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Notes of the Week.

Prof. McCloskey, D.D., of Princeton University, delivered lately an address to the Philadelphia Presbyterian Ministers' Association on "The Drift of Modern Science." He maintained that in its tendencies it is (1) utilitarian, working for the public welfare; (2) in respect to its animus toward religion neither for nor against it; (3) sharply critical; (4) given to excessive specialism; and (5) strongly materialistic and mechanical, seeking to explain the phenomena of the world by the laws of nature.

At a recent debate held in the London Presbyterian College on "Needed Reforms in Presbyterian Government and Worship," it was suggested, among other things, that pastorates should be terminable at a fixed period; that appointments to the eldership should not necessarily be for life, nor should prospective elders be required to assent to the whole of the Westminster Confession; that the office of deaconess should be revived; and that congregational meetings for a full and free discussion of matters affecting the welfare of the Church should be held from time to time.

It is now stated that the condition of the Rev. Dr. Thain Davidson's health is such that he is unable to accept the nomination to the Moderatorship of the ensuing Synod of the English Presbyterian Church. Dr. Davidson stated to his own congregation on a recent Sabbath that, acting on the advice of his medical attendant, it was his intention to decline the honor. An intimation to this effect will no doubt be sent to the Moderator (Rev. R. Leitch, M.A.) and another nomination will have to be made by the Board of Nomination at a meeting to be held early this year.

Dr. Barnardo, in an Emigration Retrospect of his work, says that the total record stands 8,043 boys and girls sent to Canada and the colonies. For 1895 the number is 733—boys 578, girls 155. Of these no fewer than 267, or 36 per cent., had at one time or another been actually on the streets. This shows instructively how large is the proportion of the rescues who are lifted from the very bed-rock of destitution, and placed in positions of usefulness and independence. The following is an analysis as to their orphanhood or other wise:

Number with neither parent living	- 265
" " mother only	" - 319
" " father	" - 105
" " both parents	" - 44

From the middle of last month and the end of February next a series of conferences is being held at various educational centres in India and Ceylon in connection with the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions. Mr. John R. Mott, official representative of the College Department of the American Y. M. C. A., and chairman of the Executive Committee of the Student Volunteer Movement, is expected to speak at all these conferences. Their object is: (1) The deepening of the spiritual life; (2) The consideration of plans and agencies to hasten the evangelization of India; (3) The promotion of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions. Conferences will be held in the following places: Jaffa, Ceylon, Madras, Bombay, Lahore, Lucknow, Calcutta.

The statement has been made that \$25,000 has been offered to Mr. Archibald Forbes to go as special correspondent to Constantinople for six weeks. The offer is said to have come from *The New York Morning Journal*. Mr. Forbes is a "son of the manse," his father having been the late Rev. Dr. Forbes, of Boharm, Banffshire, one of the leaders of the Scottish Church, and an ex-Moderator of the General Assembly.

Elder George Junkin, of the Presbyterian Church (North) in the United States, writing in "The Church at Home and Abroad," supplies a hint and warning respecting their Ministerial Relief Fund, which it may be well also for our own Church to consider. "It now looks," he says, "as if our year next April will close with a debt of not less than \$12,000 or \$15,000." Many are misled by the fact that there is an invested Fund. But we can use only the income, not the capital itself, and rates of interest have been sinking year by year. Only a fraction of the supply we need is from this Fund: and for myself, I am glad to have it so. I would rather rest the claims of this Board upon the reason and heart of the living members, if they are indeed living, and not mere appendages to the Church. Can we turn these servants of the Church away (Christ called Himself a servant) and not give them their just pay? Shall we cut down \$300 to \$200, and the \$200 to \$100, and the \$100 to \$50?"

In the newer parts of the United States, as well as in Canada, there are large demands for Sabbath schools. To overtake these claims the Presbyterian General Assembly (North) recommended its churches and Sabbath schools to raise \$200,000 for the work of the year. As between the permanent value of denominational and non-denominational work of this kind we quote from the Assembly's minutes these wise words:—"We do not disparage what has been done by other agencies in the field. God bless them and prosper their work. But we submit that it is better to work through the agency of the Church, which can take care of the results of the work, gather them into permanent organizations, and exercise over them continued and loving care—impossible to the undenominational or union work. People will love the agency that cares for them; they will love the Presbyterian Church and come into it gladly if the Presbyterian Church proves that she loves them and seeks their good."

The following on the Venezuelan boundary dispute, from the last issue of the *Belfast Belfast* which has reached us, will be interesting news to Canadians, and Torontonians especially: "Great excitement has been caused in Toronto by advices from Ottawa to the effect that the Government is arranging with the owners to convert lake steamers into cruisers. Such is the interest excited by the news that meetings have been held in the clubs to discuss the subject, and hundreds of citizens have wired to Ottawa offering their services in case of war. The work of fortifying Scarborough Heights, an important strategic point, has begun. Yesterday the Naval Committee inspected the vessels in the harbour, and selected several which they considered suitable for conversion into cruisers. The captains and pilots for service in these vessels have already been engaged, and yesterday signed their contracts. Guns are being cleaned at the armoury preparatory to being placed in position on board the cruisers. The 'Sons of England' Naval Brigade is recruiting largely."

It is now some time since the news reached this country from Australia of the serious illness of Joseph Cook, a man whose name has become so well-known by his books, and especially the Boston Monday lecture. He lately passed through Chicago on his return home to Boston, to all appearances an almost complete wreck. "I greatly fear," was the opinion expressed by one who knew him well, "Joseph Cook's life work is ended." A man of nervous temperament and ceaseless mental activity and application. The natural result has followed, and he is a weak and shattered man. It is a painful story. Dr. Cook devoted himself closely to his studies; a book was in his hand at all times. At his home he repeatedly spent successive days and nights in his library, sleeping little in the meantime. On the train during his travels it was the same thing again; he still devoted his time to reading and writing. Every place he went a trunkful of books acted as a traveling companion. The great mental strain to which Dr. Cook has subjected himself is accountable for the present condition of his faculties.

The *Belfast Witness* notices an opinion expressed by the Duke of Argyll on public education that "it is a prejudice and erroneous to think that when the State assigns money, whether from rates or taxes, to voluntary, that is, denominational schools, it does the same thing as endowing churches." To this it replies, and rightly we think; it is the very ground we have already taken on our Separate School Question:—"We maintain that here in Ireland the granting of public money to support a school belonging solely to one denomination, teaching at any hour of the day the particular tenets of that denomination, and observing at any and all hours its religious practices, and therefore shutting out by conscientious conviction the children of every citizen and taxpayer who does not belong to that denomination, or else, if he chooses to run the risk, admitting them only with the almost inevitable result of proselytism; we maintain, as the resolutions of several of our Presbyteries have done, that this is nothing else than the reintroduction, by a side wind and in a more insidious and objectionable form, of the old rejected and condemned principle of religious endowment."

The *Presbyterian*, of London, England, speaking of the late war-feeling in the United States says: "War between England and America, the two leading Christian nations of the world, the two great peoples of the English-speaking race! Impossible. Such a fratricidal struggle would be an outrage on humanity, the most terrible international crime of the age." After referring to the Monroe Doctrine, and expressing the opinion that in the circumstances neither nation would fight for it, it adds some words which may well be pondered over and acted upon amongst ourselves: "The outburst of the war spirit over a little incident of this kind, and the way in which questions like peace and war are made the sport of parties, illustrate once more the necessity for Christian men to take part in public affairs, and not to allow government to fall into the hands of unprincipled politicians. The American House of Representatives made no protest against the offence committed by the President in his unseasonable Christmas message. The protests have come from Christian men outside the Legislature. But the Christian sentiment of the nation ought not to be out-side its Legislature: it should be represented in full strength there."

PULPIT, PRESS AND PLATFORM.

Moody: There is a great deal of difference between my covering up my sin and God putting it away.

Ram's Horn: The man who is truly praying for the coming of Christ, will be found doing something to help prepare the way.

Rev. W. J. W. Findley: It is not the degenerate in the slums who are dragging down the standard of religion, but the great mass of so-called respectable people.

United Presbyterian: A young man's companions should be only those whom he could, without hesitation, take into his home and introduce to his mother or sister. We wonder how many young men would be willing to submit to this test.

Rev. Nelson Millard: The nihilism of Russia, the socialism of Germany, the communism of France and the labor leagues of England are permeated with pessimism and atheism. Their cry is that the world is sad and bad, and continually waxing sadder and worse.

New York Churchman: To know that there are some souls, hearts and minds, here and there, who trust us and whom we trust, some who know us and whom we know, some on whom we can always rely, and who will always rely on us, makes a paradise of this great world. This makes our life really life.

Rev. T. S. Cartwright: Some of our modern sermons are a disgrace to the pulpit and a burlesque upon preaching. Their theology is bad; their literature is worse. They have no oratorical charm, no intellectual power, no spiritual life. With such sermons nobody need wonder at empty pews and sleepy hearers.

Rev. Paul Van Dyke: Virtue is learned by patience, and in our daily struggle in life the fact that we often fail should only furnish good reason for more earnest, conscientious effort, with a determination to succeed. Patience not only marks the road of goodness for the soul, but it also marks the road of goodness for the world.

Rev. Dr. Fishburn: Ignorance is not the mother of devotion, but the mother of cruelty, superstition and crime. One of Satan's most powerful auxiliaries is ignorance. It was ignorance that put that black place in history we call the dark ages; ignorance bathed the sword in blood on St. Bartholomew's night and killed men for witchcraft in the New England States.

The Interior: There is no appearance of hope for the cessation of the massacre of the Armenians. It will go on till murders will stop for lack of victims. We repeat our prophecy. Christian Europe will be called to an awful accounting for this crime. Every flag in Europe is stained with innocent blood. The sword of retribution is suspended above every European capital. God will settle this account with every one of them to the last drop in the measure.