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Notes of the Week.

WE see with pleasure, says the *Free Church Monthly*, that Knox College at Toronto has conferred the degree of D. D. on the Rev. John Mac Dougall, of Florence. Mr. MacDougall has maintained for many years, with great credit to himself and great advantage to the Church, our station at Florence, and all the world knows what he has done for the Free Church of Italy. That body continues to carry on a vigorous system of evangelistic work, whose success is due largely to the persevering help and oversight of one who, through good and evil report, has stood its unflinching friend.

THE keynote of the Free Church General Assembly of 1892, says a Scottish exchange, was undoubtedly foreign missions, and it looks as if this were to be the new enthusiasm of the future. At the sittings when this subject was up the attendance was larger than on any other occasion, and the breath of the Holy Spirit was powerfully experienced. The presence of a large number of students, offering themselves as missionaries and begging the Church to exert herself to send them all to the foreign field, was a novel spectacle, which moved the Assembly to its depths. Dr. Stewart of Lovedale, just returned from an adventurous journey, undertaken with the view of founding a new missionary station in Central Africa, and Dr. Laws, just returned after years of apostolic toil and peril in Livingstonia, received a warm welcome. Perhaps, however, the most powerful address of all was given by Dr. McKichan, of Bombay. Altogether, the impression was quite unusual, and the Free Church is evidently on the eve of a new development in this branch of her work.

THE May meetings, which occupy so much of the attention of Christian people in London, says a British contemporary, have suffered no diminution of popular interest or of attendance so far as they have been held. The great Church Missionary Society has found Exeter Hall a place too strait for its friends, and this year, while Exeter Hall was crowded to its utmost capacity for the annual meeting, St. James Hall was also full to overflowing. The income of the Society for the year was reported as \$1,346,885, an amount in excess of last year's income, and which has in fact only once been exceeded. The London Missionary Society held its eighty-ninth anniversary on 12th May, its total income being \$965,000. The Forward Movement inaugurated last year has had the effect of stimulating both interest and liberality, for the receipts of the Society were \$175,000 in advance of last year's. Nearly \$50,000 of this was due to the self-denial week, instituted for the benefit of the Society's missions. This Society has placed twenty more missionaries on its staff last year, and it has 216 missionaries now in the field, forty-six of whom are ladies.

THE representative character of the Free Church Convention which is to convene in Manchester next November, says a contemporary, is affirmed in the list of leaders of British Nonconformity, who will be the principal orators. Each of the seven denominations of which the Congress will be made up will furnish at least one speaker. A clever thought has been to beg the Moderator of the Presbyterian

Synod, the Chairman of the Congregational Union, the President of the Baptist Union, and the President of the four Methodist conferences, to preside as chairmen over the sessions of the Free Church Congress. With the exception of Ireland, the different nationalities will be fully represented. The want of solidarity between Englishmen and Irishmen is even more regrettable in religion than it is in politics. Only by continual meeting and as continual rubbing off the rough edges can a mutual understanding come about. The list of subjects which the Congress will discuss is an attractive one, embracing such topics as "The Work of Free Churches in Town and in Country," "The Church, its Ministry, its Sacraments and its Fellowship," "The influence of the Free Churches on the National Life." Although no resolutions appear on the programme and the conduct of the Assembly lies entirely with its members, there is one question which must suggest itself to every broad-minded delegate. That question is Inter-Fraternal Union, and it has been suggested that this Congress might be the forerunner of such a Federated Free Church in which denominational distinctions should disappear.

THE following is from the *New York Observer*: Touching the important deliverance made by the General Assembly of the United States, North, on the inspiration of God's Word and the duty of Presbyterian ministers who have changed their faith to leave the Presbyterian Church, the *Christian Union* says: "We, then, advise the Presbyterian ministers to pay no attention to this resolution; neither to attack it nor to obey it; but to go on with their work as though it had never been passed; to abide by their own promise to try all questions, including the questions of the authority and inerrancy of Scripture, by an examination of the Scripture itself—that is, by the use of what is known as the Higher Criticism, which is only a modern name for the study of the Bible. They may possibly be turned out of their pulpit—with the result of a freer pulpit and a larger audience somewhere else. But no man need turn himself out. On the contrary, it is his duty to stay where he is—stand fast for the liberty wherewith Christ has made him free. Creed subscription is a harness, not a manacle; and the first duty of the hour is to resist the men who are trying to make of it a manacle and of the subscribing ministry serfs in chains." That a paper calling itself Christian should commend such a grossly dishonest course is surprising. But when once a religious journal begins to tamper with the doctrines of God's Word its ideas of morality and honesty are not likely to remain over-scrupulous.

THERE is in *Blackwood's* for June a lively paper on speech by Sir Herbert Maxwell, who makes sport both of parliamentary speakers and of parsons. He complains, says a Scottish contemporary, that they don't know what to do with their limbs when they are talking: crouched shoulders, bent knees and hands in the pocket are not graceful attitudes; members will grip a despatch box and ministers a pulpit cushion as if it was very life; ease is a first element in effect. The best place, says Sir Herbert, to study the vices a speaker ought to avoid is Parliament; but he evidently gives the palm of inefficiency to the pulpit—with a fine Scotch caution, to the Church of England pulpit. This reservation was hardly necessary; there is no speaking better than the best Scotch ministers', but there is none so bad as the worst; the bad speaker in an English Church is at least short, but the Scotsman will have his forty to fifty minutes—the worst speaker taking the longer time. The writer condemns the attempt to read from the manuscript while concealing it; this half-and-half measure he deems a constant failure; read all openly or speak all boldly is his maxim. He also criticizes "the wearisome and excessive use of metaphor," the frequent interlarding of pulpit speech with Oriental imagery. Thus he would prefer to a reference to vines and fig-trees an allusion to a corn-field or potato patch; it would startle many congregations. But there remains one more startling thing; let Sir Herbert be asked to preach before the clergy at the

next assemblies, and let his own sermon be photographed and the preacher photographed; he would spare neither his own voice nor his own attitudes.

THE Southern General Assembly proposed a conference with the Northern Church on the subject of Christian work among the negroes as well as upon foreign missions. Both of these propositions, says the *New York Independent*, were adopted with great heartiness, but that which sought conference with the Northern Freedmen's Board passed only after the Secretary, Mr. Phillips, had explained its purpose, which he stated to be to encourage the formation of a separate coloured Presbyterian Church out of the coloured Churches which are now connected with the Northern and Southern Presbyterian bodies. The Southern Church now has five Presbyteries with forty ministers and fifty-five churches and 1,300 communicants, and the Rev. A. L. Phillips, a man of much ability and of a fine spirit, is appointed to give his entire work to this department of Christian labour. A committee has been appointed consisting of a number of the ablest men in the Southern Church, which will call a convention of all the Southern Presbyterian ministers to meet at Birmingham, Ala., to confer about organizing an independent Presbyterian Church. Of course such a Church will not be organized without the consent of the negroes; but it is almost impossible that that consent should be withheld if the negroes are earnestly urged by their white brethren to withdraw and establish such a Church. Mr. Phillips told the Assembly that it was with a view to the organization of such a Church that he desires to interest the Northern Presbyterian Church, and that there had already been some considerable encouragement given to such a proposition. We are prophets enough for the occasion to be able to foretell, with a very considerable amount of positiveness, that no charm of charmers will be effective enough to persuade the Northern Church to take a single step toward relieving itself of its coloured brethren. It will keep them as long as it can.

THE *New York Independent* says: The annual meeting of the International Missionary Union commenced at Clifton Springs, N.Y., June 8. The first session was remarkably interesting, more than sixty missionaries speaking briefly of their experiences in their fields. The special topic of the next afternoon was governments and missions, particularly appropriate in the present crises in Turkey, China and the Pacific. Papers were read from Dr. Albert Long, of Robert College, and an address was given by Dr. Cyrus Hamlin, in which systematic repressive measures, recently set in operation by the Turks, were attributed mainly to the intrigues of Russians. Dr. S. L. Baldwin, of New York, spoke most favourably concerning the recent anti-Chinese legislation at Washington. Both subjects were referred to a committee to formulate appropriate resolutions. On the presentation of an address from the World's Woman's Christian Temperance Union, an organization now embracing forty-two nations in its membership, the Union, by an unanimous rising vote, heartily endorsed the petition praying for a suppression of the liquor traffic and opium trade. The next day there was a special meeting in the Tabernacle, addressed by the Rev. Dr. J. H. Barrows, of Chicago, chairman of the Committee on Religious Congresses of the World's Columbian Exposition. His special topic was parliamentary religions, which he said would be a school of comparative theology, bringing together for the first time representatives of the great religions, showing how many important truths were held by them in common, and affording a view of the effects of the religions on the different conditions of life. In the morning session a resolution, expressing hearty approval of these Congresses, was introduced by the Rev. J. E. Robinson, of the Methodist Episcopal Church in India, but after a vigorous discussion, it was voted down by a large majority, chiefly on the ground that the very discussion of these religions in the Parliament would be showing them too much favour, putting them almost on a par with Christianity and providing pulpits for their teachers.