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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

IN the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church the report of the committee condemning the liquor traffic licensed by government and providing for the excommunication of such Church members as deal in spirituous liquors and rent property to tavern-keepers was, after a heated debate, unanimously adopted.

AMONG the gratifying reports which were made at a recent meeting of the committee of the Pan-Presbyterian Council, one which especially evoked feelings of pleasure was to the effect that several Episcopalian gentlemen had expressed a desire to be permitted to share in the honour of entertaining the delegates. "Such a spirit," says the *Belfast Witness*, "is worthy of all praise, and augurs well for the reception which the Council will receive in Belfast, and for the spirit in which its deliberations will be regarded, not only by Presbyterians, but among other Protestants."

THE *United Presbyterian* in the following makes a point: It has been said that the house in which the Methodist Conference met in Philadelphia was badly ventilated, and that this caused irritation in the minds of delegates who would otherwise have been calm and amiable. It was not an unusual experience. Want of fresh air often causes bad temper and truculent debates, and many a question, no doubt, gets its final and often improper direction from the delinquencies of the sexton. Without meaning or knowing it, that official frequently gives shape to important church legislation.

LAST week a crime of unusual brutality was perpetrated near Blyth, Ont. Two neighbouring farmers and their families had for a long time a bitter grudge against each other. They happened to meet on the road one morning. Long pent up hatred found vent in bitter recrimination. Words soon led to blows. An old man named Maynes was knocked down and terribly maltreated. Before becoming unconscious, he exclaimed, "that's enough," but his assailants were too passionate to be pitiful, their father saying to them in reply: "Give him the boots, boys." At last he relented, but it was too late. Mynes died soon after from the terrible injuries he had received.

THE *Christian Intelligencer* urges that "Sabbath desecration is proving to be not profitable. At Coney Island, where the Lord's day is utterly disregarded, it has been difficult to obtain competent and responsible men to conduct the hotels, because they do not pay, or pay so little as to make no adequate return for the work and worry expended. The restaurants in the same locality change hands pretty much every season, because they, too, 'don't pay.' The stock of the railways leading to the island has only a nominal price, because it is earning nothing. In this city the Sabbath opening of the Exhibition of Water Colours was a disappointment in the matter of revenue."

AMONG the many suggestions made from time to time as to the best methods of dealing with pauperism that recently offered by the Rev. D. J. Macdonnell is both wise and opportune. Mr. Macdonnell asks the Civic Works committee to reserve a portion of the city's work until the winter months, when it would enable the House of Industry managers to apply the labour test to applicants for charity without incurring unnecessary expense. The idea is a good one. Tramps are known to flock to cities where soup kitchens and easy-going goal regulations prevail in the winter months. They are equally decided in giving a wide berth to those places that present the very fair proposition of work first, pay afterwards. It is likely that Mr. Macdonnell's suggestion will be adopted.

AT the late meeting of the Unitarian Society in Belfast, the Rev. H. Rylett, minister of a congregation near that city, and the Parnellite candidate for the county of Tyrone at the last election, said Unitarians

would live in hope. Referring to the Presbyterian Church, he said that he failed to see any indication whatever that the Church, or any distinguished members of it, had in any sense left the old bearings of the Westminster Assembly of divines. Unitarians, as a society and a religious body, were, in Ireland, face to face with the most dogmatic Calvinism that now remained, he believed, in the civilized world. This statement of Mr. Rylett and its truthfulness (witnessed by the applause of the meeting) are gratifying proofs of the theological position of Irish Presbyterianism.

THE Soudanese are favoured or afflicted, as events may prove, with another false prophet. Another adventurer aspires to the title of El Mehdi. These pretenders to prophetic authority may, by their conflicting claims, hasten a solution of the embarrassing problem in which England and other nations are at present so deeply interested. It is said that the latest prophetic pretender has succeeded in securing a considerable following and is now able to enter the lists with his more formidable antagonist. In a conflict between his forces and those of El Mehdi near Darfour, it is stated that the latter have been defeated. Late despatches also state that several Italian priests and sisters of mercy have been put to death, and others cruelly treated by the false prophet's followers at El Obeid.

THE efforts now being made in Italy to unite the various evangelical churches are progressing satisfactorily. A short time ago the "Assemblea Promotrice" met in Florence, at which the Waldensian, Free, Methodist, and Baptist Churches were represented. The meeting took place in the Presbyterian Church, and the Rev. J. R. Macdougall acted as president. There was the utmost cordiality of feeling among the delegates. It was agreed that a union of the churches was desirable, and that under the name of the "Congresso Evangelico Italiano," an Assembly of representatives of the various evangelical churches should be instituted. A few days later, a number of representative men, among them Alessandro Gavazzi, both of the Waldensian and Free Church of Italy met at Fiesole and considered the possibility of uniting and forming but one Church. The union movement in Italy at present is very promising.

AT the recent meeting of the Royal Society in Ottawa, the Rev. Prof. Bryce, of Winnipeg, read "A Plea for a Canadian Society," which was very well received. He traced the discoveries made by the earlier explorers and fur traders, and pointed out that what was now known of Canada was in a great measure due to the fur trade. He gave a list of rare and valuable books and manuscripts on the early history of Canada, all of which are very rare, and many of which can scarcely be obtained at any price. He suggested that the Society should undertake the publication in cheap form of some of these annually, and thus do a work similar to that accomplished by the Hakluyt Society, the Camden Club, and other associations. He pointed out that if these works were published as he suggested under the auspices of the Royal Society, a sufficient number of them would no doubt be disposed of to make the work of publication self-sustaining. After some discussion, a committee was appointed to carry out the suggestion.

ANOTHER ghastly crime has been added to the dark list. Last week, while a pressman was going to his early morning labour, he found a man lying on the side-walk of one of the Toronto streets in a pool of blood. Assistance having been procured, the wretched victim of a brutal tragedy breathed his last without being able to utter a single word that could throw any light on the dark mystery. The facts elicited at the coroner's inquest reveal that drink and immorality had brought the unfortunate man to a sad and untimely end. The deed was witnessed by a deaf mute from the window of his dwelling, and though his evidence in several important particulars is incomplete, his examination, by means of writing, was in some respects

singularly graphic. Several persons suspected of being implicated in the crime are at present in custody. Whatever mystery may hang over this deed of darkness, one thing is plain enough, had the poor man been temperate and virtuous he would not have been at the place and in the company he was the last night of his life. The way of the transgressor is hard and the end is harder still.

CHURCHES holding the principles of Congregationalism have of late years found it necessary to supplement their efforts by instituting associations so that there might be greater unity of action and that the general work they undertake may be more effective. Though contending for the principle of independency they have discovered that union is strength. Among our good neighbours, the Baptists, this tendency has of late been apparent. Last week an interesting meeting of the Baptist Union was held at Brantford. Questions of great importance were discussed. An influential section desired that a doctrinal creed should be formulated. On this practical question strong differences of opinion exist. There is a movement also for procuring a denominational hymn-book. Another subject that evoked warm discussion arose out of the policy to be pursued in the North-West. Some hold that the brethren there should obtain the help they need from the American churches, while others maintain that it is the duty of the Churches in Canada to aid the work within the Dominion. The Rev. Dr. Cochrane conveyed to the Union the fraternal courtesies of the Presbyterian Church.

THE lengthy conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Philadelphia closed last Wednesday. Among the many conclusions reached, the following may be mentioned: The Committee on the State of the Church presented a report recommending that no divorces be granted except on grounds justified by the Scriptures, and that a commission be appointed to confer with the governors of all States to endeavour to secure the enactment of uniform laws on the subject. The first clause was amended, making it the sense of the Conference that divorces shall not be granted but for adultery, and anyone divorced for such reason, if the guilty party, cannot be married again by any minister of the Church. A resolution was also adopted, though a minority report was presented against it, that neither coloured office-bearers, members, nor Sabbath school children be discriminated against. A series of resolutions was adopted denouncing polygamy, and declaring it the sense of the representatives of Methodism that it is the duty of Congress without delay to pass such laws as will summarily depose from political and official power in the territories of the United States those who either practice or advocate polygamy as a civil or religious right.

IN a paper by Mr. John Reade on "The Making of Canada," read before the Royal Society, the following passage occurs: The population of the Dominion, made up of the best blood of Western and Central Europe, the pick of the Latin, Teutonic, and Celtic races, has every element necessary to form a great nation. In physique and intellectual powers the average Canadian is certainly the equal of the average Frenchman, Briton, or German. At present the national elements composing the whole are distinct, and attention to the question of origins at this transition stage in our history will be of advantage for the determination of certain problems hereafter. But there must come a time when a Canadian will be simply a Canadian, as an Englishman is an Englishman, whether of Celtic, Saxon, or Norman descent. Already there are Canadian characteristics in which natives of all origins share. Every year that tendency will become more marked, and with it the growth of a national spirit. Great as has been our progress as allied national communities, it will be much greater when we are all really one. Unity is in reality our great desideratum, and it should be the aim of every patriotic and public-spirited man to use his influence for its attainment.