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Notes of the Week.

THERE is to be a move made in the Free Church of Scotland, for increasing the stipends of the ministers; or rather of making \$1,000 the minimum stipend a minister is to receive. This has already been accomplished in the English Presbyterian Church, which may justly boast of having taken the lead in this particular direction.

THE Belfast *Witness* concludes an article on the Irish Assembly with these words: The Assembly which has now closed was one of the quietest and happiest ever held. There was almost no excitement at it. Scarcely a jarring note was sounded. Not a breath of passion ruffled the smooth waters. There was a large amount of work to be done, and it was done, we believe, with greater satisfaction to all parties concerned than at any Assembly within living memory. We can heartily congratulate the reverend Moderator on having had the good fortune to preside over an Assembly which it will be a pleasure to him to look back upon, and the whole Church on having enjoyed a meeting which must signally redound to the advantage of its highest interests.

THE Toronto Children's Fresh Air Fund inaugurated last year is one that ought to enlist the sympathies of every humane heart. The good accomplished last year was far beyond what can be tabulated. To bring gladness and sunshine into the gloomy lives of little ones whose opportunities of healthy enjoyment are far from numerous, is an aim worthy of a true philanthropy. This year the promoters of this laudable movement have begun operations and their hands ought to be strengthened by a generous support. Those who are interested in its success are requested to send subscriptions to Mayor Clarke, City Hall, or to Mr. J. J. Kelso, Hon. Secretary-Treasurer, 103 Bay Street. Donations of children's clothing, books or toys, will be received by Mr. Edward Taylor, corner of Simcoe and Richmond Streets.

KING HUMBERT I. of Italy, testifies his personal interest in the Bicentenary of the Glorious Return by sending to M. Pons, the Moderator of the Table, 5,000 francs to be divided between the college and the Waldensian Hall, which is to be inaugurated on the day that commemorates the close of their exile. In transmitting this princely gift, Signor Visone, minister of the royal household, thus writes: The event, which is so justly the cause of exultation to many citizens who have set the example of manly virtues, is also hailed with joy by our king, who knows well the steadfast devotion of the Waldenses to the House of Savoy. This devotion to the dynasty, accompanied by warm love to their country, has supplied to Italy brave soldiers, and deeply attached sons and daughters. His majesty testifies what are his sentiments toward this devoted people by the accompanying gift.

THE *Christian Leader* says: One test of a good tune, as of a good book, is that it lasts. The most popular air may be the most ephemeral. A less popular melody may grow in favour and win its use for centuries. The mere fact that a tune has lasted for generations is so far proof that it is a good one. So Mr. Spurgeon is safe in prophesying a general oblivion for Sankey's light arias, and in declaring that there is sound stuff in "Hampshire," "Derby," and "Calcutta." He has a sneaking kindness for the old fugal tunes, with the parts running after each other. One thing is noticeable in Mr. Spurgeon's racy comments on singing. He says that he always chooses the tunes as well as the hymns at the Tabernacle services. This is another indication of how the master hand makes itself felt in every department of work and worship at the Tabernacle.

THE *Christian World* says:—Professor Blackie has been paying his usual annual visit to London, and his many friends must have been glad to observe that, though he is now about eighty years of age, he retains the freshness of heart and brain, and the elastic vigour of body, for which he had so long been distinguished. To hear him read or, still better, sing, with dramatic accompaniments, his own poetry, is a rare intellectual treat. When, for instance, he

makes a drawing-room ring with the graphic stanzas of his splendid national ballad on Jenny Geddes, one seems to be present in the old cathedral of St. Giles in Edinburgh in the first half of the seventeenth century, while the historic stool is hurtling through the air, and the din and crash are beginning to be heard of that riot which, according to Carlyle and Green, drew three nations into its whirl, and changed the course of British history.

THE Rev. William Clarke, Moderator of the Irish Presbyterian Assembly, which held its meetings in Belfast lately, having been represented as having charged the Scottish Church with deserting their Irish brethren in the present crisis, explained that his words had been misconstrued. He has always been strongly attached to the Church of Scotland, and never more so than at present. His reference was to other friends in Scotland, and not to the national Church. Dr. Whigham, who was Moderator in the year in which the crisis arrived, said he had received from leading men in the Church of Scotland, from its Presbyteries, and from one Synod most cordial assurance of their sympathy. Rev. William Robertson, one of the Scottish deputies, said he dared not touch on politics, but he would repeat it, that the message they were sent to bear to the Irish Assembly was one of the most cordial sympathy with them in their present difficulties and struggles.

THERE are considerable religious differences in the little village of Criptina, in the Province of Ciudad Real. The Civil Guards and the authorities have had a great deal of trouble in protecting the Protestants and their chapel from the rest of the villagers. A procession, instigated by the Jesuits and priests, attempted to attack the Protestants. Then, says the *Daily Telegraph* correspondent at Madrid, the Mayor ordered the Evangelical Chapel to be closed for an indefinite time, though it had been opened in due form. The Protestants then assembled for worship in the house of one of their congregation. They were fined because their singing could be heard in the streets, and the Mayor told them he could not answer for their lives, if they stayed another week. The priests even prosecuted the Protestants for an alleged insult to the very procession which attacked their chapel. All applications for redress and the reopening of the chapel met with no response from the Minister of the Interior, though a Liberal Government is in office. The only reply made was, that it is impossible to interfere, as everybody knows the state of things in the Province.

THE *British Weekly* says:—The discussion in the Free Assembly was on the whole genial, extreme positions being generally avoided on all sides. But we do not gather that the mind of the Assembly is in favour of any great change. Some would be prepared to follow the example of the Presbyterian Church of England, and draw up a new and brief Confession of Faith. Others, again—and if we mistake not, a great majority—wish nothing more than such a declaratory statement as has been adopted already by the United Presbyterian Church. There is no reason why such a statement should not be passed without friction, and the experience of the United Presbyterians seems to show that it is sufficient for the present need. At least, we are not aware of any heresy case arising in the United Presbyterian Church since its authorisation. We have often endeavoured to impress on our readers that the change contemplated by the Presbyterian Church of England is really very great. For one thing, it throws open the whole question of inspiration, and there are certainly those in the Free Church whose consciences would be relieved by a similar declaration. But, in spite of the daily press, we are convinced that a large majority in the Free Church would disallow any such change.

THE *British Weekly* says: The General Assembly of the Irish Presbyterian Church has been meeting in Belfast. The reports show a healthy, vigorous life, though the number of church members has very slightly decreased. Less attention than usual was given to politics, but the Moderator declared that the Assembly remained uncompromisingly opposed to "Gladstone-Parnell" Home Rule, and a special compliment was paid to the Church of Scotland for joining in this, while the Free and United

Presbyterian Churches went as a whole with the main body of Liberals. It was asserted, and not denied, that the Irish Presbyterian Church still held by the Establishment principle. The Rev. James Heron, author of a creditable volume on the organization of the Early Church, was appointed colleague to Dr. W. D. Killen in the chair of Church History. We notice elsewhere the sharp and significant snub administered to Dr. Watts. The truth is that the Irish Presbyterians are a body of intelligent and cultivated men, and though partly out of humour and partly out of good humour, they acquiesce too easily in the claims of certain persons to be their spokesmen, they can on occasion put down their foot firmly enough. But what will "the Churches of Christendom" say?

A NOTABLE incident, says the *Belfast Witness*, was the appearance of the Rev. Dr. Somerville, the well-known ex-Moderator of the Free Church, distinguished for his world-wide evangelistic labours in the Assembly of the Church of Scotland. The occasion was the consideration of the Jewish Mission of that Church, which attains its jubilee this year, having been founded in 1839. Dr. Somerville has visited the Church of Scotland mission stations in the East, and been much gratified with their efficiency. In expectation of seeing and hearing him, the house had become crowded in every part, and the Lord High Commissioner also remained to hear his address. The doctor, who was visibly affected by his welcome, delivered a long, interesting, and eloquent address on the subject of the Jews. This was accompanied by a good deal of effective gesture and by-play, and yet withal truly simple and devoid of any straining after effect. The doctor solemnly declares he looks for some wonderful and sudden conversion of this ancient people, and he gave some graphic and interesting accounts of the manner in which he had been received when lately addressing large bodies of them in Bohemia and in the East—all the more remarkable, he said, as he only spoke in his plain Scotch tongue, and all he said had to be interpreted to the audiences. The House listened to the old man's eloquence with the greatest interest and attention for nearly an hour, and at its close, the warmth of the applause showed how deeply the members and the audience had been moved by the high religious tone and fervid eloquence of the speech. Dr. Gloag, the Moderator, in thanking Dr. Somerville for his address, expressed the hope that his presence there that day was a happy augury of the time when the Free and Established Churches would be more closely united.

AN important meeting was held in Hamilton last week. Its object was to promote Sabbath observance. As a result of the meeting a branch of the Lord's Day Alliance was formed. It was decided that the organisation be named the Western Ontario Branch of the Lord's Day Alliance with the following officers:—President, John Charlton, M. P.; Vice-Presidents, Revs. R. G. Boville, John Morton, Canon Houston, G. Burson and Mr. J. Mann; Secretary, Rev. John Young; Treasurer, S. F. Lazier. Executive Committee—The officers and Geo. Taite, St. Catharines; W. J. Copp, Adam Brown, M. P.; A. H. Dymond, Brantford; A. T. Mackenzie, R. L. McFarlane, Lundy's Lane; Wm. Bowman, London; W. McGibbon, St. Catharines; A. Alexander, and D. D. Hay, Stratford. A resolution was passed that the Alliance appoint a person in each district, who, with others, shall form a Committee to interview members of the two Houses respecting the objects of the Alliance. A strong resolution was also carried deprecating the opening of gates and the collection of fees at park and camp associations on Sundays, and the Secretary was instructed to inform the managers of such places that, in the judgment of the Alliance, they should be closed and no fee collected or articles sold therein on Sundays. It was decided that the territory covered by the Western Branch be the Counties of Grey, Wellington and Halton, with all the counties south and west. A public meeting was held in James Street Baptist Church, over which Rev. W. J. Maxwell presided. Speeches were made by Rev. Mr. Burson, Rev. Mr. Brethour, Rev. Mr. Mordy and others, all bearing directly upon Sabbath observance. A resolution was passed, expressing sympathy with the large class of men employed on the railways and canals who have to work on Sundays against their own inclinations.