

owing to a want of interest in the Scheme.

The Tr. was instructed to invest the amt. recd. to the best advantage.

Agreed to instruct the Sec. to correspond with each of the congregations to remind them of the decision of the Genl. Com. anent a Bazaar, and to ask them to select two ladies of the congregations to meet in New Glasgow, on the 1st Wed. of March, to arrange regarding the work to be undertaken by such congregations in contributing to a Bazaar to be held where the com. may decide upon.

## NOTES OF THE MONTH.

Mr. Parnell, the Irish agitator has been visiting many of the cities of the United States, denouncing the British Government, and bewailing the woes of Ireland. His chief object in visiting America appears to have been to secure funds to carry on political agitation in order to secure the overturn of the present land laws of Ireland. The leading American cities refused to contribute for such a purpose but gave with lavish liberality to relieve the distress amongst the peasantry. Before leaving Ireland Mr. Parnell advised the tenantry not to pay their rents, and it appears, many of them have acted on his advice in this matter. Those who have paid their rent have in some instances been ill used by the anti-rent party. One poor widow who paid a yearly rent of one pound for a little holding of three acres, had a stack of oats worth £12, burned by her fellow tenants, because she had paid contrary to their order. Among the causes of distress we note first the failure of the crops as will be seen by the following extract from the report of the correspondent of an American paper.

The chief question, I judge from conversations with tenants, with agents and

others, is to be the scarcity of food—and particularly of potatoes. While in many districts there are plenty and nearly of the usual quality, in others there are none at all and in many places there is only half a crop. From actual experience I can testify that they are bad flavored, small and frequently diseased. Passing through Castlebar one market day I heard a shrill voice crying:— "Fine potatoes! fine large potatoes!" Turning to the cart in which the market-woman's crop lay, I examined them curiously to see what she called fine potatoes and saw a quantity of miserable potatoes, not larger than marbles and equally unpalatable. Questioning the woman I found that she was a widow with four children, and was selling her own stock of potatoes in order to buy the other necessaries of life. She thought her potatoes would last six weeks more and then, as she was in debt about seven pounds and had no money whatever to buy meal with, her only chance was the workhouse, and with set teeth she said she would never enter that accursed place. I found ample confirmation of this old tradition—the hatred of the tenant farmers and laborers against the workhouse. They would sooner starve than take advantage of its protection, and as this is so, it seems singular that the poor law should be framed in direct defiance to the sentiment and even to the wants of the people. The workhouse at Castlebar will accommodate 724 persons and the Westport workhouse over 1,100. In the first named there were, when I called, 134 inmates, only two more than during the corresponding week of the previous year. In the Westport workhouse there were about one hundred and sixty, an increase of some twenty-five. All of these are children or sick persons, and no provision is made for the relief of those who are not ill and yet want food, because under the poor law the authorities may not assist able-bodied persons outside