

After the prizes and diplomas had been distributed addresses were delivered by the Rev. D. M. Gordon and Dr. Moore, expressive of their high satisfaction at the thoroughness and high character of the work done during the past year, and at the efficiency with which the whole staff of the college had discharged their several duties. The principal, Dr. Kemp, addressed a few closing and complimentary words to the young ladies and retired amidst a shower of bouquets. The prospects of this college are very encouraging, it is very thoroughly equipped in every department and in admirable order. It has on its staff for the next year the name of Miss Charles who has obtained high honours in the late examinations at the University of Toronto.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE IRISH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

A very keen debate took place on the question of instrumental music in the public worship of the Church by the introduction of the following resolutions:

"Whereas the laws and practice of this Church, which are founded upon and agreeable to the Word of God, nowhere authorize the use of instrumental music in public worship;

"Whereas, in 1868, the General Assembly declared 'that the common law of this Church excludes the use of instrumental music in the public worship of God, and that Presbyteries be instructed to see that congregations conform to this law';

"Whereas, in 1873, the Assembly resolved by 'unanimous deliverance,' to give up and abstain from the use of instrumental music in the public worship of the sanctuary;

"Whereas, in 1874, the Assembly required 'as a matter of Church order and Presbyterian principle, that the deliverance of 1873 anent instrumental music shall be carried out by all the congregations under its care';

"Whereas, year after year the Assembly has been expressing its grave disapproval of the conduct of those ministers who, in the face of its repeated deliverance, have persisted in using an instrumental accompaniment;

"Whereas, in 1879, the Assembly reaffirmed the deliverance of 1873, expressed 'its determination to honourably and resolutely adhere to it,' and enjoined 'all ministers and congregations who acknowledge the authority of the General Assembly and the duty of loyal submission to the supreme court of the Church, to see to it that that unanimous deliverance be at once carried out in its integrity'; and

"Whereas, it appears that the ministers of Enniskillen, Queenstown, Carlow, and Bray have deliberately disobeyed this injunction, and thereby practically renounced the authority of the General Assembly, and repudiated the duty of loyal submission to the supreme court of their Church:

"Resolved—(1) That the Assembly now declares that the conduct of these ministers is utterly un-Presbyterian, and directly subversive of order and government, and that, if further persevered in, it will be accounted and dealt with as contumacy.

"(2) That the Assembly, in defence of the form of worship hitherto observed by this Church, in defence of the rights and liberties of those ministers and people who conscientiously object to an instrumental accompaniment, and in defence of that authority with which it is invested as the supreme court of the Church, now enjoins the ministers of those congregations where an instrumental accompaniment in public worship is in use, to give it up forthwith.

"(3) That the Assembly now appoint a commission with Assembly powers, with instructions to take charge of this whole matter; and, in the event of disobedience on the part of any ministers to the repeated requirements of the supreme court on this subject, to certify them that if they, or any of them, do not act as hereby enjoined the said commission shall hold a meeting on the third Tuesday of August, and deal with them in accordance with the laws of the Church made and provided in the case of contumacy, and shall further continue such dealing until satisfactory evidence of repentance and submission in each case be given.

"(4) That the offer of such aid towards payment of preceptors as Presbyteries may find local circumstances demand be and hereby is renewed by this General Assembly."

The Rev. J. McNaughton, of Belfast, moved as an

amendment the previous question. In the course of his speech he besought the fathers and brethren of that Assembly, and especially gifted and talented men like Mr. Petticrew, Mr. Robinson, and Dr. Robb, and others joined with them, just for a little to let that matter alone, and let them give all their influence and talent, not in taking part in miserable controversies such as that, but in stirring up the Church to a higher degree of Christian life. He felt strongly on this subject, though he could not exercise all the vigour he once had. He could not allow that day to pass without making that appeal to his brethren and esteemed friends. He implored the Assembly with all the power he possessed, and all the energy he could command, by all that was heroic in the history of the past times of the Church, by all that was valuable in the great work God had given them to do, by their being specially selected in this land to witness for God, he implored them to let that wretched, miserable, drivelling question alone, and give themselves to the cause of the Redeemer.

This amendment was lost by 250 to 265. The debate then went on.

The following amendment was proposed:—

"First—That to exercise discipline as proposed would involve a departure from the rules laid down in 1873, and would be in violation of pledges given by prominent and representative men of that Assembly in 1874; would be unwarrantable in view of the fact that the Assembly had never given its decision as to the teaching of Scripture on the subject of instrumental music in Christian worship; and therefore, the action would be inexpedient, inasmuch as upon any resolution of this matter proposed in that Assembly the members of that Church were much divided. Second—That until the Assembly shall have given its decision as to the teaching of Scripture on the use of musical instruments in Christian worship, all proceedings in the matter shall be stayed."

In the course of some further discussion the Rev. Dr. Robb, late of Toronto, said there was a peculiar danger in this question. Something told him that while Ireland had been in ecclesiastical matters most conservative, it had been conservative of its errors as well as of its truth. He warned that Church that, if it departed from Scriptural principles and the worship of days gone by, and allowed the introduction of innovation, they were just admitting the thin end of the wedge, which circumstances would combine to drive home, and that grand old Scriptural Church of theirs might be carried away even beyond those advances which other Churches had made, and be ultimately blighted, and placed as the New Testament Apostolic Church was placed by the admission of those principles which eventuated in Popery.

This amendment was also rejected, the vote standing 250 to 251.

It was then moved in further amendment: "That, considering the Church had deliberately and solemnly resolved to abstain from passing any law in relation to the service of praise, it could not, consistently with that unanimous deliverance, exercise discipline upon those ministers and congregations who had continued to employ instrumental aids in the service of praise. They deeply regretted that several ministers and congregations still continued instrumental music, and that, whereas the use of instrumental music was the cause of grievous offence to many brethren, and kept up a spirit of irritation and alienation and contention in the Church, they appealed to those congregations for the sake of restoring peace and order, to give up all instrumental music in the public worship of the sanctuary; and that, with the hope of that appeal being successful, that no action be taken in the matter, but that Presbyteries be requested to report at the next annual meeting as to whether they had yielded to the supreme court of the Church."

This, after a scene of considerable confusion, was carried unanimously. The question is accordingly left in *statu quo* for another year.

BOOKS AND MAGAZINES.

CANADIAN MONTHLY, for July. (Toronto: Rose-Belford Co.)—Fully an average number of a publication we have often noticed.

HISTORY OF ENGLAND. By Charles Knight. (New York: I. K. Funk.)—This marvel of cheapness and excellence is now completed, and we have no doubt

will have a very extensive sale and do a great deal of good.

HISTORY OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK. (New York: A. S. Barnes & Co.)—Part IX of this popular illustrated work contains lively descriptions of the strifes in Washington's cabinet, and other matters up to the end of the eighteenth century.

GIRL'S OWN PAPER, for July. (London: Religious Tract Society; Toronto: J. Young.)—We have already spoken very strongly in approval of this publication and we can add nothing but that it keeps up, if it does not improve upon its character with every succeeding number.

THE QUIVER, for June (Toronto: J. Young), fully supports its old-time claims to be considered in many respects one of the very best family magazines in existence. This alone, at the present day, is no small praise if we think but a moment of the vast competition that exists in every department of labour and in magazine work no less than in every other. The articles this month are numerous, varied and short, which is a great advantage in this respect at least that they are more likely to be generally read. We confess our inability, however, to get up so much enthusiasm for the "stories" as for some of the other matter.

DICTIONARY OF CHRISTIAN ANTIQUITIES. Two volumes. By Dr. William Smith and Professor Cheetham. (Toronto: Willing & Williamson.)—This great work is now completed after years of patient and practised toil. It is the natural sequel of Dr. Smith's great Dictionary of the Bible, and will be found by the preacher, Sabbath school teacher and intelligent private student of the Scriptures as indispensable as that other work has become. The name of Dr. Smith as editor is a sufficient guarantee that this, like all previous works of that gentleman, is distinguished by the most painstaking accuracy, the highest scholarship, the deepest research, and the greatest condensation compatible with a full and exhaustive treatment of the various subjects under discussion. In this there is not a line of mere padding, and neither writers nor editors have cause to plead in excuse for undue length in any case that they either could not or would not take time to make it shorter. When a line will sufficiently serve the purpose, nothing more is given, when in other instances the articles swell out into something like the dimensions of treatises, it is because the importance or intricacy of the subject will admit of no more circumscribed discussion. Dr. Smith and his coadjutor would be the first to repudiate the idea that minute and competent research could not detect any inaccuracy in those volumes, and few, if any, would be willing to stand sponsors for every statement made and every opinion expressed in their thousands of pages of close, yet most legible letterpress. But those most entitled to find fault and most likely to discover blunders will be the readiest to express their admiration of the scholarly accuracy, the sobriety of judgment and the affluence of learning displayed from the beginning to the close. All Dr. Smith's dictionaries have become standards, and we risk little in prophesying that this will not be an exception to the hitherto maintained rule. This American edition, it is to be remarked, is an unabridged and exact reprint of the English one from a duplicate set of plates purchased from the English publisher. It consists of two large royal octavo volumes printed in double columns. The paper is good, and though the type is small it has a clear face and is very legible and pleasant to the eye. The work is published at half the cost of the English edition, though for all practical purposes it is equally available. Beginning where the Bible Dictionary ends it embraces the first eight centuries of the Christian era or from the period of the Apostles down to that of Charlemagne. Associated with Dr. Smith in its production have been over seventy of the most distinguished scholars and antiquarians of Great Britain, each of whom has been assigned subjects in accordance with his own special studies and aptitudes. To make the work still more satisfactory, copious references have been given throughout, so that readers have always the means of testing the research, accuracy and candour of the writers, and of exposing, if they can, either their mistakes or perversions. In these days of intellectual activity and religious ferment we are quite sure that very many will find that the seven dollars or so spent in the purchase of these volumes has been a good and remunerative investment.