

Dominion Presbyterian

\$1.50 Per Annum.

OTTAWA

Single Copies 5 Cents

NOTE AND COMMENT

Chicago will perhaps vote on local option at the April election. Near seventy-five thousand voters have petitioned the election commissioners to submit the question to a vote.

Superstition dies hard. The old delusion that comets create disasters is again revived in connection with the recent floods; and the other superstition of special judgment for sins finds its supporters. The Tower of Siloam with some good people will never fall for the last time.

Professor Orr, of Glasgow, is reported to have said, that all the missionary enterprises conducted by all the churches of the world, during the nineteenth century, have been conducted at a smaller financial cost than the amount spent by the British people in one year for intoxicating drink.

The number of paupers in Great Britain is increasing very rapidly. Aid through systematic charity was given during the past year to \$35,068 persons, the amount expended being \$71,542,120. Asked as to the cause of the great increase a man well informed on the conditions prevailing among the poor answered in one word. That word was alcohol.

Dr. A. H. Strong, of Rochester Theological Seminary, asks: "What are the churches for but to make missionaries? What is education for but to train them? What is commerce for but to carry them? What is money for but to send them? What is life itself for but to fulfill the purpose of missions, the enthroning of Jesus Christ in the hearts of men."

The N. Y. Christian Advocate says: The Chinaman no longer hoots at the western stranger as a "foreign devil," and the Chinese youths who are winning scholastic honors at Yale, Columbia and other American colleges are winning more than medals and prizes for themselves; they are conquering the esteem of Americans for a race for which "heathen Chinese" seemed a good name a generation ago.

The World's Sunday School Convention holds its sixth session in Washington, D. C. May 19-24. The convention met in 1907 in Rome with 1,113 delegates enrolled—767 from the United States. Fully 2,500 delegates are expected in Washington. President Taft will address the convention. Fifty-one countries will be represented and a membership of twenty-six million persons will be represented by the convention.

An International Committee of Foreign Missions, representing the various missionary boards of the world, has been organized. It will serve as a medium of communication between the boards and societies of Foreign Missions throughout the world and represent them in matters of common interest. It is considered a very important move in connection with foreign missions and cannot but ensure greater progress in the work.

It is not generally known that in Newark, N.J., there are two churches for Ruthenians, one a Protestant and the other Catholic. The former congregation is soon to put up a new edifice. The Protestant church is the first Presbyterian church among the Ruthenians in the United States. It was started as a mission by the Board of Home Missions about three years ago. The church, having six elders and as many trustees, was organized July 4, 1909.

Drink withers a nation, mars society, destroys the home, brutalizes man, debases womanhood, mars the constitution, blights the faculties, stirs the passions, unhinges the mind, and ruins the soul. Drink fills our work-houses, peopled the asylums, and hurries many a one to an untimely grave.

The Zulus have a custom like that of the ancient Hebrews in naming a child, of giving a name that will mark the time, or place, or some incident that occurred when the child was born. Recently at Durban, Natal, a child was brought for registry on a day when a strike had interrupted traffic on the railroad. The child was given the name of Umlabelungubevimbelaistimela, meaning "When-the-what-men-stopped-the-train." We wonder what the boy was called for short.

One of the most amazing revelations of the Boxer uprising a few years ago was the unyielding steadfastness in the faith of the Chinese Christians. The Hon. Charles Denby, for thirteen years American Minister at Peking, referring to the Boxer troubles in an article in the Baptist and Reflector, writes: "The province of Chih-li furnished 6,200 Chinese who remained true to their faith in spite of danger of suffering an impending death. It is said that 15,000 converts were killed during the riots, and not as many as two per cent. of them apostatized. In the face of these facts, the old allegation that the Chinese converts are treacherous, venal, and untrue, must be renounced. Let us not call them 'rice Christians' any more." Could as large a percentage in this land stand the test?

A correspondent writing in the New York Christian Advocate, says: The Pope at Rome permits my good friend and neighbor Father McNally at St. Patrick's church and my friend Father McSweeney at St. Francis de Sales to speak out of their own hearts messages of hope and help to their congregations along with the appointed service of the church. But Mrs. Eddy, by an edict issued a few years ago, prohibited all forms of public address or sermon or remark in the services of her churches; she abolished the office of pastor, stating that this book henceforth should be the pastor of every Christian Science congregation; and provided that, aside from a few passages of Scripture, nothing should be said or read in a Sunday service except selections from her book, chosen by herself. What a piece of spiritual arrogance it was! Imagine any congregation of American Episcopalians or Congregationalists consenting to be brow-beaten in that way! It almost passes belief.

The Census Bulletin credits the negro churches of the United States with having had 3,886,097 members in 1906. These members were affiliated with 3,677 local organizations. The figures show an increase since 1890 of 1,830 organizations and 1,011,102 members. The property of these churches is valued at \$5,531,159, with less than \$6,000,000 of debt against it; showing an increase of more than \$30,000,000 of value in sixteen years. During this period the number of church organizations increased about 50 per cent., the membership 40 per cent., and the property values more than 110 per cent. Of the members returned, 3,207,307 are in the African and colored church organizations, and 477,790 in churches under white direction. The Baptists lead in numbers and Methodists follow, with memberships running over the million mark in either family. The Presbyterians have 47,116 members, the Episcopalians 21,350, the Roman Catholics 38,235, the Disciples of Christ 11,238, and the Congregationalists 11,960.

The Messenger, the organ of the Presbyterian churches of Victoria and Tasmania, published in Melbourne, gives in its issue of December 11, 1908, an interesting account of the ministerial jubilee of Rev. James Henry, a Buchan man, who has been in Australia for nearly thirty-three years. Mr. Henry is now eighty-four years of age, and says the writer, his ministerial jubilee is dated from his ordination, on December 16, 1858, then 34 years old. On asking him why so late in life, he answered: "Poverty. I could not manage it any sooner." It was under the faithful ministry of Mr. Lind, the United Presbyterian minister of Pittligo, that the longing awoke within the lad to be a preacher of the gospel, and this as he herded cattle, and, later on, followed the plough, for he must needs help the household of his adoption. Many years went past labouring on a farm before he had laid by enough to meet expenses at the Aberdeen University, and these funds proved often far too small, so that there came times when this student had little enough to eat, and less still for fuel or firing in Scotland's wintry nights, in his poor lodgings.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has just issued a book on Belgian misrule in Africa which is called "The Crime on the Congo." In writing this book the author of "Sherlock Holmes" was prompted only by humanitarian motives. It is to be sold at as low a price as possible, and all profits from its sale are to be devoted to extending its circulation. In an interview concerning the Belgian atrocities Sir Arthur made this statement about the missionaries: "I used to be always against missionaries; I used to think that missionaries do more harm than good; but as long as I live I will never say a word against missionaries again. I shall always support them. Mind you, it is only a minority of the missionaries who have played up bravely; but then that any should have done so is fine, as it was done at the risk of great personal danger and kept up, year in, year out, against incessant persecution. If the missionaries had chosen to wink at what was going on, they might have had a very pleasant time. They acted like men—and splendidly. But for the missionaries we should never have sent out consuls and never had any information about the Belgian treatment of the natives."

The Waldensians make up the native Protestant Church of Italy. They have had a history marked by that stirring heroism which blossoms under persecution. A small community of some twenty-five thousand people they are mostly peasants living in the northwestern corner of Italy and in the valleys of the Cottian Alps. Some claim that they are the descendants of those Christians who fled from the persecutions of Nero, but, whether there be a real historic basis for this contention or not, it is certain that as early as 1190 they entered a protest against the errors of the Church of Rome, which responded by persecuting them, and persecution has been their portion almost ever since. Thirty distinct persecutions have been launched against this people, who have managed to keep the light of the Gospel truth burning and to plant congregations in France, Holland, Germany and Italy. Every kind of limitation has been imposed upon them, and arduous restrictions have crippled all their efforts at enfranchisement. All these restrictions were cast iron until 1848, when King Charles Albert of Sardinia gave them equal rights with all his Italian subjects. In 1870 religious liberty was granted to all Italians, and since that time the Waldensians, though extremely poor, have been coming into their own.