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Notes of the Week.

SUBSCRIBERS to THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN would confer a favour by forwarding by postal card the names and addresses of friends not now receiving the paper to whom it will be sent free by mail till the close of 1885. This offer is made with the view of interesting members of the Presbyterian Church who are unacquainted with the character and objects of the paper and to induce them to become subscribers.

THE friends of temperance in York county are working steadily and energetically in favour of the Scott Act. At a recent meeting of the Scarborough Auxiliary Association, it was stated that the petitions in favour of the Act were receiving numerous signatures throughout the whole county. It is expected that in York the Scott Act will be submitted to the popular vote early next year. Its friends are confident that it will be carried.

AT the regular meeting of the Toronto Ministerial Association, an application by the Teachers' Association, desiring an expression of opinion as to the regulations by which religious instruction is to be restricted to the selections from Scripture recently published led to a lengthy and animated discussion. The conclusion arrived at was that if there is ambiguity in the regulations, the Minister of Education was the proper person to give the desired explanation.

APPRECIATION of good music is growing in Toronto. The laudable efforts of the promoters of the Monday Popular Concerts have received most encouraging support. From the start, as they deserved, they have been an unqualified success. The third of the series was attended by greater numbers than any of the preceding. Masterpieces of distinguished composers were rendered with exquisite skill and taste, while the graceful singing of Emma Thursby evoked enthusiastic admiration.

SIR WILLIAM MUIR, former Governor of the North-West Province of India, in recently taking leave of the Free Church Missionary Society, said that every fully-equipped mission in that country should have, as part of its effective force, a woman trained to the work of an evangelist. The hundred and twenty-five millions of women in that country had been too much overlooked. They could be readily reached by those of their own sex, and these should be sent among them. Sir William is now Principal of Edinburgh University, and his influence for good in that venerable seat of learning will be great.

REV. A. C. MACDONALD, of Inverness, formerly of Thamesford, Ontario, in a letter to Mr. John Mackay, of Hamilton, expresses his conviction that any reforms worth having, relative to the land laws especially, will be obtained through the co-operation and influence of the owners of the soil, and not by an agitation which sets class against class. This conviction leads him to favour the candidature of the Marquis of Stafford in Sutherland, as his power can give the Crofters what no mere representative in Parliament could give. Mr. Macdonald's long study of the Crofter problem, says the *Christian Leader*, gives peculiar value to his opinion.

At a two-days' conference in Sydney of the Episcopal Church Society, attended by laymen as well as the clergy, the merits of the voluntary system were discussed, and it was agreed that there need be no fear of a fairly efficient minister lacking support under it. The opinion was favoured that it would be well to have a central fund from which all stipends should be paid. Such a fund would act as a buffer between pastors and their people. It was maintained by several speakers that the clergy should confine themselves to spiritual work and leave the financing to the laity. The practice of starving out inefficient ministers was generally denounced.

If an English newspaper in speaking of Riel had made a geographical slip it would have occasioned little surprise; but we were taken aback to see in our Chicago contemporary, the *Interior*, the following paragraph: "While our paper is going to the press, it is probable that Riel, the British Columbian rebel, will be expiating his crimes on the scaffold. The singular anomaly is here presented of a bad man, one who would have injustice done him if he were not hung, who is the champion of a just cause. It is bad policy, in a politic sense, for the Dominion authorities to hang him, because he stands for the rights of a people who have been wronged, and they choose to consider that his execution is a menace against them."

At last the shock of war has been felt in the Balkan Principalities. Servia, backed, it is understood, by Austria, has taken the initiative. Although the present condition of affairs is due to Bulgaria and Roumelia, the Bulgarians have not been able to hold their own. So far the Servian army has swept everything before it. There has been severe fighting, many lives lost and numerous prisoners taken; but the Bulgarian forces have been unable to check the advance of the hardy Serbs. The Conference seems powerless to provide a solution of the entanglements, which threaten to become more complicated. Greece is ready to make a strike in her own interest, Turkish battalions are ready to enter on the fray, Russia and Austria are watching events. The gathering war cloud may emit its thunderbolts at any moment.

It is a curious circumstance that in Ontario more than one attempt has been made to wreak vengeance on some of the more prominent supporters of the Scott Act. Only a short time since, the dwellings of two respectable residents in Orangeville were injured by means of the deadly explosive, the inmates fortunately receiving no serious injury. Now it transpires that in Barrie a dynamite cartridge with a lighted fuse attached was picked up on the verandah of a house whose occupant was a prominent advocate of the Scott Act in Simcoe county. Such dastardly deeds meet with universal condemnation, and men base enough to resort to such weapons, in order to gratify their revengeful spirit on those who seek to discharge their duty conscientiously, ought to have the full measure of the law meted out to them.

SMALL-POX, which has wrought such havoc in Montreal, is steadily abating in that city. The returns show that the number of deaths is about half what it was a few weeks ago. As soon as firm, energetic and intelligent measures were enforced, vaccination, isolation and disinfection told at once. The city is fortunate in having for Mayor a gentleman whose sagacity and firmness enabled him to cope with the prejudice and ignorance which, had scope been given them, would have permitted the scourge to decimate the city. The Mayor was ably sustained by the good sense and intelligence of the principal French-Canadian and English citizens. It is sincerely hoped that in a short time the epidemic will have entirely disappeared, and that those among whom its ravages were greatest will remember the lessons taught by the terrible visitation. The same disease has made its appearance in Charlottetown, P. E. I., but the prompt measures taken will in all likelihood prevent it from spreading.

It is not often, says the *Guelph Mercury*, that our judges pronounce the sentence of imprisonment for life in Canada in any other case than where there is every reason to believe that a murderer is insane. But, at the Ottawa assizes, Mr. Justice Rose pronounced that dreadful doom on no less than eight young men of the city. Five of them had been found guilty of violent outrage upon a respectable young lady, and the other three, of a similar outrage upon another. But for the jury's recommendation to mercy, his Lordship said he would have imposed the death sentence. The people of Canada will be glad to know that there is at least one judge in the Dominion who takes a proper view of the heinousness of these outrages upon the person, which of late have become so frequent, and who remembers that the crime of forcible violation is a capital one, punishable with death. Too many lustful blackguards have been allowed to get off with only very light punishment, so light, indeed, that the fear of the consequences has ceased to be deterrent. It is sincerely to be hoped that Mr. Justice Rose's sentence will be used as a precedent by judges who hitherto have shown a timid reluctance to deal sternly with offenders of the Ottawa stamp, and that we may soon witness a sensible diminution of such abominable crimes.

THE *Interior* has been prosecuting a chemical analysis, and here is the result: Mr. Beecher preached in Centenary Methodist Church, Chicago, last Sabbath. His sermon, like all that he has preached since the conclusion of his nonsensical series on Evolution, was singularly rich, spiritual, evangelical. It was one of those sermons which have won for him a great Christian following in all lands. Lord Byron said of himself that he had no character, and all critics who have studied him agree in his statement concerning himself. It is equally true of Mr. Beecher. He is a bundle of contradictions which defy reconciliation so as to show a unit—a character. His recent sermons would be moonshine in a fog if his assaults on evangelical faith had any truth in them. His lecture on "Money" is thoroughly epicurean. And so far as it has had any influence, that influence was to destroy the foundations of morals, and set up selfishness and sensuality as the only motives worth following, and to place no limit on them except prudence. He has sought to destroy all doctrinal bases for morals in his sermons. Then he turns about and discourses of spiritual things with the unction of a saint and the eloquence of an angel; and with a sincerity, too, that is beyond question. Such a genius is not analyzable. He is a chemical agent which reacts upon everything it touches, and comes out in new forms and colours at each succeeding contact.

A NEW liquor law will soon come into operation in Russia. The Minister of Finance has issued a circular to the Inspectors of Exrize in the different provinces for the purpose of showing that the new law will not, as asserted, favour the sale of spirits by retail. The circular says: "While experience has proved that the vice of drunkenness cannot be extirpated by legislative measures, it is certain that wise legislation can at least do much to lessen the evil and contribute to the moral development of the people. The main object of the new law is to restrict the sale of spirituous liquors upon the premises where they are produced, which do not exceed 3000 litres. The sale of spirituous liquors alone is sold, will be done away with, and the sale of spirituous liquors will be permitted only in hotels, restaurants, and eating houses generally. This will lead to the closing of 30,000 drinking places on the 1st of January, the only exception being in favour of the itinerant vendors who attend the large fairs and festivals. In order to meet the evil in those places which are so remote from the seat of Government that it is difficult to exercise a regular control over them, the local authorities have been furnished with power to raise the license to 1,100 roubles for each tavern, and to limit as they think fit the number; to refuse a license to all persons whom they deem unfit to keep a tavern; and to punish with all the severity which the law permits those who commit any infraction of it."