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Notes of the Week.

A congress was held recently in Berlin, Germany, to deliberate on the best architecture for church buildings. The discussions, in which architects and theologians participated, revealed two tendencies: First, the church for devotional purposes; second, also for practical and social purposes. In the one case, a grand main edifice with pulpit and altar; in the second, many small buildings with accessory rooms.

In the elections for the London, England, School Board, over which there has been great excitement on account of the efforts of members of the Established Church of England to use the school for sectarian teaching, ladies in several divisions headed the poll, Miss Eve and in Chelsea, Miss Davland. Not a single "Labour," "Socialist," "Secularist," or nondescript Independent was successful.

Spain has long had its "Irish question" in Cuba, but there seems some prospect that a settlement of it will be reached. The Home Rule party were defeated in the insurrection of 1878, but ever since have been quietly organising their Parliamentary forces, until last year a Bill, practically conferring self-government, was presented by the then Colonial Minister to the Cortes. The result was the fall of the Cabinet and the temporary shelving of the Bill. Both parties, however, have now agreed to a compromise, by which Cuba will obtain a large measure of Home Rule, but without a local Parliament.

The Legislative Assembly of New South Wales has just passed a Land Bill which should prove a practical blessing to that country. Its first object is to encourage the bona fide settler; its second, to discourage as far as possible the land-grabber and speculator. During thirty years no less than 50,000,000 acres of land have been alienated, while only 26,000 occupiers have been placed upon the soil; but the new Land Bill offers a speedy remedy to this condition of affairs. Crown lands will henceforth be classified and surveyed with a view to settlement, and power is taken to acquire extensive freehold properties which may be presently required for agricultural purposes. Crown lands held under pastoral leases revert to the State for subdivision into smaller settlements, and all leases will be duly compensated by the extension of such leases as they may retain. The course is a wise one, as time must undoubtedly prove.

Rev. Dr. M'Gregor, of St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh, on a recent Sabbath occupied the pulpit for the first time on his return from a brief sojourn in France, and lectured at night on "Brittany and the Bretons." The large church was crowded. Among other things he said that the gulf that separated Protestantism from Romanism was a bottomless gulf and an impassable gulf. It could never be crossed till Rome changed, and Rome would never change till the end of the world. Every fresh visit which he had made to Roman Catholic countries, through a period of now nearly forty years, had sent him every time home stronger in the conviction that one of the supreme blessings which God Almighty in His mercy ever sent upon mankind was the Reformation, and that a tremendous weight of responsibility lay on the head of the man who would depart one hair's-breadth from its principles, or bring the Protestant Church one hair's-breadth nearer to the Church of Rome."

Principal Rainy has been presiding at the annual meeting of the Edinburgh Sunday School teachers and making an address in which, referring to the intellectual side of the teacher's work, he speaks of two classes. "There were those," he

said, "who, without any feeling of conceit, had cause of thankfulness in the feeling that they had a measure of success—a consciousness that they were getting hold of the minds of the children. There were also those who perhaps had rather a feeling that they were in doubt about their success—a strong feeling of discouragement, as if they were not succeeding. He had very great sympathy with teachers who had that feeling. He would say to all such teachers, don't be discouraged. The way in which they could interest the minds of the children was just to get more and more interested in the work themselves. Just in proportion as they succeeded in getting thoroughly interested themselves, in the same proportion they would succeed in interesting and impressing the minds of the children."

Many of our Toronto readers will remember the appearance at the great missionary conference held in the city last week of a fair, young-looking, and, when he was speaking, most modest mannered man, Dr. Grenfell, who came to the city to give some account of, and advocate the cause of, the Labrador Mission, and that to the fishermen on the banks of Newfoundland. He has just returned to St. John, Newfoundland and has given an interesting account of the mission and the work of himself and fellow-laborers. Two hospitals, plentifully furnished by a ladies' committee at Montreal, with appliances, are now in full operation, with a doctor and trained nurse in charge of each. The medical men have had under treatment this year 1,306 patients. Warm clothing is distributed in cases of great need. The poor sea toilers find the whole work a great boon, and its discontinuance would be regarded as a public misfortune. Whenever opportunity offers religious services are held, and moral and religious literature distributed, both of which the people in large numbers gladly avail themselves.

In the last number of *Great Thoughts*, the following particulars are given of Ian Maclaren, whose sketches of Scottish life and scenery, given in broad Scotch, have been of late delighting so many readers. "It is now generally known that" Ian Maclaren is no other than the Rev. John Maclaren Watson, M.A., Sefton Park, Liverpool. Mr. Watson was born in Edinburgh, where his father held a high place in the Excise. His youth was spent in Edinburgh, and Sterling and Gormack, near Blairgowrie. His mother was a Miss Maclaren, of Gormack. From this district he derives mostly his dialect, scenery and character. Drumtochty is really Drumlochty, a farm in the Lornly district, but it may also be Drumtochty, in Kincardine, an estate belonging to the brother of a Blairgowrie gentleman, Colonel Gammell. Pittendreich and several other names are those of farms around Gormack. Mr. Watson's first charge was at Logiealmond, where he is well remembered as a "gentle preacher." He was the successor, not immediate, but once removed, of Professor Candlish.

The *Michigan Presbyterian*, the organ of the Presbyterian churches of that State, contains a portrait of the Rev. John Gray, D.D., pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Kalamazoo, accompanied by the following kindly notice which will be read with interest by the doctor's old fellow students and friends in Canada:—Dr. Gray is a Canadian by birth and education; of Scottish parentage, educated in the Collegiate Institute, University College and Knox College Theological Seminary, Toronto. Immediately upon graduation he assumed the pastorate of St. Andrew's, Windsor, in November, 1870, and remained in this charge until he accepted that of the First Presbyterian Church, Kalamazoo, in April, 1893. There were few pastors in the Canadian church more widely known or having a better record. This fact and his intimate relations to the churches and ministers of Detroit during many years, secured to him a hearty welcome to the church in Michigan. Alma College conferred upon him the honorary degree of D.D. in June, 1893. Though liberal and progressive he is

conservative in his views of Presbyterian polity and doctrine, while his large experience and characteristic energy eminently fit him for the important place he occupies among us.

The Memphis, Tenn., *Scimitar* writing of the money troubles of the United States government and consequently of the people gives this sound advice: "First and foremost, the Government ought to go out of the banking business and confine itself to taking care of its own legitimate concerns. It is not a proper function of Government to issue or supply a circulating medium, either of metal or paper, and certainly not paper. It should regulate the coinage, of the standard money metal and all its subservient adjuncts of inferior coinage, such as silver, nickel, and copper, but should restrict itself to mere regulation. It is not its duty to buy or otherwise acquire any quantity of any metal, but to prescribe by law the regulations which shall govern the coinage for the people in the Government Mint of such quantities of these metals as they may wish to carry there for coinage under those regulations. The duty of Government ends there, and the purchase or storage of money metals as collateral to paper issues is nonsense, scientifically and economically considered."

The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Irish Presbyterian Church, Rev. W. Todd Martin, D.D., has published an appeal to that church on the subject of Temperance in which he says: "From year to year the General Assembly passes strong resolutions, warning the people against the many enticements to intemperance by which they are beset, and exhorting to energetic and organised effort to rescue our land from the drink curse. These resolutions are too little regarded. They are not received as the solemn deliverance of the Supreme Court of the Church on a great practical question should be. The energy thrown into the conflict is altogether inadequate when measured by the vastness of the evil to be combated and the deep conviction of the Church on the question. In the immorality, disease, misery, death caused by strong drink, a curse, dark and terrible, casts its withering blight on our country. The need of ceaseless, patient, devoted, self-sacrificing, united labour is clamant. To this warfare against sin the Assembly has once again summoned, in the name of Christ, all the ministers and members of the Church."

The demise, with such startling suddenness of Sir John Thomson, the Premier of the Dominion, a week ago, in London, when apparently an unobstructed path was opening up to him to honors, higher even than that which had just been conferred upon him by Her Majesty, the Queen, furnishes another to the oft occurring illustrations of the transitoriness and uncertainty of earthly place and fame.

Who is the valiant, who the strong?
Pontiff, and priest, and sceptred throng?
On these shall fall as heavily the hand of death,
As when it smites the shepherd's breath beside his stall.

Differ as men may, and always will, upon questions of public policy, no one will doubt that he sought the good of his country in the way which to him appeared the most likely to secure that end. The general opinion in the country, we believe, will be that, by his death, Canada has sustained the loss of a man of unusual ability, of one whose opportunities to serve his country were every year increasing, and who gave the promise of rising with the occasion. What the effect upon public policy, or upon the party of which he was the head, or the relations of the two great opposing parties will be, are questions upon which it is not for us to enter. We join very heartily, however, in what we believe will be a universal feeling over the whole Dominion, sincere and respectful sympathy with the widow and family of the deceased statesman.