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## Notes of the Week.

PROFESSOR SKINNER'S inaugural lecture at the opening of the Session of the English Presbyterian College is being much discussed in certain quarters, and the matter is likely to be brought before one of the provincial Presbyteries. There is, therefore, the possibility of an exciting time over this first academic appearance of Professor Skinner

DISESTABLISHMENT is a live subject at present, especially in Scotland and in Wales. The Liberation Society offered to young people four prizes for essays in favour of Disestablishment and now Mr. Frederick Sherlock, editor of the *Church Monthly*, proposes to give \$100 in prizes for essays against Disestablishment. This somewhat novel method of discussing popular questions has advantages in its favour.

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A CONTEMPORARY states that it is generally but erroneously supposed that Dr. Matheson, of Edinburgh, dictates his books and sermons to his amanuensis. Dr. Matheson, although blind, writes out all his own compositions. To help him, he has got a frame constructed, in which the sheets of MS. are placed under wires about half an inch apart, and he writes between the wires. His amanuensis copies the sheets. We have just seen a few pages of the Doctor's handwriting, and managed to decipher it without great effort.

JAPAN now has on paper a complete legal system, abreast of the times. The remaining portions of the Civil Code have been promulgated, and the Criminal Codes, which went into effect in 1882, have been revised. These latter take effect at once, but the Civil Code does not go into operation till January 1st, 1893. This appears to be a very simple announcement; but the significance of it is tremendous, when we remember that it is Japan, hardly a generation removed from a policy of utter seclusion, shutting out European manners and European civilization, which thus comes to the front.

THE English Presbyterian Synod's remit on ministerial efficiency was discussed recently by the Presbyteries of North London, Liverpool, Birmingham, and Newcastle, all of which gave deliverances modifying the recommendations of the Synod Committee in the direction of including office-bearers and members within the scope of the enlarged powers proposed to be given to the Presbytery, and of facilitating by financial arrangements and otherwise the removal of a minister from one sphere to another. Liverpool Presbytery seems least disposed to alter the present laws of the Church in regard to this matter.

THE Belfast *Witness* says: The offer of \$2,500, which the General Assembly's Committee on the State of Religion has received from an anonymous donor for the purpose of enabling them to secure the services of a minister who shall devote his entire time to evangelistic work, is a satisfactory sign of the trend of opinion in the Irish Presbyterian Church. Such an appointment, if the right man be only got for the post—everything depends on that—ought to prove most valuable. We are glad to learn that the committee is actively engaged on the task of discovering a minister able and willing to undertake the work. We cordially wish them all success. A minister possessed of the requisite gifts, itinerating throughout Ireland, with the sole design of stirring up the careless and preaching the Gospel simply and

earnestly to the people, ought to be able to do a vast good.

THE Rev. Dr. Andrew A. Bonar, speaking at the social meeting at Dundee in celebration of the jubilee of Dudhope congregation, said he did not approve of ministers never going from home. They ought to go from home frequently. Once in the west of Scotland, the members of a congregation, speaking about their minister, complained that he never went from home, and not long ago he saw mention of an English vicar who had not been absent one Sunday from his own church for fifty years. That was a congregation he did not envy. Dr. Bonar's address contained some interesting reminiscences of W. C. Burns and M'Cheyne.

THE New York *Independent* says. Harvard is not to be alone in its proposition to shorten the college course. At the late convention of the college association of the Middle States in Maryland, President Adams, of Cornell, expressed the opinion that the real college course should end at the close of sophomore year, and university work begin with the junior year. President Gilman, of Johns Hopkins University, advocated the shortening of the course to three years, regarding the present course as one that keeps men too long from their professional studies. President Patton, of Princeton, argues that the four years' course contact with fellow students is none too long, but that at the end of sophomore year the student should be able to begin the special studies for his future work. It looks as if the college course might have some remodelling; in fact, that remodelling has already begun with the extension of electives.

THE eleventh annual meeting of the Toronto City Mission was held last week, Rev. G. M. Milligan, chairman of the mission, presided, and was succeeded by Dr. W. B. Geikie. Mr. Hall, the devoted missionary, gave an account of his work and strongly urged the purchase of a Gospel waggon by means of which open air meetings could be much more successfully conducted. In American cities they had been found of great value in carrying on mission work. Hon. S. H. Blake spoke on the need of more extensive mission work in cities like Toronto. He stated that some time ago he had started a subscription fund to build better dwellings for the poor, and about \$30,000 had been promised. Nothing further had been done in the matter, but he advocated the formation of a company and the raising of \$50,000 for the carrying out of this scheme. He moved this resolution: That, whilst believing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to be the one all-sufficient power for the uplifting of fallen humanity, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that poverty, whether induced by evil habits or by causes beyond control, the ignorance and misery often attendant upon such poverty and the unsanitary condition and surroundings of their dwellings, producing and fostering disease and death, are patent factors in hindering the cause of the Gospel, we would therefore urge upon the community the duty of working for the extinction, as far as may be, of these great evils by the prohibition of the liquor traffic; the compulsory education of all children of school age; the erection, either by the State or by private enterprise, of model dwellings for the poor which may be leased at a moderate rental and yet secure a safe return for the capital invested. Rev. John Neil, of Charles Street Church, seconded the resolution and warmly commended Mr. Hall's work. Rev. Dr. Potts stated that there was not twenty-five per cent. of the Church membership of the city who were doing anything like earnest, aggressive Christian work for the winning of souls for Christ. He proposed a resolution endorsing the work of the mission, which was seconded by Mr. J. M. Morphy and adopted. Mr. Morphy gave an account of the finances showing that receipts for the year were \$1,490 and expenditure \$44 less than that amount. The officers were re-elected as follows: President, Rev. G. M. Milligan; vice-presidents, Hon. S. H. Blake, Dr. W. B. Geikie and Mr. James Dobson; secretary, Mr. James Thomson; treasurer, Mr. E. M. Morphy.