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Notes of the Week.

Two very important academic addresses were recently delivered. At Toronto University, President Daniel Wilson devoted the greater part of his inaugural to a consideration of the question of federation of colleges. It was manly, straightforward and consistent. The other was delivered at Queen's College, Kingston, by the Rev. Principal Grant. The learned Principal was equally outspoken. There is no mistaking the fact that the federation scheme will have to wait for a time; Queen's College has flatly refused to move. Of course its officials, professors and alumni have a perfect right to take the position they have done, and it is equally natural that Principal Grant should endorse the action of his University; but it will have the effect of delaying or rendering incomplete the contemplated union of higher educational interests.

A GENERAL election is usually an exciting time, but that now approaching in Great Britain is of far more than ordinary interest. The defeat of the Gladstone Ministry by the unlooked-for combination of Conservatives and Parnellites makes the present situation all the more exciting, bringing in, as it does, an element of some uncertainty. The use that has been made of the Irish agitation by leaders in both parties does not presage either a very wise or satisfactory abatement of Irish unreason, discontent and lawlessness. In Scotland Church Disestablishment is a burning question, and is being debated on the hustings with a fierce passionateness betokening that if not now within the region of practical politics it will soon be. The younger leaders of the respective parties are working with all their might to secure a triumph at the polls. The large number of newly-enfranchised voters is a great stimulus to energetic oratory and lithe adaptation.

THE effort to bring good music within the reach of the people is in every respect a commendable one. Enterprising parties in Toronto have inaugurated a series of Monday Popular Concerts which are designed to afford an opportunity for hearing some of the masterpieces of the most distinguished composers. The opening concert on Monday last was, as it deserved to be, a decided success. The programme was such as to commend it to all genuine lovers of good music, and the rendition, whether by the string quartette, the pianist, or the melodious-voiced cantatrice, Emma Juch, was not only all that the most exacting could desire, but was a source of genuine pleasure to every listener. A new music hall for Toronto is at last recognized as a felt want, and when it is provided, as there is now every reason to expect it will be, musical entertainments of the highest quality will be brought within the reach of all, which at present, from lack of a proper building of sufficient size, is an impossibility.

LIKE their ancestors the Danes are a brave and liberty-loving people. They are ready to fight in the face of overwhelming disadvantages against foreign invasion. Single handed in 1864 they opposed for a time the united forces of Prussia and Austria, over the Schleswig-Holstein quarrel. Since those days the democratic spirit has been growing stronger among these robust Norsemen, and a long continued contest between king and people has been the result. For

years the king and his ministers have not enjoyed the confidence of the Folkething and feeling has of late grown very bitter. The popular House has successively refused to pass the budget and the revenue has been raised by royal mandate. Matters have gone so far that revolution is openly talked of, and the greatest excitement now prevails at Copenhagen, where last week an unsuccessful attempt was made to assassinate Estrupp, the obnoxious premier. In a struggle like that now taking place in Denmark an unyielding king has no chance.

THE *New York Evangelist* says. "The fine new City Mission Church in Broome Street, New York, memorial of those royal Christian workers and large-hearted givers, the late William E. Dodge and Apollos R. Wetmore, has been especially fortunate in its opening and introduction to the masses resident in its immediate neighbourhood. Messrs Moody and Sankey were there on Sabbath and during the first days of the present week, and very large numbers attended upon their multiplied services, and good was done. How much, we do not undertake to say, as that always depends on the faithfulness, the zeal, and constancy with which the sturdy strokes of the evangelist pioneer, be he Mr. Moody or some one else, are followed up. A good, even a grand, beginning has been made there, and what has been achieved in this average down-town section of the city, may be in another and yet another. The churches only need to put themselves in array, to brighten and familiarize themselves with their armour, and having taken this initial step, those next in order will follow 'as the day the night.' The mere attitude of readiness magnified in the parable."

THE second meeting of the Toronto Ministerial Association was held on the 19th instant in Shaftesbury Hall—Dr. Thomas, the President, in the chair. The Rev. A. H. McGregor opened the meeting with prayer. A plan for services at the Insane Asylum was reported by Rev. C. A. Cook, and adopted by the Association. The claims of the Christian Temperance Mission were warmly advocated by the Rev. G. M. Milligan, B.A., and the members of the Association were urged to attend the annual meeting on the 27th inst. in the Metropolitan Church. Professor Clarke, of McMaster Hall, read a most interesting paper on "Phases of Religious Life in the United States." Sketches of eminent preachers and their style of sermonizing were given, Dr. Duryea and Dr. Phillips Brooks being particularly mentioned. The discussion which followed was led by Dr. Rose, who mentioned that he was himself eighty-one years of age, and that during a ministry of sixty years he had scarcely failed to preach a single Sabbath. Dr. Meacham, late of Japan, is to give the next paper, "Reminiscences of Missionary Life." The meeting was closed with prayer by the Rev. Samuel Houston, of Cooke's Church, Kingston.

A RECENT issue of the *Presbyterian Messenger* contains a short letter by Dr. Oswald Dykes, on the importance of the Shorter Catechism, from which the following extracts are taken. We are impressed with the great need that exists for systematic doctrinal teaching, both in the home and in the school. Experience has shown, we believe, that unless some handy "form of sound words," setting forth the essential truths of Christianity in an orderly fashion, be committed to memory in youth, the usual Bible lesson fails to convey such an intelligent or comprehensive acquaintance with the scheme of revealed and saving doctrine as is to be desired. Without a catechism, in short, to serve as a peg on which to hang the weekly instruction, reduce it all to system, and fix its results in the memory, much of our teaching is lost, for it leaves in the child's mind only confused fragments of Bible knowledge. We Presbyterians possess and have long used for this purpose a manual—the Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Assembly—which, though of English origin, has been little known to English children. There are some who complain

of it as difficult of comprehension; and some also who would like to see its language modernized and made less technical. Still, it is by far the best at present in existence for the end in view. So much will probably be admitted by all, and if by any means its contents could be mastered by our young people, or even if its terms could be lodged in their memory, few will question but we should have in the future a set of pupils far better instructed than many we are turning out at present.

It is a poor time, says the *Independent*, to decry prohibition when it is working so successfully in Maine and Canada and the West and South. Maine has given it a full trial, and is so well satisfied with it that it puts the principle in its constitution by the handsome majority of nearly 50,000, and as the years pass and the law gets a firmer grip of the traffic in the cities and larger towns, this majority will grow. Every day proves prohibition to be the great conservator of peace and prosperity. Similar testimony is coming already from Iowa. When the State adopted prohibition, a year or two ago, some of the wisacres predicted that business would decline and prosperity take wings. The saloon, they contended, helps business, and makes trade move. There would be vacant shops and houses, silent mills and deserted villages, as the result of driving out the enterprising saloons. How is it in the capital city? Let the *Iowa State Register* answer. "Let any man who scoffs at prohibition and its material good, go about Des Moines to-day, even this early, and locate the former sites of saloons—sites then occupied by old shanties, and rented by saloon-keepers who employ no clerks and no help, and who robbed labouring men and their families daily of their earnings—and then compare the same properties, their value to the city and to society, with the large brick blocks erected on them in the last two seasons, or since the prohibitory law went into effect, and inspect the business now being carried on on the same sites, the character of the business, the amount of capital invested to carry it on, adding so largely to the taxable wealth of the city, and the value of better-paid employment, and then let him answer the question himself, which is best for the city, these brick blocks and the new stores, and the large employment given by the new stores, or the old, rotten shanties and the saloons in them that used to be?"

THOSE inclined to be depressed by the cry that Christianity is declining might study with profit the reports of the seventy-fifth annual meeting of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions held in Boston last week. The unusually large attendance and the great interest manifested are plain indications that faith in the power of the Gospel is steadily growing and impelling to greater and more earnest action than ever for its extension. The immense audience that assembled in the Music Hall in the evening was addressed by Joseph Cook, Dr. Barrows, of Chicago; Dr. Behrends, of Brooklyn, and Dr. William M. Taylor, of New York, who, among other things, said: I do feel absolutely certain about everything within the pages of this Book (laying his hand upon the Bible). And that is really what we have to deal with in missionary enterprise. One point about that is all I would like to impress upon you at this time. The work before us is the conversion of the world, how is that to be accomplished? One of the oldest missionary hymns in existence gives us the answer, the seventh Psalm: "God shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him." It is through a revived Church that the world is to be converted. There is action here, and reaction, too. The Church that has no missionaries will very soon have no ministers, that is true; but, on the other side, the Church that has no spiritual life will not send forth any missionaries. And as we are looking forward to-night, we see that the world can be saved to a spiritual revival, a baptism of the Holy Ghost upon the churches of Christ; here at home is the world to be ultimately evangelized. Now that comes to the bosom of every church member here, it lies near to the heart of every minister of the Gospel here. Our part of this great work is to secure the revival of the churches at home; to pray. "God be merciful unto us and bless us, that Thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving help among all nations." This revival of religion will send a culminating wave around the world.