

# Dominion Presbyterian

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## NOTE AND COMMENT

The will of the late Marshall Field provided that the bulk of the Field fortune should be held in trust for two of the grandsons until the older one reached the age of fifty years. If the boys survive that date it is estimated that their fortune will amount to a round billion dollars.

His present Majesty was once asked by an American what he would do to support his family should the chances and changes of this mortal life remove him from his high estate into a lower sphere. He replied that he would travel about and give lectures on the "hardships of being Prince of Wales."

Very ignorant and rash people are heard every now and then to assert that it will be only a little while until the Church dies out, or the Bible is forgotten, or the gospel ceases to have any influence. This is very foolish and without any foundation. One might just as well assert that within a few years people will outgrow the use of water, or that they will forget the use of bread.

The assembling of the Grand Army for another yearly review suggests to the Springfield Republican that among all the candidates mentioned for the Republican Presidential nomination there is no veteran of the civil war. Not before since the war has such a thing happened when the field was open to new candidates. Thus does the old generation pass, giving way to the new.

According to a decree issued one year ago, Russian subjects were given the right to change their religious faith. This privilege was accorded to members of the Orthodox Church as well as to others. A counter decree has now been issued by the Holy Synod excluding soldiers from its benefits, and compelling them, as long as they are in the army, to remain in connection with the Orthodox Russian Church. A Russian decree, whether issued by the Czar or by any of the other qualified authorities, is binding in law only until it is revoked or superseded. There is no assurance that it is seriously meant, or that it will not be changed with the changing whim of the government.

The magnificent new Cunarder, "Lusitania," has broken the ocean record by making the trip from the Queens-town Lightship to New York harbor in four days and thirteen hours, and part of her journey she showed a sustained speed of 26 knots (nearly 30 miles) an hour, which is as fast as the average of many of our passenger trains. The new steamship was built on the Clyde. She is 790 feet long, with a beam of 88 feet, and a depth of 60 feet; and she draws 37½ feet when loaded. Her funnels are 185 feet high, and have a diameter of 24 feet. She carries 7,000 tons of coal, and can accommodate 650 first-class, 500 second-class, and 1,300 third-class passengers. She is equipped with turbine engines of 70,000 indicated horse-power, driving four shafts, each of which carries a three-bladed propeller of manganese bronze. The ship is furnished with telephones, elevators running from deck to deck, rooms with open fireplaces and windows, a cafe, an orchestra, and a music and lounge-room. Surely this ought to rob ocean travel of nearly all its terrors.

Lover of Nature, particularly of bugs, Dr. F. H. Snow, of Lawrence, Kansas, has come home from New Mexico with 15,000 more specimens—520 were beetles. The collection now numbers more than 200,000 specimens; 6,000 beetles, 2,500 hemiptera, 100 diptera, 500 dragon flies, 2,000 butterflies, 1,000 grasshoppers, and 1,000 bees and wasps. Camp was pitched in Gardner's Canyon, on the eastern side of the Santa Rita range, among the live oaks, about 7,000 or 8,000 feet above sea-level. "It was a delightful country to collect in," said Dr. Snow. "It was cool most of the time and had splendid water. Heretofore I have always worked in the desert with its hot sands, mesquite and chaparral. Not one of our party met with an accident, and there were no Gila monsters up there," he continued, laughing. Last year a Gila monster bit the doctor.

The concentration of a large part of the wealth of the United States in the hands of a few men is one of the disquieting facts of our era of great organization. But, far as this concentration has gone in the United States, it is not comparable to the concentration of the sources of wealth and of financial power under the older class-governments of Europe. For example, a writer in the Contemporary Review estimates, from the receipts of the income tax, and from similar data, that "about 95 per cent. of the entire wealth of the United Kingdom is owned by about one-ninth of its population." He estimates that about 200,000, or at most, 250,000 families, own nearly the whole of the accumulated wealth of the kingdom. All such statistics are avowed estimates, but after a liberal allowance has been made for error, the fact of a tremendous concentration remains.

It is regrettable to learn that the Welsh revival, which promised such great things two years ago, has been followed by a serious reaction. The National Free Church Council of England sent Mr. Wilfrid J. Roland to Wales to investigate the disquieting rumors of the conditions in Wales, and his report is not encouraging, though he blames the churches themselves for their failure to conserve the unquestioned spiritual results that were produced. The "Interior" says that he "visited thirty-seven places in South Wales where the revival fire burned warmest, and found sad declines in all of them. Everywhere there have been grievous losses of membership from the churches—in some places 'enormous losses.' In mining villages the conditions are particularly bad; the public houses are recovering the patronage which they lost in the time of the revival, and many young fellows who are still ashamed to be seen in public drinking-places join private drinking-clubs, where gambling also prevails. Church leaders attribute this startling defection to their own failure to provide any special instrumentality for fostering the Christian life of young converts and for attaching them to the church. After revival meetings subsided, the churches went on simply with the routine of ordinary services of worship to which established Christians had been accustomed. Many congregations now contemplate trying to repair the oversight by introducing forms of institutional work. In some of the mining villages miners' institutes have been erected to furnish working-men with a place of sober and clean resort, but all of these are secular. It is felt that the Church missed a great chance in not earlier seizing on this idea for itself."

The "Youth's Companion" gives an interesting sketch of the peculiar type of Christianity professed by Menelik, the black king of Abyssinia. The king is pious, after his fashion, but his piety shows itself in a zeal for making converts more after the Mohammedan mode than what we consider Christian, though it is fully in accord with the spirit of the inquisitors of a century or two ago. He had interested himself in the Ethiopian version of the New Testament, which has recently been completed, and he has constituted himself an agent of the Bible Society for the distribution of the Scriptures throughout his own dominions. His Majesty is so desirous of promoting the study of the Bible among his soldiers that he will not hesitate, it is said, to fell an officer with a blow of his fist for any deficiency in Scriptural knowledge. His methods of stimulating piety include, it is likewise declared, the use of the stocks for soldiers who do not say their prayers. He unholds any form of violence which he deems conducive to spiritual growth. Thus persons guilty of sacrilege are hanged, even when the guilty belong to the female sex.

The British Trades Union Congress, held in London, England in the early part of September, expressed itself very decidedly upon two points, in regard to which its decisions are of more than local interest. First, it declared against compulsory arbitration of labor disputes, on the ground that, in Great Britain, the ends of labor could be better secured by means of strikes. In the second place, it demanded a universal old-age pension of five shillings a week for every worker over sixty. The idea of compulsory arbitration has been embodied in the labor laws of New Zealand, Australia, and Canada; but the American unions have bitterly opposed it, and now the British unions have taken the same stand. We think the Canadian plan is rather the better. In regard to old-age pensions, there is considerable diversity of opinion, but the idea has found increasing favor in recent years. Germany has an old-age pension law that pensions the workman at seventy years of age. Australia has one which, we believe, comes into effect when the laborer reaches sixty years. Collier estimates that if the British Government were to adopt the trades Union recommendation, it would mean an annual payment of about \$65,000,000; and a similar scheme in the United States, with a pension of \$3 a week, would probably cost \$300,000,000.

Korea, in spite of its political difficulties, is having a marvellous religious awakening. Dr. Erdman says of it:—"If they keep up in Korea the same percentage of conversions as they are now having, for eleven years, the whole of Korea will be converted. The explanation is simple. The Korean church is a Bible-loving church, a Bible-reading church. Last year women came eight, ten, and twelve miles, walking over hills and mountains, and willing to submit to any hardship if only for four days God's Word could be read and explained to them. So, too, the men will carry their own provisions, and walk twenty or thirty miles, to attend one of these Bible conferences." It is marvellous how much one revival resembles another. They have their different characteristics—but the unity is most apparent. If the Korean revival rests upon Bible-study it will prove spiritual, sane, and permanent.