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FOR 1886.

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Notes of the Week.

AS the Russian Raskolniks or Dissenters are strictly forbidden to print any books in Russia, they have lately opened a large printing-office in Roumania. A number of pamphlets have been recently published there in defence of the Raskol against the Orthodox onslaught. These pamphlets are now being largely circulated in Russia, to the consternation of Orthodox clergymen.

DURING the year 1884 agents of the British and Foreign Bible Society distributed in North China 51,613 copies of Scripture, in part or in whole, reckoning Bibles in four volumes, and Old Testaments in three volumes, as one copy respectively. It is most remarkable to notice that, of this very large total, only 190 copies were given gratuitously. The total circulation of the above society in 1884 was over 275,000 volumes.

OUR scrupulously accurate and esteemed contemporary, the *Glasgow Christian Leader*, informs its readers that Mr. P. C. Hill, ex-Premier of Canada, addressed a temperance meeting in Canterbury the other evening, the Bishop of Dover occupying the chair. Is it possible that during his recent visit to England the venerable Premier of Canada was the distinguished speaker referred to? He has not been known as an ardent advocate of the temperance cause in Canada. But then he is no doubt open to conviction.

A CONGREGATIONAL minister, the Rev. John Foster, Clapham, gave an evening discourse on a recent Sabbath, on 'The Irish Difficulty looked at in a Gospel Light.' At the close a stalwart Irishman coolly began to criticize the sermon. The minister requested him to resume his seat. This was resented by the critic, but with happy presence of mind the organist dashed off into a lively melody, and effectually drowned the remonstrances of the Irishman, who left, with a companion, declaring it was "disgraceful!"

AN International Committee, recently appointed to make an investigation, and report on the legalized gambling carried on at Monte Carlo, have discovered that between the years 1877 and 1885 not fewer than 1,820 people committed suicide consequent upon losses at the gambling tables. And it is said that this terrible record conveys no adequate notion of the misery entailed upon the families or creditors of these nearly two thousand suicides. A more impressive warning against the gambling iniquity can scarcely be imagined.

ACCORDING to the old privileges the Protestant Church was regarded in the three Baltic Provinces of Russia as an Established Church. But as the Czar has undertaken to Russianize the Protestant-German population of those provinces, the Holy Synod of Russia has issued a ukase declaring that henceforth the Orthodox Church shall be the only Established Church for all the Czar's subjects of all religious beliefs; and, therefore, all the children born of the mixed marriages between Protestant and Orthodox parties shall be considered as Orthodox.

SOME of those who have represented the English Government in India, and not a few in subordinate positions, have shown themselves anything but friendly to the cause of missions. This cannot be said of Lord and Lady Dufferin. The latter, seeing the misery of the people, sent for Miss Thorburn, an American Methodist missionary, and inquired how she might alleviate it. She is now studying Hindustani with Miss Thorburn, and paying the expenses of persons studying in America for future missionary work in India.

THE world moves. The *Inverness Courier* states that a public meeting of the inhabitants of Dornoch, convened by requisition, was held in the County Hall to consider the desirability of holding New Year's Day on the 1st of January, instead of the former custom of keeping it on the 12th, Old Style. After a few remarks from the chairman and the Rev. Neil Taylor, the meeting, on the motion of Mr. William Munro, seconded by Mr. John Mackintosh, unanimously resolved to adopt the New Style, and to intimate the same throughout the parish.

THE Belfast *Witness* intimates that the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Irish Presbyterian Church has issued a call to prayer on behalf of Ireland, which, it says, cannot but be regarded as eminently seasonable and needful. The circular issued says: A great crisis has come upon us. A powerful political organization makes demands which, if conceded, would most seriously imperil the peace, the social well being, and the highest spiritual interests of all classes of the people. It is believed that an effort will be made by whatever party is in power to satisfy in some measure the demands now so urgently made.

THE movement for reform in the Church of England has developed great strength. The Cambridge petition has received a larger number of signatures from prominent Churchmen and is ready to be presented. Another address to the archbishops has also been numerously signed. It differs from the Cambridge memorial in laying greater stress upon the appointment of parochial councils, and in defining those who are to take part in them and other proposed bodies simply as the laity, and not as *bona fide* Churchmen. The most noticeable thing about this address is the extreme variety of opinions represented by the names appended to it.

GERMANY is apparently giving way rapidly to predatory instincts. She has shown of late a decided weakness for the appropriation of far-off islands. The latest freak of Teutonic acquisitiveness has been displayed in the South Seas. It was reported that the island of Samoa had been annexed. The report has been reiterated and denied several times; but the despatches received both in London and Washington leave no doubt that adventurous German sailors have in a high-handed manner hoisted the Imperial flag in token of Samoan annexation, and in disregard of existing stipulations with England and America. Perhaps it may lead to more papal mediation and high-flown courtesies between Bismarck and the Pope.

THE Presbyterian Churches in Australia and Tasmania have adopted a basis of union, or rather a basis for a confederation. These are some of the points agreed upon: That the final Court of Arbitration or Advice among the Federated Churches, in respect to all matters legitimately brought before it and in respect to these matters alone, shall be called the Federal Assembly of the Presbyterian Churches of Australia and Tasmania. That the names of the several supreme courts remain as at present. That each supreme court have control of its properties and funds. The Foreign Missions of the Federated Churches are under the Federal Assembly. The theological halls are to be under the supervision of the Federal Assembly, but the professors are to be appointed by the supreme courts.

IN laying the memorial stone lately of a new Free Church edifice at Port Glasgow, Sir William Collins expressed his belief that there never was a period in the history of their Church and country when they required to watch with more jealous care the blessings they now enjoyed. There were forces rising around them in ecclesiastical and political spheres which threatened to weaken, if not destroy, the bulwarks of their national faith and freedom, thus robbing them of their heritage of liberty and religious toleration. It had been alleged that the impulse given to Christian liberality at the Disruption would gradually decline. He saw no sign of this, for now, when they were approaching the jubilee of the Free Church, the contributions of her members had reached the magnificent sum of over \$3,500,000 per annum.

IF matters go on at the rate they have been doing for the last few years, it is evident that Canadian cities and towns will have to face a serious pauper problem. The *Ottawa Free Press* states that the Mayor of the Dominion Capital the other day expressed himself in this fashion: There have been three children at my house this cold morning in search of relief, and the number of people who call on me is on the increase every day. I am haunted with suffering humanity; they come to my house before I am out of bed; they lie in wait for me and follow in droves to my place of business, and when I go to the city hall a fresh regiment is waiting there and they actually swarm to my house at meal time, in the hope of catching me. It is something startling how large a number of people are in need this terrible weather. Some of them want wood, others bread, and so on. There may in some cases be improvidence or worse, but actual destitution demands immediate relief.

THE last annual report of the Willard Tract Depository, Toronto, shows an advance of sixty-five per cent. on the business done over the previous year, the gross sales amounting to nearly \$50,000. The balance sheet indicates that the business has been done on a good paying basis, all expenses having been paid; two half-yearly dividends at six per cent. have been paid; \$200 placed to the credit of the free distribution account, and \$775.49 added to the rest account, making the balance to credit of rest account \$1,963.93. The amount of literature sent out last year was as follows: Tracts, leaflets, etc., 387,700; Gospel, Sabbath school and Christmas text cards, 267,000; Scripture almanacs, 12,000; books, 55,300; pamphlets, 14,600; hymn books, 42,000; Bibles, 8,400; "Notes for Bible Study," 120,000; "Our Mission Union" and "Young People," 130,000, or a total of 1,037,000. In addition to this there have been given out for free distribution. Bibles, books, tracts, cards, etc., some 200,000, making the total issues for the year 1,247,000 copies, or 2,887,552 since the formation of the company, and over five million issues since the opening of the Depository in 1873. These have been sent to all parts of the continent, and a goodly number to other parts of the world. The different publications of the Depository have met with a gratifying reception from the Christian public, and are increasing in demand very rapidly. Not long ago arrangements were entered into with several of the largest and most pronounced religious publishing houses of Great Britain and the United States, giving the Willard the sole control in Canada over special lines and, in some cases, over all their publications. The Depository appears to be flourishing and doing excellent service. In order, however, to ensure further success and development of the work, all that is required is increased capital. Now that it has been demonstrated that a religious bookstore will pay interest on moneys invested, there should be no hesitation on the part of Christian friends in providing the needed amount, especially in view of the fact that such can be done with a legitimate return for the same. The directors of the Depository have no hesitation in commending the investment as a safe and reliable interest-bearing stock.