

# The Chronicle

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### The Convent School Fire.

The fire at St. Genevieve Convent School, last week, by which a number of the inmates were burnt to death, is a tragedy most horrible.

One of the nuns, ten girl pupils and four very aged women were cremated, while two nuns and three other females were seriously injured. At the time of the fire there were 52 inmates in the convent, 10 being nuns, 37 girls, and 5 aged women. The village had no fire protection, though a plentiful supply of water was at hand, as a stream runs close to the scene of this disaster. There seems every probability that owing to a panic amongst the pupils, the efforts of the nuns to get them out of the building were nullified. That any institution of this class should have been left without fire escape apparatus is a scandal to the Province. Only a few years ago a splendid convent school, only a few miles from the one at St. Genevieve, was destroyed by fire, the warning of which ought to have been effective in rousing the public authorities into taking action to give the inmates of all such establishments a chance for saving themselves from being roasted alive. In the district afflicted by this awful holocaust there are a number of extensive isolated buildings used as boarding schools and homes for the aged and infirm so situated as to be without fire protection, either by exterior fire ladders, or local fire brigades. There are buildings even in this city in which large numbers of young persons are occupied in the day time, some in which many reside, that are most inadequately provided with the means for their rapid exit in case of fire. The provincial and municipal authorities have already incurred a grave responsibility by neglecting to pass, or enforce such laws as are most urgently needed to protect the lives of pupils and workers in large buildings. We hope the St. Genevieve horror will lead to such measures being adopted and such action taken as will provide adequate fire protection, more especially for the inmates in suburban, isolated buildings used as schools, religious retreats or factories.

A recent accident in London was caused by an accumulation of gas being exploded by the sparks thrown off an electric wire. A suit for damages following during the course of which the trial judge remarked upon the danger of having electric wires running in places where gas is liable to escape and accumulate. So far as dwelling houses and other buildings are concerned it would not be difficult to entirely avoid this risk, but, in streets, where the danger is most imminent the danger is such as to need precautions specially designed to prevent gas being exploded by electrical sparks. Accidents of this class are liable to involve very serious consequences. It is believed that to this untoward combination of gas and electricity is due a number of fires classified under, "origin unknown." All new buildings should be protected against modern dangers one of which is the chance of an explosion and fire caused by a leakage of gas and of electricity in or near the same location.

A scientific mining expert has contributed an article to the London "Economist" on the world's sources of the gold supply. He estimates the entire yield for 1904 as follows, the total being the largest on record:

Australasia . . . . .	\$87,500,000
United States and Alaska . . . . .	86,500,000
Transvaal and Rhodesia . . . . .	85,000,000
Russian Empire . . . . .	22,500,000
Canada . . . . .	16,500,000
India . . . . .	10,500,000
Mexico . . . . .	11,000,000
All other countries . . . . .	34,500,000

Total gold supply in 1904 . . . . . \$355,000,000

The probabilities are in favour of an increasing supply in the next five years, during which time it