

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. I.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10th, 1884.

No. 37.

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

NOT to be surpassed in generous recognition of eminence in scientific attainment, the authorities of McGill University last week conferred the honorary degree of LL.D. on Lords Rayleigh and Lansdowne, Sir John Macdonald, Sir Lion Playfair, Sir William Thomson, Professors Bonney and Frankland, Capt. Galton, Vernon Harcourt, Sir Henry Roscoe, Professors Blanchard and Mosely, General Lefroy, Sir Richard Temple, Sir P. Bramwell, Mr. G. B. Taylor, Professor Daniel Wilson, Professors Asa Gray and James Hall, New York State geologist.

A YEAR ago several members of the British Association were shaking their heads gravely over the proposal to hold the meetings of 1884 in Montreal. In due time opposition vanished. The cordial welcome and hospitality extended by public bodies and private citizens has been far beyond what the most sanguine anticipated. The members of the Association have in various ways testified their appreciation of the kindness shown them. A peculiarly appropriate recognition has been the offer, to the faculty of Applied Science in McGill University, of a gold medal in connection with the visit of the Association to Canada.

EVERY genuine effort to reach the non-church going portion of city populations is deserving of the warmest support. In the City of Toronto a short time ago, a Mission Union was formed. Amongst its members are to be found those who have taken an active and self denying part in sustained evangelistic efforts in the past. A new and commodious mission hall has been erected in a locality within easy reach of those for whom these efforts are specially made. Interesting opening services, invariably well attended, have been held on successive evenings. Well known clergymen and laymen have taken part in these meetings. Sustained and systematic efforts are to be made with a view to make the services attractive and useful. The friends connected with the praiseworthy undertaking have issued the first number of a bi-monthly, under the title of *Our Mission Union*, which is admirably adapted for the purpose and the class of readers for which it is intended.

THE cholera epidemic is disappearing in France. In Spain also its ravages are decreasing, while in Italy it is causing dreadful havoc. From the accounts published it is evident that its rapid spread and great fatality are largely due to the ignorance and superstition of the people. The almost utter absence in many places of sanitary arrangements, the presence in densely peopled localities of reeking filth, the unaccountable distrust of the medical profession, and persistence in violating the most obvious dietary laws have provided the most favourable conditions for the spread of the dread disease. These startling disclosures of the condition of a class of Italian people show plainly that enlightenment has a great task yet to accomplish. It is reported that a veritable case of Asiatic cholera has occurred at Cardiff. The victim came on an Italian steamer from Alexandria. There are, however, no indications that cholera has got a foothold in England.

SUNDAY excursions in the United States are not different from Sunday excursions elsewhere. They are patronized by the same class of people in every community. Those who have regard for Christian principles do not, and cannot, countenance them. Respectable workingmen wish to protect their families from the dangers and temptations never inseparable from the Sunday excursion. So dreadful were the scenes witnessed last summer on the Hudson river, that a repetition of them was considered hardly probable. Only the other Sabbath, on a boat running from New York to Staten Island, an awful riot among drunken excursionists took place. It ended in the murder of the bar-keeper. The bar by itself is a dangerous institution, the Sunday excursion steamer

is not one on which a benediction rests, both combined are demoralizing in the extreme. The Canadian people cannot be too earnest in their endeavours to protect the sacredness of the Lord's Day.

A CASE of great interest involving several important points, has made its appearance in the law courts of St. Louis. A Miss Taylor entered a convent about two years ago. It is stated that she previously conveyed her property worth \$100,000 to her sister, then unmarried, under an agreement that she expected to take monastic vows with the order of St. Francis de Sales, but should she not do so on entering and afterwards severing her connection with the order, her property was to be restored to her. Some months ago Miss Taylor left the convent, announcing, it is said, that she had withdrawn from the order, and asked for a restoration of the property. Her sister, and sister's husband did not like to surrender the property. They claimed that she was not sincere, and that therefore she was not entitled to it. Miss Taylor brought an action and recovered her property. She has since returned to the convent, and her brother-in-law and sister have taken proceedings to secure the property, contending that her withdrawal from the convent and her return thither, was simply a device by which it might be conveyed to the conventual authorities.

PROMOTERS of Agricultural fairs exercise great ingenuity in providing popular attractions. The avowed purpose for holding these fairs is to promote agriculture by bringing under the notice of farmers and others new and improved methods and implements, and a full and varied display of field and garden products. The best time for holding these exhibitions is unquestionably in the autumn after most of the products have been harvested. Then farmers and their families have leisure to enjoy the holiday these associations afford. It is perfectly legitimate to make the fall fairs enjoyable as well as instructive. At a fair in Missouri lately the brother of the desperado Jesse James was advertised as one of the leading attractions. Such are the unaccountable vagaries of popular taste, and perception of the fitness of things, that the ex-bandit was the lion of the day. Crowds of notoriety hunters grasped him eagerly by the hand, he was presented with a purse of money, a handsome horse and buggy in addition to the remuneration his presence was deemed worth to the managers. There must be a great scarcity of heroes in the Southern States. And yet when boys go wrong ways, people are astonished and surprised.

THE Gospel Army is managed in the same manner and pursues methods similar to those employed by the Salvation Army. The former appears to encounter more determined opposition than the latter. The popular hostility usually manifests itself against some officer whose alleged misconduct has aroused dislike. Whether such accusations are well or ill founded it is difficult to determine. At all events a "major-general," who has been waging war in Brant and Waterloo counties, has made himself peculiarly obnoxious to many respectable people. The rowdy element, both at Ayr and Paris, have taken advantage of this. The officer has been the repeated victim of unpleasant "ovations," and has in many ways been subjected to shameful treatment. So turbulent was the crowd at Paris one evening last week that the authorities were powerless to maintain order, and a ringleader in the disgraceful doings was rescued from the police. People may differ in opinion as to the rights of these organization to parade the public streets at will, but few will be found to say that they are not entitled to protection from insult and abuse. These lawless acts are simply disgraceful and those who take part in them ought to have exemplary punishment meted out to them. If scandalous allegations against officers and members of these armies are sustained by fact, their influence as religious teachers will be utterly discredited, and they will soon find it necessary, like other wolves in sheep's clothing, to move on.

AFFAIRS in Spain are assuming an unsatisfactory shape. King Alfonso is suffering from a dangerous illness which may result in his death. Conflicting parties are intriguing, each with the hope of grasping power. The republican element, not inconsiderable, is unusually active. Zorilla is accused of seeking to corrupt the army, and is reported to have made his escape to London. Ex-Queen Isabella is also accused of making attempts to regain the throne from which she was so ignominiously driven more than a dozen years ago. The latest element of discord is the movement of the Romish priesthood to get up an agitation favouring the restoration of the temporal power to the Pope. Reactionary movements are not visible when European political waters are calm. Like the stormy petrel, they make their erratic appearance when political complications are more than usually intricate. Whatever remains of the temporal power as a question of practical politics belongs to Italy alone. The papacy may cling to the fragment of temporal sovereignty as essential to it, but the Italian nation have thought and willed otherwise. They preferred the "Free Church in a Free State" of Count Cavour to the *non-possiemus* of Pius IX. Neither his successor nor his Jesuit councillors will persuade them to alter their preference. The cause of civil and religious liberty does not recede, it goes forward.

A WELL-KNOWN representative of the Woman's Rights movement, has not as yet entered the lists as a candidate for the presidency. In a previous contest she did announce herself a candidate and issued an address to the people. This time she has thought better of it, and seemingly has no desire to try conclusions with Blaine, Butler, Cleveland and St. John. Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, contributes an article advocating liberal divorce cases for the United States to one of the magazines. It is the general impression that the divorce laws, particularly in some of the States, is dangerously liberal as it is. Many of the least and most thoughtful of our neighbours are convinced that reform is needed in an entirely different direction from that advocated by Mrs. Cady Stanton. Laxity of divorce law is ruinous to the welfare of the family, and therefore most injurious to the State. If the following statement is anything like correct, it is not greater facilities for divorce that are required, but a reform of the marriage law so that it would effectually prohibit the marriage of silly children.

A legal marriage in most of the States, may be contracted between a boy of fourteen and girl of twelve without the consent of parents or guardians, without publication of banns, without witnesses, without even the signature of the parties, the presence of a priest, or of any officer of the State.

THE relations of capital and labour are not very promising at present. When difficulties arise, feeling is at once embittered, and too often violent conflicts arise. Workmen feel that only by uniting can they protect their rights. Trades unions are checkmated by counter combinations on the part of employers. By the pressure of trades unionism on the one hand and determined resistance of capitalists on the other, the conflict between capital and labour becomes relentless. The course of business is violently impeded, and workmen and their families suffer great hardships. These collisions of opposing interests work serious injuries. They create and foster a state of feeling that bodes no good to the common weal, intensifying class hatreds, sowing distrust and jealousies. Serious mining strikes have occurred in the Hocking Valley, resulting almost in a petty civil war. There has been considerable violence, and the Governor of the State has had to call the military into requisition. Happily no serious encounter has occurred, but there are apprehensions that the labour troubles may spread. It is plain that combinations and strikes have failed to adjust satisfactorily the difficulties between employers and employed. The best way yet proposed of settling these disputes is the appointment of independent boards of arbitrators, whose decisions would not be in the interest of either party, but based on impartial justice. The plan is at least worth a fair trial.