

Notes of the Week.

THE *Methodist Times* remarks: The growing earnestness of the Churches is compelling men to make new departures of the most daring and unprecedented character. And all wise leaders will encourage free experiment. It is a transition age. Only by endless adaptations can the Churches of Christ readjust themselves to their swiftly changing social environment. The churches that are too feeble or too stupid to evolve new agencies and new methods must die.

IN the three chief Presbyterian denominations in Scotland there are 182 D.D.'s, of whom exactly one-half are ministers of the Church of Scotland. Of the ninety-one in the Established Church about eighty-five have received the degree from Scottish universities, while of the fifty in the Free Church about thirty-five have been conferred by the national universities, and of the forty in the United Presbyterian Church only about a half have this origin. While the Established Church has eighty-five Scottish D.D.'s for its 1,400 or 1,500 ministers, the other two bodies, with 300 more ministers, have only fifty-five.

MR. M. A. JAMES, of the *Bowmanville Statesman*, has been visiting England. He gives a summary of his observations on many topics, the following among others: There is much more crime in England than Canada. The police news occupies much space in the papers. The temperance sentiment is growing very rapidly, and total abstinence societies are multiplying very fast. The preaching is abundant in quantity, but the quality is not up to the Canadian standard. The English are not a churchgoing people. Not more than ten per cent attend church regularly. There is abundant material to engage the attention of missionaries at home. The heathen are not all in China, Japan and India.

THE Presbytery of Irvine, Scotland, met recently in private to consider a petition submitted from Mr. Matthew Orr and other members of Stevenston Parish Church, complaining of the conduct of their minister, the Rev. J. Kyd, in allowing his brother-in-law, Rev. James Forrest, of Kilmarnock, to occupy the pulpit of the parish church on Sunday, June 19, when he ignored the doctrines laid down by the Church, and forced his own doctrines of Unitarianism upon his hearers. The petitioners had reason to understand that Mr. Kyd had previously been cautioned by some members of the Presbytery, and there was therefore no excuse for him not knowing his brother-in-law's principles. They held him as guilty as if he had preached them himself. They therefore prayed the court to take immediate steps to prevent the same thing occurring again.

THE Aberdeen Free Church College has just come into possession of an important memorial of the martyr times of Scotland in the form of an autograph letter of James Renwick. The letter is one of considerable length and great interest. It is written in a clear and regular hand, and has been mounted in a suitable frame. James Renwick, as is well known, met his death on the scaffold at Edinburgh with the courage of a Christian hero, on February 17, 1688. He was but twenty-six years of age at the time of his martyrdom. This is probably the only memorial of the kind now in existence of the noble youth, who was the last of those who sealed their testimony with their blood under the persecutions of the Stuarts. It is the gift of Dr. John Webster, of Edgchill, formerly M.P. for the city of Aberdeen. It is to be deposited in the library of the college.

THE *Christian Leader* says: Monsignor Persico, acknowledging an address at Tipperary, said the Pope "intends to do great and real good for Ireland," adding that "when he raises his voice the potent of the earth will listen with reverence, because

that voice is never raised but in truth and justice." The truth is, as everybody knows, that the Pope is sitting on a fence, doing his best to keep hold of the Irish people, and at the same time to please the English Romanists, like the Duke of Norfolk and Lord Bute, who, as great landlords, abhor and dread the Irish National League. His Holiness never had a more ticklish task to perform. Personally he is, of course, favourable to the policy that would please the territorial magnates. This is well known to the Irish Nationalist leaders, and also to the peasantry of the sister isle, who listen to the Papal legate with their tongue in their cheek.

THE *Manitoba Free Press* says. The annual meeting of the Young Men's Christian Association, held on Tuesday evening, led to the presentation of some interesting facts. Nine years ago there was but a handful of young men in the city interested in the work, now the membership exceeds 400. The character of the work of the Association must commend itself to all. Not only has it been an active agent in the cause of Christianity, but it has done much good for the city and country, in preserving the moral purity of the young men. That the Gospel meetings held from week to week have been a source of much good is beyond question; that the young men of our city have been benefited very greatly by the free library is equally sure, and that the association has been the means of doing much in the way of assisting immigration is shown by the report of the general secretary. An organization which can find employment for 170 young men during the course of the year, which can freely open its rooms day and night for the homeless young men of our city, which can do such excellent work in the gaol, the hospital and other public institutions, and which tends to encourage a spirit of morality, is well worthy of the support of the citizens.

At the financial district meeting of the Methodist Church, Milton District, held in Milton on Friday, September 9, the following resolution was passed unanimously by a standing vote, it was also moved that the secretary of the district forward copies of the same to all the country papers, and also to the *Toronto* and *Hamilton* daily and weekly papers, with the request that they publish the same. Moved by A. Willmott, seconded by James Laing, That this district meeting, having learned that an effort is about to be made to repeal the operation of the second part of the Canada Temperance Act in the County of Halton, be it therefore resolved that we hereby commit ourselves to strenuously oppose such efforts at repeal. We feel that the Scott Act is the most efficient instrument at our disposal for the repression of the liquor traffic, and whatever difficulty there may be in its strict enforcement, we can never willingly go back to the licensing of an iniquity, and we hereby call upon the Methodists and all good citizens of the county of Halton, to give such an answer, at the polls, to the petition as shall finally define the attitude of this county on the policy of retaining our local option law until such time as we obtain a prohibitory law for the Dominion.

CONCERNING purchased and appropriated sermons which some ministers preach to their congregations the *Christian World* has the following: Referring to the correspondence in these columns on this subject, "Only a Woman," says that she has a ministerial brother-in-law who could not compose a sermon "all out of his own head" if decapitation were the penalty of failure; and that as a matter-of-fact he copies his sermons *verbatim et literatim* from printed sources. "A Scotch Congregational Minister" thinks that what is needed is the selection by churches of ministers with brains. At present, it strikes him that originality and vigorous thinking are at a discount in his denomination, it being assumed that a minister is lacking in heart power in exact proportion as he is possessed of head power, and *vice versa*. Not always perhaps, but very often, the question "Can he think?" is never asked by a church respecting any candidate

for the pastorate. If the churches care for brains in a minister, they will get them and heart as well if they choose. Rev. E. D. Green, of Preston, says: "During the thirty years of my ministry I have several times had my pulpit invaded by such ecclesiastical trespassers. One 'great man' I can remember gave my people, word for word, a discourse from Guthrie's 'Ezekiel,' another made Spurgeon speak when he was not seen, while on some other occasions, W. Jay and Parsons, and such former lights, have shone when I have been absent."

THE Rev. W. C. Van Meter, founder, and for several years superintendent of the Howard Mission and Home for Little Wanderers, New York, now superintendent of the Italian Bible and Sunday School Mission, has been in Rome for the last fifteen years, directing with energy, prudence and success, the operation of the mission. He is at present in Canada, and has been cordially received in Montreal and Ottawa, where he has addressed a number of meetings. The Society, under whose auspices Mr. Van Meter labours, is evangelical and undenominational, and ministers and laymen possessing the confidence of the Churches are on its directorate. A recent report states that during the year ending August 31, we have sent to 202 ministers; colporteurs, visitors and teachers, living in 124 cities and towns, 23,403 Bibles, Testaments, Psalms, Proverbs, and other books of the Bible. These they have carefully distributed among soldiers and sailors, in hospitals and prisons, in their day, night and Sabbath schools, and among the poor around them. In the medical mission department of our work we sent them seven cases of excellent medicines for their sick poor. We paid the salaries of the chaplain and matron of the Protestant hospital in Rome, of which Dr. Gason, one of the most prominent and successful physicians in the city, is director. We paid the salaries of thirty-five teachers in the Evangelical Night Schools in Italy, Sicily and Elba. Such an important and promising work cannot fail to commend itself to the confidence and support of the Christian community.

THE *British Weekly* remarks that an instructive incident, which points an apt moral, took place in connection with the British Association meeting at Manchester. In the Anthropological Section, Dr. Edward Tylor, F.R.S., a well-known authority in various branches of antiquarian research, delivered an address on "A Witch's Ladder." At some length he expatiated on the strange object which he had secured—a rope about four feet long, in which there were fixed at right angles some scores of feathers. It had been recently discovered in the thatch of an old dismantled cottage at Wellington, Somerset, and had excited much wonderment in the agitated minds of connoisseurs in witchcraft and folklore. Much correspondence and many inquiries goaded the Professor, however, to the conclusion that it was a "wishing-rope," or "witch's ladder," such as might have been used by some weird sister for charming milk from a neighbouring dairy, or coveted treasures from alien custody for the benefit of her mediæval clients. Backed by authorities from Somersetshire to Naples, the conclusion was presented to the audience as proved beyond cavil, and the learned doctor sat down amid applause that augured conviction, when up rose a patriarchal associate, who knocked the bottom out of the theory by the youthful reminiscences of deer chasing with just such a weapon of offence as that presented before the section. And another basely practical one thought he could produce sundry other "witch's ropes," such as he and others had used but a few months since for driving the deer in the park at Hampton Court. These feathered ropes frightened the timid creatures more effectually than stouter instruments. Upon which the section incontinently turned its attention to the shapes of ancient Assyrian graves; and the rope, whose cabalistic attributes had been so summarily shorn, was hurried into a retiring room. It may yet be an instrument of self-flagellation.