

# Dominion Presbyterian

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## NOTE AND COMMENT

The French Government is considering the total abolition of the manufacture and sale of absinthe, the most popular and at the same time the most ruinous intoxicant among the French people.

During the last ten months the temperance movement carried on under the direction of Archbishop Bruchesi, of Montreal, has secured sixty thousand signatures to the pledge. Recently a member of one of the largest liquor houses in Quebec Province admitted that in the two years since the Archbishop inaugurated the temperance mission the consumption of liquors had materially decreased, and a wholesale grocer who also deals in liquors said that his sales are now only about one-half what they were a few years ago.

It is said that the old bucket once was the cause of a war in Europe. We thought that the world had outgrown such things, but it seems that the New World has at last furnished history with a parallel case. Copies of the official communications exchanged between the little Republics of Nicaragua and Honduras which have been received at Washington show that the war between those countries, which threatens to embroil all Central America, grew out of the seizing of a mule by Nicaraguan cavalrymen!

American papers are speculating upon and discussing the probabilities of the next presidential election campaign. It is not quite certain that Bryan will be the Democratic candidate, but as to the Republican party, everything seems to be shaping for the nomination of Roosevelt. Many of the party leaders realize that he is the only candidate who can save the party from disaster. Speaking of the newspaper discussion and speculation the New York World (Democratic) says: "Why do so many newspapers and politicians waste time speculating whether Mr. Roosevelt or his opponents will control the Republican National Convention in 1908? There is no doubt about it. If Theodore Roosevelt is alive he will boss the convention. It will nominate nobody to whom he is opposed. The only problem on the President's hands is to keep the convention from renominating him. This is the only defeat he is likely to suffer."

The "Christian Work and Evangelist" tells of "a remarkable conference of Christian women met recently in Wei Hsien, the Holy Land of China. There were 300 women representing over 200 villages, and 200 more came from the neighborhood. Here was a gathering of women, some of them over seventy who had hobbled on their bound feet for fifty miles or less, carrying bedding, hymn-book and Bible. Most remarkable still is the fact that their husbands encouraged them to go, though many had never before been more than two miles from home. The program included topics decidedly Oriental: The family relationships, beginning with the daughter at home, her betrothal, the wife, the mother-in-law, the meaning of church membership, personal work, Sabbath observance, family worship, prayer and personal Bible study; unbinding the feet—a discussion which led 205 of those present to loosen their extremities and to promise that they would make their daughters-in-law do the same. Mrs. Roys says that the afternoon meeting of the closing Sab-

bath was broken up entirely by the spontaneous desire of the delegates to go out for personal work on the street where thousands of women were to be found wending their way to a temple to pray to the gods for a fruitful harvest. What a hopeful sign for the future, when a religious conference cannot hold one session because the delegates are all engaged in personal work!

On the authority of the "Westminster," of Philadelphia, it is said that "more than fifty years ago a Moravian named Heyde, stationed himself on a ridge of the Himalayas at Leh, on the borders of Tibet, and with slight encouragement has held the field until the present time. He has mastered the language, translated the Bible into Tibetan, and has reached not less than 10,000 people."

There are now in the United States, including Porto Rico and Hawaii, 9,204,531 Negroes. Nine-tenths of these live in the Southern States, and constitute one-third of our population. There are 21,000 negro carpenters, 20,000 barbers, nearly as many doctors, 16,000 ministers, 15,000 masons, 12,000 dressmakers, 16,000 engineers and firemen, 5,000 shoemakers, 4,000 musicians, and 1,000 lawyers. 77 per cent. of the negroes work on farms. Of the 746,000 farms on which they work, 21 per cent. are owned wholly by the negroes, and 4 per cent. are partly owned by them. Nearly 4,000,000 negroes are engaged in gainful occupations. This is about 45 per cent. of their total population; while only 37 per cent. of the white population of the United States are bread winners.

The law abolishing the death penalty in France is being assailed on every side. The principle newspapers of Paris are all urging its defeat, while prominent statesmen and literary men are clamoring for the same thing. A number of opinions are quoted by the "Literary Digest," and their consensus seems to be that expressed by the "Gallois," of Paris, which declares that "the abolition of the death penalty has done nothing but cut the sinews of justice and encourage crime." M. Goron, Chief of Police of Paris, is quoted by "La Liberté" as saying: "During the twelve years for which the death penalty has been practically suspended, the results of this reform have been apparent. I think the experiment has been continued long enough. These results have been most disastrous."

Some churches reserve certain pews for strangers. A writer in the Southern Presbyterian thinks the better plan is to show them into family pews, where they will be welcomed by members of the church. Speaking of a church which does this, he says, they do this purposely, because they want people to feel at home. The pastor exhorts his people: "If a stranger is shown into your pew, or a stranger and his wife, be glad to see them, greet them with a smile. See that they are offered one of the hymn books in your pew-rack. After service extend the hand of welcome to them, and ask them to come back again—ask them to come to your pew with you next time. These are little things. They will cost you nothing. But what a difference they make in the way people feel who come to worship with us for the first time!" This is an idea worth noting by people who attend churches in Ottawa and elsewhere.

The question of the use of the U. S. flag in beer and liquor advertisements has been settled. Two liquor dealers of Omaha were prosecuted under the laws of Nebraska on the charge of selling beer-bottles decorated with the national colors. They were fined \$50 each, but appealed to the State Supreme Court on the alleged ground of the unconstitutionality of the law. That court sustained the verdict, and the case was carried to the Supreme Court of the United States, which confirmed the previous two decisions. In the course of his opinion, Justice Harlan upheld strongly the right of the State to protect the flag, the emblem of the nation's power, against indignities. He maintained that the use of the flag as an advertisement on beer-bottles cheapens and degrades it. "To prohibit such use is no abridgement of personal rights as contemplated under the Constitution." Our neighbors, perhaps, make too much of their flag; on this side of the line it may be said we make too little of ours. But we are improving.

In a recent issue of Harper's Weekly, Rev. John Monroe, chaplain of the Prison Evangelistic Society of New York, publishes an interesting article on "The Cost of Crime in the United States." He shows that nearly one-fourth of \$130,000,000 raised by taxation for the expenses of New York City is spent in the repression and correction of crime. For the United States at large the total cost is figured to reach the amazing figure of \$1,076,327,605. The national government alone spends about \$140,000,000 a year for the prevention or correction of crime. Such figures are enough to convince the most indifferent Christian that, aside from all other considerations, for the sake of the dollars and cents involved every effort should be made to enact and enforce such laws as to reduce the cost of crime to a minimum. One of the most interesting features of the article is the remarkable contrast between the cost of religious work and the cost of crime. The author presents this contrast in the following paragraph: "The cost of religious work in the United States is enormous. The cost of foreign missions, comprising all denominations, is \$7,000,000; home missions expend the same sum. We spend for education, \$200,000,000; for church expenses and ministers' salaries, \$150,000,000. Hospitals and dispensaries for the sick poor cost us \$100,000,000; for sanitariums of all kinds we spend \$80,000,000. City missions and rescue work of all kinds demand and receive \$3,000,000; humanitarian work of every kind, \$12,000,000. Our Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations cost \$5,000,000; while all other moral and social work in the United States requires an expenditure of \$5,000,000. The total expenditure for humanitarian and religious work is, then, \$549,000,000. As against this, the total cost of crime in the United States for the year reached the incredible total of \$1,076,327,605.99. That is to say, we spend more than five hundred million dollars a year more on crime than we do on all spiritual, ecclesiastical, physical, humanitarian, educational and healing agencies put together!" These are startling figures, which we have no doubt, will apply proportionately to Canada and Canadian cities and strongly emphasize the importance of enacting and enforcing laws to reduce the cost of crime. But more; these figures should impress our people with the importance of giving stronger support to Christian and humanitarian work.