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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

UNCERTAINTY as to the real state of affairs in the Sudan still continues. Contradictory statements appear from day to day, yet the aspect of affairs remains much the same. It is reported that Berber has fallen into the hands of the rebels and there has been a brutal massacre at Shendy. General Gordon still remains at Khartoum, and his friends are impatient for his relief. A movement is being made in London to raise a volunteer force to go to his rescue. Prominent men are offering contributions for this purpose. These enterprises are always popular and no doubt men and means in abundance will soon be provided. The English Cabinet may take steps that will render a volunteer effort unnecessary.

A MOST successful series of Sabbath School Institutes in the western district of Toronto has just been held. The meetings were under the care of the Rev. John McEwen, secretary of the Sabbath School Association of Canada. They were fairly well attended. If Sabbath school teachers generally, and those interested in the religious training of the young only realized the value of these institutes, they would become at once immensely popular. They could not be in better hands than those of Mr. McEwen. His efforts were ably seconded by ministers of various denominations taking an active part in the meetings. Mr. McEwen is, we understand, about to hold a series of institutes in Huron county.

DR. TALMAGE gave two lectures in Toronto last week. Both were well attended. The first was delivered in Bond Street Congregational Church, the subject being "Happy Homes." The following evening he lectured in Shaftesbury Hall on "The Bright Side of Things." The substance of these lectures was solid and sensible; the style vivid and dashing. Though the audiences thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity of seeing and hearing the pastor of Brooklyn Tabernacle, his visit to Toronto did not produce any perceptible excitement. It may be that the lecture once so popular, has had its day. Only when a man of more than ordinary talent speaks on a subject of immediate or stirring interest is it possible to get up enthusiasm over a lecture. The glory of the lecture platform is a thing of the past.

THE Montreal *Witness* fires the following well-aimed shot: "A man goes into a liquor selling place and asks for a lodging. He is assigned a place in the hall. Like a dog he gets the back of the door. In the morning he is found dead. A coroner's jury holds an inquest, and says he was killed by 'Cerebral apoplexy from the immoderate use of alcoholic liquors.' It never seems to occur to either coroner or jury that they should enquire who dosed that man to death, why was he set down to die like a dog in a place where public lodgings are, or should be provided when asked for, or any other questions that would lead to the persons responsible for the man's death. But the same civilized government that gives the liquor sellers license to scatter death, gives the coroners license to reap the fruits thereof. This is civilization.

The *Independent* has made Bobcaygeon famous. The philosophic editor, from his quiet retreat, takes a leisurely survey of men and things, and gives expression to views, wise and otherwise, on current events. Moralizing on the Conspiracy case he says: "The trial will soon commence - we shall in due time learn the result. In the meantime we may repeat what we have often said before, that in this eminently Christian colony which contains so many churches, clergymen, and bishops, it is not possible for a man to commit any crime which can injuriously affect his social standing, or which will lead to his expulsion from the 'best society.' Will drunkenness? Ask at Ottawa. Will bribery? Ask at Toronto. Will stealing letters? Ask at Montreal. Will dishonesty and dishonest? Ask anywhere." Why should there be so much ground for queries like these?

It is rumoured that after a long struggle Laval University is about to succumb. For years it has had to contend against the hostility of a portion of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. Representations and deputies in its behalf have been sent to Rome, and hopes were entertained that it would secure the papal approval. Dom Smeulders was sent out to remove the causes of contention between the friends and foes of the institution. Whatever may have been his intentions, it is now evident that Laval University is nearing the end of its existence. The authorities are reported as saying that they will soon have to close the doors, but that this course has not been forced upon them by the existence of ecclesiastical troubles or differences, but solely from the lack of funds. But the question remains, why are funds lacking? Had there been harmony of feeling, funds would have been forthcoming.

SWITZERLAND has just arrived at a conclusion upon two important social problems, and her tests should not be overlooked by the law-makers of other communities. The abolition of capital punishment and the imposition of merely nominal licenses for the sale of intoxicants have both been determined by the Swiss republic to be detrimental to the people. With the cessation of the extreme penalty murders increased with alarming rapidity, and with the removal of the high license a carnival of debauchery set in. Not merely did drunkenness become more general, but the gaols were filled with offenders whose crimes could be traced directly to the cruelty, the immorality and the unthrif of habitual intoxication. Whole communities in a few short years became changed; industry lagged; rural simplicity gave way to barbaric rudeness and a canton of once thriving peasantry became a synonym of indolence and misery.

It has been announced recently that Mr. George Munro, of New York, has endowed another chair at Dalhousie. Some two or three years ago he established a professorship of English Literature and Metaphysics, and nominated Professor Schurman, then of Acadia College, as its incumbent. A professorship of metaphysics has now been founded to be filled by Prof. Schurman, and a distinguished Canadian scholar, Dr. W. J. Alexander, has been nominated by Mr. Munro for the chair of English Literature. Dalhousie thus owes to Mr. Munro no less than five professorships, one with an income of \$2,400, the others each yielding \$2,000, and two tutorships worth each \$1,000 annually. He has, in addition, established for a term of years a number of bursaries, representing an interest bearing principal of \$45,000. Such handsome donations in aid of the cause of higher education will be more frequent in Canada as people of culture grow in numbers and wealth.

THE victims of intemperance who fall by the wayside are very numerous. Frequently the newspapers record the death of persons who had sunk to the lowest depths of degradation, and the statement is often added that years ago they had been in high social and business standing. The other week a Montreal contemporary instanced the case of a man who died in poverty and neglect. At one time he had control of a large business, but giving way to intemperate habits, he had gone steadily and rapidly down to shiftless poverty. Now the Port Arthur *Sentinel* records the miserable death of a man who, some years ago, was a candidate for parliamentary honours in a Canadian city. He went west and dragged out a miserable existence - squalor, wretchedness and crime were its chief characteristics. The *post mortem* examination showed that his death was caused by intemperance. The frequent recurrence of these sad endings is more forcible than laboured arguments, however logical.

THE first session of the Woman's Medical College was formally closed at an interesting meeting held in the theatre of the Normal School on Saturday week. A large number of people, friendly to the project were present. The president of the College, Dr. Barrett,

occupied the chair. Dr. George Wright gave the closing address. The success already achieved is gratifying to the friends of the institution. Five students have been in attendance during the session just ended. The lecturers have rendered valuable services gratuitously, and a lady had placed a scholarship valued at \$60 at the disposal of the college to be awarded to the most proficient student. The first winner of the scholarship is Miss Gavina Gowans. The Toronto Woman's Medical College is about to lose the valuable services of Mrs. D. McEwan, a lady who was ever ready to engage in all good undertakings, & who she has been a consistent and faithful champion of the cause that aims at securing a wider sphere for woman's work. Mrs. McEwan is about to remove to the North-West. When the next session opens it is expected that at least twenty-five students will be in attendance. The Rev. Dr. King, being present, gave a brief address.

INTERVIEWING is a striking feature of journalistic enterprise. It affords an excellent discipline for a bashful man if ever any such finds his way into the profession. It has, however, one defect. It would be misleading to depend on the accuracy of an interview that really takes place, and yet it may be as reliable as those that are purely imaginary. Dr. McCosh, of Princeton, was good enough to unbosom himself to the interviewer - so he says - to the following effect: "Henry Ward Beecher claims that you are a believer in the theory of evolution as connected with religion. Is that true?" "It is true and it is not true," he replied, with quaint emphasis. "I believe in the physical theory of evolution, certainly - in the growth of the oak from the acorn and the law of heredity in the generation of the human race. I believe that the fittest will survive, as Herbert Spencer affirms. But if Mr. Beecher intends by claiming me as a representative Presbyterian evolutionist to pledge me as a believer in his religious theories, he has neither reason nor warrant. I don't believe Beecher has any theology, and what little he has I don't believe in. I hold to evolution as a scientific deduction, perfectly consistent with the sacred Scriptures, and as fortifying their divine authenticity."

DURING the late session of the Dominion Parliament a number of petitions were presented for some enactment to secure the proper observance of the Sabbath. In the Senate a select committee was appointed to consider the matter and report. The Hon. Mr. Vidal, in presenting the report, among other things said: "I think it would be a very improper thing to ask such a very important step to be taken when time does not permit a careful and proper investigation of the matter. The committee felt that they could act in no other way than to express their own convictions set forth in that report. One thing at once was evident to us, if the Dominion Parliament does possess the power, it has never exercised it by legislating on this particular question. In only one statute passed by the Parliament of Canada is there any reference whatever to the subject, and that is only indirectly, providing that the disturbance of any gathering for public worship shall be a criminal offence. We find laws for the preservation of quiet and orderly behaviour, and the right observance of the Lord's Day in the statutes of every Province of the Dominion. We found also that the courts had decided that the old Imperial Statutes of the reign of Charles I, and some others, are in force in all the Provinces of the Dominion, except, perhaps, the Province of Quebec, where it was thought there might be a question regarding its validity. With these Imperial statutes existing and in force, and the local laws to which I have referred, it was thought they were apparently sufficient to meet the views of the petitioners and to secure that Holy Day from needless profanation. Under these circumstances the committee have thought it better to present their view to the House, and I trust that the House will receive the report and allow it to remain without thinking it necessary to commit themselves by any action with reference to it. That would be the best way of disposing of the question."