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Notes of the Week.

Sunday is a legal holiday in Japan, authorized by the government on the theory that all men need a day of rest, and equally out of respect to the Christian religion. The government offices and courts are all closed and official business is universally suspended, although many of the shops are kept open and some of the factories continue in operation seven days in the week. But under the new law those who work seven days receive extra wages.

In view of all that is being said just now about the conduct of the Chinese in persecuting Christian missionaries, American and English, we may mention an incident related by Mr. D. L. Moody. In writing of a visit to San Francisco he says: "I saw a Chinaman in San Francisco walking along as quietly as any man could, but a hoodlum, catching hold of his queue, threw him to the ground. When I attempted to remonstrate against such brutality, the ruffian drew a knife, and I nearly lost my life. I wonder that the Chinese do not rise up in their wrath and drive every American out of China, because of the hellish things done in this country."

Mr. Asquith, one of the ablest men in the late government is returning to his practice at the bar, which in England is considered rather *infra dig.* Commenting upon this an English journal says: "Mr. Asquith, notwithstanding a general belief to the contrary, has in no real sense 'married an heiress,' for though his father-in-law, Sir Charles Tennant, is credited with £70,000 a year, and may possibly possess it, he is a baronet with eleven children, and so has to provide for the dignity of an hereditary title and to divide the remainder of his estate into ten portions. Hence none of his younger children can be considered very rich for their position."

The question of sectarian schools came up for earnest discussion at the Wesleyan Conference held lately in England. There was very general fear lest the Conservative victory meant encroachment on religious liberty, and a series of resolutions, proposed by Mr. Hugh Price Hughes, and seconded by Dr. Rigg, was unanimously adopted, avowing: "That the principal object of Methodist policy in the matter of elementary education, is the establishment of School Boards everywhere, acting in districts of sufficient area, and the placing of a Christian, unsectarian school within reasonable distance of every family. This is of special importance in the rural districts, where Methodists have no alternative to the compulsory attendance of their children at Anglican schools."

It would appear as if in the case of Turkey there was to be another illustration added to the many which history already furnishes of the old proverb, "Whom the gods wish to destroy they first drive mad." The Armenian outrages, which have shocked the whole civilized world, it was hoped, had, for the present at least, been brought to a pause. Fresh outrages, similar to those already reported, have again been perpetrated, which, if they do not show complicity of the Turkish officials, at least demonstrate the weakness of the government, and such a spirit of irreconcilable hatred on the part of Mohammedans against Christians, which if it cannot be stayed from bloodshed by diplomacy must be by force and that very speedily. The most recent reports are that by an attack of 1,000 Turkish troops five villages were pillaged. Five thousand persons were rendered homeless. Men were tortured and women and children ravished. Four monasteries were sacked. It is reported that the Turkish minor officials have formed an Anti-Christian Society to slaughter Christians if the Porte accepts the scheme of reforms the powers insist upon.

The Special Commissioner of the well-known English magazine, *The Quiver*, has a contribution in the September issue in which Newcastle-on-Tyne, where this year the English Presbyterian Synod met, is described as a great centre of religious activity. The religious renaissance of Newcastle, the writer says, dates from the establishment of the bishopric in 1883, but while claiming that the initiative came from the Establishment, he freely concedes that Nonconformity is also well abreast of the times. Methodism, represented in the article in the person of Rev. S. H. Hallam, is stated to be by far the strongest form of Dissent in Newcastle. The work of the Rev. J. H. Jowett is also generously recognized, as well as that of Rev. F. Lambe amongst the United Methodists, of Rev. R. Leitch amongst the Presbyterians, and of Rev. W. Walsh amongst the Baptists.

By a break in the conduit for supplying Toronto with water from Lake Ontario, the city has been thrown into a state, if not of panic, into one at least of great and general anxiety for its safety and health. This break was wholly unexpected, although it was known that the means of water supply for the city was far from being the best possible. The most prompt measures were taken to avoid the evils and danger which would be certain to arise from the use of impure water. It may be hoped that by the immediate warning given of the danger and the means taken to avert it there may be no outbreak of disease. There has been brought home to the city, however, the imperative necessity for taking instant and effective precautions, whatever these may eventually be found to be, to avert what may very easily prove to be nothing short of a calamity to the city and in part to the country.

The *Belfast Witness*, whose testimony may be regarded as possibly partial to the incoming English government, says, in a late issue: "No first speech of a Chief Secretary for Ireland ever created a more pleasing impression than that of Mr. Gerald Balfour in reply to the extravagant demands of Mr. J. Redmond and the lugubrious mixture of entreaties and threats relied upon by Mr. Dillon. Studiously cool from first to last, Mr. Balfour seemed to weigh every sentence as it was uttered, and to give out his opinions with the impressiveness which comes of anxious thought and deliberate conviction. Mr. A. J. Balfour was so impressed with the success of the effort, and with the hearty appreciation of it shown by the Assembly, that he buried his chin in his shirt front and refused to show his face fully to the House. It was easy to see, however, that he was deeply flushed with pride that on his first big trial in debate his brother had acquitted himself right brilliantly."

Welshmen the world over have a profound respect for Sabbath observance. Half-a-dozen young Welsh colonists, in a South American Colony, undergoing the annual military service, refused to drill on Sunday, the only day fixed by the Spanish authorities. They were promptly imprisoned for twenty-four hours. The next Sunday they again repeated the offence, and were sentenced to twice the former period of imprisonment. Popular feeling was aroused on their behalf. A petition to the authorities was signed by nearly every resident in the colony, and presented to the local Spanish governor. He maintained that the rule of the Argentine Government was to drill on Sunday, so that the men need not lose their day's work. The colonists retorted that they would prefer losing work for a week to working at drill or anything else for a single Sunday. Impressed by this general opposition, the Governor referred the whole case to the president of the Republic of Buenos Ayres, the subordinate youths being meanwhile excused drill, and there the matter now rests.

Mr. Graves, an English consul in Turkey, forwards to the Duke of Argyll a private dispatch describing the deplorable condition of the fugitive and starving Armenians in the Sassoun District, the scene of the late massacre of Christians. Their condition is pitiable indeed. It says there are about 860 of these houseless wanderers, now living in the woods and mountains, in caves and hollow trees, half naked, and some, indeed, entirely without covering for their nakedness. Bread they have not tasted for months, and curdled milk they only dream of, living as they do upon greens and the leaves of trees. There are two varieties of greens which are preferred, but these are disappearing, as they wither at this season. Living on such food, they have become sickly; their skin has turned yellow, their strength is gone, their bodies are swollen, and fever is rife among them. Vice-Consul Shipley reports from Moush that there is great distress, amounting in a great number of cases to abject destitution, among the fugitives from Sassoun, of which he and his colleagues have had many opportunities of convincing themselves from personal observation. Vice-Consul Hallward writes from Van that the need for relief is unquestionable; that there is an enormous amount of destitution, and that there will certainly be more before next winter.

The Trades and Labor Congress of Canada is a very important body of its kind, and its deliberations and resolutions are well deserving of the serious attention and consideration of all classes of society; perhaps we might add specially of Christian ministers who are often charged, we do not now say justly or unjustly, with want of sympathy with the working classes. The following are some of the decisions arrived at, at the Congress which has just closed in London: It was decided to ask all members of trade unions to pledge themselves not to deal with Chinese, where the latter enter into competition with labor; to call for the abolition of the offices of Governor-General and Lieutenant-Governors, to request the Presbyterian General Assembly to withdraw its efforts to secure the repeal of the Chinese poll tax; to petition the Federal Government to pass an alien labor law similar to that of the United States; to ask that all prison-made goods be stamped; and to ask Trades Councils to unite with the National Council of Women in securing shorter hours and better hygienic protection for working women. The Congress declared in favor of the single tax. A letter will be sent to Eugene V. Debs expressing admiration for his stand, and denouncing his confinement as an attempt to strangle liberty.

Two men have just entered upon important educational positions in the Dominion whose course and the character of whose influence and work will be watched by all intelligent and truly patriotic Canadians with much more than ordinary interest. These are Dr. Petersen, the new Principal of McGill College, and Dr. Parkin, the new Principal of Upper Canada College. Both of these positions are among the most important in the country, and if both gentlemen are found upon trial to be fully qualified and are spared to occupy them for a number of years, the country in the students who will pass through their hands, and through the institutions of which they are to be the leading spirits, will feel and manifest the character of their influence, for good or ill, it may be for generations to come. Not parents only, but every citizen ought to be interested, as he will undoubtedly be affected, although unconsciously it may be, by the influences which, as from a fountain, flow from these and such like institutions over all the land. Men for the most part little think and little heed how much the Dominion owes, to speak only of those who have finished their public work, to men of the high moral character and powerful personal influence for good exerted upon those who came under it of the late Sir Daniel Wilson, and Dr. Petersen's still surviving predecessor, Sir William Dawson.