc., in order to remove dangers from cross currents, shallows, and other impediments to easy navigation. The actual excavation work for the canal proper will comprise in the aggregate probably less than forty miles. It is estimated that with the completion of the canal there will be 500,000 horse power available along its course—almost as much as is available at Niagara.