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Notes of the Week.

THE cowardly wife-beater is not likely to have it all his own way. Public opinion, never favourable to the practices of the barbarian, is beginning to crystallize into stern law for his repression. The unworthy scamp who strikes his wife is, in harmony with the fitness of things, about to get a trial of his own favourite method of punishment. The Legislature of New Jersey has passed a law by a vote of thirty-nine to twelve subjecting wife-beaters to the infliction of the lash, the stripes not to exceed thirty. This is, no doubt, a barbarous mode of punishment. But you must speak to the barbarian in his own language if you desire to be understood.

AFFECTION for one's *Alma Mater* is in many cases more than a mere sentiment. When former graduates have achieved wealth they often take a pleasure in showing their gratitude to their universities in a substantial way. Here is one of several recent instances: The University of St. Andrew's, Scotland, has just received the handsome donation of \$25,000 from a former student, Mr. W. Russell, of Northampton. It is to be applied for the purpose of founding entrance bursaries, and will tend to resuscitate the old College, which has been in rather a feeble condition for some years back, urgently requiring all the help and assistance its friends and well-wishers could give. Like generous gifts to our various Canadian Colleges will, no doubt, be of more frequent occurrence in the future than in the past, though many handsome donations have already been received.

BEFORE President Cleveland's inauguration it was fully expected that he would attend one of the fashionable Presbyterian Churches in Washington. Expectations in this respect have not been realized. A church in a part of the city no longer fashionable has been selected by the President as the one in which he desires to worship. Its pastor is the Rev. Byron Sutherland, a strong Republican in politics, who faithfully and fearlessly denounced slavery when it required courage and fidelity to do so. As it was, all the members with pro-slavery leanings forsook Mr. Sutherland's ministry. He was Cleveland's mother's minister. This, no doubt, chiefly accounts for the President's preference. The man who desires to take the oath of office, the highest in a great nation's gift, on his mother's Bible, and who chooses his mother's pastor as his own, gives good evidence that he desires to do right and to justify the trust reposed in him.

SUCH has been the absorbing interest in the crisis respecting the Afghan frontier that affairs in the Soudan which, a few weeks ago, would have created the greatest excitement are, for the time, regarded as matters of slight importance. The march to Tamai has been an affair of grave difficulty if not, as surmised in certain quarters, of serious disaster. Arabs, in unexpected numbers, rushed on the small British force as it reached Hasheen, and put the capacity of commanders and the endurance of the troops to a severe test. It is clear that the fighting powers of the followers of the Mahdi are not to be despised. They scorn danger and death, being animated by a spirit of wild fanaticism. They know the Desert, are acclimatized, and seem to excel in strategy. The advance on Tamai has been temporarily checked, the little army being seriously hampered by the capture of transport and commissariat resources, and the loss of a large number of comrades. The Arabs are evidently bent on making the most of their opportunities till adequate British reinforcements arrive.

NO improvement has yet taken place in the Anglo-Russian relations. The grave anxiety still remains. Any little gleam of hope that the shock of arms might be averted has apparently been obscured. No official declaration of a pacific nature from Russia has yet been made public. Warlike preparations are going forward in Britain and Russia with unabated urgency.

Diplomacy is busy not only between London and St. Petersburg, but both nations are endeavouring to strengthen their position by alliances with other powers. According to recent despatches both are doing all they can to secure the adhesion of the Sultan. There is not a little interest displayed as to the side the Sick Man will take if hostilities begin. The diplomatic skill of Earl Dufferin will find full scope for its exercise in the affairs of India at the present time. Contrary to what we have been hearing of late, the people of India are enthusiastic in their desire to maintain British rule and to repel foreign aggression. Russian journals expressed the opinion that the Indian people were only waiting the opportunity to welcome the Muscovite as their deliverer from English tyranny. They have evidently been misinformed.

THE Toronto Board of Trade has taken an active interest in securing the passage of an equitable insolvency law. Since the repeal of the late Act, affairs have been in a most anomalous and unsatisfactory condition. When an unfortunate trader or firm have gone under, there has been an unseemly and undignified scramble for possession. One or perhaps two very sharp creditors, who carry out to the letter the familiar maxim, "Each one for himself," may have saved something from the wreck, but by so doing they saved the other creditors from being encumbered with any of the spoils. The legislation sought is to do away with this most unjust result of having no bankruptcy law. Naturally enough, the members of the Board of Trade look at the matter from the creditors' point of view. They have often been exasperated by the tricks of the fraudulent bankrupt who deserves no clemency, but the honest, though unfortunate, trader who has come to grief through stress of circumstance ought not to be crushed beneath the double weight of law and misfortune. Though all the members were not so enthusiastic for securing the discharge of an honest bankrupt as they were for an equitable distribution of his assets, it is probable that legal provision will be made for his discharge on satisfying his creditors that everything has been square and above-board.

MR. GEORGE HAGUE, of the Merchant's Bank, Montreal, is a good authority on financial matters. He is able to take an all-round view of the subject. His observations are not exclusively confined to the material aspects of money; he takes into account its moral bearings as well. He has been lecturing before a Congregational Young Peoples' Association on "Money." In the course of his lecture Mr. Hague is reported to have said. There are many hard things about rich men in the New Testament. The typical rich man of that time had got most of his money in plunder and bribes. But, in all times, the natural tendency of wealth is to make men—for one thing—sceptical; even wealthy Christians know the constant temptation to let money gradually cover their whole horizon. It tends to make men proud. The lecturer illustrated this point by an anecdote of a rich man, not very highly educated, and rather inclined to indulgence, who once said: "They talk of a fellow named Croesus, and they say he's rich; well, I'll plank down dollar for dollar with him any day!" Wealth tends to make men hard, covetous, selfish, often over-reaching, oppressive and unjust. But, if money was never accumulated, men could not obey the command to "subdue the earth," they could not build railways or sail ships. We are only forbidden to lay up treasure for ourselves.

THE Central American Republics do not possess the advantages of settled government. In these states, ambitious political adventurers have found fitting spheres for their activities. Ordinary readers have not cared to follow the many revolutionary movements of more or less magnitude with which the States of South America have recently been disturbed. The contest between Chili and Peru, having assumed more than ordinary proportions, awakened consider-

able interest. Another disturbance, occasioned by the President of Guatemala, has attracted not a little attention. Barrios, of Hispano-Indian extraction, has risen from a very humble sphere, and for a number of years has been the veritable dictator of Guatemala. By herding an insurrection he ultimately obtained the Presidency, and now, like Alexander, desires to extend his conquests. He aims at the unification of the five Central American Republics. He seeks to reach the desired end by a short cut. He has no intention of waiting for the accomplishment of his object by peaceful means. The idle ceremony of consulting the people most interested and gaining their consent does not suit his purpose. Confederation, according to Barrios, is to be brought about by the sword. The other Republics are rushing to arms to resist this summary method of disposing of their political future.

TEMPERANCE people in Oxford County take a sensible view of the situation. They do not consider that because the Scott Act was passed by a handsome majority their work is at an end. Opponents of the Act cling to the faint hope that it will never be enforced. In Oxford an association of energetic temperance workers has been formed, one of whose principal aims will be to see that the provisions of the Act are faithfully carried out. Correspondents are writing to the newspapers bitter complaints as to the infringement of personal liberty the adoption of the Scott Act is said to entail, and they are awfully severe on the sumptuary character of the law. A growing majority of the people declare that the law passed by the Canadian Parliament seven years ago is necessary, in the best interests of the country, for the restriction of one of the greatest evils from which the community suffers. There is no greater tyranny in the enforcement of the Scott Act than there is in carrying out any other law on the Statute Book. The law is not forced upon the people. Its adoption is their own voluntary act, and they have the right to insist that if it is adopted its provisions must be enforced. It is neither the intention of its framers nor upholders that the Scott Act should be quietly entered in the pages of the Statute Book. The latter is not the quiet resting place of defunct legislation. The friends of the Scott Act do well to see that its provisions are enforced wherever it comes into operation.

THE *Edinburgh Scotsman* is not regarded as an authority on theological matters. Its criticisms on Church affairs are often as perverse as they are pungent. In the following, however, Canadian readers will see that it is not altogether astray. Mr. Young, of Newington, spoke emphatically on the abuses connected with Church Bazaars, at a recent meeting of Edinburgh U. P. Presbytery, and this is how the *Scotsman* "improves" the occasion. Bazaars should be properly conducted, and purged from such abuses as lotteries and raffles, hand-bills of "brilliant attractions," and newspaper advertisements of "winning numbers." Surely, it is time to rescue the Churches from the low estate into which they have fallen, when such sinful and worldly practices are adopted by Church members and patronized by fathers and brethren. That publication in the *Scotsman* of "the winning numbers for the two fat pigs that were raffled at the Church bazaar" must have brought the blush to many a clerical cheek besides that of the pastor of Bristo Church. And what are the Presbyterian public to think of the minister who proposed to raffle a horse, and showed even a deeper depth of depravity by "actually sending Mr. Young some tickets to sell"? It may perhaps be conceded that Mr. Young and Mr. James should be forgiven their assaults on bazaars and their insults to the "shopkeepers and show-women" for the service they have done in getting the Presbytery to discountenance such proceedings in the bosom of Zion as the raffling of horses and lotteries of fat pigs. The negro minstrels may be tolerated and even admired, but it is surely time to drive the unclean beasts out of the courts of the temple.