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Notes of the Week.

THE Russian Minister of Finance intends to tax the Protestant Churches in the Baltic Provinces. Those Churches have hitherto been exempt from taxation. This is one of a series of reforms by which the Government intends thoroughly to Russianize the old Baltic German institutions and to diminish the influence of the German Protestant clergy.

THE Belfast *Witness*, always loyal to Presbyterianism, says: The hand of the Belfast Presbytery reaches far. It has one congregation—a very flourishing one—in the Bahama Islands, and this week it has sent out a delegate to ordain a ruling elder in another at Hamburg. This north of Ireland has been a fruitful mother of churches.

DR. HAMILTON MAGEE, of Dublin, affirms his belief that priestly power in secular matters was never at such a discount in Ireland as it is at the present hour. But he doubts whether the spirit of independence that is abroad would be strong enough to hold out against the consolidated organization of the Roman Catholic clergy. They profess to be the servants of the people, but if it is in their power they take good care that the people shall be their servants.

MR. PAIN, a London stockbroker and a staunch Anglo-Israelite, says the *Christian Leader*, counsels his fellow-believers to take advantage of the present high prices of European securities to sell without a moment's delay, and to re-invest their money in British, Colonial and American securities. "Directly this long-expected war commences," he says, "it will bring a tremendous fall in prices and ruination to all the Powers involved, whilst we, being free from the struggle through the blessings of Providence, will remain unhurt."

MR. SPURGEON, in his recent comparison of old and modern tunes, to the disparagement of the latter, said the new tunes were written to suit the organ, and to fill publishers pockets. But in this the editor of the *Nonconformist Musical Journal* believes Mr. Spurgeon to be wrong. "The old tunes," says Mr. Minshall, "give much more scope for an organist to make a display than any of the modern tunes, and as to the profits made by publishers—with a few exceptions, tune-books are certainly financial failures. The old tunes are dead and gone, and nothing that Mr. Spurgeon can do will ever bring them into general use again."

THE *Christian Leader* says: The Leeds surgeon, Mr. Wheelhouse, who succeeds Professor Gardiner in the presidency of the British Medical Association, repudiated in his inaugural address the reproach of scepticism often brought against the medical profession. To the kindred charge that their constant contact with pain tends to numb their sympathy and diminish their pity for the sufferings of mankind, he had a telling reply. What other calling could produce a parallel to the modern development of medicine—a science which sought, even at the risk of its own extermination, to eradicate the causes of disease and death? Could an epidemic now devastate a whole country as it did in former times? Were they not by their ceaseless search after the seeds of disease, and by the cultivation of sanitary science, doing a mighty work in the renovation of the world and the diminution of suffering? Could any work be nobler, any search after truth more intimately religious?

WHY is it, asks the *Hamilton Times*, that in our courts of justice we cling to the old custom of swearing witnesses on the Bible? Does the fact of kissing the sacred volume add to the solemnity of the oath? Would not the raising of the right hand be just as binding as kissing the dirty covers of a book that has done service in our court rooms from time immemorial? Drop into our Police Court any morning and see the motley crew that handle the Bible and press it to their lips, and then think of a respectable man or woman having to follow a vagrant on the witness stand, and kissing the same book on which the foul breath of some diseased

wretch still hangs like a vapour. Who would think of pressing to their lips the cover of a book that had just been handled by one afflicted with a loathsome disease? and yet it is done every day in our police Courts. Reform is necessary. This would be a good subject for a physician to discuss.

THE Catholics of England have written to the Pope approving his protest against the erection of a monument to Giordano Bruno, and they say: It grieves us that certain men have had the insolent audacity to violate the reverence due to the Supreme Pontiff, and with him the whole Christian world, in erecting a monument to one Bruno in the very place where he suffered the punishment due to his crimes. His monstrous opinions put forth concerning human society, government, States, and the truth of philosophy exceed in perversity all others. This, says the *New York Independent*, is the most outspoken approval of persecution for opinion's sake we have seen lately from Roman Catholics. We are astonished that an English Roman Catholic could have written it, or an American Catholic paper printed it. Bruno was a religious unbeliever, and he wrote his unbelief. That was all, bad enough, but not an offence to be punished by long imprisonment and the stake. "The just punishment of his crimes!" Do American Catholics really approve of religious persecution?

THE Fourth International Convention of Christian Workers engaged in religious work to reach the non-church-going classes will be opened in Buffalo, N.Y., on October 24, and will last for five days. It is expected that there will be a larger number of active Christian workers present than has attended any of the previous conventions. The topics discussed will be in direct relation to practical Christian work of the kind indicated, and will be sure to be most instructive and helpful. Anyone who attends one of these conventions is sure to come again. A verbatim report of the proceedings at the last convention is now printed, and can be obtained by remitting 75 cents to the Rev. J. C. Collins, New Haven, U.S. This is said to be one of the best class-books that can be put into the hands of Christian workers. It is expected that railways will grant return tickets for a fare and one-third, and as Buffalo is so near the border it is hoped that the Christian Workers in Canada will avail themselves of the opportunity to attend the Convention in large numbers. Full information can be obtained by communicating with Mr. Collins or with Mr. A. Sampson, 28 Scott Street, Toronto.

AMID the whirlwinds of dust raised by excited clamour over the Maybrick trial in England, there were many who kept their balance. The *Belfast Witness* seems to have been cool and sensible as ever, as is evidenced by the following sound opinion: The sentence of death pronounced on Mrs. Maybrick for the murder of her husband has been commuted to penal servitude for life. Petitions in favour of the reprieve or pardon of the criminal have been flooding the Home Secretary's office since sentence was pronounced. If the woman had performed some heroic, honourable, or highly virtuous action, the thousands who have been interesting themselves in her fate would have left her unregarded. The screaming agitation of the past week is neither wholesome nor healthy. Newspapers and agitators raised themselves above judges, juries and the law, and screamed to have all set at defiance. There were elements of a political as well as of a personal and sentimental nature at the bottom of the agitation. We do not suppose it accomplished anything. In all probability the course now pursued by the Home Secretary would have been adopted without all the fuss and fustian. Indeed, it seemed to us that the agitation was calculated to defeat rather than further the object in view, besides displaying a most unhealthy moral condition of large sections of the people. The fate of the murdered man was forgotten in a sickly and sentimental interest in the fate of his murderess. On the grounds of mercy to the woman, and in consideration of her sex, we are not sorry her death sentence has been commuted; but not on the ground of any belief in her innocence or doubt of her guilt.

OUR Halifax contemporary, the *Presbyterian Witness*, makes the following just plea on behalf of the worthy pioneers of the Church. Though based mainly in relation to the Maritime Provinces, the honour roll could be largely extended. There has been as much genuine hard pioneer work by Presbyterian ministers in this Dominion, as by any other body of ministers. No man toiled more zealously or under more serious difficulties than Dr. James MacGregor. We need not go back to his day to note hard work well done in the face of hardships and privations, such as our frontiersmen of to-day rarely encounter. Mr. Farquharson, of Cape Breton, "endured hardships as a good soldier of Christ." Robert S. Patterson, of P. E. Island, did likewise. So did Graham and Waddell and Sprout. We could name men still living, who often toiled hard, rested little, and fared very sparingly for months and years—for the sake of Christ and the Gospel. Not a man of them regrets to-day any hardship or privation endured for Christ's sake. Only let us not forget our fathers, who are still within reach of our kindly offices. They are not to be here very long. How few remain of the men of 1850! Let us make the best provision possible through the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund, in order that in their now declining years they may have some comfort, and some cause to know that the toils of other days are appreciated.

THE *United Presbyterian Magazine*, edited by Professor Calderwood, of Edinburgh University, says: The recommendations of the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church and the Assembly of the Free Church in favour of co-operation in common Christian work, give promise of important results. The recommendations are not to be allowed to wait long for application. The Glasgow Presbytery of the Free Church and the United Presbyterian Presbytery of Glasgow (South) have entered upon negotiations for co-operation, and have agreed to plans for united action. This is an admirable illustration of what may be done in accordance with the desire of the supreme courts of the Churches. We pray that a rich blessing may descend on such united effort as has been arranged; and we trust that the movement, so promptly and hopefully begun may extend all over the land. Many interests are suffering from the severance of Christians in their efforts for the good of the people. The two Churches that are moving formally on the new lines are so closely related that joint action must be easy. Co-operation of this kind will react on opinion and feeling in the nation, and may carry the whole Church of Christ throughout Scotland into a healthier and heartier effort to bring the Gospel of Jesus home to the whole body of the people, multitudes of whom are groaning for lack of the quickening and consolation which this Gospel offers freely to all.

THE *Chicago Interior* knows how to compliment and how to rebuke, and that is the reason why it is successful in giving expression to the following, which is both true and timely: One would sometimes like to say a complimentary thing to another, and yet hesitates. Flattery is humiliating both to the one that gives and the one who hears. On the other hand reproof is still more difficult. It always involves seeming assumption on one side and a special inferiority—not general but limited to the matter in hand. And yet an honest compliment, like an honest reproof, has the ring of pure metal, and each has in it a pleasing element. If a man come to you and modestly and kindly tell you of your fault, you may be perfectly sure that that man loves you. This does not include a habitual fault-finder. A fault-finder has more faults of his own than he finds in others—just as a heresy hunter is always at heart heretic; and just as a very suspicious person is always to be suspected. A compliment to be pleasing must be true, and its truthfulness apparent to the receiver. "That was a manly act of yours, sir, and I wish to thank you for it." That said when deserved has no trace or flavour of flattery in it. "Your sermon met my needs to-day, sir, and I am very glad I had the privilege of hearing it." There is no flattery in that more than there is a letter acknowledging the receipt of a favour. Recognition of good work is due to a good workman, and it is helpful and encouraging to him.