

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. 19.

TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8th, 1890.

No. 41.

Notes of the Week.

A SCOTTISH paper says: Perhaps no fact illustrating the popularity of Rev. John M'Neill is more remarkable than the demand for the tickets of admission to his sermon in the great hall of the Edinburgh Exhibition. These were issued in the morning at ten o'clock, and before five in the afternoon they had been all taken up. Quite as impressive in its own way was the rush of volunteer stewards; within a few hours more than a hundred offered their services.

By a unanimous resolution of the Council of Queen's College, Belfast, the medical classes were this year for the first time thrown open to ladies. Five in all availed themselves of the opportunity thus afforded them of preparing for medical degrees, and the President, Dr. Hamilton, states that they have applied themselves to their work with the most laudable assiduity and success, and that the results have been good in every way. Two ladies attended art classes, making seven in all who were enrolled on the college books during the session. All the classes of the college are now open to both sexes.

BELFAST, it is said, is now unquestionably the first city in Ireland. At the last census it had 208,122 inhabitants, and therefore at that date stood in respect to population below Dublin, with 249,602, although well above Cork with 80,124. But the Belfast people of to-day confidently estimate the result of next year's census at 300,000 or more—some, indeed, placing it at 308,000. In 1871 Belfast stood at 174,412, Dublin at 346,326. It is a remarkable fact that the customs duties paid annually in Belfast amount to two millions, being nearly double what is paid in Glasgow, and only a little below what is paid in Liverpool.

It is marvellous how fastidious some people can become. Several educationists in Brooklyn have made themselves ridiculous by their objections to Longfellow's "Building of the Ship." It has a place in the readers used in public schools and these very superfine people would like to see it deleted. A contemporary but voices the general opinion when it says: Longfellow, of course, wrote his poem with no view to its adoption as a selection for reading-books in schools. But he did write as one of the purest minded men known to the literary history of either England or America. Of no writer in either country could it be more true that his productions contain "no line which, dying, he could wish to blot."

It is high time, says a contemporary, that a protest were entered against the absurd length of the names bestowed on many of the religious and philanthropic societies. One of the latest is "The Christian Union for the Severance of the Connection of the British Empire with the Opium Traffic." If Charles Lamb had come across the ingenious author of this title, he would probably have suggested the propriety of examining his bumps. According to the hideous but often compulsory plan of using initials only, this new society would figure as "The C.U.S.C.B.E.O.T." Let us hope that, in spite of its grotesque name, it may accomplish something towards the removal of a national disgrace; but we should be more sanguine as to its success if it could shorten its title.

THE Rev. J. L. Bigger, M.A., Professor of Oriental Literature and Hermeneutics in Magee College, Londonderry, died rather suddenly at his residence, College Gardens, recently. The immediate cause of his death was inflammation of the stomach, though he had long suffered from goitre. He was the eldest son of Mr. W. F. Bigger, J.P., a successful Derry merchant. He was educated at Clifton, Bristol, at the Royal Academical Institution, and the Queen's College, Belfast; and afterward studied at Leipsic. He was one of the foremost Hebrew scholars. He was formerly pastor of the Second Church, Lisburn,

and thence succeeded Professor Giren in the chair from which he has been called at the early age of thirty-six. He was son-in-law of Professor Watts, of Belfast. On the Sunday before his death he preached twice in Cambridge.

THE Rev. George Reith, M.A., of the Free College Church, Glasgow, has written for the guidance of his people a brief criticism of Dr. Martineau's "Seat of Authority in Religion." He says that this last manifesto of the veteran Unitarian cannot but be unwelcome and painful to those who were inclined to agree with the late Dr. Ker in thinking that Dr. Martineau was sending a stream of fresh spiritual influence through the Unitarian Churches. It is instructive to note, Mr. Reith adds, how the old Unitarian ground has been definitely abandoned, and that now Unitarians frankly admit that Paul, John, and the authors of the first three Gospels, all accepted the Divinity of our Lord, and the fact of His resurrection. Principal Rainy, it is said, has been studying the same volume during his holiday, and with much the same feeling as that indicated by Mr. Reith's note.

OR late the Pope has been anxious to appear as arbiter in international disputes. From Paris the rumour comes that he is desirous of once more proffering his good offices in the settlement of the difficulties between England and France over Newfoundland affairs. What the motives of His Holiness are it may be difficult to say. One thing at all events is evident, he is always willing to embrace an opportunity of posing as a temporal potentate. What has he got to do with the affairs of England or France? Unlike Him whose vicar the Pope specially claims to be, he does not ask "Who made me a judge or divider over you?" Without disrespect it may be said that the Pope has at the present time plenty to do in minding his own business without meddling with that which in no wise concerns him. Does the Pope's interest in the Newfoundland fisheries owe its origin to the fact that Peter was a fisherman?

THE recent meeting of the Trades Union Congress in Liverpool has attracted general attention. Many and diverse are the criticisms its proceedings have evoked. The following is from the *Presbyterian Messenger* published in London: Amid much that is gloomy and depressing in our time, these evidences of vigour and vitality among the working population are full of happy omen. Churches, as churches, cannot take up the questions that are discussed; but ministers would do well to keep themselves well informed in them all. A Frenchman, when asked why the bulk of his countrymen had settled down into unbelief, replied: "The Church cared nothing for the people; and the people in consequence have left the Church." Rome has changed her policy and gained some success in the new line she has taken up. We do not admire her methods or her plans; but none the less is it true that the future belongs to the church that can win the confidence and the affections of the people.

THE Rev. Robert Stevenson, D.D., of Dalry, died recently in his eighty-third year. He was a native of St. Ninians, and took his arts and divinity courses at Glasgow. Licensed by Dumbarton Presbytery in 1832 he ministered for a time in the historic church at Regent Square, London, and was ordained to the North Church, Paisley, in 1835. In the following year he was translated to the Middle Church in the same town, but in 1841 he removed to Dalry. When the Queen paid her first visit to Scotland in 1842, Dr. Stevenson was a member of the deputation of the General Assembly to Her Majesty. He received his degree from Edinburgh University in 1878 and the following year was offered, but declined, the Moderatorship of his Church. Dr. Stevenson was present at the trial of Rev. J. Macleod Campbell, of Row, and was an intimate friend of Dr. Chalmers. By his will \$12,500 is left towards the endowment of Dalry West Church; \$12,500 to Kersland Barony church and school; \$10,000 to Glasgow for two bursaries;

\$500 to the poor of Dalry, and \$8,000 to various funds of the Established Church.

THE *Christian World* says: In a letter in Saturday's *Times* Mr. Malabari, the cultured Brahman gentleman who has come on a short visit to this country to endeavour to rouse public opinion to the need of reform in the matter of child-marriage and enforced widowhood in India, acknowledges the gracious kindness he has experienced. "Before another week begins," he writes, "I shall have left these shores, to me fragrant with the breath of freedom and charity." Another worker in the same field for the advancement of Hindu women is the widow lady known as Pundita Ramabai, the author of a most interesting little book entitled "The High Caste Hindu Woman." Ramabai is a Christian who comes before the public of this country and of the United States with a plan for educating child-widows and training them to occupy useful positions as teachers, governesses, nurses and house-keepers. She estimates that \$25,000 would be sufficient to make a beginning in this direction and the scheme is one that should commend itself to the philanthropic.

ONE feature of the Romish propaganda, especially in England, is a parade of the names of titled and other social magnates who go over to Rome. On this point the *Christian Leader* says: Mr. Wilfrid Meynell would find it a rather hard task to prove the large assertion he makes respecting the English perverts to Rome. Alluding, in his *Contemporary* paper on Newman, to the members of the Wilberforce, Hope-Scott, and Arnold families who went over to Rome, he says that what is recorded of them is recorded of "nearly every family in England." The roll of the perverts is often enough paraded by the Roman organs in the press, sometimes with names that have no business to be there; and anyone who examines it will see that Mr. Meynell's statement is an absurd exaggeration. And may we suggest to him the propriety of drawing up a list of the persons who, having gone over to Rome, afterwards returned to the Protestant ranks, and some of whom, like Mr. Foulkes and Lord Robert Montagu, have revealed the secrets of the prison house which drove them back. Mr. Meynell boasts of Thomas Arnold. Where is that gentleman today? We presume Mr. Meynell knows where his daughter, the authoress of "Robert Elsmere," is.

THE most recent suggestions and recommendations of the Utah Commission, says the *Chicago Interior*, are echoes of earlier utterances, in this, that they call for "more stringent legislation" against polygamy and other evils of Mormonism. Some secular papers interpret this to mean that the Mormon power is about as great as it ever has been, and that efforts to restrict it up to the present time have been practically a failure. We cannot accept such a conclusion; and we need only refer to the regular newspaper reports of elections in Utah, both this year and last, to disprove it. Polygamy has been made quite generally odious, and the influence of the Mormon priesthood, over the youth of Utah, is greatly diminished. The public schools of Salt Lake City, with other departments of municipal government, are under the control of Gentiles, and in various parts of the territory the people who represent decency and progress are in the ascendant. Turning from the testimony of the secular press, we can produce, if need be, unimpeachable witnesses from among our church preachers and teachers, to the perceptible diminution of Mormon power. This very week we print a church news item, noting the presence of Mormons at a preaching service by a Presbyterian minister—a thing impossible to imagine in the old days, unless the Mormons had come to mob the speaker. The continued and repeated demand for stringent measures simply means the approval of past efforts, and a desire for the finishing of the job on the old lines. "Keep it up" is the condensed sentiment of those who give advice about the legal crusade against Mormon iniquities. Much has been accomplished; let the good work go on. To falter now, or to change tactics, would be to lose some of the advantage already gained.