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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE week of prayer has been generally observed this year as it has in the past. There has been no falling off of interest as compared with other years. The same spirit of harmony and good feeling between the various denominations exhibited hitherto has characterized the meetings of last week. The observance of the week of prayer gives visible unity to evangelical life and effort. It is an immediate blessing and it is the means of securing greater blessing for the future. Prayer is a powerful means of promoting the unity and spiritual prosperity of the churches.

THE Roman Catholic press generally did not make pointed attacks on the Luther celebration till it was over. Many of the Romish papers then threw aside all restraint, and spoke with much vehemence and with very little regard to historical accuracy. What is still more wonderful, the Pope on a recent Sunday received a deputation of cardinals who presented an address of congratulation upon the results of the recent congress of bishops. In replying His Holiness complained of the infamous Italian press which he said had used the centenary of that impious apostate, Martin Luther, to insult the Holy See.

AT the usual monthly meeting of the Guelph Ministerial Association, held last week, the Rev. Robert Torrance read a paper on "Christmas—the Day and its Customs." The following resolution was proposed and unanimously adopted: "That the attention of this Association having been called to the inconveniences and discomforts, not to say danger to health at inclement seasons of the year, arising from the want of punctuality at funerals, it be recommended, with the concurrence of all parties interested, that the religious services at the house be held before the hour appointed for the funeral to take place, so that the procession may leave close upon the time published."

HERR LASKER, perhaps the most prominent leader of the National Liberal party in the German Parliament, was on a visit to the United States. After spending some time in the west he returned to New York where he died very suddenly of heart-disease last week. He has been for a number of years a prominent figure in the politics of Germany. No member of the Reichsrath combated with more firmness the absolutism of Prince Bismarck. Herr Lasker was of Jewish parentage. After receiving a good general education he studied law, and to obtain a comprehensive knowledge of his profession he resided for about three years in England. He was elected a member of the Prussian Diet in 1865, and since that time has been identified with the progressive party in German politics.

AN excellent illustration of the value of coolness and discipline in the presence of danger was given in connection with the fire at Hope Street Public School in this city last week. Unusual heat and smoke filled the rooms of the large and commodious building. Investigation showed that the wood-work near the furnace was on fire. The alarm was quickly and quietly given. The pupils were dismissed with almost the same regularity as on ordinary occasions. Several of the children were at first excited, but the firmness of the teachers and many of the scholars checked all approaches to panic. The result was that every one connected with the school escaped without accident. The excellent architectural arrangement of the building, and the cool common-sense of those in charge, were successful in averting what might easily have been another distressing calamity.

IT is fourteen years since the General Assembly of the Canada Presbyterian Church gave permissive sanction to the use of instrumental music in public worship. The wisdom of that course has been justified by results. It has not in every case been productive of absolute harmony, but any other decision would have led to great disturbances. Occasionally an enthusiast in favour of the organ may stir up a

vigorous opposition, and occasionally also a hot-headed opponent of the organ by the unreasonable vigour of his protest may seriously break the peace of a congregation. The latest fracas of this kind occurred at Shannonville. A new church with a new organ, was to be opened on Sabbath week. A stalwart protester against the use of instrumental music finding his representations were overborne, resolved on the heroic measure of barring out minister, organist, and congregation. It was a cold day but the blood of the besiegers got warmed up. They forced the door and the solitary anti-organist was no longer able to hold the fort. These things are ludicrous, and they are harmful. We cannot always have our own way. Petulance and passion do not comport with principle.

THE movement, begun a short time since to form a Canadian Intercollegiate Missionary Alliance has thus far resulted most satisfactorily. A meeting was held in Wycliffe College Convocation Hall, Toronto, last week, Mr. Welr, of McMaster Hall, presided. Representatives were present from all the theological colleges in the city except Trinity, the students of which were not back from the Christmas vacation. Delegates were also present from Victoria University, Cobourg, and others would have attended from Queen's University, but were delayed in their journey from Kingston. The articles of organization, drafted at a recent meeting of the Alliance, were submitted to the assembled students and discussed *seriatim*. A very lively debate took place, lasting nearly a couple of hours, but the articles were ultimately adopted with a few alterations. The first meeting of the convention was fixed for October next. Communications were read from the Wesleyan College, Montreal, from Albert College, Belleville, and from Woodstock College expressing hearty sympathy with the students of Toronto in their missionary enterprise. Mr. Whittington, of Victoria College, shortly to go as a missionary to Japan, gave a short but interesting address.

AN important Chancery decision affecting the right to Church property has just been given by Vice-Chancellor Proudfoot. The Society of Friends who have so long maintained their simple and unobtrusive forms of worship have been more or less influenced by the changing conditions, with which they and all others are surrounded. There are two well defined parties within the Society; the strictly conservative and the progressive. The former adhere to the distinctive views held by the body since the days of George Fox. They hold fast to the old ways and peculiar dress. The progressive party are willing to conform to the modes common in other churches. They give up the practice of silent waiting for the Spirit in their meetings; they do not object to use the current names of days and months, and are in the habit of reading the Scriptures, singing hymns in public worship, and are not averse to a paid ministry. They also follow the Methodist plan of having a mourner's bench, and narrating experiences. The contention just decided in the civil court was as to the possession of a meeting-house and property at Westlake, Prince Edward county. The progressive party are most numerous and on this account claim the property. The orthodox Quakers base their claim on the fact, that they represent the views and follow the practices of the Society to which the property was originally deeded. Following English precedent the Vice-Chancellor decided in favour of those who adhere to the doctrines, discipline and forms of worship familiar to the Society of Friends since its formation.

A CASE has been pending for some time in one of the New York State courts on the validity of a mock-marriage ceremony. Last summer there was a lawn party under church auspices at the residence of one of the members. The young people had a pleasant time of it. They played croquet and other inoffensive games. A spirit of mischief prompted some one in fun to propose impromptu marriages. Several couples went through a burlesque performance. Possibly none of the young people thought seriously of

the matter afterwards. Some old folks did, however, and endeavoured to snatch a verdict declaring the marriage at the lawn party legal. They have not succeeded. The marriage ceremony is not to be trifled with. In giving his decision the judge expressed himself in a very sensible manner: It is very evident to my mind that, if left to herself, Miss Higbie would never have claimed that she is the lawful wife of Walter Vaughan. In my opinion this proceeding has been instituted at the suggestion of persons who ought not to have exposed her to the gaze of the public. For what took place at the sociable the church under whose auspices it was held is not responsible. Such performances are the natural results of the loose notions of boys and girls, for which their parents are to blame. If parents would not neglect the discharge of the parental functions, mock marriages and indiscriminate kissing would not be so frequent. I decide that the relation of husband and wife does not exist between Jerome Walter Vaughan and Annie E. Higbie, and consequently he is not bound to support her.

WEEKLY HEALTH BULLETIN.—From the intensity of the cold and the general interruption of communications, the number of disease reports for the week is below the average, but the general indications of prevailing disease are nevertheless well marked. Respiratory affections have greatly increased. Bronchitis, which though high, has been stationary for several weeks, show an advance, while Influenza, which last week had shown a very great advance, has this week become still more prevalent, and Tonsillitis has also advanced. Amongst Fevers, Intermittent shows a well marked decrease in prevalence, and Enteric is apparently likewise on the decline. Of the contagious zymotics, there is none which has shown any marked change from last week. The outbreak of Small Pox, which occurred in a lumber camp near Rosseau, was an item of much interest, inasmuch as the negligence, to use no stronger term, which allowed the sick man to pass from this point to Orilla in a railway train, was most reprehensible. Dr. E. A. Powell, into whose hands the case finally came, deserves all praise for the energetic measures taken to isolate the case, and all the members of the family who had been exposed to the disease, and to protect the general public by urging vaccination on all. It will be very strange indeed if more cases are not soon reported as the result of exposure to the disease. Whooping Cough, Scarletina and Measles show no tendency to increase. Diphtheria once more excites remark. The correspondent from District I, eastern Ontario, who reported severe and fatal cases last week, says: "I had 200 pamphlets distributed of 'How to Check the Spread of Contagious Diseases' and thus the public are being educated on the value of disinfectants." The disinterested and self-sacrificing efforts of this gentleman are beyond all praise—an example to all, and a reproof to penurious penny-wise and pound-foolish municipal health officers. From District V., southern shore of the Georgian Bay, a medical gentleman reports the following: "We have lately had five cases of Diphtheria here, three of which were fatal, originating from a servant girl having washed a bundle of clothes worn by her master while nursing a part of his family who were down with the disease near Toronto. No part of the bundle of clothes washed was worn by any one of those down with the disease. The servant girl in question, fourteen years old, died; her sister, twelve years old, who assisted to nurse her, contracted the disease and died, and a third sister, seventeen years old, in the same house, also succumbed to the disease. The three died within fifteen days. Two other children, neighbours, were in the house in question two or three times and took the disease. Both have about recovered." Must the ignorance and carelessness, which have led to this "Dance of Death," always continue? Shall people never learn the value of disinfectants and isolation? And shall the unrestrained intercourse, as seen in the children from the neighbouring family entering the house of death, be, through the absence of Local Boards of Health, always possible?