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## Notes of the Week.

In the House of Congress lately a bill was passed restricting immigration. It provides for the exclusion of all males between the ages of sixteen and sixty years who cannot read and write the English or any other language. An exception was made in behalf of a father whose family is eligible to admission or already resides in the United States. Female illiterates of all ages are to be admitted, supposedly on the ground that in most States they have no vote. Steamship companies conveying into the country such passengers will be required to carry back at their own expense all immigrants who fail to come up to the requirements made by this bill. According to a table of percentages of illiterates, Portugal has the highest number and Denmark the lowest.

A most interesting and hopeful statement as regards the prospects for improved farming in Ontario, and also for the comfort and social standing of the farmer's life is the fact mentioned in the annual report just issued of the Ontario Agricultural College and Experimental Farm for 1895. The total number of students is no fewer than 250; 150 attended the general course, of whom 120—nearly all farmers' sons—were from Ontario, twelve came from other Provinces of the Dominion, and the remainder came from other countries. The special dairy course had 100 students attending, all but six being from Ontario. Among the dairy students were six ladies. Forty-one counties and districts were represented in the general course and 31 in the dairy course. It ought to be widely known that each county in the Province is allowed to send one student free of tuition and the nomination is made by the County Council.

That the month of May is in Britain the one for holding the anniversaries of religious and philanthropic societies of all kinds is well known to everyone who takes an intelligent interest in such matters. They are perfectly bewildering in their number and variety, but by their enthusiasm and success generally, they fire the heart and make the blood course faster through the veins. Among many others we notice the meeting of The Mission to Deep-Sea Fishermen, partly from our knowledge of such work in this city and Montreal through Dr. Grenfell of the Labrador Mission. At this meeting the chairman, Sir Joseph Pease, "pointed out that 121,000 men and boys were employed in the fish-catching trade of the United Kingdom. They landed 700,000 tons of fish, which were worth seven million sterling. During the year 10,609 medical and surgical cases were treated, over 27 tons of literature were distributed, and £2,491 worth of tobacco sold. The income of the Society was £22,000, but the expenditure exceeded this by £1,200.

South African affairs, which have for some months past bulked so largely before the public, have at last but settled down into their usual state of quiet, at least on the surface. The history of the past few months marks an episode not creditable by any means to some of the principal agents of the South African Company and mine owners of the Transvaal. Though quiet has been restored,

there still smoulders the embers which caused the trouble, and which may again, unless the greatest caution and wisdom are shown on all sides, break out into a flame. The real root of the difficulty, and what the final outcome of the whole matter is likely to be, is well put in a late issue of the *Globe*: "The English and the Dutch races have come into collision in the last great field of colonization. None can doubt what the end must be. Though obstinacy on the one side and rashness on the other may defer it for a generation, yet a united South Africa is bound to be achieved in the end; and whether the wisdom of Imperial statesmen can retain it in the empire or not, it is bound, at any rate, to become in the end a united and English-speaking South Africa."

The press on the other side of the line is far from being of one mind upon the late legislation of Congress on the admission of illiterates into the country. The *Repub.* of St. Louis asks, "Can the United States afford to exclude from its dominions a man who may possess all the qualities which go to make worthy citizenship except education? There are men in this country to-day who have barely succeeded in learning to write their names, and who are nevertheless among the most enterprising citizens in the communities in which they live. The *Journal*, Minneapolis, says, "This bill ought to pass the Senate." The *Record*, Philadelphia, on the other hand, charges Republicans with being glaringly inconsistent. "In curious contrast," it says, "with the zeal of the Republicans to prohibit illiterate immigration is their hostility to all efforts to protect the suffrage from ignorance. To them it is quite in accordance with the fitness of political things that swarms of ignorant voters in the 'Black Belts' of Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi should overwhelm the ballot-box; but they snuff great danger to our institutions when a few hundred illiterate Italians, desirous of earning an honest living, seek homes in this country."

The extent to which the country is agitated by the Manitoba school question, how strong the feeling is against it among men of all political parties, and how that issue for the time eclipses all others, is well seen in the action of the Methodist Conferences which have been in session within the past few days. Those who hold the doctrine that such bodies in their corporate capacity should be, in the face of issues affecting most deeply the highest interests of the country, no better than dumb dogs, find no countenance in these conferences. In that of Montreal each one of a series of strongly worded resolutions protesting against the claims of the hierarchy and against coercion was carried either unanimously or by large majorities. In the Hamilton Conference the proposal was received with enthusiastic applause to send to that of Manitoba this greeting: [Galatians v., 1: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." If the people of the Dominion vote in accordance with the action of these and other religious bodies, there can be no doubt as to what the result of the election will be as regards the principle of coercion at least, and whether the people or the hierarchy are supreme in Canada.

The following questions which appear among others in a new paper, *Ottawa*, may be quoted as particularly pertinent at the present moment. It is, by the way, we may add, an Independent Conservative journal. "If there is any certainty that the Catholics of Manitoba are unanimous in their dissatisfaction with the present state of their schools, has the demand for the restoration of Separate Schools in Manitoba come from the Roman Catholic laymen of Manitoba or from the Bishops of Quebec? If we do not condemn the mandement must we not be taken to have accepted the doctrine that 'the Bishops, whose authority is from God Himself, are the recognized heads of a perfect society, sovereign and superior by its nature and its end to civil society'? Would not the admission of such a principle operate a revolution in our form of government? Would not its adoption subordinate the civil authority to that of the ecclesiastical, and would it not establish the supremacy of the church in all affairs, civil as well as religious? Have we forgotten the lessons of history, and are we willing to submit our necks in all lowliness and humility to the clerical yoke?"

A piece of legislation has been enacted by the Louisiana Legislature, and its constitutionality sustained by the Supreme Court of the United States, which to us poor down-trodden subjects of Queen Victoria appears remarkable, if not even infamous for a country where "all men are born free and equal, and have an equal right," etc., as the great American eagle has screamed it forth thousands of times to its infinite delight in the ears of the listening and enslaved nations of Europe. The law requires "railroads in the State to provide separate cars for white and coloured passengers, as being in analogy to the laws of Congress and many of the States." The accommodation thus provided for coloured people, for which equal charge is made, is also very inferior in many places to that provided for whites for the same price. "Justice Harlan dissented from this decision, taking the ground that it would be just as reasonable to require separate coaches for Americans and foreigners, for descendants of the Teutonic race and those of the Latin race, for Roman Catholics and Protestants. He held that the law was contrary to the Thirteenth Amendment, that railroads were public highways, to the use of which under the Constitution all citizens are entitled. He declared that such laws were in the last degree mischievous, and that no public authority in this country could constitutionally regulate the civil rights of any class of American citizens." In justice it must be said that this decision has provoked much hostile comment from the press. The *Age* (coloured), New York, after quoting several cases of legislation of a similar kind, says: "As far as the Afro-American citizen is concerned, there remains to him no right whatever under the Constitution of the United States. A more perverse and infamous consensus of legal decisions was never made by any court of final resort than that which the Supreme Court of the United States has piled upon the three war amendments to the Federal Constitution. They place the citizens absolutely at the mercy of the State without appeal to the Federal power, representing all the States and greater than any one of them."

## PULPIT, PRESS AND PLATFORM.

Ram's Horn: The greatest waste of time we can be guilty of in this world, is to neglect to prepare for the next.

Rev. Dr. Field: The liquor question is the question of the age, but the school question is the question of the hour.

The Outlook: The aphorism that capital should buy labor in the cheapest market is an economic falsehood. The New Testament principle, Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, is economically prudent. Justice pays better than greed.

Presbyterian Witness: Much ought to be done, and can be done justly and magnanimously, in the interests of peace and good will. But we do not see what could justify us in setting up sectarian seminaries in Manitoba and the Northwest in defiance of the expressed wishes of the people.

John Learned: There has always been and there always will be the brave advancing minority, the world's hope, the invincible few—not a remnant, meaning something left over, but a leadership, keeping in the van of thought, bearing and daring for what they believe to be the truth and right.

The N.Y. Independent: Badness is not to be argued with, but rebuked. So with all conceit, and especially that most detestable of all, religious conceit. It is to be ridiculed and travestied, as was that of the Pharisees by Christ, when He pictured one of them as saying: "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are."

Ian Maclaren: No party has ever existed in civil history without containing patriotic men, and no party has labored for the commonwealth without doing it service. Any party that declares itself to have a monopoly of purity and a monopoly of honesty; any party that declares that the other cares only for its interests, but that they alone care for the well-being of the people, is condemned there and then. It ceases to be a party of patriotism; it becomes a party of Pharisaism.

Robert Sellers: A more skilful piece of diplomacy is not to be found on record than that of the Bishops in availing themselves of the claims of the Quebec Protestants to thwart those claims and at the same time to secure great concessions to their church. The reasonable demand of the Quebec Protestants that they be secured by the B.N.A. Act in the enjoyment of the Common schools they had established themselves and had enjoyed for seventy years was perverted by the Bishops into extending the privileges of Separate schools in Ontario, and now into an attempt to shackle our free North-west with the incubus of a sectarian system of education. Will the electors of Ontario now teach the Bishops the lesson that ought to have been taught them in 1866? They can safely do so without the slightest fear that the interests of the Quebec minority will be in the slightest degree endangered.