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## Editorial Notes and Comment



ROUMANIA has not only joined the allies, but she has joined the prohibition party among the nations. We see it stated that in that country the sale of intoxicating liquors has been entirely prohibited. In this Roumania is showing great wisdom. If this fearful war will result in the abolition of the liquor traffic in all of Europe, it might be a blessing in disguise. As much as we are opposed to war, we would almost be willing to see this country plunged into war if the curse of liquor could be removed; except that we believe this much-desired end is going soon to be accomplished without the shedding of blood. We believe that few people realize what a fearful war alcohol is waging continually in our country. If we will compare the cost in men and money, we will find that this country is spending almost as much as some of the large European nations. We sometimes wonder how England can raise \$25,000,000 a day to meet her war expenses, making the cost for a year about \$2,200,000,000 a year. Yet, in this country each year \$2,500,000,000 is spent for liquor. Just how many lives are being sacrificed in Europe, we cannot tell accurately. But in this country the best authorities say that 100,000 men are killed each year by the demon of strong drink. And no one can tell the millions of others who are injured by its fearful results. The suffering and sorrow brought to wives and children by the casualties of war cannot be worse than the poverty, sorrow and disgrace brought by the drunkard husband and father. There is at least the comfort and consolation to those who sorrow for one killed in battle that he died doing his duty. Is there any comfort in the death of the drunkard? If the men and money now wasted on liquor were turned into useful channels what a wonderful blessing it would be to this country.

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INFANTILE paralysis has been the cause of many deaths among children and of much sorrow in the homes in several sections of the country, especially in New York City. Although the scientists have been able to discover little as to the cause of this terrible disease, it has done something towards preventing its worst consequences. No doubt those who are working on the subject will eventually discover its cause and its cure. One reason that this epidemic has attracted so much attention is the fact that other diseases are so much better-controlled now than in the past. In the last part of the 18th and first few years of the 19th century there were dreadful attacks of yellow fever, smallpox and the bubonic plague, in the cities of New York and Philadelphia and other places along the Atlantic coast. Between 1791 and 1804 there was scarcely a year in which one of these plagues did not visit these cities. In 1793 four

thousand died of yellow fever in Philadelphia alone. In 1798 there were two thousand deaths from the same cause in New York. In 1795 the Synod of New York held no meeting for fear of the plague. Thanks to the labors of science under the guidance of God the causes of these and many other diseases have been discovered, and then the way to cure and to prevent them in large measure has been learned. Now little or no fear of them is felt. There are some of the grosser forms of sin that the wisdom of man, with God's blessing, is restraining. The public lottery, so common a hundred years ago, is practically abolished. Race track gambling and prize fighting are very much restricted. The country is rapidly being freed of the fearful curse of the legalized liquor traffic. There is much yet to be done in the prevention of disease. So there is much to be accomplished in overcoming the ravages of sin. Still what has been done shows that the people of this country, as well as of others, are becoming wiser and better.

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DEACONS in the Northern Presbyterian Church seem to occupy a very unimportant position. In many congregations their only duty is to dispense to the poor the funds put into their hands by the church. They have nothing to do with the general finances of the congregation. The church that takes this view of the office of deacon is depriving itself of a mighty power for good work. The Southern Church places a far greater value upon the deacons than that. Still we have in many cases not emphasized this office as it should be. When we fully recognize that giving to God is an act of worship, and when the deacons realize that it is their privilege to lead and train the people in this part of the worship, and that they will confer a great blessing upon the people by training them in this act of worship, then will there be a great advance in the work of the Lord. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal. 3:10). The coming of this blessing rests largely with the deacons.

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THE GREAT number of religious denominations in this country is shown by the statement that in the State University of Ohio with 1,577 students there are representatives of 34 denominations. Of the students 288 profess no church allegiance. A few of these churches we do not recognize as evangelical, but the gratifying thing about this great diversity of belief among the churches is that the differences have to do with non-essentials. In all essential points we are one, trusting and worshipping the same Triune God, and being saved with the same salvation.

Y M. C. A. work among the soldiers in the camps and on the border is accomplishing a great deal of good. These men are necessarily deprived of ordinary church privileges, and the government does little or nothing to provide recreation for them. A soldier's life in camp is necessarily a strenuous one, and it is often surrounded by great temptations. The Y. M. C. A. tent or building provides a religious centre where services are held which do much to strengthen the faith of the Christians and to awaken the unconverted and bring them to Christ. The secretaries not only do much personal work with the men, but they are the leaders in directing the work of others. In this way many men are put actively to work for Christ, who would otherwise probably be indifferent, even if they did not actually fall into lives of sin. We publish this week an article which will give a good idea of some of the valuable features of this work and of its need. Christian men and women will do well to give of their means to support this work among the men who are making great sacrifice to sustain the honor of our country and defend it against its enemies.

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WINTER is coming and especially in the country often the evenings will seem very long. Why not organize a Bible study class in your neighborhood? Invite some of the Christian people of your neighborhood to meet with you and talk it over. If you can get a good teacher, it will be very well; but a teacher is not necessary. Just appoint some one for the leader each time and study together any passage that may be selected. Get whatever published helps you can, but depend largely upon the study of the Bible itself, depending upon the guidance of God's Spirit, the Great Teacher. Evenings spent in this way will bring more real pleasure and profit than can be secured in almost any other way.

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MANY people say that the price of Church papers is too high, and that, if the price were lower, there would be many more who would take it. The Northern Methodist Church owns and publishes its Church papers. In compliance with a demand for a cheaper paper the price was reduced to \$1. This, however, did not bring the promised increase in the mailing list. After losing large amounts, it has been found necessary to raise the price again or let the papers go out of existence. The fact is that a weekly Church paper cannot be published for less than \$2, and the failure of many who have tried the lower price is proof of this statement. There are really very few Christian families in this prosperous country who cannot afford to pay \$2 for their Church paper, if they really want it.