

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. 9.

TORONTO, FRIDAY, MAY 6th, 1881.

No. 18.

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE "Baird Lectures" for 1881 are by the Rev. Dr. Matheson, and their subject, "Natural Elements of Revealed Theology." Their design is "to ascertain to what extent the doctrines of revealed religion have a basis in the natural instincts of the human mind."

THE British census returns are already being partially published, while our Canadian affair is dragging its slow length along, with nobody able to give even a guess when it will be finished, but with plenty of people fully able to testify that it is being done in a very slipshod fashion, and will issue in many being registered twice and in still more not being registered at all.

WHEN Robert College at Constantinople was first started it encountered bitter opposition, not only from the Mohammedans, but from the Armenian and Greek Churches. Now there are fifteen or twenty young Moslems among its students; and so thoroughly have the prejudices of the Greek Church been overcome that at the last annual commencement the Greek Patriarch sent a representative to attend the exercises; and in the course of the session he made an address full of commendation of the institution.

THERE is a continued movement towards religious liberty in the State Church of Sweden, which, while it does not assume a solid form of organization, yet shows the general operation of spiritual influences. Voluntary societies, called "Societies of the Lord's Supper," are forming within the Church, which seem to be possessed of an evangelical spirit. They fraternize with our own preachers, and "beg to hear from them how Jesus saves from sin." Indeed, our preachers are in some instances called to minister to these people stately, and are partially supported by them. The growth of these societies seems to detract in some places from the attendance upon the Methodist congregation. Nevertheless, the elements of belief they advocate are indirectly making advances among the people.

LIBERTY is widening and strengthening in France. The soldiers are now released from compulsory attendance on religious services. Protestant officials are no longer obliged to attend mass on public occasions. Religious books, whether sold or given, are no longer the objects of prohibitive laws. A simple declaration is all that is necessary to hold a meeting or deliver a lecture. Public schools may be taught by Protestants as well as by Roman Catholics, and just a few weeks ago perfect freedom for all in respect of burial grounds has been voted by 348 to 150. What is true of France is equally so of Italy, and to a good extent is getting to be so even of Spain. The onward progress of liberty and toleration is becoming as marked and unmistakable as the most sanguine could have anticipated.

THE New York "Evangelist" says: "There is likely to be a decrease of wife-whipping. The Judiciary Committee of the Assembly at Albany has reported for consideration the bill providing for the flogging of all men who lay violent hands upon a woman. The following is the important section: Sec. 1. Whenever, hereafter, any male person shall wilfully beat, bruise, or mutilate his wife or any other female human being, the court or magistrate before whom the offender shall be brought and convicted shall direct the infliction of corporal punishment upon such offender, specifying at the same time the number of strokes or lashes, which shall not be more than twenty-five nor less than ten, which shall be sturdily laid on upon the bare back of said offender, by means of a whip or lash of such proportion and strength as will insure the carrying out of the spirit and letter of this statute. It is further provided that the punishment shall be administered within the prison enclosure in the county where the offence was committed,

in as private a manner as may be, and in the presence of a physician. We trust the bill may become a law."

HERE is an interesting item as giving the drink bill of Great Britain and Ireland, 1880:—

Beer	905,038,976 gallons @ 1s 6d	£67,881,673
British spirits...	28,457,486 " @ 20s...	28,457,486
Foreign "	8,477,512 " @ 44s...	10,173,014
Wine.....	15,852,335 " @ 16s...	12,270,102
British wine, etc.	15,000,000 " @ 2s...	1,500,000

£122,279,275

The area of cultivated land in Great Britain is 32,101,909 acres, and the average rental 30s per acre..... £48,152,863

The area of cultivated land in Ireland is 15,357,856 acres, and the average rental 15s per acre..... £11,518,392

£59,691,255

The drink bill is therefore more than double the entire rental of agricultural land. It also amounts to more than £3 per head for every man, woman and child yearly, and more than £15 per annum for each family—and largely exceeds the entire public revenue.

THE Rev. Newman Hall, writing in the "Independent," takes exception to the doctrine that the Church makes its chief gains by means of periodical revivals. He says in his experience and observation it has been otherwise. The record that he furnishes is similar to many that are made in this country, and which shew so strikingly how what are called great awakenings and occasions of unusual grace are deceptive, through the falling off of those who are published as the trophies of their power. In concluding his article he says: "Should not the Gospel trumpet sound the notes 'Repent! Believe!' week by week? If the regular week day prayer-meetings were crowded by church members earnestly seeking the divine blessing on the ordinary instrumentality; if all professors felt that responsibility to be workers, not waiting for a revival to bring in the hundreds, but each trying to save individuals; if the pew preached, as well as the pulpit, vindicating the doctrine propounded in words by purity and probity and benevolence of life; if, instead of waiting for an occasional torrent, more advantage were taken of the rain that daily falls, the dew that nightly distills, might we not have a revival all the year round?"

WHATEVER Dr. Howard Crosby may be as a temperance man, he is certainly good on Christian work. There are some people who seem anxious to shew a decline in this. In answer to a reporter for the "Christian Union" seeking information on church attendance and work in the city of New York, Dr. Crosby replied thus pointedly and pithily to the series of questions asked. 1. I know of no decline whatever in church attendance. I think things are just as they have always been. 2. I think the sermons of to-day are as effective as they ever were. 3. All such things as Church fairs, private theatricals, etc., do decrease spirituality, but I don't believe there are any more of them now than there have long been. 4. I don't know any difference in Church work, except that there is a great deal more of it, and that it is spread over a larger surface. 5. I don't think the devil is a bit more active now than he has always been, and I think a good deal of modern thought is a modern humbug. I don't think modern thought is any better than ancient thought. I think there is a great deal said about this nineteenth century that is all bosh, and the old doctrines are just as precious and just as much prized as they ever were."

EX-PRESIDENT HAYES has recently written a letter which ought to set at rest the ridiculous stories afloat about his inconsistencies in the matter of wine drinking: "When I became President," he says, "I was fully convinced that whatever might be the case in other countries and with other people, in our climate, and with the excitable, nervous temperament of our people, the habitual use of intoxicating drinks was not safe. I regarded the danger of the habit as es-

pecially great in political and official life. It seemed to me that to exclude liquors [from the White House] would be wise and useful as an example, and would be approved by good people generally. The suggestion was particularly agreeable to Mrs. Hayes. She had been a total abstinence woman from childhood. We had never used liquors in our own home, and it was determined to continue our home custom in this respect in our official residence in Washington, as we had done at Columbus. I was not a total abstainer when I became President, but the discussion which arose over the change at the Executive Mansion soon satisfied me that there was no half-way house in the matter. During the greater part of my term, at least during the last three years I have been in practice, as in theory, a persistent total abstinence man, and shall continue to be so. All statements, including the one you sent me, inconsistent with the foregoing, are untrue and without foundation."

MANY of our readers will remember the visit paid a few months ago to Canada and the States by M. Reveillaud and the Rev. George Dodds, in advocacy of the claims of the McAll Mission to the working men of France. From a letter lately received by the Rev. Dr. Reid from Mr. Dodds, we learn that the work in France is extending with a rapidity which fills even the most sanguine with astonishment. Mr. Dodds says: "It has doubled in three years and four months the number of its stations. We have just opened a new meeting at Versailles, and M. Reveillaud gives us most welcome help from week to week. The work has succeeded beyond all expectation at Roubaix and Croix; these towns along with Lille and Tourcoing are the centres of industry in flax, cotton and silk; the people are either Flemish or of Flemish origin, much quieter and less demonstrative than the people in Lyons and Bordeaux, or even our audiences in Paris." Audiences of upwards of 400 workingmen meet to hear the Gospel, and to join in singing the hymns. Mr. Dodds adds that a new station outside of Paris has been opened at a place from which the preachers had been driven by the violence of the priest and people, and now of a Saturday evening as many as 150 gather for worship, and there is not the slightest disturbance. All this is very encouraging, and may well lead all God's people to cry, "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes!"

EVERYWHERE, except in the halls of the Vatican where the gloom of the dark ages yet lingers and prevails, a spirit of enlightened catholicity is gaining ground in the counsels of the ruling powers. We have already referred to the change in Spain. We have just received from Rev. S. L. Potter, of Teheran, Persia, a translation of a recent order from the Office for Foreign Affairs, sent to the Governor of Hamadan, the central province of Persia, "in the month of Safar the Vicarious, 1298," corresponding to January, 1881, in regard to the persecution "of certain Jews who have chosen the Christian faith" by other Jews. The Government, it seems, have frequently remonstrated against the acts of persecution, and now, in sending this new order, they say decidedly, "Let a Jew choose the Christian faith, or a Christian accept the Jewish faith, they should not incur opposition or molestation from anybody. With all the previous injunctions, what reason is there that some arrangement has not been effected for removing the oppression on the part of the Jews?" And then it peremptorily directs the Governor to "give such exertion and attention to the matter that hereafter eternally no hindrance shall be placed in the way of those certain individuals and persons of the Jews and Armenians who wish to enter another faith. And in other respects also, you will take care that the Jews and Armenians dwelling in Hamadan shall enjoy rest and quietness. What further writing is necessary?" It is time for Pope Leo and the Sacred College to reconsider their unchristian and obsolete policy, when even the Shah of Persia admits the inalienable right of his Christian and Jewish subjects to choose their faith without molestation.—*Christian Weekly.*