

Notes of the Week.

A GLASGOW contemporary says that the Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, ex-Premier of Canada, who is spending the summer in Scotland, is very much improved in health, being now able to walk a considerable distance every day. Of his eleven trips across the Atlantic this has been the most favourable, nothing untoward having occurred during the voyage beyond the losing of his sealskin cap overboard.

THE Rev. Peter Leys, of Strathaven, imprisoned in Edinburgh for refusing to give up his grandchildren to the Jesuits, has at length been liberated. These grandchildren had been left in his care for six years by their father, who was unable to maintain them, and, he having joined the Romish Church, at the instigation of the Jesuits, brought suit against his own venerable father, who preferred enduring the penalty of refusing to comply with the decision of the court. The indignation aroused by these proceedings was so great that Mr. Leys has been released from prison. Like the Bourbons, the disciples of Loyola seem neither to learn nor to forget.

THE *Christian Leader* gets off this well-timed protest: The modern rage for those vulgar and ugly abbreviations which we have the utmost difficulty in reducing to a minimum in our columns, and which would disfigure them to a much greater extent were we not constantly on the watch, was strikingly exemplified the other day at a certain ladies' prayer meeting. One of the sisters, who is very much interested in the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, the Woman's Home Missionary Society, and also in the Woman's Educational and Industrial Union, prayed fervently, with a charming certainty that she would be understood: "O Lord, bless the W.C.T.U., the W.F.M.S., the W.H.M.S., and the W.E. and I.U!"

A DEPUTATION from the Government Committee of the General Assembly of the Irish Presbyterian Church, consisting of the Revs. James W. Whigham, Dr. Petticrew and Dr. W. Todd Martin, had a lengthened interview recently with Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Chief Secretary for Ireland, on matters affecting the interests of the Presbyterian Church. In the course of the conference, among other things, we understand that they pressed strongly on the attention of the right honourable gentlemen the unfair way in which Presbyterians have been systematically treated in regard to all public appointments in the hands of the Crown. We shall see, says the *Belfast Witness*, how appointments now pending will be made. The present Government owe a good deal to Presbyterians; let us hope they will show them some consideration and fair play.

SOUTHERN Europe was shaken by earthquake last week, and two days later similar experiences were felt in portions of the Southern States, on this continent. Those upheavals invariably produce panic, and people are at their wits' end. Precautions against almost any other calamity may to some extent be taken; but the suddenness with which the shock comes, and the uncertainty as to what locality may be affected add to the danger and alarm of these destructive eruptions. In Greece, and elsewhere on the European continent, numerous lives have been lost and much property destroyed. Charleston, S. C., appears to have borne the heaviest stroke on this continent. Many have been killed outright, and many more wounded; but the marvel is that, amid crumbling ruins and the outbreak of fires, the casualties to life and limb have been comparatively so few. In all these disasters the survivors have cause to sing of mercy and of judgment.

In the last number of the *Christian Leader* there is a very genial and appreciative sketch of Professor Watson, LL.D., of Queen's University. Dr. Watson

is at present on a visit to his native land. The sketch has the following passage: During last winter he gave a series of popular lectures in the evening, consisting for the most part of criticisms on the leading philosophers and their different systems, both ancient and modern, from Plato, the father of Idealism, to Herbert Spencer, the chief exponent of Hedonism. Those lectures were attended by both men and women, and it was interesting to observe the eagerness with which the ladies listened to subjects of a more or less abstruse character. What a change from the time of Socrates or Plato, when women were not permitted to become disciples in the schools! But now they are admitted into almost every profession and are showing themselves, as Mrs. Poyser says, able, to "match the men."

WHEN the Belfast riots were at their fiercest Albert Street Presbyterian Church, situated near the Roman Catholic district, was frequently attacked and the congregation disturbed. The pastor, Rev. Henry Montgomery, brought the matter before the Presbytery, who appointed a deputation to wait on the civil authorities asking for protection. The deputation was cordially received, and their request complied with. The *Belfast Witness* says in this connection: We are quite prepared to believe what Mr. Montgomery states, that the Roman Catholic clergy and the respectable members of that denomination have no more sympathy with the attacks made on Albert Street congregation than the law-abiding Protestants have with the intolerant spirit manifested by the so-called Protestant mobs in other districts. And we cherish the hope that the fury of these fatal and most unchristian riots has now exhausted itself, and that the moderation shown by Mr. Montgomery and his congregation is an omen that a spirit of fairness and brotherhood will soon more generally prevail in our distracted community.

IN these days events move with unwonted rapidity. The perfidious scheme in the interest of Russia to dethrone Prince Alexander of Bulgaria was a surprise to all. He was swiftly sent beyond the confines of his principality, but no sooner was the nature of the plot discovered than it was resented with indignant determination. The exiled prince was permitted no time to rest from the fatigues of his unexpected flight, when, in obedience to the expressed desire of his people, he had to return and resume his sovereignty. There is some reason to believe that at Berlin and Vienna there was a disposition to wink at the high-handed action of the Autocrat of all the Russias, but the universal sympathy shown for Alexander was sufficient to restrain any disposition to interpose between him and his return. For the present, at least, Russian designs on the Balkan Principalities are foiled, and the warlike party at St. Petersburg must digest its chagrin as it best can. What new complications may suddenly arise it would be difficult to anticipate, but these are the days of unexpected surprises, and startling occurrences are not improbable.

THE corner-stone of the new and commodious building in course of erection for the Toronto Young Men's Christian Association was laid with appropriate ceremonies last week. The chair was occupied by Mr. S. Caldecott. The ceremony of laying the corner-stone was performed by Mr. John Macdonald. In a cavity which had been made in the stone he deposited a tin box containing the following articles: Historical sketch of the association, list of officers and members, cut and description of the new building, copies of annual reports for 1886 and 1885, programme of corner-stone proceedings, Shaftesbury Hall *Bulletin* for August, 1886; copies of printed matter used in the work of the association, copy of "International Year Book for 1886," copy of *Young Men's Christian Association Watchman*, copy of New Testament Scriptures, copies of the daily and church papers published in Toronto; current coins of the Dominion and the "Canadian Almanac for 1886." Addresses were then delivered by Mr. Macdonald,

Revs. P. McF. McLeod, Elmore Harris, A. H. Baldwin, Mayor Howland, Revs. Dr. Potts, J. Burton and Mr. T. J. Wilkie. The building is expected to be ready for occupation by April next. The land on which it is situated cost \$21,000 and the expenditure on the building will be about \$59,000. The amount realized by the sale of Shaftesbury Hall building was \$55,000, so that \$25,000 is required in order to have the association free from debt.

CONCERNING the Belfast riots the *Christian Leader* writes: Of all men it is the sound Protestants who most deeply lament the reproach that has been brought upon their name by the savage outbreak of lawlessness in Belfast. For these sanguinary riots certain political leaders are being held primarily responsible; and assuredly it is not possible to reprobate too strongly the predictions that were uttered of civil war unless the Orangemen could have their own way in the matter of Home Rule. That inflammatory language was calculated to produce the disorder and bloodshed which must have so sorely grieved and humiliated every Christian heart in the capital of Ulster, and which has carried death and desolation into so many homes. Our readers are well aware that this journal is not ignorant of the persecuting and violent spirit of Roman Catholicism, and that it never hesitates to expose the devices of Rome; but in the present instance it is our duty to protest against the action of the Belfast Protestants, who began the riots which have disgraced their city, and to condemn the language of political firebrands which unquestionably paved the way for these riots by weakening respect for the law. Nor should we be faithful to our function were we to ignore the fact that even Protestant divines as well as politicians indulged in the wicked and unconstitutional predictions of civil war. Even the author of the "Tongue of Fire" cannot escape from the terrible responsibility incurred by these prophets of bloodshed. We have long held Mr. Arthur in high esteem; but we have misconstrued his character if he does not to-day feel a pang of remorse on account of the words he printed in his political pamphlet three months ago.

THE General Conference of the Methodist Church began its sessions last week in this city. The Rev. Dr. Ryckman was appointed secretary. Dr. Carman delivered a comprehensive and able address, in which reference was made to the past history, present condition, and the future prospects of Methodism in Canada. Respecting the relations of the Church to the civil courts in connection with a recent case in New Brunswick, Dr. Carman said: A case has arisen in connection with the New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island Conference which has caused some anxiety and uneasiness, and which may require some action on the part of the General Conference. The circumstances are briefly these: A member of the Conference was under arrest, charges having been preferred against him impeaching his religious and moral character. The Conference, through the disciplinary court, was conducting an examination into the truth of the charges, when an interim order, issued at the suit of the defendant by the Supreme Court of New Brunswick, stopped the proceedings of the court of trial and of the Conference, and the Conference is cited to show cause at the Michaelmas term of the court why a rule should not be issued prohibiting the Conference or the committee, or any committee of the Conference, from proceeding further with the examination of the case. The question assumes a grave character, as it touches the right of a voluntary Church to exercise jurisdiction over its members, according to the established canons, discipline and usage, and its right to construe and enforce its own discipline. And the question is raised whether a Church has a right to examine into the conduct and character of its own members without interfering with the civil power. Stopped by the action of the court from the further examination of the case the Conference has adjourned its session till the decision of the court is made known. The matter is thus placed before the General Conference for their action, if action is needed.