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SABBATH SCHOOL PAPERS.

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Notes of the Week.

A NEW Brunswick exchange states that Mr. H. B. Pickard, Gilchrist scholarship man for 1880, has added another laurel to his literary achievements by winning the Mr. Laren scholarship, consisting of the proceeds of £2,600 sterling, tenable for three years and open to graduates of Edinburgh University, under three years standing, who have graduated with mathematical honours. Mr. Pickard belongs to Fredrickton, N. B.

IN writing on tax exemptions "Argus," in the last number of the *Canadian Baptist*, says. Builders of churches may as well begin to reckon on the fact that before very long, in this country, the structures they erect will probably be subject to taxation. It is quite possible that respecting this question some compromise be made, as, for example, that the land on which the church stands shall not be taxed. But that taxes will be levied on church property to some extent, before long, is almost a foregone conclusion. The exemptions on the dwellings and incomes of ministers will also be done away with. It is difficult to see how such thorough-going disbelievers in the union of Church and State as Baptists are can object to this change.

A FEW years ago a sad mining disaster occurred at Stellarton, N. S., by which a number of lives were lost. Last week there was a dreadful calamity at the Vale Colliery, near New Glasgow, in the same Province. Late on the evening of the 12th inst., an explosion took place, and immediately the seam where twenty-two men were at work was in a blaze. Soon after a rescuing party descended the shaft and succeeded in bringing seven men to the surface, who fortunately escaped with a few slight bruises. Subsequently other two were rescued, but all the others in the pit at the time lost their lives. The district where the sad occurrence took place is plunged in gloom, and the bereaved relatives of the dead miners are receiving the sympathy which such a calamity, not uncommon in the case of those who follow a perilous occupation, is always sure to evoke.

FROM various indications it is evident that efforts on a large scale will soon be made to bring about a union of the various Presbyterian Churches in Scotland. There is a tendency to look at the practical benefits to be derived from the union of the three ecclesiastical bodies, into which Scottish Presbyterianism is divided. There is much cordiality and in some cases co-operation in foreign mission fields. For the more successful prosecution of mission work harmonious action is being fully realized. The work at home would also be much benefited by union. There are serious difficulties in the way; it is true, but as in Canada and Australia these are not insurmountable. Union cannot be precipitated, but it can and will grow. Conferences of representatives of the various churches are being held in an unofficial way. The movement, it is hoped, will lead to important results.

THE *Edin Telegraph* calls attention to an evil which exists in that quiet and attractive town. The same thing is to be met with elsewhere. A number of lads from twelve to eighteen years of age are in the

habit of congregating at the town hall whenever a meeting takes place. They annoy the people assembled by rude noises, and in other offensive ways. The *Telegraph* concludes by making the following sensible remarks: It is not creditable to the order that should prevail that no property owner dare allow an empty tenement to be unprotected for a single night without running the risk of having all the glass in it broken. This sort of lawlessness cannot too soon be put down. It does not say much for the parental supervision of our youth that so many young people of tender age are to be seen loafing round the street corners at nights, smoking and chewing tobacco. How can parents expect their children will grow up respectable unless they exercise more careful supervision over them? Would it not be well for the ministers of the different denominations to direct the attention of their congregations to the necessity of parents being more careful in training their children?

BENEVOLENT institutions in Canada are supported with an ungrudging liberality. They will compare favourably with those of any land in this respect, but they are not so numerous as those to be found in older civilizations. There is not so much accumulated wealth at the disposal of benevolent individuals as is the case in some other lands. Instances, however, are not wanting to show that the same disposition animates Canadian citizens, and that time and opportunity will aid its development. With the wealthy benefactor, as with the humblest individual, justice should come before generosity. There are many possessors of wealth, however, who have it in their power to dispose of a portion of their means in a way that will be helpful to the distressed without injuring the claims of those immediately dependent on them. The good example set by Mr. John H. Stratford in Brantford, and Mrs. Charlotte J. Nicholls in Peterborough, are not only worthy of grateful recognition, but also of imitation by those to whom wealth has been entrusted. Mrs. Nicholls has presented to the town and county of Peterborough, Moira Hall and grounds with an endowment of \$10,000, for the purposes of a public hospital.

THE Soudan campaign will be memorable for the loss of brave and capable soldiers. There is hardly any room now to doubt the accuracy of the tidings of Gordon's death. The circumstances of his fall, as reported, are significant. Generous and confiding, resolute and ready in resource himself, he falls a victim to the heartless treachery and cunning of the barbarians. He who waited and watched through all the weary months, had he lived forty-eight hours longer, would have been with his brave rescuers, and all Christendom would now be ringing with his praises. As it is his memory will be cherished and his fame will grow. In a matter-of-fact age he demonstrated that Christian enthusiasm is still capable of heroic self-sacrifice and devotion to duty. General Gordon lived a noble life and died a hero-martyr's death. The name of General Earle has to be added to the death-roll of brave officers who have fallen in the Egyptian campaign. Victory crowned the efforts of his command but he did not share their triumph. In the ranks there were no doubt many private soldiers who fought gallantly for their country and died in the strife, though their names may not be known beyond their regimental companies and the limited circles in which they moved. Honour to the brave, without distinction, who fell while fighting their country's battles.

ABOUT a year ago, a benevolent and wealthy citizen of Brantford intimated that he was prepared to erect a public hospital and present it to the city. The building has been completed and formally opened by the Lieut-Governor of Ontario. So far as convenience and sanitary arrangements are concerned it is a model institution of the kind. At the time the gentleman announced his intention of building the hospital, he stated that it should be non-sectarian, open to all and free to the indigent. No reasonable fault can be found with such conditions. Most people will regard them

as eminently proper. He has however, adhered to another condition previously indicated. It is that no clergyman, priest or member of a religious sect or other society, shall hold religious or other services within its walls or grounds, except a patient should request the attendance of such, and then only for that patient's personal benefit. In a well regulated institution like this, arrangements could easily have been made for regular religious services for the benefit of the patients, as is admirably done in most public institutions. If patients decline religious ministrations, their wishes would certainly be respected. To most sufferers the consolations of religion are acceptable and beneficial. Those who have been privileged to visit the sufferers in public institutions can bear testimony to the gratitude with which they are generally received. It is a pity that a generous and humane gift should be hampered by an illiberal and unsectarian sectarianism.

THE present attitude of Mahomedanism is thus comprehensively and briefly sketched in last issue of the *Week*. By some students of Eastern politics and lovers of the East it seems to be believed that Islam is on the point of casting its slough, undergoing some moral transformation, and making a fresh start in life. It is difficult to understand on what these anticipations are based. There is enthusiasm among the Mahomedan tribes of Africa, as we see by the fanatical valour with which they throw themselves on the bayonet; but this is only the fire of recent conversion, while they in whose breasts it burns are mere barbarians. The sect of Reformers and Revivalists called the Wahabees which some time ago was an object of interest and fear to Anglo-Indians appears to have expended its vitality. Vague rumours are heard of movements in Arabia; and there is certainly a development of what may be called Panislamism, which however is the offspring not so much of religious revival as of the increased facility of intercommunication which enables the Moslem on the banks of the Ganges to see and lament the paling of the Crescent on the Bosphorus. But Islam is a religion of conquest, essentially barbarous, and suited only for barbarians; it has never produced a genuine or a lasting civilization; it has never shown like Christianity a power of adapting itself to different phases and successive epochs of humanity. Persia, the second great Mahomedan power, seems to have run the same downward course as Turkey, and to be in a state of even deeper decay and fouler putrescence.

IN giving a summary of the proceedings of the committee of the Edinburgh Free Church Presbytery in the case of the Rev. Dr. Stuart Muir, of Leith, the *Glasgow Christian Leader* says. The committee charged with the investigation of the foolish eccentricities of Dr. Stuart Muir presented a further report. With great minuteness they have prepared a series of questions with Dr. Muir's answers, and these are printed and are to be circulated and studied before being considered at next meeting. Dr. Muir acknowledges his belief in baptismal regeneration, his preference for the prayer book of "the holy martyr Archbishop Laud," his practising of "fasting during Lent" though he had a "dispensation" from "a Romish authority," his wearing a diamond pin in the shape of a cross, and having a calling card with a cross on it, edged with purple. Many of his answers appear to be neither more nor less than verbal quibbling and trifling. Dr. Muir was ordained in 1849 and evidently has a very small congregation, its whole yearly income being only \$915. He has asked the Presbytery to libel him, but has expressed his willingness to retire from his pastorate if allowed to retain his position and income as a minister. The convener of the committee, Mr. Brown, reminded the Presbytery that "in all procedure connected with the standing of a minister great care must be taken to avoid anything like precipitate action." Principal Rainy truly remarked that "some might be of the opinion that the case should end in a very summary manner." He might have added, "and the sooner the case ended the better."