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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

FROM some of our British exchanges we learn that a discussion is going on in the High Church papers on the part unconfirmed children ought to take in "offering the Holy Sacrifice" and "adoring the Presence." In a letter on the subject, the Rev. J. W. Horsley, the chaplain of Clerkenwell Prison, introduces the questions of private confession and absolution; and he says "I could, and would, if necessary, hear or make a confession in a pair-oar on the river, or under a lamp-post in the street." When is all this foolery to end? and how?

NEVER has Toronto seen such a funeral as that of the late Hon. George Brown, which took place on the 12th inst. Crowds from all quarters of the country were present, and the general and genuine manifestation of sorrow for the dead and of sympathy with the widowed wife and fatherless children gave the most unquestionable proof of how deeply the heart of the country had been touched and how powerful was the hold which the dead Senator had secured, not only upon the respect of the people of this Province, but upon their personal and unfeigned affection.

THE May meetings held in this city during last week were, upon the whole, fairly successful, though the proceedings were not of such general interest as to call for any lengthened report. The speeches were all very respectable, and the different reports were in general very encouraging. The Bible Society had rather a falling off to report, both in the way of income and issues. The Tract Society was reported to be holding on in its useful, unostentatious course. The Women's, and the Young Men's Christian Associations were also shewn to be in healthy and vigorous operation.

"We are sorry," says the Lucknow "Times," "to learn that Dr. Valentine, the well-known medical missionary at Jeypore, is compelled to go home, completely broken in health. He takes also with him his motherless girl, Nellie. Many, as he departs, will remember him in their prayers. The last numbers of the 'Missionary Record' and of the 'Children's Magazine' contain deeply appreciative notices of the death of his little daughter Ettie, which followed so soon after that of his wife—a sketch of whose devoted missionary labours appeared in the November number of the 'Record' from the pen of Dr. Shoolbred."

ON the 26th ult. a series of evangelistic services was commenced in Rome by Dr. Somerville of Glasgow. Despite the opposition of the municipality, which, pandering to clerical intolerance, set its veto on the contract already concluded by him with the proprietors of the Argentine Theatre, and sanctioned by the Government, the reverend doctor was able to address 1,500 persons in the Alhambra. A large crowd had assembled outside the Argentine in ignorance of the veto. At the close of the meeting Dr. Somerville was by acclamation invited to continue the series, which at Florence and Naples has already attracted such numerous audiences, and which nowhere but in Rome has encountered municipal opposition.

THE five local Synods of the Irish Presbyterian Church have all recently held their yearly meetings. There was not, it appears, much work done at any or all of them. The Belfast "Witness" throws out the following suggestion which might be worth considering in Canada as well: "The thought has sometimes occurred to us—Could not these annual Synodical gatherings be more utilized than they are for serving the cause of the Church? They transact the business brought forward, and transact it well, but could not the opportunity be taken advantage of for serving the cause of the Church more in the respective districts over which the Synods preside? Could not, for example, a great public gathering be held on the

evening of one of the days of meeting, at which addresses bearing on the work of the Church, on the state of religion, or kindred topics, could be delivered by ministers or laymen selected beforehand? Would not such an arrangement increase the usefulness of the Synods, and subserve good and great public ends? We throw out the suggestion. Perhaps it may be taken up by some one competent to carry it out."

WHILE Scotland sends seven Conservatives to the House of Commons, out of a representation of sixty, Wales, out of one of thirty, sends just two. Mr. Henry Richard, in a letter lately published, tries to explain the phenomenon in the following fashion: He tells us that in the recent political contests the influence of the aristocracy was almost universally and most actively given to the Conservatives, and that many of these aristocratic promoters of Jingoism enjoy a deservedly wide and warm personal popularity. Yet, notwithstanding all their popularity and exertions, the candidates they strenuously supported were, with two exceptions, rejected in several cases by majorities much larger than even the Liberals themselves had expected. And why? Because, in the first place, the Welsh population are pronouncedly Nonconformist in their religious connection and service; and they know right well that the Tories are the intolerant supporters of the intruded Episcopalian Church. The nobility and gentry, too, though kindly in their relations with the people, shew no sympathy with their religious convictions or national aspirations. They adhere to the Episcopacy whose pretensions loyal Welshmen so keenly distrust, and they scorn to learn the native language which the true-hearted Welshmen persist in loving as their mother tongue. The Nonconformists of Wales are, therefore, in a measure Liberal from necessity as well as conviction, and there seems little likelihood of their ever being entrapped into the Conservative fold, unless the Conservative gentry, yielding to party exigency, consent to the disestablishment of the intruded Church, and conform more fully to the national and religious sentiment of the country.

IN reference to the removal of Dr. John Gibson from Chicago to London, the Ministerial Association of the Chicago Presbytery at its last meeting adopted the following minute. "Whereas, our beloved brother, Rev. J. Monro Gibson, has felt called upon to resign his pastoral charge within our bounds, and to accept a call to the Presbyterian church of St. John's Wood, London, and we, the members of the Chicago Presbytery and his associates in the work of the ministry, desire to convey to him some further expression of our high regard and Christian love, therefore resolved, That we do hereby, as a Presbytery, give expression to our conviction of the very marked and signal usefulness with which it has pleased God to attend the labours of Dr. Gibson during his residence in this city. His ministry has been rich in precious result not only to his own church, but to all the churches of our order, and to the cause of evangelical religion throughout the city and far beyond. We rejoice in the substantial fruit of his Christian scholarship, in his fidelity both as a pastor and a presbyter, and equally in the influence which has been so constantly felt amongst us of his cheerful, wise and humble life. We tender to him our sympathy in the painful separation which he feels called to make from a Church and from Christian brethren by whom he is so warmly loved, and can only add our heartfelt hope and prayer that in his new field of labour God will give him open access to the people, and clothe his ministry with increasing power. And, finally, we would address ourselves to the Presbytery of London, to which Dr. Gibson has now been transferred, and entreat them to receive him from us as a brother-greatly beloved, a helper of the faith of many, as one destined, we trust, to be a new band between us and our Christian brethren of England.

SOMETIMES rather whimsical mistakes are made from the similarity of the names of distinguished or notorious individuals. A worthy Presbyterian exchange, on the other side of the lines, a week or two

ago afforded rather a curious illustration of this. It made Professor Blackie of the Edinburgh University do duty for Professor W. G. Blaikie, D.D., of the Free Church College in that city, and, forthwith dubbed the erratic and anything but orthodox Professor of Greek "one of the prominent men of the Free Church of Scotland, and also distinguished as a worker for the general interests of Calvinistic Presbyterianism in Great Britain and the world." Is Saul also among the prophets? We should just think he was, when that most genuine but most eccentric and most unorthodox (not to put it positively) of the sons of men and genius John Stuart Blackie—does duty as a champion of Presbyterian Calvinism and becomes the substitute of that most proper, most particular, we had almost said most prim, and—well—slightly prosaic gentleman, who has an "i" in his last name instead of a "c," and whom his greatest enemy has never once thought of accusing either of heresy or genius. To think of Professor W. G. Blaikie being fathered with the mocking suggestion that was first, we believe, thrown out by the Edinburgh "Scotsman" to the effect that a few of the ablest sermon writers and preachers of Scotland should be detailed for the special purpose of composing first rate sermons, a few hundred copies of each of which should be sent in good time to be on hand for Sabbath morning, so that all the duller brethren might read them to their congregations, and thus there be a systematic course of instruction going on over large districts at the same time, is so awful that it might be worth the excellent Free Church doctor's while to put out a card certifying that he is *not* the gentleman referred to. In the absence of such a disclaimer, we put in this modest caveat for the benefit of our Presbyterian and other fellow editors in the States, who, in the prospect of Professor Blaikie's appearance at the Pan-Presbyterian Conference at Philadelphia might seek to honour him and explain his position and views by quoting the following, which refers to the "other" Blackie: "He thinks our preaching work is overdone; that there should be more public catechetical instruction, and more attention given to praise and psalm-singing. Then he would have a special class of ministers, mighty in the Word, who traversing the country at stated times, would utilize the pulpits of certain districts, so that one really good sermon might be preached to a score of congregations in the course of a month to the great advantage of preachers and hearers. But he thinks the great thing wanted at present in the Presbyterian Church as a civilizing force is an extensive cultivation of the "psalmodic element." It is the same mistake that leads to the following closing sentence, in which, no doubt, to his own great surprise and amusement the celebrated Professor of Greek and believer in Gaelic is made the great propounder and advocate of the ideas and plans of the Chalmerses, Candlishes and Guthries of a past generation: "In his 'Curiosities of Literature' the elder Disraeli tells us that 'the history of Psalm-singing is the history of the Reformation.' In many of our congregations at present it is becoming an unknown art. Therefore do we rejoice to see a man of Professor Blackie's acumen and position calling public attention to the vast importance of it, as well as to the advisability of introducing such alterations in our ecclesiastical arrangements as would promote the furtherance and the strength of our divinely-appointed Presbyterianism. Indeed, there is hardly one of the points which he has now been advocating, the importance and utility of which did not commend themselves to the minds of Chalmers, and Candlish, and Guthrie in the past generation. Learned leisure, more evangelistic work, more public catechizing, more powerful preaching, and less of it, more psalm-singing—these are some of the present wants of Presbyterianism." For the versatility, fun, frolic, exuberant "go" and matchless self-confidence, as well as occasionally the delicious nonsense, of genius, commend us to John Stuart Blackie; but we beg to repeat that he is neither the authoritative expounder of the Calvinistic principles nor the recognized and honoured reformer of Presbyterian practices of the present day, on the other side of the Atlantic or this.