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## Notes of the Week.

THE annual meeting of the Royal Society was held at Ottawa last week. There were many of the literary and scientific celebrities of the Dominion present, and others unable to be at the meeting sent papers to be read. Many and varied were the subjects discussed. Pleasant evidently were the circumstances in which the magnates in the republic of letters assembled, and in addition to the enjoyment and social intercourse experienced, they have contributed their share to the advancement of learning.

THE Rev. Dr. Fletcher brought before the Presbytery of Hamilton the expediency of organizing in the congregations, under the care of the Presbytery, young men's missionary associations, to help the home mission work of the Church, and referred to the many benefits likely to result from such organizations. After some remarks from Doctors Laidlaw and Laing and other members of the court, a committee was appointed to consider the subject and present a scheme to the Presbytery at its next regular meeting.

THE correspondence respecting Sir John Lintorn Simmons' special mission to the Vatican has been laid before the British Parliament. It will not, says a contemporary, be pleasant reading to a good many conscientious people. What it amounts to is that the ecclesiastical patronage of Malta has been surrendered to the Pope; and a foundation laid for establishing a permanent diplomatic representation at the Vatican. We may expect some plain speaking on the subject at the Conference of the Protestant Alliance, to be held in Exeter Hall.

THE methods of securing the services of an acceptable pastor are becoming less rigid than they were. For instance, it is stated that Principal Caird, of Glasgow, and Mr. W. Dunn, of Kensington, have been asked to select a minister for a vacant pulpit at Port Elizabeth. There were one hundred applicants for the appointment, the stipend of which is \$3,000 a year. An Edinburgh Established minister, selected by Principal Caird as suitable for the post, preached on Sunday morning in Hammersmith Church to enable Mr. Dunn, who was present, to form an opinion of the gentleman's qualifications.

THE Rev. A. Stuart Muir, D.D., whose death took place in London, was a native of Paisley, and after receiving his education in Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities, began his ministry in Newfoundland, subsequently occupying a charge in Boston. He became minister of Trinity Church, Leith, about thirty years ago, only retiring from that charge in consequence of his being taken to task by his Presbytery for his Roman Catholic tendencies. Dr. Muir was an intimate friend of the late Dr. Begg, until, it is said, he mortally offended that doughty constitutionalist by asking him to meet a Roman Catholic priest at dinner.

THE English *Presbyterian Messenger* says: The Rev. John Smith of Broughton Place Church, Edinburgh, was elected, on Thursday last week, by the United Presbyterian Synod, to be the lecturer at the Theological Hall on Practical Training. The other two names put in nomination for the appointment were those of the Rev. Dr. Aird, of Breechin, and the Rev. M. McGilchrist, B.D., of Ardrrossan. As Mr. Smith was one of our old ministers at Wallacegreen, Berwick, where he was singularly successful, it is peculiarly gratifying to us to note the influence he is exerting now that he has, to our great regret, gone back again to Scotland.

THE *United Presbyterian Magazine* says: It is fifty years since the Presbyterian Church in Ireland was constituted by the union of the Synod of Ulster with that of the Seceders, that had been founded by our forefathers soon after the Secession in Scotland, the former body consisting of 292 congregations, and the latter of 141. The General Assembly of this Church is to hold its jubilee gathering on July 7th, at Belfast. They have much to rejoice in and be

thankful for,—the ability to hold their ground, and even to make progress against the forces that are arrayed against them; the living earnest religion that is found among them; the influence they have exerted on various lands, especially on America, where the Presbyterian Church, the most vigorous of all those that bear the Presbyterian name, is a plant from their root. We trust that the coming Assembly will be in every respect a prosperous one.

SEVERAL departures, in addition to the adoption of the new Articles were made at the recent meeting of the Synod of the English Presbyterian Church. One was the appointment of three ministers—the Rev. John McNeill amongst them—to act as evangelists for six weeks during the current year. This, says the Belfast *Witness*, is a step which might well be imitated by other churches. Another was the consideration of a proposal that in future all ministers of churches embraced in the Presbyterian Alliance should be eligible to charges in the English Presbyterian Church—an idea which also deserves to be weighed by other churches. We observe that in the election of a Hebrew professor the vote was taken by ballot. A resolution that votes in the Irish General Assembly should be taken in the same way was moved and lost last year.

IT is stated that in one very important respect the New German Chancellor von Caprivi differs from his great predecessor. While Bismarck openly acknowledged his acceptance of Christianity, he had little or no sympathy with the organized agitations looking toward the establishment of Christian ideas and ideals in the masses of the people. The friends of the mission cause, both home and foreign, the associations for the improvement of the observance of the Lord's Day, for the suppression of the rum ruin and of public immorality, could never gain the Iron Chancellor's heart and co-operation. Caprivi, however, is an active friend of all such movements, and is especially interested in the City Mission Society of Berlin, and is ever willing to show his sympathy for any earnest agitation for the elevation of the morals of the people. He is a regular church attendant, and is liberal in his contributions to church purposes.

THE Rev. Charles Moinet, of Kensington, addressing some students, who had just been licensed as ministers, at a meeting of the London Presbytery, said that evangelical Christianity had been associated in the past with a somewhat dictatorial dogmatism and a narrowness of sympathy of which, perhaps, it had not yet worked itself quite free. If these were, indeed, the causes of the reaction which had set in against it, it must be their effort, as ministers, to remove them, and show that evangelical preaching could be combined, as it always was when found at its best, with greatness of heart and a keen and sensitive sympathy with all the social and intellectual difficulties of the times. Old positions had been assailed, traditional views had been freely handled, and it was difficult for the preacher sometimes to know how to adjust himself to the altered and still-shifting position. They should, at all events, be careful to avoid proclaiming as certainties what were merely hypotheses. And to this end they should aim at mastering the meaning of Scripture.

THE *British Weekly* says: The Welsh Church, in its struggle, will have the full support of the Church of England, for reasons which are obvious on the surface. But the Church of Scotland need not look for any such aid. The *Record*, it is true, gives some patronising sympathy; but the *Guardian* out and out refuses to do so. In the eyes of the High Church Party, the Church of Scotland is not a Church at all, and they believe that their ranks in Scotland will be largely strengthened by Disestablishment. The true conception of the Union, says our contemporary, includes permission to each nation to govern itself in all particulars which do not affect the integrity of the kingdom or contravene the moral law. Disestablishment in Scotland would no more dissolve the civil link between the several parts of the United Kingdom than Disestablishment in Ireland; nor, if accompanied by a proper regard for the interests concerned, need it

involve dishonesty. Consequently, if Scotchmen are really in earnest in this matter, they will have a good right to be listened to.

MANY and varied are the stories told of H. M. Stanley. Here is one that the *British Weekly* tells: The day following the great meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in Exeter Hall, a conference of prominent supporters and workers was held at the Bible House, Queen Victoria Street, with a view to the improvement of organization and methods of operation. In the course of the meeting Sir Harry Verney rose and said: I have something to tell you that I am sure you will all be very glad to hear. I was sitting a few days ago next to Mr. Stanley, the great African traveller, and in conversation he said to me, "Just before I started for Africa Sir W. Mackinnon said to me, 'Now I want to give you something, but I should like you to choose for yourself. I shall have the utmost pleasure in presenting you with anything you like. Never mind the expense. Just say what you would like?' I replied, 'said the traveller, 'Give me a Bible.' The desired gift was soon in my possession, just the Bible I wanted. And during my absence in Africa I have read that Bible through three times. It need scarcely be added that the announcement was received by the meeting at the Bible House with the utmost delight and heartiest applause.

THE annual meeting of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union was held in Erskine Church lecture-room, Montreal, last week. A number of devoted ladies from various parts of the Dominion and some from the United States, among them Miss Frances Willard, were present. In the report of the work done during the year, which was presented by Miss Tilley, of Toronto, it is stated that conventions had been held in five provinces. Ontario now had 219 branches, with a membership of 4,503, and the membership of the Bands of Hope amounted to over 14,000. The Scott Act was not now in force in any county of the Province but great hope centered in the new license law. In Quebec there were seventy-three unions with a membership of 2,735, and forty-four Bands of Hope with a membership of 2,414. In the Maritime Provinces there were fifty-four unions with a membership of 1,302, and twenty-two Bands of Hope with a membership of something over a thousand. British Columbia had six unions with 242 members, and thirteen Bands of Hope with a membership of 465. The Manitoba and the North-West Territories' unions are also doing good work. Altogether there are 513 unions in the Dominion, with a total membership of 9,040, and 192 Bands of Hope, with a membership of 19,184. These figures show a decided increase in last year's returns.

THE report of the Free Church College Committee on the charges brought against Professors Dods and Bruce, filling fifty-one pages of a blue book, has been issued. In the case of neither professor have the committee found in their writings grounds for instituting a process against them as teaching what is at variance with the standards. But they blame Dr. Dods for having expressed himself in "a startling and unguarded manner," and for publishing statements which, taken by themselves, might seem to make of no vital importance questions which are vital. Dr. Bruce is also blamed for dispensing "with the circumspection in forming and stating his views which might have averted painful and injurious misunderstandings." Statements of his have "created difficulty and perplexity in the minds not merely of ignorant but of well read and considerate persons." Some of his explanations it accepts "with a certain reserve." With something of severity the committee rebuke Dr. Bruce for his habit of finding fault with the state of Church faith and life. One member of the committee, Rev. Mr. Matthew of Haddington, dissents from the report on Dr. Dods as inadequate, in his opinion, on nearly every point; he regards Dr. Dods' concessions to unbelievers as so dangerous, unwarranted and unscientific as to call for more explicit disavowal. But neither Dr. Bruce nor Dr. Dods, in replying to the sub-committee's reports, shrink from the opinions they have avowed, when fairly understood.