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Notes of the Week.

MR. ANDREW LANG, says the *Christian Leader*, makes sport of the German higher critics by treating "Ivanhoe" in their manner, and showing it to be a development of the story "Odysseus"—Scott is "but a national name for the mythical composer of all Scotch poems and romances."

At the Oriental Congress Professor Hechler, of Vienna, submitted a sheet of the fragment of papyrus manuscript of a part of Zechariah and Malachi which reached that city lately. It is a piece of a copy of the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, and the writing is the Greek uncial. There are corrections in red ink made probably at a much later date than that of the original writing. It is thought to be the oldest Biblical manuscript in existence.

PROFESSOR SAYCE told the Oriental Congress that so abundant is the literature already exhumed from the buried cities of Mesopotamia, not to speak of the additions it is almost daily receiving, that many generations of scholars will not be able to exhaust it. He referred also to the discovery at Tell-Amarna in Egypt, and at Lachish in Palestine of the broken halves of a correspondence on clay tablets a century before Moses was born—the first written record of pre-Israelitish times ever recovered from the soil of Palestine.

LONG reports have come from Captain Lugard bringing the history of the conflict down to March 3. He shows the Roman Catholics, who are far the more numerous, to have been clearly the aggressors, and that he and the Protestants acted only in self-defence. He strove to be absolutely impartial, and did all he could to conciliate the king and the French bishop and priests. He reports free access to a country abounding in ivory, and the securing of the Salt Lake, which is more valuable than an ordinary gold mine.

MISS GORDON CUMMING writes in "Two Happy Years in Ceylon": It is a sore subject that, whereas Hindoo, Mohammedan and Buddhist conquerors have ever abstained from deriving any revenue from the intoxicating spirits which are forbidden by each of these religions, a Christian Government should so ruthlessly place temptation at every corner both in Ceylon and in India, where, as has been publicly stated by an archdeacon of Bombay, the British Government has created a hundred drunkards for each convert won by Christian missionaries.

It is said that one-fifteenth of Germany's cultivated land is devoted to the liquor traffic, which is making it a question of beer or bread for the poorer classes of that country. The drink question is thus becoming an important one in the political economy of Germany. Professor Schmoller, of Berlin, an able political economist, thus writes: "Among our working people the conditions of domestic life, of education, of prosperity, of progress or degradation, are all dependent upon the proportion of income which flows down the father's throat. The whole condition of our lower and middle classes—one may even, without exaggeration, say the future of our nation—depends on this question. If it is true that half our paupers become so through drink, it gives us some estimate of the costly bur-

den which we tolerate. No other of our vices bears comparison with this."

THE second of the September sessions of the reunion Conference at Grindelwald was opened with a meeting of 300, presided over by the Bishop of Worcester. He said there was nothing in the prayer book to lend colour to the belief that the Episcopal ordination was the only valid one, or that the graces of the sacraments were tied to such ordination. The Church of England preferred an episcopacy, but did not condemn Presbyterianism. But her hands were tied by the Act of Uniformity of 1662, and it was hopeless to look for reunion with the Nonconformist Churches except on condition that their ministers should submit to ordination by the Church of England bishops. Pere Hyacinthe also spoke, expressing the belief that the Utopia of to-day would be the reality of to-morrow, but that reunion could only be brought about on the basis of the historic episcopate, the people being left to choose their chief pastors.

REFERRING to the death of Sir George Macleod, Dr. Marshall Lang, at a meeting of Glasgow Presbytery, affirmed that it was fitting to remember that his connection with the Church of Scotland had many interesting links. He was the son of a distinguished minister, the late Norman Macleod, of St. Columbas; he was the brother of a very distinguished minister, Norman Macleod, of the Barony; and he was the nephew of one who bore a name highly esteemed by all, Dr. Macleod, of Morven. His brother and his cousins were still with them, and it was interesting to know that the succession of pastoral Macleods was continued in one of his sons—the young minister of Buchanan. Sir George loved the Church of Scotland with a loyalty and devotion that never faltered, and when he spoke at Church defence meetings all his Celtic fire was roused. As an elder he lived and worked well, and though a busy man yet they could always count on his presence at the annual gathering of the sons of the clergy; and these gatherings in future would to many seem poor indeed, wanting much of the brightness and sparkle that always emanated from him.

THE Belfast correspondent of the *British Weekly* says: Mr. Moody left Belfast on Saturday, and the Rev. John McNeill has taken his place, and continues the meetings in the Convention Hall. On Sabbath forenoon Mr. McNeill preached in St. Enoch's Presbyterian Church to an audience as large as that which thronged it to hear Mr. Moody, and at the afternoon and evening services in the Hall there was little, if any, difference in the numbers which gathered there. If anything, the press of Monday morning speaks more enthusiastically of the preaching of Mr. McNeill than of Mr. Moody. At any rate there seems no diminution, either of interest or attendance. Following in the wake of his Glasgow and Dundee methods, the "great Scotch preacher," as he is being called, has arranged midday meetings all through the week for working and business men in St. George's Hall, and it is hoped that, as in the two cities named, he may be successful in securing the presence of professional men, such as lawyers and physicians, as well; and, as the impression made by Mr. Moody's work in Belfast seems to have been really very strong and very deep, it is likely that the presence of the professional classes may be secured. On Saturday, as stated, Mr. Moody left for Dundalk, where he conducted successful services on the Sabbath. On Tuesday he comes north to Armagh for two services—one in the open air if the day be fine, and the other, or, in the event of rain, both, in the largest of the three Presbyterian churches, which is capable of accommodating 1,500 under pressure. On his quitting Armagh he goes, meantime, direct to Cork meaning to conduct services in several of the surrounding southern towns. Mr. Moody is accompanied by his son, Mr. Merton Smith, Chicago, and Mr. Vance, who will conduct the singing in the room of Mr. Burke, who remains in Belfast with Mr. McNeill. It is stated that Mr. McNeill took the place of Dr.

Talmage, who was so wearied by his heavy work elsewhere that he had to stop short at Chester.

IN Victoria there are 159 religious sects, while over 13,000 object to state their religion. There are 5,028 Freethinkers, and 2,668 who have no religion at all. About one third of the population, or 401,605, are adherents of the Episcopalian Church; there are 248,587 Roman Catholics, 167,027 Presbyterians, 134,841 Wesleyan Methodists, 27,822 Baptists, 22,110 Congregationalists, the other smaller sects comprising Lutherans, Primitive Methodists, Bible Christians, Jews, Liberals, etc. There are 13,517 persons connected with the Salvation Army. In 1861 the Episcopalian Church had forty per cent. of the whole religious population, and in 1891 thirty-seven per cent. The Roman Catholic increased from twenty-one per cent. in 1861 to twenty-two in 1891. Similarly the Presbyterian Church had sixteen per cent. of the population in 1861, fifteen in 1871 and 1881, and fourteen in 1891, a decrease of one and a-half in every hundred of the population in comparison with 1861. The Methodists have made the greatest increase—from eight per cent. in 1861 to thirteen in 1881 and fourteen in 1891. A Committee on Statistics of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, in endeavouring to account for the decrease in their Church, thus reported to the commission in May last: "There is no lack of faithfulness on the part of the Church to its people. . . . Year by year our congregations and Sabbath schools are increasing. Perhaps fewer emigrants from Scotland, which chiefly furnishes a Presbyterian people, are now arriving in the colony than from England and Ireland; or it may be that a larger number of Presbyterians are leaving Victoria to return to the home countries, having been prosperous and successful here, than of other denominations.

It is with no pleasure, says the *British Weekly*, that we find ourselves opposed to an advocate of New Testament Christianity so sincere, brilliant and successful as Mr. Price Hughes. It is still less congenial even to seem to oppose anything that makes for Church union. But some things said at Grindelwald have been so wild, so mischievous, so extravagantly wide of practical needs, duties and opportunities, that no time should be lost in making a firm protest. Mr. Hughes is reported to have said that Nonconformists are prepared to adopt the Episcopate; further, that they are prepared to concede the primacy of the Church of England as the most learned and influential of all Churches, and—we do not know what besides. Now, doubtless, for union much must be conceded, but the concession must not be all on one side. Is it not a fact glaringly notorious, however regrettable, that the Church of England, as a whole, never desired union with Dissenters so little as it does to-day? Is it not a fact that the moving and growing life within that Church belongs to a party which seeks to end all dissent by what it calls conversion, and Dissenters call extermination? The men who spoke at the Grindelwald Conference hardly represent the Church of England at all, and even they go a very little way. For example, they do not seem to be willing to consider the question of Disestablishment. Now it is idle to speak of reunion until both parties are upon the same ground. As for Nonconformists accepting the Episcopate, nothing can be more certain than that they would not and should not do anything of the kind. Where the Episcopate is not a mere name it is a sacerdotal fact. There is no defence of the Episcopal position in these days by which inferior and incapable men are set over brethren in all respects their superiors save by falling back on the High Church theory. The Church of England is neither the most learned nor the most influential of Churches, though it is new to us to hear that either learning or influence gives a Church primacy. If Mr. Hughes follows out his own argument he must make overtures to the Church of Rome. There is just as much, and as little, hope of a reunion between the Church of England as it exists at present and Nonconformists as there is of a reunion between Nonconformists and the Church of Rome.