

NOTES AND COMMENTS

When we somewhat complacently pat ourselves on the back and think we belong to a superior civilization that has put away all the nonsense of paganism and the ages of superstition out of our lives we come up against the extraordinary fact that almost any one can get a hearing who talks horoscopes these days.

Millions believe that this or that seer or seerss "predicted the war" and can foresee the future. For instance, Madame de Thebes, of Paris, has such a hold on modern credulity that many have awaited her 1916 predictions in fear and trembling, and have even asked her not to be "too pessimistic," and all because she is credited with having foretold, in December, 1913, the great conflict now devastating Europe.

But when one examines her specific claims in the war issue, one finds, as in the past, that her utterance could be read forward and backward and any event could be squared with it. As to "1914" what she said was this: France will be drawn into war and emerge victorious. An era of love, peace, great hopes and great labors will date from 1914. But first the waves must be tinted with blood and water and fire mix in a combat of subterranean forces.

Naturally such a prophecy could be twisted to fit any war, and the qualification of war with an "era of love and peace," dating from 1914, is the usual contrast that most prophecies exhibit, since if one horn of the dilemma misses the fact it is caught on the other. For 1916 the seerss is, of course, pessimistic, but sees a "brilliant future" for America, and the "end of the Kaiser." All this parade of childish credulity, accompanied with childish imposture, but is as old as the hills; for did not the Delphic oracle tell Croesus, in the sixth century B.C., that if he fought the Persians he "would destroy a great kingdom," which he interpreted to mean the Persian, while it happened to be his own? Yet, despite the famous cases in which it failed, the Delphic oracle flourished and grew in wealth and authority until the Christian era.

And now, although astronomy has routed astrology, the whole world shudders over the crown of some old beladame over the "courses of the stars." We all know better, but the riddles of guesses like hers still control, and people still love to believe there is "something in it."

MEN AT FRONT ARE SPENDERS.

Reporter Assumes Role of Huckerster For a Day.

So much has been said about the way the soldiers are robbed by hucksters who manage to circulate just behind the front and offer a miscellaneous goods for sale that the French Chamber has sent a commission to the front to investigate the question. These hucksters are generally residents in the military zone and obtain permission to carry on a trade in objects ranging from a piece of soap to an anthology of French poets as a recompense for the losses they have suffered.

A newspaper man who had left the army from illness determined to become a huckerster for a day to see what there was in the business. His experiment seems to show that at the bottom, the fault, if it exists, is due as much to the inherent desire felt by human nature to buy something when the opportunity has not occurred for some time.

About 6:30 one morning he laid out his little stock on the steps of a church in a little village of some thirty houses, for or five of which were still intact. To his right he placed the soaps, of many colors, and the perfumes to the left, letter paper, collections of songs and in the middle knitted goods, socks, etc., under which were hidden a few bottles—not bottles containing alcohol, the risk of prison would have been too great—but of coca wine, quinquina and such aperitifs of legal degree of spirit.

"How much is the mirror?" asked his first customer. "One franc (20 cents)." It was a little mirror sold at 2 cents in Paris, but it was taken at ten times the price without an attempt to bargain.

Ten cents for a glass of coca wine about as big as a thimble, yet the bottle was emptied in five minutes! Five cents a sheet of paper with Joffe's portrait. An automobilist paid 8 francs (\$1.60) for a bottle of eau de Cologne and offered two 5 franc bills. He refused to take change and was delighted with a child's trumpet to make up the remaining 40 cents. He at once began to blow it and his comrades to dance to his music.

For men who had just come back from six days burial in the trenches to buy something meant civilization and life. The seller was soon cleared of all his goods. What had cost him \$10.40 had cleared \$65.20, a profit of more than 500 per cent.

Before leaving the village the amateur huckerster handed over the \$65.20 to the Captain of the section to be used to add some delicacies to the men's rations.

The officer smiled and invited the donor to lunch, adding a few words which showed that officers are no more free than men from the desire to buy something. "If you have anything left we will buy it."

Playing Too Safe. The defendant in a case tried in a western court had been duly convicted of theft, when it was seen, on "proving previous convictions," that he had actually been in prison at the time the theft was committed. "Why didn't you say so?" angrily demanded the judge of the prisoner. "Your honor," said the man, apologetically, "I was afraid of prejudicing the jury against me."

If a man were as wise as he thinks his wife thinks he is what a wonderful world this would be.

The Fashions

The Spring Bride.

The wedding gown of to-day has lost some of its dignity with its train but it has gained a youthful charm which is to be preferred. In the wedding frock of to-day, there is much of the quaint charm and sweetness of grandmother's gown; smocking, puffing, quilting, shirring and numberless other handmade trimmings are used in its ornamentation, and it is fashioned of the sheerest, most airy of fabrics and laces.

Attractive Use of Lace and Chiffon.

Laces, chiffons, and nets were never daintier or more fairy-like than they are this season. It is to be a season of laces and transparent fabrics. Laces as graceful as the web of the spider, or the glinting, shimmering wing of the butterfly, vie for favor with the more substantial, Spanish and thread-run patterns; the sheerest of silk crepes and the crispest of organdies are modish for frocks.

Children as Attendants.

Small attendants, flower girls and tiny pages, are becoming more and more a feature of fashionable weddings. It is a pretty English custom, one that often saves much thought and planning. These small attendants are picturesque adjuncts to the ceremony, and whether they wear picture hats, small bonnets, or no head covering at all is a matter of no consequence; all three are correct and perhaps the prettiest and simplest thing of all, is to have the wee, curly head decked with a wreath of fresh flowers to correspond with those in her basket. Sometimes the small girl's dress is a quaint replica of the bride's own gown, and then again it is a Kate Greenway frock, dainty and quaint to a degree.

Patterns can be obtained at your local McCall dealer, or from The McCall Company, Department "W," 70 Bond St., Toronto, Ont.



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The Short Bridal Gown

Paper-like taffetas are often used in the gowns of the bride's attendants and then, again, they are of organdy, in the palest of tints, trimmed with tulle or taffeta. This combination of taffeta and organdy will be a noticeable feature of all imported frocks this summer; it is an unusually attractive notion.

The Formal Wedding Gown.

For the demure little bride who wishes to tread the beaten path of custom, for reasons sentimental or otherwise, there are gorgeously brocaded satins with a touch of silver in the motif. A court train lends formal dignity to such a gown even though the frock itself is considerably shorter or than would have been dreamed of in mother's or grandmother's time. The smallest of pages or flower girls are often a detail of such a wedding, lending a novel, pretty note. There are softer satins, too, which may be used for the formal or informal frock equally well.

Simple Veil Arrangements.

Quite the most important part of the frock for June, October, February, or any other bride, is the veil. It is often a simple length of tulle, draped over the hair and caught with a wreath or cluster of orange blossoms or white clematis; then again it is a cap or ruche, but always there is the cluster of dainty, waxy blossoms, so absolutely necessary to the true wedding spirit. The veil offers the best way of introducing the bit of rare old lace without which the wedding gown is incomplete, if such a bit is to be found in the family treasure chest. If there is none, the bride must be content to bring in her "something old" in a bit of brocade, cleverly introduc-

Frock for Bride's Attendant.



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Frock for Bride's Attendant.

ed on bodice or girde; a piece of antique jewelry, also will serve to keep the spell.

The Bride's Bouquet.

The bride's bouquet may be a stiff formal little bunch of white roses, with its quaint, stiff little paper manchette, or the graceful shower bouquet with drooping lily cups and ribbons. One of our exclusive florists always furnished his bride with a bouquet in shower effect of lilies of the valley, white orchids and white ribbons; lilies of the valley and white roses are equally effective and much less expensive. The serious bride may carry a flower-decked prayer-book, if she prefers, instead of a bouquet.

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RED CROSS PUBLICITY.

Goderich Red Cross Society has shipped supplies to the value of \$3,484. Saskatchewan Provincial Red Cross has a membership of 4,500. A Co-operative Elevator Company in Saskatchewan has given \$1,000 to the Saskatoon Red Cross.

A Red Cross worker in Wolfville, N.S., has put up over 400 jars of fruit for Red Cross hospitals. Grain Growers' Guide, a Western agricultural paper, has raised \$659 for its Red Cross fund.

Collingwood Red Cross has a membership of over 500 and has raised \$3,686 in money and supplies. Manitoba Red Cross has a membership of 7,519 and collected the past year nearly \$120,000.

Barry Red Cross has ten auxiliaries in the surrounding country. Hamilton Steel Co., is making the Red Cross a donation for 1916, of \$5,000 payable quarterly. Commodore of Royal Victoria Yacht Club, Victoria, has given to Red Cross a steam yacht valued at \$10,000.

Employees of Imperial Oil Co., Sarnia, have given \$1,000 to Red Cross Society. In Alberta 1,200 Red Cross "Mite" Boxes have been distributed to private homes. Newmarket Red Cross realized \$3.50 by auctioning two turnips contributed by a farmer. Wolfville citizens gave \$355 to No. 7 Stationary Hospital being equipped by Nova Scotia.

It is as difficult to estimate the true value of the Red Cross as it is to appreciate the value of any community of public hygiene and sanitation. Still, we know the terrible ravages of plagues and diseases in times past and no one is disposed to deny that the cost of public hygiene returns a valuable profit in disease immunity.

Similarly the value of the Red Cross consists fully as much in the suffering it prevents as in the misery it actually alleviates. The terrible sufferings of Serbia in the first year of the war illustrated the value of an efficient Red Cross, Serbia triumphantly resisted the first Austrian invasion, but decimated by disease coupled with lack of Red Cross supplies, fell an easy prey to the next invasion.

If the soldier remains days after his wound without medical attention, his chances of recovery are slight. The aim of the Red Cross is to get wounded into its hospitals as soon as possible, but to do this it requires an elaborate and expensive organization as near the front as possible.

The real proof therefore that the Red Cross is doing is to be found, not in terrible conditions of suffering, but in a perfectly functioning system of relief work which reduces suffering to a minimum. It is the comfort, not the agony of the wounded which is the best test of Red Cross value.

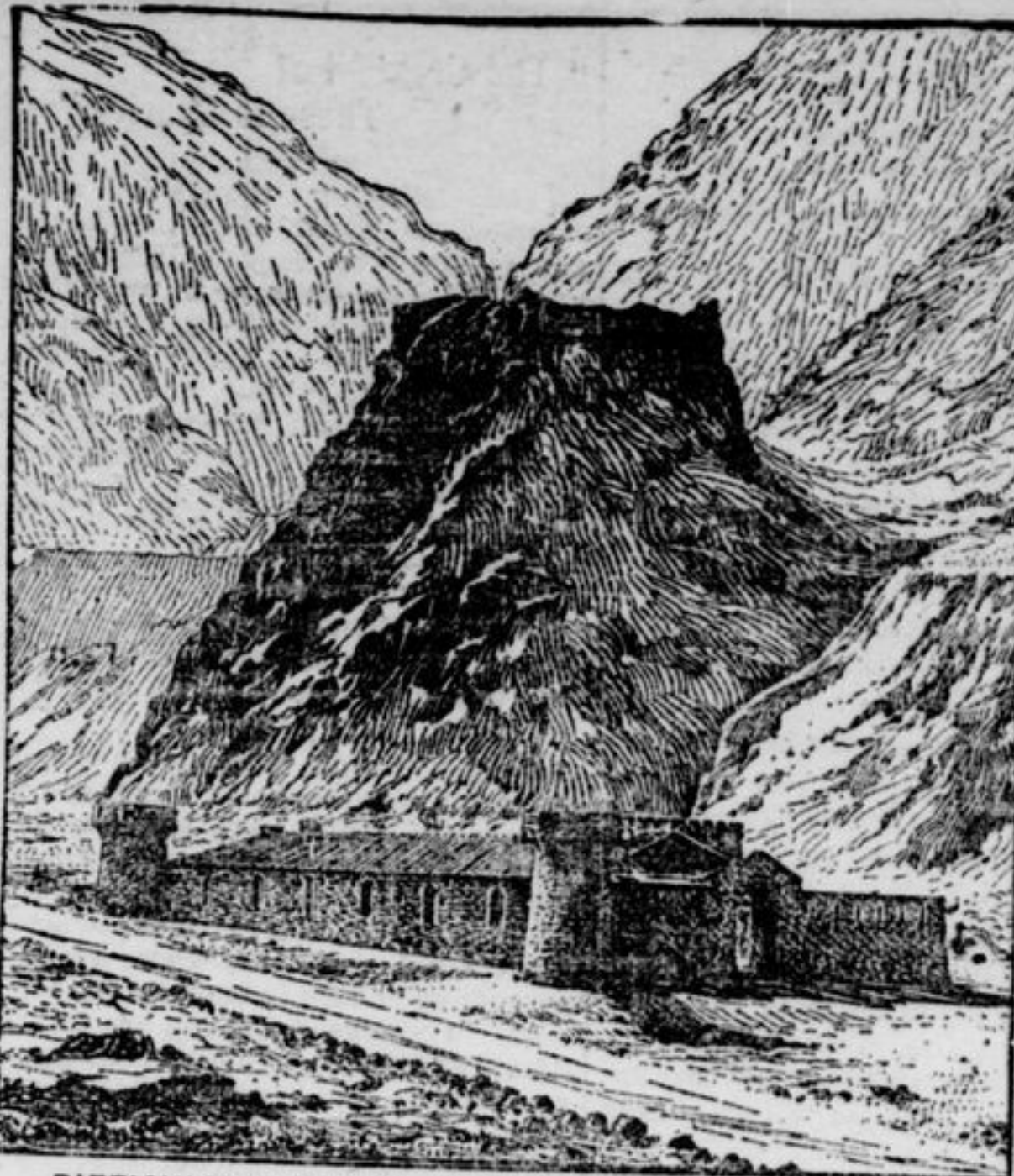
Dr. Herbert Bruce the well known Toronto surgeon who has been on active service in France, has stated that our Canadian Red Cross is famous beyond all other Red Cross Societies for its sympathetic treatment of its patients. So that even the English and French wounded express a wish to be taken to a Canadian hospital.

This kind of Red Cross service for which Canada has won an enviable reputation, is only possible with perfect equipment and with continuing generous contributions from our Canadian public.

Now a Vast Arsenal.

The British now claim that Sheffield has become a vast arsenal, and the greatest in the world. The steel works there far exceed those of Krupp at Essen and their output is far greater. Already \$125,000,000 have been spent in the extension of the steel works and another \$125,000,000 are in process of expenditure. No less than 12,000 men are engaged in the manufacture of shells, while 9,000 are making cannons. Since the 6th of September there have been 700,000 workmen and 50,000 women employed in 715 different establishments in manufacturing arms and ammunition. This is the work accomplished by the new Minister of Munitions.

"I know a man who has the power of making all persons show his hands." "Who is he?" "My glove dealer."



DIFFICULTIES WHICH FACE GRAND DUKE NICHOLAS. Illustration shows the nature of the fighting ground in the Caucasus, where the Grand Duke Nicholas is pressing back the Turks. Illustrated Georgian military road and Castle of Tamara, in the Caucasus Mountains.

THE SUNDAY LESSON

INTERNATIONAL LESSON. FEBRUARY 27.

Lesson IX.—The Seven Helpers. Acts 6. Golden Text: Gal. 6. 2.

Verse 1. Grecian Jews—A special use of the word Hellenist, to describe Jews who were brought up in the Dispersion and had been accustomed to speak Greek. Many of them would take the first opportunity they could get of removing Palestine. Hebrews were (properly) dwellers in Palestine whose language was Aramaic, though they would generally understand Greek. The cleavage between the two classes depended most of all on the fact that the Bible of the former was the Septuagint, while "Hebrews" used the original. Note that Paul (Phil. 3. 5) insists that he was "a Hebrew and the descendant of Hebrews," although Greek was for him as much a native language as Aramaic, and he was entirely familiar with the Greek Old Testament. Neglected—"Were being overlooked"; the sequel is enough to show that it was quite intentional. The Hellenists were largely newcomers, and it was very natural that the widows of men who had been in the city all their lives should be noticed first.

2. It must be remembered that the twelve had a message to give which could not be delegated. Other men could preach as well—hardly one of them could match Stephen, far less Paul. Many other men could organize charity better than they. But they could tell what they had seen and intended. The words and works, the death and resurrection of Jesus, and in this they could have no substitutes.

3. The method proposed is very significant for the history of the Christian church—"poor stewards" we should call them in British Methodism—are to be elected by the whole membership, and installed by the twelve. The conditions are that they must be men of well-recognized character and good enough for the service, but not only men of judgment, but deeply spiritual. For the Spirit is needed just as much for "serving tables"—that is, the counters over which money is laid—as for preaching or praying. There were to be seven, the sacred number, an additional reminder that this was no "secular" work which the twelve rejected as not good enough for them. Not they are never called "deacons"; we need not discuss the later tradition that gave them the name, but the New Testament knows nothing of the application. Appoint over this business. The twelve will transfer to them work they had hitherto done themselves.

4. The prayer—Literally, it is put first as the outstanding feature of Christian meetings. The ministry—Or service; for the word is significantly identical with "serve tables" in verse 2. The word—"The gospel."

5. The translation above tries to imitate the Old Testament flavor which Luke here, as so often, gets out of the Septuagint to give an aroma to his phraseology. They chose a board of whom every member bore a Greek name. Were the Hellenists in such an overwhelming majority? But if it was an unfair representation, by which the "Hebrew" widows would suffer, were the twelve likely to endorse it? Philip—See Acts 8. 5, etc.; 21. 8. He is the only one besides Stephen of whom we hear anything more. The Acts must not be expected to supply biographies of the seven when most of the twelve are passed by. Nicolaus—One might almost suggest that he is precisely described in order to distinguish him from some other Nicolaus—the one whose name was attached to the antinomian sect of the Nicolaitans?

6. Laid their hands—A symbolic figure familiar in Old Testament ritual. It suggested, as it does in many primitive religions, the passing on of grace and special functions from one person to another. It was destined to give rise to a most unapostolic succession of superstitious ideas, but was perfectly simple and very suggestive in its origin.

7. Priests—This marks the climax of the humiliation of the proud high priests; their own order is changing its Sadducee principles for the gospel of the resurrection. Were obedient to the faith—Compare Rom. 1. 5 Or service; for the word is significantly identical with "serve tables" in verse 2. Faith is a monarch demanding a very practical loyalty. Stephen's brief story is to show us that

LOST IN WAR TIME.

The Pathetic Story of a Little French Lad.

One day last spring the little town of Roi-de-la-Somme in France, was unexpectedly shelled by the Germans, and a Canadian chaplain describes the scene as he saw it. Life was going on as usual, mothers were busy in the homes, children playing on the streets. In a few moments all was wild confusion, everyone seeking safety, mothers rushing wildly about searching for their children who had been at play. Some found them—some did not.

Among the number who was not found was a little lad about eight years old named Julien Decaux. He was playing football when the shells came among them and ran with the others for safety. One of the British car drivers a few weeks later when coming from Boulogne saw a little fellow, dirty, half-naked and lone, about three miles from the town. He seemed lost, and he was. It was Julien Decaux. He told the chaplain that he had never seen his mother since he was playing on the square that day; he was the only child of his parents. Can you imagine the broken-hearted mother hunting about among the troops for three months? The chaplain took him to the chief of police and they are trying to hunt up Julien's mother. The police wanted to keep him meantime, but he got a firm grasp on the chaplain's leg and emphatically declared that he was going to stay with "mon capitaine." He is staying if his parents can be found he will be restored to them—if not, the chaplain will see that he has a good home.

SHAMMING DEAD.

German Ruse That Failed—Two Huns Were Baggied.

An Irish soldier writing home from France, says:— "I and I were sent off a listening patrol to reconnoitre a house close by the enemy patrol lines. We didn't know whether they were in the house or not, but—though they were, so off we went, just M—and I. The house had been blown up by artillery fire and not much remained but the shell; still it made good cover for an observer's party. We crept to the door and from room to room upstairs and down with the moon shining through in portholes here and there. But we found only two dead Germans at the foot of the stair, lying huddled and with the contorted faces that we thought dead men only wear.

So we went back and reported that which we found. — was a disbeliever. Why didn't you prick the dead men with a knife? These we carry, of course, for close quarters, we would only plead guilty to a breach of discretion. "Come back," said he, "both of you." So back we went with him. The two Germans were lying as we left them; one with his head over his arm, the face hidden; the other on his back, with bared teeth, and a look of horror in his fixed eyes. "They're ours," said I. "I thought so." And the two came to life—but three separate men are a big argument against two who have been playing silly without arms. So the night's bag paid for the hunt."

"WAR HAS JUST BEGUN."

Russian Soldiers Are Warned Not to Waste Ammunition.

All boxes of ammunition being dealt out to Russian soldiers now are marked: "Don't waste your ammunition; the war is only just beginning." Posted in every public building in Russia, from railway station to restaurant, are notices reading: "Speaking German is strictly forbidden." The penalty for violating this rule may be three months' imprisonment. The British Foreign Office has issued instructions to all British Consular officers in allied as well as neutral countries to see whether British subjects within their districts are associating with persons of belligerent nationalities. Offenders are to be warned once; if they persist in associating or even talking with an enemy either in a business or social way, their British passports will be cancelled.

The regulation, already being enforced, applies chiefly to British subjects in neutral countries and to those doubtful ones who have become naturalized subjects of King George while passing their German, Austrian and Turkish sympathies.



Daddies and Laddies.

Oh, the world is filled with daddies— Not a place but has its share; And they're loved by little laddies; Here, and there, and everywhere; And each little laddie's daddy Thinks him better than the rest, And each daddy's little laddie Loves his own dear daddy best!

And there are so many daddies, Plain and handsome, poor and rich, 'Tis a wonder little laddies Can distinguish which is which; But at picking out his daddy Every laddie stands the test, For each daddy's little laddie Loves his own dear daddy best. —Youth's Companion.

A Squirrel's Quarrel.

Once on a time there were two perky little grey squirrels who dwelt together in a great forest, and they cared for each other so much that they never had a cross word. One day two men came into the forest and began to quarrel. When they had gone the first squirrel, who had been watching the men, turned to the second and said, very politely: "Let us quarrel!"

"Very well," said the other, who was always anxious to please. "How shall we begin?"

"Oh, it will not be very hard," said the first squirrel. "Those strange animals who have just gone away found it easy enough." In all sorts of ways they tried to pick a quarrel with one another, but they were so polite that the plans never worked. At last the first squirrel found two fine nuts, and bringing them to the second squirrel, said:—"Now, here are two nuts. You say they're yours, and I'll say they're mine, and we'll be sure to have a fine quarrel. Now! Those nuts are mine!"

"Oh, very well," said the other, "you are more than welcome to them." "But at this rate," said the first, "we will never quarrel. Talk back. One person can't fight by himself. It takes two. Now let's begin all over again. I own all the trees in the woods!"

"Is that so?" said the second, "How nice of you to let me live here!" At this the first squirrel had to laugh, so they gave up the idea of quarrelling, and lived happily ever afterwards.

HEALTH

To Prevent Gall-Stones.

Of course the primary cause of gall-stones is inflammation of the lining of the bile ducts in the liver or the gall-bladder. This inflammation is probably always produced by its first infection, the typhoid bacillus, and its first infection, the typhoid bacillus, being notorious factors of such inflammation. Often indeed, living typhoid bacilli are demonstrated in the centre of a gall-stone 10 or 15 years after the attack of typhoid fever.

Stones form in this way: A clump of germs irritates the mucous lining and causes the secretion of excessive mucus, which adheres to the clump of germs, forming a foreign body in the gall sac or the ducts. Cholesterin, a crystalline substance of the bile, is deposited upon the nidus in concentric layers. So the stone grows, sometimes to the size of sand grains, sometimes shot or peas, sometimes as big as chestnuts, sometimes one large stone filling the gall-sac, perhaps as large as a pigeon's egg.

Certainly moderation in eating—eating only enough to maintain a normal weight for one's height, age and sex, or less than enough to maintain an excessive weight (most gall-stone victims are over-weight) is a preventive measure in persons inclined to gall-stone trouble.

Less meat, or meat broths and more vegetables, cereals and fresh fruit. One with gall-stone trouble should keep the bowels regular, not by physic, but by diet, exercise and habit. Salines, either in the form of natural spring waters or the various saline cathartics of the druggist, are good for occasional use, not to regulate the bowels, but to reduce engorgement of the portal (liver) area. Sufficient should be taken, preferably early in the morning, to produce a few watery evacuations.

But abstemious habits of eating, free water drinking, and open air walking are the three best-known preventative remedies against gall-stones.

Sound Advice.

When you reach the sixties, take care, and you'll reach the seventies. Increase your care and you will glide happily into the eighties. At the age of sixty at the latest, you must form fresh habits, for great changes then take place in the body. There is a loss of weight; the bones become fragile; no fresh blood-cells are formed, and the tissues waste away. There is, too, a great decrease

National Righteousness

Humanity Marches Slowly But Surely on to the Light of Better Days

"And the times of this ignorance God winked at."—Acts xvii, 30. When we take sides we assume that most of the wisdom is on our side and most of the ignorance is on the other. And we are treating the other side with scant courtesy and for destroying opposition whenever possible. That has been the working principle of men and nations. Suppose God had worked on that principle in dealing with His creation? Suppose that every time He met with opposition He hurled thunderbolts? Suppose that whenever a creature failed to cooperate with the Creator He simply destroyed the creature? Would it not have been better for the race, however much harder it would have been on the individual?

Not a Stern Mechanism. It all depends upon what is the goal of creation. If it is a highly efficient machine that is to result from all the processes of creation then to eliminate friction and to destroy opposition are commendable. If it is humanity that matters, then whatever tends to make humanity humane becomes the only moral purpose of creation. And it would seem that God's goal is not a stern mechanism but a

generous hearted humanity, as evidenced by the statement that instead of destroying ignorant opponents of His will He closed His eyes in tolerant compassion. God knows that men who fight in ignorance against their own good, fight as eagerly on the side of human betterment when they are enlightened. Therefore, He does not destroy but waits till men who have caught inspiration from being able to understand His will. Prophets, poets, saints and seers are the real captains of the great army of humanity as it marches slowly, painfully, but surely on to the light of better days.

God Gives Us Leaders.

Such captains will arise presently above the fighters in Europe. God gives us leaders and then waits for us to follow in their way. It is a way of infinitely tender compassion this way of righteousness, in which one sees that the evils of the world are the result not of willfulness but of ignorance, and sees also that an orderly society will emerge whenever men learn the gentle art of living together. To contribute to this end is the privilege of all whose religion rests upon the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of a compassionate God.—Rev. Addison Moore, D.D.