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Notes of the Week.

THE Washington Monument, the corner-stone of which was laid July 4th, 1848, and on which work was resumed in 1880, was completed on Saturday, Dec. 6th, by the setting in place of the marble capstone, weighing three tons with its pyramidal apex of aluminum. The structure is the tallest in the world, being 600 feet in height. As soon as the capstone was set, the American flag was unfurled overhead, and a salute of twenty-one guns was fired from the White House grounds. A more elaborate celebration of the event will take place on Washington's Birthday.

IT is stated that one of the objects aimed at in the recent Plenary Council at Baltimore is the establishment of a great American Roman Catholic College. No sooner is the announcement made than a magnificent donation for the furtherance of this object is acknowledged. A Miss Caldwell, of St. Louis, heads the list with a contribution of \$300,000. In addition to this it is stated that wealthy adherents of the Church of Rome have assured the promoters of the college that the sum required, \$3,000,000, will be forthcoming. It will be seen that one wealthy lady alone has contributed \$100,000 more than the sum required for the endowment of Knox College. The prospects are, however, that the effort made by the friends of the institution will soon be crowned with entire success.

ON his return from the Plenary Council at Baltimore Archbishop Lynch received a public welcome. A procession formed and escorted him to his palace. He was accompanied by several dignitaries of the Roman Catholic Church, who took part in the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of Archbishop Lynch's elevation to the episcopate. Archbishop Ryan, of Philadelphia, after the celebration of a pontifical high mass, preached a sermon, in which he paid a high tribute to the Archbishop of Toronto, magnifying the human priesthood, and concluding, if the report be correctly given, by a sad misappropriation of sacred Scripture in applying to his fellow-archbishop the words that are applicable to the one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus, to whom only they belong.

A DESIRE has been expressed for a new Commercial Reciprocity Treaty between Canada and the United States. The most striking form at present enjoyed is reciprocity in criminals. Dishonest rascality in the States makes for the boundary line with all the haste and cunning that inspired the fugitive slave of former days. The Canadian defaulter hastens to swell the exodus over which the politicians wrangle. A confidential clerk who abused his trust and embezzled largely is now in the South with the officers of the law at his heels. A notorious New York receiver of stolen goods, who carried on her nefarious trade for twenty years under the eyes of the police, was at last brought to justice, but forfeiting her bail has sought refuge in Canada. On his return from England the Premier in an interview expressed himself favourable to a more efficient and stringent method of dealing with fugitive criminals.

DR. JOSEPH PARKER, London, has decided never to speak at any public meeting where the chairman is a brewer. The London *Christian Chronicle* says:

He feels that the time has come when brewers must be looked upon in their commercial capacity as men of ill repute. He carefully distinguishes, however, between the man and the brewer. The man himself may have many characteristics and excellencies, which ought to be recognized, but the fact that he is a brewer, and therefore at the very root of a traffic which is causing more misery in the country than any other trade, ought to be considered reason for declining his patronage of every institution of a religious and benevolent kind. Think of a brewer being worth upwards of half a million of money, and being petted and cheered because he has given £50 to the fund of some ragged school! It is worse than ironical, it is positively iniquitous. Considering that it is not many years since the Buxtons and others could be foremost in philanthropic societies and yet be brewers, this is a great move forward for Great Britain.

RECENT exchanges state that the Scottish Churches have selected their Moderators for 1885. The Moderators elect in both the Church of Scotland and the Free Church are well known in the world of letters. Dr. Mitchell, Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the University of St. Andrew's, who is to preside over the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, is author of a notable volume on "The Westminster Assembly," a work of great research, which throws much light on the memorable gathering of which it treats. Principal David Brown, of Aberdeen, who has been selected as Moderator of the Free Church, is author of several valuable commentaries, and was a member of the company of revisers of the Authorized Version of the New Testament. Both divines were members of the recent Pan-Presbyterian Council, and took a prominent part in its proceedings. In Scotland the selection of moderator is a prerogative belonging to previous occupants of the chair, who meet annually for that purpose, though in the United Presbyterian Church the Moderator is appointed by direct vote of the Synod.

FACILITY in obtaining divorce is one of the worst and most dangerous foes of home life. The home is the corner-stone of social existence. A nationality that does not venerate and protect the family carries in it the elements of its own dissolution. The ease with which divorce is obtained in several of the neighbouring States has led many earnest minds to contend for a reform in this important matter. At the recent Plenary Council the permanence of the marriage tie was strongly insisted upon. According to the official report lately printed, Massachusetts in an estimated population of 1,985,335, recorded during the year 1883, 23.82 births, 9.16 marriages, and 19.01 deaths to each 1,000 persons. The number of marriages has increased from 12,515 in 1864 to 18,194 in 1883, the number of divorces from 270 to 655. The proportion of illegitimate to legitimate births has doubled in twenty years. It is stated that in Chicago the divorces granted by the courts average fifty a week. It is also stated that numbers from Canada go to Chicago to obtain a severance of the marriage tie, which they can easily secure by a six months' residence in that city.

PRACTICAL experience is sometimes a great enlightener of conscience. The incidence of taxation is very unequal. Why, on principles of fairness and justice, has not yet been demonstrated. In rural districts exempted property is not felt to be a heavy burden, and some are disposed to argue that the removal of exemptions would be unfair to country residents, because they would have their share of the equalized impost to pay. Why should they not? It is also sometimes argued because a city has been selected as the seat of Government the possession of Government buildings and the residence of exempted officials are more than sufficient to compensate for the unequal taxation that must result. It may be a question of advantage or disadvantage, but it is much more a question of right and wrong. Our Saviour paid His tribute, why His Church should not pay hers

is hard to be understood. A society has been formed in Toronto to work for the abolition of tax exemption. The City Council has agreed to submit the question to the ratepayers; the Ottawa City Council is also moving in the matter. It may be that the movement will not be immediately successful, eventually it will; right and time are on its side.

THE Plenary Council at Baltimore was immediately followed by an immense assemblage in the same city to celebrate the centenary of Episcopal Methodism on this continent. A large number of delegates from all parts, including several representative men from Canada, met in Mount Vernon Church. At the opening services the Scriptures were read from a Bible once in the possession of John Wesley, and a centenary hymn, composed for the occasion, was sung by the vast audience. Bishop Foster preached the opening sermon. So far as a brief written report can indicate, it was an able effort. Many important present-day topics were touched upon. The outlook, to his view, wears a sombre aspect, though Dr. Foster has an unwavering faith in the Church's future. He is reported as saying that "it was important that Calvinism went down. All its great truth could not float its error." Intelligent exponents of the Scriptural system of doctrine known as Calvinistic do not seek to float error. Their desire is to spread the truth. Calvinism is in no sense responsible for the distortions and caricatures so often held up to the ridicule of admiring Arminians. Calvinism is not reckoned among the things going down just at present.

THE Scott Act has gained another victory and sustained another defeat at the polls. Last week voting took place in Brant County and in the city of Brantford. In the county it was carried by a very decisive majority, every township casting a large vote in its favour. The town of Paris was the only constituency that gave a majority against the Act. Brantford also polled a majority adverse to its adoption. It was not large, being only 164. The result may be disappointing, but it is in no way surprising. In towns and cities those interested in the liquor traffic have their headquarters, and they are more able to bring influence to bear on a certain class of voters who lack force to withstand pressure. The triumphant majority in the county is an offset to the failure in Brantford. A sensation has been caused in Fergus by the stand taken by the Rev. Mr. Smellie, who is represented as having come out against the Scott Act. One thing is certain that this venerable pastor who has been nearly fifty years in the ministry, if mistaken, is perfectly sincere in his convictions, and holding them, is fully entitled to their public expression if he deems it necessary. There is, however, every prospect that the Act will be sustained in Wellington County.

DURING the autumn an English yacht was wrecked. The crew escaping in a boat, beat about in great extremity and suffering until relieved by a passing vessel. They were without provisions, and death from starvation stared them in the face. One of the number, a boy, was put to death and his body yielded sustenance to the survivors till they were rescued. They have been tried for the murder of the lad, condemned and sentenced to death. The circumstances are such that the strong appeals for mercy addressed to the executive will certainly be listened to, and the death penalty commuted. Such a termination of the sad tragedy would be universally regarded as satisfactory. The decision of the court was, in the circumstances, both right and proper. Morbid sentiment is so prone to obliterate moral distinctions that it too often sheds maudlin tears at the wrong place. When cannibalism and murder begin to find apologists it is about time to ask: Whither are we drifting? The charity that overlooks the sacredness of human life is spurious on the face of it. The verdict of the jury called the deed done by the men in their extremity by its right name. Now if clemency is extended to them, it is not liable to be misunderstood, and its exercise in their case will meet with universal approval.