

# Dominion Presbyterian

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## NOTE AND COMMENT

It is stated that there are about 250,000 Buddhists in Germany alone, and that the majority of them belong to the so-called cultured class.

The Indianapolis News makes the point that if the saloon is the poor man's club, the dues are out of all proportion to the benefits received. And we are inclined to think everybody will agree to that proposition.

A writer in the Baptist Standard does not like the term "white man's burden," as applied to the negro. He names him "the white man's helper," and he is right. The negro has been not a burden, but a burden bearer ever since slave traders landed him on our shores.

A lay speaker in a recent Layman's Missionary Campaign in the United States was talking of men's ability to give, and their willingness. He put it this way: "We have the means; we have also the meanness; we must get rid of both." It is not uneldom that the means and the meanness seem married, with scant possibility of divorce.

Three United Free Church congregations in the old town of Edinburgh John Knox Church, Moray Church, and Canongate Church, are uniting to form one congregation. The John Knox Church is to be the centre of congregational life. Thus the United Free Church continues steadily in its work of concentrating and husbanding its resources.

Dr. Henry Van Dyke says to church members: "Make your life more simple, even if you have to make it less fashionable. The world wants you to make it less fashionable. The world wants to see a real difference between Christians and other people in their attitude toward money." What the world wants to see is not always the proper standard for the Christian, but it is correct in this case.

Perhaps never before in the history of religious work has there been anything like the enthusiasm and interest created by the Laymen's movement. The congress in Chicago, May 3 to 6, will complete a schedule of seventy-five meetings held in as many different cities. In every city the audiences have taxed the capacity of the largest halls, while the demand for tickets for the banquets preceding the mass meetings was greatly in excess of the largest accommodations.

Prof. Nordmann, of the Paris Observatory, has been figuring upon the heat and luminosity of the sun. He says every square inch of the sun's surface has a luminosity equivalent to 1,994,000 candle power. As the most powerful electric arc light known to us at present is only equal to 20,000 candles, the square inch of sun is a long way ahead. That square inch would give us light equal to 60,000 incandescent lights of 32 candle power each. Evidently there is no lack of lighting power in the divine arrangement of the solar system, remarks the Christian Guardian.

L'Abstinence announces the second refusal of the Czar to approve national prohibition for Finland in these words: "The Landtag adopted the law for prohibition by a vote of 158 to 34, but just as was the case after a similar vote two years ago, the law has been interdicted by the Czar. Words fail us to express our indignation that in this twentieth century a people, who have so decidedly expressed their desire that this curse should be taken from their midst should be denied their rights at the demand of the wine growers of the country, of liberty, equality, fraternity."

For their own safety so many persons require total abstinence from intoxicating drinks; for the sake of others this total abstinence is practiced by another company so large and influential that it is ruling in the lives of the best in all parts of this land favored of God.

Major Stanton, the late governor of Khartoum, says that it will be the largest city in Africa, and, beside doing an immense trade in the various products of the Soudan, it will be the center of an enormous cotton trade. He believes that in fifty years the Soudan will supply England with all the cotton she needs.

The "Advance," of Chicago, is authority for a statement that would indicate that the most stringent prohibition laws ever enacted are to be credited to China. As long ago as 1100 years B.C. the Chinese government enacted a statute that those who drank to the extent of intoxication should be put to death, and in the year 459 B.C. real prohibition was enacted, the liquor seller paying the penalty of violation of the law by forfeiting his head.

Evangelical Christian work is carried on in Africa by 2,740 missionaries, assisted by 13,989 native Christian workers, maintaining 4,789 places of worship, with 221,156 communicants and 527,790 professed adherents. The 4,000 missionary schools are attended by 202,490 pupils. The missionaries conduct and control 95 hospitals and 16 printing establishments. "A chain of connected missions extends from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean. One half of the 700,000 people of the native state of Uganda are enrolled as Christians; and of the 700,000 negroes of the British Cape Colony, 200,000 are Christians. No land has responded better to the missionary appeal than Africa."

As the result of the experience of the London County Council in its efforts to provide work for the unemployed, pauper labor, like slave labor, is declared to be almost worthless. The report of the council says: "Work was done this winter in the London parks to the value of \$39,000. It cost the central unemployed body to accomplish this no less than \$296,100. In other words, work which laborers hired in the open market and paid high wages could have done for \$39,000 cost \$257,100 more when done by the unemployed—that is, by men who knew that they would not be discharged if they idled and who had no interest in their work, but only in their wages. That, we venture to say, is the type of work which will be universal when the state is the sole employer and when men do not espouse their own form of work, but have it found for them by that benedict despot."

The World's Christian Endeavor Convention at Agra, India, was a very impressive meeting, and was one of the most important as well as the largest international Christian gathering ever held in that country. It was attended by 1,800 registered delegates, but three or four thousand visitors swelled the congregations. About 800 delegates come from America and Europe. One hundred delegates from Burma traveled 3,000 miles coming and going, and ten from Assam still further. One hundred and sixty-eight Protestant mission stations were represented by 400 missionaries and more than 3,000 converts. Twenty-five languages were spoken by the attendants, but English and Hindustani were the languages of the convention. Among the more important addresses were those of the Rev. Herbert Anderson, president of the Christian Endeavor Union of India, and of the Bishop of Lahore.

The Moravians began their work on The Labrador in 1771, having previously established a mission in Greenland in 1733. It is a great tribute to the missionary zeal of this body of people that they went into this unknown region and, deprived of all but the most infrequent means of communication and cut off to an unusual degree from any knowledge of the outside world, have maintained this work for nearly a century and a half. Even to-day a visitor from the outside world is a rare occurrence, practically only when the Government mailship arrives with the mail or Dr. Grenfell makes a call.

We have given little space to Russian abuses of late, says the Herald and Presbyterian, not because there are not plenty of them, but reports on the whole show progress toward a more enlightened and better government. It will take many years for Russia to come to the position of the nations of Western Europe, but a sudden change is impossible, and the hardships and wrongs of gradual progress are less than those of a sudden revolution. The Douma has not very much power, but it is exerting tremendous influence. Its budget committee has struck at the root of the system of Siberian exile by reducing the appropriation for this purpose to \$34,000. The administration will doubtless find other ways of getting the money, but the number of political prisoners sent to Siberia is being steadily reduced.

The net increase in membership in the Congregational Churches in the United States for 1908 is 10,642, the total membership being 790,332. The present number of churches is 6,560, including the foreign churches under the direction of the American Board. Twentynine churches were added during the past year, and there was a net gain of 14,189 in Sabbath schools, but there was a loss of 4,554 members of young people's societies, a decrease of \$232,432 in contributions to benevolent causes and a decrease of \$74,207 in home expenses. The average salary of the pastor is \$907, exclusive of parsonage. Not a new member was received in 1,348 churches during the year, and there were 1,000 churches without pastoral supervision. Half a century ago there were 2,571 Congregational churches in the United States with a membership of 59,453. In that time there has been a growth of 3,435 churches and 540,743 members.

Spain cannot forever remain in its present backward condition, and the new Premier, Canalejas, seems to desire to advance as rapidly as the people will permit. In his speech in the Cortes, last week, he outlined the government's programme, and appealed for the united support of the radicals and democratic forces in order to "Europeanize and modernize Spain." Without the united support of these two parties he declared that his effort to curb the growing power of the Romish priests would fail. The Premier's programme included a beginning of popular education by the State, greater liberty of conscience and of the press, and the general adoption of modern ideas. He wants to bring his nation in line with France and Germany. He has the hearty support of the King and Queen. Indeed, the latter, is believed to be most strenuously urging reforms. At all events the young King is among the most progressive men of the nation, and, were he able, would modernize Spain. But a king has very limited power in these days. There is the Cortes, through which laws must be enacted, and back of this the people, intensely Roman Catholic, and generally opposed to progress. Instead of repressing progress, this king is trying to save the people from their own stupidity, and to induce them to accept education and modern advantages.