

STATUS OF AFFAIRS IN IRELAND TODAY

The Visitor Brings Away an Impression of Pathos.

POVERTY OF THE PEOPLE IS REAL

The Potato Famine Has Caused Great Distress, but the Greatest Cause of Trouble is That There is Not a Sufficient Margin of Industrial Opportunity on the Island to Keep the Young Men of the Island at Home.

London Letter in Washington Star.

The deepest impression of Ireland which the visitor brings away is that of pathos. A haze of melancholy broods over the remembrance of the country such as follows one from the funeral of a friend. The temperament of the Irish is so sunny, their condition so miserable; they are a people so brainy, so gifted with wit, with all the elements of happiness, and there is no little to inspire these elements in the life of Ireland today that the contrast kindles sympathy.

Yet the poverty of Ireland is to the poverty of England as the poverty of England to the United States. Much sympathy is wasted over the hard times in America by the London newspapers, with half-starving Ireland on their one hand and wholly starving India on the other.

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POVERTY EVIDENT

Even in these sharp days many children are running barefooted and hunched in the streets of Dublin, while the few garments they wear are even less than the ragged shreds of the ragged ones. The difference between the incapable, short-sighted Spanish rule, as illustrated in Cuba, and the British rule, far-sighted and far-seeing, is shown in the wealth of Java, written by Eliza Follen, which has just been published by a New York house.

THE DRINK HYPOTHESIS

Temperance people declare that over-production of whiskey is the complaint from which Ireland suffers. But an Irishman primed with whiskey wherefrom bubbles a stream of bulls and reports is preferable to the Briton who in his drink always exceeds his inalienable right to his "woman."

There are two sides to the stories of an Irish famine in the coming winter.

The government asserts that there is nothing more to the talk than a politicians' famine. The politicians, with many of the clergy and citizens at large, contend that the distress will be nearly equal to that which over-

whelmed the island during the crop failures in the seventies. That it will be more suffering all parties admit, though no one claims that it will approach the famine of '48. Each side has reasons for painting the picture as dark or as bright as possible. Government officials explain that it is for the interest of the agricultor to multiply distress because such conditions bring distress upon the ruling powers, and they hint as well that the politicians have the rake-off from relief funds which they expect America to contribute. The politicians retort that the government is trying to cover up the famine because it is largely due to official incapacity.

AN OFFICIAL OPINION.

The under secretary for Ireland, Mr. J. B. Donohue, who is believed one of the most impartial and fair-minded of the government, gave his views to the writer.

"There are several counties on the west coast where the people have a hard time to attain self-support under the best conditions, and it takes but a small push to send them over the border line into dependency," he said.

JAVA AND CUBA.

They Are the Two Finest Tropical Islands in the World--A Comparison and a Contrast.

From the Philadelphia Inquirer. The two great tropical islands of the world are Java and Cuba. The story of Cuba is well known. A continent capable of supporting millions, with a soil one of the most fertile in the world, it has been ruled by the Spaniards into ruin.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE INCAPABLE, short-sighted Spanish rule, as illustrated in Cuba, and the British rule, far-sighted and far-seeing, is shown in the wealth of Java, written by Eliza Follen, which has just been published by a New York house.

JAVA'S SIZE.

Java is nearly the same size as the state of New York. It has an area of 49,397 square miles. It supports a population of 24,000,000, a population of 450 to the square mile. Belgium, the most densely populated country of Europe, has 540 persons to the square mile.

WINE WITHOUT ALCOHOL.

Sterilized Grape Juice is Made in Switzerland. Those interested in temperance movements and others will be glad to learn that in Switzerland the manufacture of non-alcoholic fruit and grape fruit beverages is conducted on quite a large scale.

Sunday School Lesson for December 19.

Message About Sin and Salvation.

1 John 1, to 5; to 11, 6.

BY J. E. GILBERT, D. D., LL. D., Secretary of American Society of Religious Education.

INTRODUCTION.—Thirty years after Paul wrote his letter to Timothy, written last week, John the beloved (John xiv, 2), penned his first epistle. During that long interval great changes had occurred in the church. All the other apostles had passed away, most of them having laid down their lives as martyrs to the faith.

CONFESSION.—It is plain that the man who denies his sinfulness will never find God and enjoy His favor. The first step, therefore, to a removal of sin, as a requisite to fellowship, is an open and complete acknowledgment. Humbling though it is, confession is essential, a mark of repentance and faith.

ASSURANCE.—If there is any subject upon which absolute certainty is desired, it is the subject of one's relation to God. The remainder of our lesson (verses 2 to 10) furnishes the ground of such certainty. "We know that we know Him," says John, "the most important knowledge," John xviii, 20. But how is one assured of such personal acquaintance?

PRETENSION.—It appears that fellowship with God, which we seek, is understood to be the very substance of the Christian religion. John xiv, 20. But some pretended to experience this fellowship, who were not acquainted with it. John exposes their hypocrisy (verses 5 and 6). He declares that "God is the light," a being of such glory that the offense of his crime will be as great as the light of his holiness.

ADVOCATE.—Now comes a question that has annoyed and caused no little controversy in the church. Suppose a man has confessed, been forgiven and received into fellowship and fellowship with his Heavenly Father, is he then utterly faultless? (Job ix, 29). Is he free from all liability to sin? The apostle answers: "Such an one must determine so far as in him lies not to sin (verse 10), for in that case he comes again under condemnation."

CONCLUSION.—By the foregoing it appears that at the close of the first Christian century, the teaching of the church had not been corrupted. Here is a summary of doctrine, precisely what is believed today by the evangelical and aggressive portion of Christendom.

REALITY.—Having thus in a few words stripped the pretender, the apostle proceeds to apply the same test in a reverse order to establish the reality of genuineness of the true Christian. If men walk in the light, if they live under the searchings of Divine truth (1 John xxix, 2), and in harmony with the Divine will, they are in fellowship with Him. It is for this reason that the light is called the "true light," and the darkness is called the "darkness."

RENEWAL.—Having shown that the removal of sin is a condition and proof of fellowship with God, we seek, is understood to be the very substance of the Christian religion. John xiv, 20. But some pretended to experience this fellowship, who were not acquainted with it.

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AN OPEN LETTER TO MOTHERS.

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