

# Dominion Presbyterian

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## Note and Comment.

Six to eight dollars a month buys food, fuel, and clothing for a family of five persons in Japan.

Notwithstanding a deficit of \$60,000 last season the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra will continue its concerts next season. The guarantors have already made good the entire amount of the loss.

Forty thousand workmen, belonging to forty different trades or callings, are on a strike at Florence. Six thousand troops have been concentrated in the city, to preserve order. Food is very scarce. The city newspapers have had to suspend publication on account of the strike.

The British and Foreign Bible Society reports an extraordinary increase in the sales of Malay Scriptures from Singapore. In the past few years the sales have averaged about 3,500 per annum, and in 1899 they were even less. But last year the number of copies sold exceeded 11,000, and in consequence several new editions have had to be printed.

A novel telephone patent has recently been granted to Edwin W. Smith, of Canada, for a telephone cabinet or hood, designed to take the place of the regulation silence booth in stations where space is extremely limited. It consists of a sort of diver's helmet of wood, which is attached to the telephone, and into which the user of the latter puts his head while he is talking.

President Roosevelt will receive the honorary degree of LL.D. from the University of Chicago during his visit to Chicago in the fall. October 3 has been fixed as the date of the ceremony. A special convocation will be called and the affair will be as elaborate as a full commencement, with the exception that the President will be the only man to receive a diploma.

Since the passage of the "Law of Associations," requiring religious bodies to secure Government authorization, there has been a great exodus of those unwilling to comply with the law. Great Britain, Holland, Switzerland, Spain and Belgium have been the principal refuges of the dispersed nuns and monks. One hundred and twenty Carmelite convents are now deserted, and hundreds of Dominican, Visitation and Poor Clare nuns have trooped out of the country. The departing nuns of St. Benedict were led forth by Adelaide, Duchess de Braganza accompanied by her daughters, the Archduchess of Austria and the Duchess of Parma. The Carthusian monks have gone to Spain and Belgium, and the Benedictines have found a home in England. The Capuchin-Franciscans, the Dominicans, the Trappists, the Oblates of Mary, and the Marist Brothers have applied for and received the necessary authorization.

Communication by Wireless Telegraphy has been established between Washington and Annapolis, (thirty-five miles), under the

auspices of the navy department. The Department has secured specimen apparatus of four different wireless systems. They are all to be tested, with a view of adopting the most successful for use in the navy. The Marconi system is not among those being tested, as negotiations with Marconi for sample apparatus failed. In this initial stage of the tests, the question of interference from stray currents, which is one of the principal purposes of the tests, remains undetermined.

Great Salt Lake for several years has been slowly but steadily receding. According to Director Murdock, of the United States Weather Bureau, it has now reached the lowest level recorded since observations have been taken by the department. Up to August 1 the lowest mark ever recorded was on July 11. Since that time the lake has receded four inches. The fall of the water since 1894 amounts to nearly six feet, and on the low, flat eastern shore this has resulted in a recession of the water line during that time of fully three-quarters of a mile. Speaking of this phenomenon, Director Murdock says: "Utah has been in a dry cycle for seventeen or eighteen years. In this period the precipitation has been much below the average. Precipitation sometimes moves in cycles of this kind and duration and I think a prolonged period of increased precipitation is nearly due. But it will take several wet years to bring the lake back to its former level."

Four years ago the Belgian Government offered a reward of \$10,000 for the discovery of a paste for matches, not containing white phosphorus, in order to mitigate the evil influences which the present manufacture of matches exercise upon the employees. The arbitrators, however, although they have tested several so-called harmless mixtures, have not yet discovered one that fulfills the required conditions, since all the mixtures so far submitted have been defective in inflammability, igniting on all surfaces or, in igniting, ejecting inflammable matter containing poisonous substances. The matter is of supreme importance to Belgium because match making is one of the staple industries of the country, but the mortality in the manufactories is very high, the prevalent complaint being phosphorus poisoning.

"The unexpected has happened," says the Belfast, I. Witness. A body entitled "The Catholic, (that is, Roman Catholic) Lay Representative Committee" has sprung into existence, apparently in connection with the Education controversy. Their Western branch has aroused the ire of the "Catholic Truth Society," so that we have the interesting spectacle of a conflict between laity and priests. The Catholic Truth Society demands that the other should say "whom they represent." The other replies that "the consequences of the denunciations which follow are quite too unpleasant to invite their occurrence." Moreover, this daring "Lay Representation Committee," suggests that a public meeting should be held, for which it guarantees half of the expense, in order to discuss the fol-

lowing resolution—"That this meeting while earnestly maintaining the principles of the Catholic religion, consider that there are lay rights which ought to be restored, and especially that representation for the parents and lay parishioners should be secured upon the managing boards of all Catholic schools." If Catholic laymen would vigorously and respectfully assert their rights within their own church, they might be able to inaugurate much needed reform therein.

Cassiers' Magazine is responsible for a rather good, or bad, story recently told illustrating the arrogance, ignorance, or whatever it may be called of the executive of some of the trades unions in dealing with their members. It appears that while a workman was engaged in guiding a cable into a conduit in a building that was being wired, his fingers were caught between the cable and the walls of the conduit. That the men at the far end of the conduit, unaware of their comrade's plight, continued to pull upon the cable, seeing which an apprentice lad ran to his assistance and pulled back on the cable. That a delegate of the union who had witnessed the affair and had expressed sympathy for the sufferer, reported him for violation of the rules of the order, and he was called to executive headquarters to explain his conduct. Notwithstanding that his fingers bore evidence to the extent of the accident he had undergone he was fined "for allowing an apprentice to do helper's work, to wit, assisting a journeyman drawing wire into conduits."

The Weekly Leader had this note: Professor M'Comb, of Canada, who recently contributed an interesting article to our columns, writes in the current issue of The Contemporary Review on the important question, "Do we need Dogma?" He is very hopeful concerning the future of theology, and says: Historical criticism, too, which has done so much to purge theology of accidental accretions, has also contributed very materially to its substance and strength. Agnostic despair of history is no longer possible. Professor Harnack being witness, the fire of the most stringent criticism has failed to dissolve such facts as these: (1) That Jesus claimed to be the Messiah, the prophetically announced Deliverer of God's people; (2) that the Logos doctrine of St. John cannot be traced back to Milo; (3) that the marvellous (if not the strictly miraculous) cannot be eliminated from the records without utterly destroying them. Men are asking to-day not: Is there a God; but, What kind of a God is He who is involved in all thought and life; what is the character of the Will behind the universe? Theology answers; Look at Jesus as He lives and breathes in the Gospel history, and you will find God; His reason and heart lie at the centre of all things; in Him you will discover the clue to the winding mazes of history, the baffling perplexities of thought, the dire mysteries of Nature. No doubt, we have here rather a faith and a conviction than a reasoned and a demonstrated conclusion. But truth can afford to wait.