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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE will of the late C. H. McCormick, of Chicago, has been admitted to probate. The estate, valued at ten million, is devised in trust to his widow for five years, at the end of which time she receives one fifth, and three sons and two daughters the remainder. The trustee is permitted to make such charitable donations as in her judgment the testator would make.

THE Rev. Dr. Wright, a distinguished A.M. of Trinity College, Dublin, has created some sensation by an article in which he says that many of the fellows of that university do not believe in divine revelation or the existence of a personal God. Several are, at the best, agnostics, if not atheists. There is no way for disciplining either a fellow or a professor for erroneous views, and so it is a propaganda of scepticism.

THE Methodist Episcopal Conference at Philadelphia took up the report of the Committee on Itinerancy relative to licensing women to preach. The report takes the ground that it is expedient to take action as to licensing women to preach, or ordaining them. Rev. Dr. Ives, of Central New York, offered a substitute setting forth that the Conference is not prepared to sanction the ordaining of women, but approves of licensing them to exhort and preach under authority of the quarterly conference. After debate the substitute was lost, 126 to 222, and the report adopted.

THE movement to bring the symbolic standards of the English Presbyterian Church into harmony with the requirements of the age, so far as has appeared, can in no sense be called a revolt against the system of doctrine to which the Presbyterian churches have adhered. The retiring moderator, Dr. Edmond, of London, in the opening sermon at the recent meeting in Liverpool, said that the movement for a modification of the Confession, contemplates no abandonment of the old, but the perfecting of it by new; the maintenance of truth sufficiently declared, and the fuller explanation of what is not so explicitly exhibited, the main aim being to bring into a more proportionate and prominent place the love of God to sinners as such. They were not going to break away from the old; they were only wishing to add what would complete its symmetry.

IF any reliance is to be placed on a recent dispatch it is evident that the Irish agitation will receive a new impulse. It is stated that Parnell's party are appealing to the Roman Catholic priesthood in Ireland with a view to secure their active co-operation. Whatever may be the ultimate result of this new combination it will certainly make the breach wider than it is now between the Protestant and Orange influences of the North and the anarchic element in the South and West. It is openly assumed that no legislative relief afforded the Irish people has the effect of making them peaceably disposed or law-abiding; the advanced party clamours for separation from the British Empire, nothing less than this, they say will satisfy them. The new departure will add to the bitterness already existing by arousing and intensifying relentless religious animosities.

ONE of the most successful efforts to promote improving study among those whose occupations prevent their attendance at academic institutions has been the inauguration of the Chataqua circle. In many places in Canada successful and flourishing branches have been established. The amount of real progress attained by many of the members is such that next season the number of these branches will be largely increased. Last week the Toronto branch of the Chataqua Literary and Scientific Circle held a most successful conversation in the Normal School building. The auditorium was filled to its utmost capacity. The programme which was of a most interesting character comprised vocal and instrumental

music of a tasteful kind contributed by well-known Toronto talent. Addresses were delivered by the chairman, Mr. E. Gurney, jr. and the Hon. G. W. Ross who made a very happy and appropriate speech.

WITH commendable wisdom, temperance reformers are beginning at the right end. It is well to use every legitimate means for rescuing the inebriate, repressing the traffic in intoxicating drink, but a splendid field for successful work presents itself in guarding the young against the snares of the tempter. At Brantford, last week, a largely attended temperance meeting in the Park Baptist Church Mrs. F. Hunt, of Boston, during the course of a powerful lecture, strongly advocated the teaching of temperance in Canadian schools as in the States of New York and New England. The following resolution at the close was moved by Mr. Wm. Peish, M.A., seconded by Dr. Nichol, and unanimously carried:—That, having listened to the able lecture given by Mrs. Hunt, the citizens of Brantford would respectfully request the Hon. G. W. Ross, Minister of Education, to take steps for the more efficient teaching of temperance in our High and Public schools, and that a copy of the resolution be transmitted him in accordance therewith.

WHILE in several counties of Ontario active measures are being taken for the submission of the Scott Act to a vote of the ratepayers, a new agitation has broken out in Halton. There the Act has been in force for about a year and, it is generally claimed, has been productive of great good. The testimony as to its beneficial effects is of a most trustworthy character. Still it is not uniform. Many abuses still exist, in no-wise attributable to the Scott Act. Medical men and druggists in that county prescribed alcoholic stimulants dispensed with a freedom unparalleled in any other commodity known to the healing art. For this laxity the Scott Act is in no-wise responsible. It appears that the druggists who sold such large quantities have been refused a renewal of their license. This together with the exposure of the discreditable attempts to evade the law will tend to a stricter and fairer enforcement of the Act in Halton county. An effort is now being made there to obtain its repeal. Those taking part in such a movement will have to adduce more conclusive facts and reasons than they have been hitherto able to present, before they can affect a change in the public sentiment of the community.

THE Methodist brethren have been busy of late making the necessary arrangements for consummating the Union to which they have now for sometime been committed. Many details have been adjusted without any serious friction, and as the time approaches every obstacle is rapidly disappearing. There is now every appearance that the Union will be harmonious and enthusiastic. The committee appointed at the Belleville Conference to take the necessary steps towards closing the book rooms, which are to be discontinued by reason of the consummation of the Union, and to arrange for discontinuing the publication of certain denominational journals for the same reason, met last week in the Methodist Book Room, Toronto. The *Observer*, Bowmanville, and the *Christian Advocate*, Hamilton, are to cease publication on July 1st, and the *Christian Guardian* is to be supplied to subscribers to those journals. The *Christian Journal* has been discontinued for some time. The Methodist Book Room at Hamilton is to be closed. The disappearance of these old familiar friends is, notwithstanding the higher good anticipated, a matter of sincere regret.

FROM a Montreal contemporary we learn that the regular quarterly meeting of the Presbyterian Sabbath school Association of that city was held in St. Paul's Church last week, the president, Mr. James Croll, in the chair. The secretary, Lieut.-Col. Fraser, read the quarterly report, which showed the various Presbyterian Sabbath schools to be in a prosperous condition, the attendance on the whole being on the increase. During the last four months the number of teachers

was 343, scholars on the roll, 3,176; actual attendance 2,312. The Rev. James Barclay then delivered an earnest and instructive address upon the work of the Sabbath school teacher, strongly urging the necessity of personal piety. On motion of Mr. Walter Paul, it was decided that when the meetings were re-convened, they should be held monthly. Some remarks were then made by Lieut.-Col. Lyman, Dr. Alexander and Mr. McFarlane, and a committee was appointed to select delegates from the association to the meeting of the International Committee at Louisville, Ky., after which the meeting closed with the benediction. An hour was then pleasantly spent in social conversation, refreshments being provided by the ladies of the congregation.

ANOTHER of the distinguished ministers of the Free Church of Scotland has passed away; another of the great worthies has gone over to the majority. The Rev. Dr. Kennedy, of Dingwall, was no ordinary man. He was a strong man, intellectually, morally, and spiritually. There was nothing feeble or vacillating about him. His convictions, not always in accord with the popular opinions of the hour, he held with much intensity. These were expressed strongly, but always in a manner consonant with Christian dignity. Many who in matters of ecclesiastical polity were strongly opposed to him have paid heartfelt tributes to his many virtues. Principal Rainy, at the Edinburgh Synod, said that it would not be easy for them to estimate or express the loss sustained by the Free Church in the Highlands by this removal. The high standard of thought, feeling, and power which characterized his preaching, and the way in which he commended himself to the consciences and the hearts as well as to the intellects of his hearers, placed him on a level beyond ordinary comparison. Dr. Kennedy was a great power for good in the support and maintenance of the Gospel in the Highlands of no common kind. Dr. Phin at the Edinburgh Presbytery of the Established Church also paid a tribute to the deceased for his consistency and manliness. A power on the side of righteousness and truth and sound doctrine, Dr. Phin said, had been taken away. Dr. Kennedy was a delegate to the Evangelical alliance meeting at New York in 1876. He then embraced the opportunity afforded him of visiting this country and preaching in several of our Canadian churches.

THE publisher of THE PRESBYTERIAN, Mr. C. Blackett Robinson, has in preparation an important historical work intended to give a vivid portraiture of Canadian life during the past century. The field of research is an interesting one. The early settlement, and struggles of those who have been instrumental in making Canada what it is to-day, afford ample material for instructive and vivid narrative. Macaulay introduced a new era of historic writing when his first volumes appeared. He spared no pains in securing everything that could throw the least light on any part of his subject. He ransacked not only the recesses of the British Museum and the State archives for official documents; he did not disdain the ephemeral political squibs, the broadsides and ballads disposed of by an extinct race, the flying stationers. He availed himself of everything that could impart life, colour, and reality to the movements of British history. Here in Canada the capable historian has, in addition to authoritative documents, ample and varied material in the reminiscences of early settlers, in long-forgotten pamphlets, and the earlier issues of the newspaper press wherewith to construct a narrative that will be true to fact and yet as interesting and readable as a work of fiction. Canadian history, proper, affords a splendid theme for the competent writer who has undertaken the task, and intelligent Canadians will hail with pleasure a well-written work that traces the rise and progress of free institutions, paving the way for future national greatness and prosperity. Parties in possession of historical reminiscences, old documents or pamphlets relating to early Canadian history would confer a favour by communicating with the publisher.