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NOTE AND COMMENT

Rt. Hon. Sidney Buxton, postmaster-general, reports 8,250,000 periodicals were forwarded to Canada during the year ending March 31, 1909.

The seating capacity of the largest churches in Europe is St. Peter's, Rome, 54,000; Milan Cathedral, 37,000; St. Paul's, London, 25,000; St. Sophia's, Constantinople, 23,000; Notre Dame, Paris, 21,000; Pisa Cathedral, 13,000; St. Mark's, Venice, 7,000.

Sunday is hereafter to be observed as a day of rest in the United States navy, so far as possible. An order has been issued directing that the duty required of officers and men be reduced to the minimum, and that the commanding officer's inspection of ship and crew be held on some other day.

The English suffragettes, who have been for some time sowing the wind, are apparently about to reap the whirlwind. Those who interrupt meetings have no right to complain that their own are broken up, and when it comes to be a rivalry between woman and students in the gentle art of noise-making it is safe to bet on the students.

Something novel and instructive in exhibitions is announced for London next year. Japan will devote twelve halls to a display of her history, religion, literature, military organization, administrative system, arts and sciences. It is hoped the Anglo-Japanese alliance will be strengthened by increasing the knowledge which one people has of the other.

Germany's naval budget calls for 443,000,000 marks next year. This is equal to \$111,000,000. In 1901 the naval budget was 205,000,000 marks, or \$51,000,000. In 1905 it was 248,000,000 marks, or \$64,000,000. So that since 1901 the expenditure upon the navy has more than doubled. This is one of the circumstances which set Britain thinking.

It may not be generally known that rice is the chief cereal food of about one-half of the world's population. The latest estimate of the world's rice crop places it at 175,000,000 pounds. The wheat crop is estimated at 195,000,000. The rice industry is growing rapidly in America. In 1908 it amounted to 60,000,000 pounds, 90 per cent of which grew in Louisiana and Texas.

There is still room in this world for the benevolent despot, when Mr. Carnegie can suppress the red light district of Pittsburgh by threatening reprisals against the city unless his demand is granted. The steel industry is the life-blood of Pittsburgh. The Laird of Skibo has also spent millions on local philanthropic and educational enterprises. The city could not afford to lose his favor.

The French cardinals have issued a letter denouncing the public-school system of France and warning parents not to send their children to these schools. The dispatches state that "Cardinals are coming down the line, recently and at a secret meeting with the French cardinals explained what the Pope expected of them." This is all that is necessary. At the bidding of the Pope, and the order of his messenger, and the direction of the local officials passing down the line, the public school or anything else is denounced, and the faithful receive their orders. There is the secret meeting, the work in the dark, and the man or the cause that displeases is smitten. It is this, among other things, that is causing the revolt from Rome, and the loss to religion itself, of multitudes in every country where Rome has been the dominating power.

Sir Ernest Shackleton admits that there are bounds to what he will undertake in the way of exploration. Speaking at Liverpool, he said that the men who went into the African forests took on a job he would never tackle. He would rather have the cold any time than to run the risk of having a native worth about five bob sticking a spear into him, or to have the mosquito, infinitely smaller, fixing him up.

It was Mark Twain who found life in Nevada monotonous because cows would fall down his chimney. Apparently accidents not altogether dissimilar are liable to happen in the little hillside towns on the Lancashire border. A doctor, in one of those towns the other day found that a pneumonia patient had had a set back. He was informed by way of explanation that a goat had fallen through the bedroom window.

The stoppage of Winnipeg's source of supply of electric energy is a useful and should be an effective warning to other large cities not to depend on only one means of furnishing light and power. The breakdown of the Winnipeg system was due to the bursting of a flume at Bonnet Lake, and such an accident may happen any time. Transmission wires should be duplicated wherever there is long-distance transmission of electric energy. The shrouding of a large city in darkness is a matter so serious that the most ample precautions should be taken to prevent it.

An addition has been made to the many amusing stories of the Scottish elder and the gentleman who tells the tale himself played the chief part in the episode. He attended church at a coast resort, taking with him a sixpence and a half sovereign. He put, as he thought, the former coin into the offertory bag. Next minute he discovered to his horror that the sixpence was still in his pocket, and that the half sovereign was gone. He simply could not afford to lose the money, and at the close of the service he went with some repetition to explain to the elders on duty what had happened. Hardly were the first words out of his mouth when one of the worthies exclaimed — "Not another word, here's your money; we were just wonderin' who had made the mistake!"

Black, the young Scotch "heretic" of whom we have heard of late, thus writes to the Presbytery of New York: "At this time I would like to take the opportunity of stating frankly and in brief why I desire to enter the ministry, and my desire can be summed up in the words 'that I may testify to the gift of the grace of God.' My one desire is to preach to men the grace of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, whom I know as my Redeemer, who as the divine Son of God was sent to us by the Father in his mercy. In Christ God has supremely revealed himself to me, and with Paul I can say that 'God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.' Through Christ alone can we truly know the Father and His will for us, and this he has shown us by his life here, his death on the cross and his resurrection from the dead. 'And the word became flesh and dwelt among us.' He offered himself as a sacrifice for our sins, and is now lifted up that whosoever believeth may in Him have eternal life. In my life I desire to preach Christ to men that they may be persuaded to come to him from their sins, that they may know him in truth and love him with their whole souls and take him as their Lord and God." Verily this "heretic" is not far from the Kingdom of God!

The conflict in France between the Catholic Church and the government shows no abatement in intensity and bitterness. It now centres around the state schools. The bishops and the priests generally condemn the schools, and in some cases are refusing church privileges to children who attend the schools. The parents do not share in the priestly opposition in many cases. In one parish they retaliated by refusing to contribute to support the Church. In another place, however, last week the mothers of girls who attended a state school made a public bonfire of the books used in the school. At an audience given French Catholics in Rome on Thursday last the Pope strongly condemned the French government, declaring it to be intent on the destruction of Christianity. The contest is of epoch-making character so far as France and Catholicism are concerned.

The Roman Catholic Church in Canada has at last awakened to the fact that it is not reaching a great multitude of the Roman Catholic immigrants. Its attention has been called to this the more forcibly by the action of the other churches in trying to remedy the evil effect of her omission. To say that the Roman Church has not been grateful for the well-intentioned efforts of other churches to help these people whom she was neglecting, is to put it mildly. The Presbyterians, it would seem, have been the chief offenders in their dealings with the Ruthenians, and upon them The Catholic Register pours without stint its vials of wrath. Incidentally it pays its compliments also to the Brandon Normal School, which it terms, in very euphonious language, "a nasty, low-down, proselytizing Orange institution, and an eye-sore to the whole Catholic population of the province." The *Ranok*, a newspaper published by members of the Orthodox Greek Church, it calls "the organ of the Presbyterian missionaries," and declares that "it is the most villainous, lying, and indecent publication that has appeared in recent years in any language." The Baptists are also mentioned, but the ecclesiastical flail falls less heavily upon them. Rev. Dr. E. D. Maclaren, answers these strictures by denying that all of the Ruthenians are Roman Catholics. He says: "I am not quite certain of the exact proportions of these classes of Ruthenians, but I was told by an immigration official in Winnipeg three years ago that ten per cent. were Roman Catholics, forty per cent. were Uniates, and fifty per cent. Greek Christians." He says also: "The Presbyterian Church is not proselytizing the Ruthenians; it is Canadianizing them. If we had wanted to do so we could. I have no doubt, have had thousands of them enrolled by now as members of our church. We have been seeking to elevate them to Canadian citizenship. We are simply giving these people practical assistance and advice who resent the efforts of the Roman Catholic Church to list them as its followers." The *Ranok*, he declares, is not a Presbyterian publication. At present it seems that the Roman Catholics have one priest trying to minister to about 35,000 of these people. We rather think the Roman Church is itself to blame if it has allowed these people to remain without the ministrations of religion so long, and if we might be permitted we would suggest to our esteemed Roman Catholic contemporary that it would perhaps be advisable to tone down a little the ecclesiastical hysteria of its esteemed correspondent. Newspaper hysterics are rather out of date.