

## Notes of the Week.

The Fenians, or that branch of the brotherhood over which the outrageous O'Donovan Rossa seems to have control, are determined not to be one whit behind the most audacious and barbarous of the Nihilists, in whose infamous ways they seem to be closely following. On Thursday night an explosion of some powerful combustible took place in one of the public offices at Westminster, which shattered the glass in the neighborhood and so shook the buildings that every body was more or less alarmed, but fortunately, although the explosion was a terrible one, no lives were lost. The *Pall Mall Gazette* says in many maps of London the local government board office is marked as the Home Office. It is thought the attempt to blow up the former building was made with the idea that it was the latter, Sir William Harcourt, Home Secretary, being very odious to the Fenians. Sir William Harcourt and other Home Office officials believe the attempt was directed against the criminal inquiry department, which is adjacent to the office of the Local Government Board. Sir Charles Dilke, President of the Local Government Board, says he thinks the attempt was not upon himself or other officers of his department. The evil-doers intended to cause a widespread destruction of property. He is of opinion that the plot originated with the managers of the skirmishing funds. The Government offer a reward of £1000 for the discovery of the authors of the explosion. This also applies to the attempt on the *Times* office. Anyone not an actual culprit giving information as to the origin of the explosion will be pardoned. The police of Dublin are assisting the London police in the search. Extra precautions have been taken to protect Earl Spencer and officers of the Executive Department.

An effort is being made to have the duty on books coming into the Dominion removed. In the first place books intended for libraries and for educational purposes, and afterwards, if the Government sees its way clear, all books of every description. We are in favor of this proposal, for we can see no appreciable benefit, except to the revenue, which a duty on books promotes. All the published works of Canada, which books placed on the free list would interfere with, are so few that we believe Canadian publishers are not opposing the agitation, while to the book-buying public the difference is important. The Memorial to the Government states that books, maps and charts and music paid a tax last year of over £80,000. It declares that Canada is the only colony that imposes such a tax, and that all the great nations of the world allow free import of books except the United States, which, however, admits books free for Libraries and Colleges.

The Panama Canal, the construction of which was for so long a time in doubt, is now proceeding rapidly. A Panama dispatch says: "Every steamer which arrives at Colon brings large numbers of laborers for the Inter-oceanic Canal. The first of a lot of twenty-four engines bought in the United States by one of the canal sub-contractors had been put together and has commenced work. Charles de Lesseps is expected here during the present month, and Count de Lesseps will be here in July."

A contemporary says: "The progress of total abstinence in quarters where not long ago it would have been likely to find no standing ground, is one of the signs of the times. Half a century ago, who could have conceived of a Cabinet Minister being a teetotaler? Now, as we observe from the public prints, quite a number of members of the English Cabinet are total abstainers, some having joined the ranks very recently. Among the rest, Earl Granville, Mr. Childers, Sir William Vernon Harcourt, and Sir Charles Dilke take nothing stronger than water. With Sir Garnet Wolseley, and such statesmen as we have mentioned on their side, certainly the abstainers are fully entitled to say that the hardest work and the severest mental strain can be borne without the resort to stimulants. How absurd it would all have seemed to our grandfathers! Yet some people would have us believe that 'the former days were better than these.'"

So profuse are the Panegyrics of Roman Ecclesiastics on St. Patrick's Day in lauding the Patron Saint of Ireland for his many special virtues as a son and subject of the Holy See, that it is difficult to make even those who are not of the Roman Communion believe that he was neither an Irishman nor a Roman Catholic. But such, nevertheless, are the facts. We have only to read the Confessions of St. Patrick to see that he was anything else but a Roman Catholic; while the Roman Cardinal, Baronius, says in his annals, that "all the Irish in the seventh century were schismatics, separated from the See of Rome."

From the frequent reports of horrid crimes which the telegraphic wires convey to us, we were fearful that crime was increasing in Canada, but we are gratified to learn, according to the Report on the Penitentiaries of the Dominion, which the Minister of Justice has just laid before the Dominion Parliament, that there are fewer prisoners than last year or the year previous. The following is the return:—Total number in Kingston penitentiary 30th June, 1882, 601; St. Vincent de Paul penitentiary, 317; Dorchester penitentiary, 101; Manitoba, 573; British Columbia, 72. In all the penitentiaries of the Dominion 30th June, 1882, 1,128; in all penitentiaries of the Dominion 30th June, 1881, 1,218. Total decrease, 90. The report of the Inspector says, in two years there has been a falling-off in the total convict population of Canada of 151.

The munificence of Mr. George Munro, a Nova Scotian, now the well-known publisher of New York, in endowing another chair in Dalhousie College, Halifax—a chair of International and Constitutional Law—in addition to the two other Endowments and several valuable Bursaries, etc., previously given, is unique so far as Canada is concerned, and reflects the highest credit upon the liberality and patriotism of the donor. We have strong doubts, however, notwithstanding these princely gifts, how far Dalhousie can hope to win to herself, or deserves to win, the youth of the country, the inducements in a money point of view she is able to offer ever so alluring, in the absence of a recognition of religion in her curriculum. We hope these gifts will stimulate Churchmen throughout Canada to contribute more generously to their own colleges, where they can feel assured religious instruction occupies its legitimate place in the training of their sons.

A despatch from London, on Friday, says:—"It is expected that emigration to Canada during the ensuing season will be unusually extensive. The steamer, 'Parisian,' which sailed from Liverpool for Halifax yesterday, took 450 emigrants. A large number of Scandinavians and Germans will proceed to the North-West, Canada, in the course of the next five weeks. A despatch from British Columbia says:—"White mechanics and laborers are coming in by hundreds. Many families are coming to settle, attracted by the mild climate and the high scale of wages paid. A railway contractor declares that Chinese labor is unsatisfactory and more expensive than for whites; Mr. Onderdonk has 3000 whites. Many of these were leaving California because of drought, and Nevada because the silver mines are worked out."

When the *Christian Visitor* seeks to make capital out of the fact that there are more Church of England patients in the Hospital and more Church of England paupers in the Poor House in Halifax than there are Baptists and Presbyterians it degrades its cause and places itself in an unenviable position. It is a fact which if not well known ought to be so to our contemporary that the great bulk of the poorer classes are of Irish and English descent, and that the Church of England is largely the Church of the very poor. Why this is so can be explained. The Church of England is the Church of the very rich, and Christ has given into her keeping those in whose welfare He always showed the deepest interest, and has provided her with special ability to improve their condition. So far, therefore, from it being a reflection upon the Church it is a source of pride and comfort to us to know that we have had entrusted to us those who are so precious in God's sight; and we speak within bounds when we tell the *Christian Visitor* that one of our churches in

Halifax gives more in money and necessities to relieve the distress of the poor than all the Baptist congregations in Nova Scotia put together. *Presbyterian Witness* please copy.

From the fact that O'Donovan Rossa and other Irish incendiaries live in the United States, and that American politicians of a certain class never rest from casting aspersions upon England and all that is English, it has been presumed by many that the people of the United States are in sympathy with such sentiments. This is an entirely erroneous view, and the following will show that it is so. The dishonesty of the Land Leaguers, our readers will perceive, is made very apparent:—"H," writing in the *New York Sun*, says: Why do these Land Leaguers condemn James Carey, the informer? Have they forgotten that the same League offered large rewards for any information that would lead to the arrest and conviction of the murderers of Lord Cavendish and Mr. Burke? Now that the truth is known, why do the Land Leaguers abuse Carey for exposing the murderers? It is just the information the League offered a reward for. The fact is, if the League funds were not used for the murder of these men and others, the Leaguers would be Carey's friends instead of his enemies. It is clear to every American that the Irish Land League funds go toward supporting murder and murderers in Ireland. No true American can have any sympathy with such an organization. Mr. Parnell must understand that although he may have one million Irishmen at his back in America, there are ten million American bayonets ready to preserve law and order. This is the United States, not Ireland."

The Winnipeg papers are complaining that while their merchants are perfectly solvent, but have to carry large stocks which will be easily disposed of in the spring, the banks refuse to discount or renew their paper, and so have seriously crippled trade. From what travellers say Winnipeg is overstocked, and unless leniency is shown to the mercantile community many failures will occur before the spring fully opens. We hope satisfactory arrangements will be made between the parties, so that the pressure may be for the present removed.

Dispatches dated Saturday, from Durban, represent the condition of South Africa as anything but peaceful. The whole country on the border of the Transvaal is in a state of anarchy. Natives are arming against the Boers. Chief Mapoch has just defeated the Boers, inflicting severe loss. We may soon expect to hear that the returned King, Cetewago, has become interested in the proceedings. We fancy the Boers are not the most lovable neighbours.

The Dominion Government propose to loan \$500,000 to the company interested in building a bridge over the St. John River at St. John. This work is much needed, and will be of great value to the traffic on the Intercolonial, and to the trade of the Maritime Provinces. The bridge will be proceeded with at once.

The attempt on the life of Lady Florence Dixie, on Saturday last at Windsor, is a further evidence of the determined and blood-thirsty spirit animating the Irish incendiary party. This lady, it may be remembered, organized a scheme for the relief of the Irish tenants, and devoted a great many months to its development. More recently she has felt herself called upon to criticize severely the Land League, and turned over what money she had remaining for emigration purposes. It seems that her noble philanthropy has been brutally misunderstood, and her life attempted. This act coming so quickly upon the Westminster explosion, will we fear, create not only a feeling of amazement and disquiet, but of retaliation on the part of the English people which may result in much bloodshed.

THE *Scientific American* says of a new invention which is attracting much attention: "A Portable Electric Lighter for \$5.00 is being extensively sold by the Portable Electric Light Co., of Water street, Boston. It is an economical and safe apparatus for lighting for home and business purposes. Their illustrated catalogue is sent free. We advise our readers to possess themselves of so valuable and ready a light."