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Notes of the Week.

Write to the Presbyterian Printing and Publishing Co., 5 Jordan Street, Toronto, enclosing \$1 and receive THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN till 31st December, 1894. For the family circle a better investment could not be made.

It is said that another attempt to legalize marriage with the deceased wife's sister is to be made, by the introduction of a Bill in the House of Lords. Either Sir G. O. Morgan or Mr. Caine will ask the leader of the House of Commons whether it is not now sixty years since the House first protested against the prohibition, and more than twenty years since, for the seventh time, the House passed a Bill in favour of such marriages, and whether the Government will not itself introduce a Bill on the subject.

The total annual voluntary contributions of the Established Church of England are £5,401,982, of which sum the diocese of Manchester contributes only £358,299, while the four dioceses of Wales contribute £247,986. This is but a penny less by capitation than in the wealthy diocese over which Dr. Moorhouse presides. Two considerations may explain this. First, that in Wales the Episcopalians are striving for dominance; and second, that many families have come from Dissent, where giving is a highly cultivated grace.

During the recent Lent season in Mexico, a country in which the Roman Catholic church is all but supreme, three Sunday afternoons were devoted to bull fights, in the presence of applauding thousands of both sexes, from those of the well-to-do classes who paid seventy-five cents and one dollar for a vacant space in which to put their own chairs, to the poor mechanics and peons, who gave twenty-five cents for the privilege of standing in the sun. Those even who were clothed in rags, and knew not whence the morrow's bread would come to appease their children's hunger, managed to get the money to witness the torturing and slaughtering of dumb beasts. An army band played, a foremost citizen presided, and delicately reared ladies were judges of the contest.

Incidents connected with the introduction into the Imperial Parliament of the Bill for the disestablishment of the Church of England in Wales, says the *Christian World*, "proved that Welshmen are intensely keen upon disestablishment. Judging from opinions expressed by some of the leading men, the Bill has been received with general favor. That it is everything one would desire no one thinks for a moment; but, as one leading Welsh Radical remarked, 'It is almost certain that if it passes the House of Commons, the House of Lords will throw it out. On that account it is better that the clergy be offered magnanimous terms; having rejected those, then the Radicals and Nonconformists will feel free to go in for a more thorough and drastic measure after the next general election.'

Miss Ida B. Wells, an American lady who has been visiting London, England, addressed Dr. Clifford's congregation at Westbourne Park recently, after the usual service, on "The Condition of the Colored People in the Southern States." The audience was deeply impressed by her story, and the following resolution, moved and seconded, was put to the congregation by Dr. Clifford, and carried unanimously: "This meeting, having heard from Miss Ida B. Wells a recital of the wrongs done to the colored people of the Southern States of America by lawless mobs, expresses its sorrow and indignation; is glad to hear from the Hon. F. Douglass that the Northern people, public and press, are beginning to speak out, and earnestly urges all who love justice and brotherhood to secure for every citizen of the Republic, irrespective of color and race, if accused of crime, a proper trial in the courts of law."

Rev. William Carey, of Barisal, India, great-grandson of the pioneer missionary, met with a hearty reception at the meeting of the Young Men's Missionary Association in aid of the Baptist Missionary Society held lately in London, England. He said that working alone in his part of the mission field he heard but little of the general progress of the work. It was necessary to come to headquarters in London to get a bird's-eye view of the operations of the various enterprises, and he must say he felt very dispirited at the smallness of the work done in view of the great need. Still there was encouragement to be derived from the knowledge that others were striving to overcome the same difficulties that confronted him. The work of the missionary was like that of the pioneer in clearing the dark forests. The felling of one tree seemed a small thing, but the echo of a comrade's axe in the distance fell gratefully on the ear.

Rev. S. Vincent, of Plymouth, England, speaking lately on the spirit in which the present phases of biblical criticism should be regarded, said, "The higher criticism began in reverence. Everybody who studied the contents of the books of the Bible from the literary point of view, with a view to discovering the truth about their age and authorship, was a higher critic. Unfortunately, some critics have a bad name, and some of them richly deserve it. Their hostility to the supernatural leads them to resort to every means of eliminating it from the books of the Bible. Nobody should fear to know the truth about the truth, which is what the genuine higher criticism sought to discover. He rejoiced that to-day the destructive critics are being met by critics as learned as themselves, and yet who are devout Christians. If scornful impatience, on the one hand, and shameful innuendos on the other, were laid aside, the true solutions would be more quickly found.

The Rev. Dr. Bryce addressed the British Columbia Synod at its late meeting in the interest of Manitoba College, whereupon a committee was appointed and a deliverance brought in by it on the subject which was adopted unanimously by the Synod. It was as follows:

"The Synod desire to place on record their sense of the important services rendered by Manitoba College to the cause of Presbyterianism in the western part of the Dominion and their cordial recognition of its strong claims upon the sympathy of all the congregations within their bounds.

They regret to learn that these congregations have fallen so short of the measure of support expected from them, and they instruct the clerk to communicate with the congregations that have failed to contribute to this important object, informing them of the Synod's disappointment at their failure in this regard and of the necessity of contributions being forwarded as speedily as possible.

They beg to assure the authorities of the college of their readiness to co-operate with them in any plan that may be adopted for promoting its welfare or increasing the interest in its work."

Mr. W. T. Stead, who lately caused such a panic in this country, especially in Chicago, and has been giving addresses on various subjects in Edinburgh, spoke at the Wesleyan West End Mission, his subject being, "If Jesus Christ were to come to Edinburgh." "If Christ were to come to Edinburgh," he said, "and set Himself to ascertain whether they believed in Him, He would judge them not by the churches they built or attended, or by the prayers they said, or by the doctrines they believed, but by the 500 homeless men who passed Saturday night in Edinburgh shelters, by the 500 women of ill-fame who, the police said, resided in Edinburgh, and by the 1,000 human beings who in Edinburgh went to bed drunk on Saturday night—in short, by the way in which they carried out the precept of the 25th chapter of Matthew—to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, etc. What was wanted in the present day was the union of municipal, church and philanthropic effort in a combined and common-sense effort to remedy the social evils around them."

Figures diligently gathered and lucidly arranged by the secretaries of the Home and Foreign Missions, of the Scottish United Presbyterian church are full of encouragement. The year 1893 has been, commercially, an exceptionally trying one. There was thus good reason to fear that the Church finances would be seriously affected, and it is cause for special thankfulness to God that this foreboding has not been realized. Generally speaking, the statistics are much more pleasant reading than could have been expected, and gave evidence that there has been astir, throughout the church, a large spirit of generosity and faithfulness. Last year some candid friends, who do not love dissent, found delight in placarding what they designated "A Big Drop in U. P. Funds." It is peculiarly gratifying to know that the work abroad is making steady progress, and that the increase in the membership of our Foreign Mission congregations has been larger than in any previous year, viz., 1,046; and that now there are in these churches no fewer than 18,460 communicants. In every direction there is found abundant evidence that the Divine blessing has not been withheld.

Mr. D. J. Macdonnell is not the man to be daunted by one rebuff. We like him much for many good reasons, and among others for his pluck, and for the fine spirit in which he takes defeat. So although his overture averted the simplification of the Confession was declined transmission to the General Assembly, that is by no means the end of the matter. We do not say anything just now of the merits of the proposals of Mr. Macdonnell, but the thing which he is aiming at is beyond peradventure one of those which is coming. The action of the United Presbyterian Church and of the Free Church in Scotland, and more especially of the English Presbyterian Church in this direction are sufficient to relieve Mr. Macdonnell of the charge of being revolutionary, or radical, or premature in his undertaking. Nothing is more evident than that, if the larger union of Christians, which many pray and long for and look forward to with high hope as to the blessing it may prove to the church and to the world, something of the kind which Mr. Macdonnell is seeking to effect must be done. The questions how and when to go about so great an undertaking successfully can only be solved by tentative attempts, such as were made by Mr. Macdonnell at last Tuesday's meeting, and of which, as we have said, we have not seen or heard the last.

At the meeting of the Synod of British Columbia an overture of a very important kind was brought up for transmission to the General Assembly which does not appear in our account of the proceedings of that body. It proposes a radical change in the administration of the Home Mission work of the church. The grounds for the overture are these, the expense annually incurred by the meeting of so large a committee, the great disproportion of the representation on it of the eastern and western Presbyteries because of the distance of the former from its customary place of meeting, and the unnecessarily large size of the committee. The gist of the overture lies in the two following provisions:

1. The Assembly's Home Mission Committee (western section) shall consist of eight representative members, viz.: Two from each of the synods of Montreal and Ottawa, Toronto and Kingston, Hamilton and London, and one from each of Manitoba and Northwest Territories and British Columbia to be nominated annually by such synods and appointed by the General Assembly.

2. There shall be a synodical committee for home missions in each synod (western section) to consist of home mission conveners of Presbyteries.

The two superintendents of Home Missions and principals of Theological Colleges are to be members *ex-officio*. The functions of the Synodical Home Mission Committee shall be purely advisory and the decision of General Assembly's Home Mission Committee on matters of administration shall be final except that any three of its members in a minority may appeal to the General Assembly.

This it will at once be seen, does propose a complete change of the method which has hitherto been followed of working our vast and still growing Home Mission field, and we mention it now that all may take into consideration the important change which it contemplates.