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## Notes of the Week.

THE statistics of the Southern Presbyterian Church just prepared, shows that it has thirteen Synods, sixty-eight Presbyteries, 1,145 ministers—a gain of 16-2,321 churches, 161,742 communicants—a gain of 5,493. There was a large increase in all contributions except three. The total is \$1,612,895 against \$1,463,478 last year.

IT is stated that Gebra-Georges, a young man studying in Dr. Commandi's institution at Florence, has translated "The Pilgrim's Progress" into Amharic, the language of Abyssinia. The translation will be carefully revised and printed at Crischona in the native type. The Religious Tract Society is bearing half the cost, about \$250, and the work will be ready in the autumn, making the eighty-fourth language into which Bunyan's book has been translated.

A ROMAN Catholic paper published in New York complains of the injustice of Catholics being compelled to pay for the education of other people's children, and adds: Denominational schools would solve the problem to the satisfaction of all concerned. To this the New York *Independent* replies: Denominational schools would be practically a destruction of the public school system. While England is trying to emancipate itself from the denominational system and in France and Belgium and other countries it has been called a curse, it is not at all likely that free and progressive America will turn around and face backward. Its common school system is one of its greatest glories, and it will maintain it against all comers. Catholic laymen are well enough satisfied with it. It is the hierarchy back of the priesthood that makes all the trouble.

THE Rev. John McNeill gave an address on open-air preaching at the recent conference at Mildmay; it was a racy talk appropriately delivered under the mulberry tree. At the World's Sunday School Convention, Mr. McNeill remarked that in Scotland there used to be a considerable distinction between the minister and the Sunday school teacher, the latter being generally a man who had tried to be a minister and failed, and to whom the minister occasionally condescended to speak. But that had all been altered; there had not been a levelling up of the one, but a levelling down of the other. Mr. McNeill, while expressing his belief that all denominational differences were melting away with regard to the Sunday Schools, declared that he was a believer in denominations, and his own to be the best. He could not help feeling it to be true, although the poet had not written it:

Oh, how unlike the complex works of man,  
Heaven's easy, artless, Presbyterian plan.

THE *Indian Witness* says: Mrs. Booth-Tucker, alias Commissioner Raheeman, made a speech in the Salvation Army Headquarters in London, on her return from India, in which she claimed that the natives of India are joining the Army in great numbers. Of course, we shall be misunderstood and charged with opposing the Army, but we squarely challenge that statement and demand the proof. We live in India. The writer, who lived in Bombay, where the Army Headquarters are, knows that, so far as that place is concerned, the natives have not joined the Army in great numbers. After over five years of work, when they formed an Army Corps in that city, a few months ago, they had less than twenty members, not one-half of whom were natives of India. We yield to none in our prayerful support of any and every cause that makes for the salvation of India, but must demand that the cause shall be truthful in stating the results of its work.

IT was a significant fact that Principal Rainy's first sermon in Melbourne was preached in the Scots Church, of which Mr. Marshall, late of Inveresk, is pastor; in the evening he occupied Mr. Ewing's pulpit at Toorak. At the meeting held in the Masonic Hall, under Sir James McBain's presidency, to welcome Dr. Rainy, there was a large and enthusiastic gathering. The Principal gave strong expression to his belief that great blessing would attend a well-constructed union of the Presbyterian Churches at

home. Each Church would throw into the common treasury not merely money, accomplishments and Christian character, but also peculiar lessons, and a peculiar set of characteristics and tendencies which would enrich the united body. Principal Rainy was to spend three Sabbaths in Sydney; he would preach in two churches each Sabbath, and lecture during the week. A picnic in his honour was being arranged to take place on the day following his public reception. Dr. Rainy's first sermon at Melbourne is described as "full of latent force and sentiments that move to action." It lasted thirty-five minutes, and "from the rich and abrupt ending it was quite evident that the time was up, not that the man or the matter had run dry."

CHURCH dignitaries, remarks the *Christian Leader*, are not prone to break away from old customs; but there has lately been quite an outbreak on the part of bishops and others against old habits. The Bishop of St. Asaph travels in a third-class railway carriage. The Bishop of Salisbury is building a technical school by his own palace. The Bishop of Durham gives a thousand a year to church building in his diocese. The Bishop of Ripon has dispensed with apron and gaiters and wears trousers like an ordinary Christian; but he preserves still the episcopal rosette in his hat—so like what the flunkies of a magistrate wear by courtesy, as if to remind one that bishops are the servants of the churches. Archdeacon Sinclair follows suit—in both senses. And now that many bishops—with his "Beatitude" of Cyprus—have dined at the Mansion-house with some Nonconformist ministers, one would hardly be surprised to hear that the Bishop of Edinburgh had preached in St. Giles' in a Genevan gown, such as his forebears "sat under" and his father wore.

THE Evangelical Society of Geneva has at present fifty students preparing for the ministry, whilst its large staff of earnest colporteurs is constantly at work with varying but, on the whole, encouraging success. These agents sold last year over 27,000 Bibles and Testaments, and disposed of 600,000 tracts. This Society labours in some of the most destitute parts of France, where no other work is carried on. There is a hungering for the word, as the following will show: Except three days spent in Paris, meetings have been held here for a whole month, day after day, without any interruption. Our audience, far from decreasing, has been steadily augmenting, some having walked three or four hours to come to the meeting, not deterred by the fact of the late return through the night. Often these persons have waited to the after-meetings which were generally held, with the result that many went on their way rejoicing. In some places the National (Protestant) Churches have been opened to the agents, and then after meetings have been held in one of the neighbouring houses. The field in France is very hopeful.

A VERY brilliant conversazione to welcome Principal Rainy was held in the Masonic Hall, Melbourne, and nothing could be better than the speaking and the spirit of the proceedings generally. Dr. Rainy gave a very statesmanlike and eloquent speech, and he developed a quite unexpected quality of humour. Thus he gave a very amusing turn to Dr. Dale's curious complaint about the Australians' want of "originality." That is, in effect, Dr. Rainy declared, a very splendid compliment. "It implied that they, of whom Dr. Dale might be taken as the representative, were all agape with expectation. They expected Australia to be far ahead of the old fogies at home, and it was in that state of mind that Dr. Dale or himself might meet with disappointment. It reminded him of what Dr. Thos. Guthrie told him of an elder of his, who was a most remarkable man for his personal character. He was a person of peculiar temperament and very peculiar ideas, and had actually never had his photograph taken. But Dr. Guthrie prevailed upon him to go to a photographer. After the operation was over, the photographer said, 'Now, Mr. So-and-So, it's done,' but the man maintained an attitude of perfect steadiness and composure of feature. Dr. Guthrie then himself said, 'You need not sit any more.' The elder, maintaining his position, replied, 'I have not felt the shock.' It appeared as if Dr. Dale, when

taking the photograph of the Australians, expected to receive a shock, and was disappointed because he did not get it." To thus extract a compliment from an accusation is a very felicitous feat!

THERE are about 3,000,000 of the Lutheran faith in Russia, mostly in the Baltic Provinces. For years these Lutherans have suffered grave persecutions, as have all Germans in the Czar's dominions. Dr. Luthardt, in an address at Leipzig last month, called attention to the sufferings of the brethren: Our Lutheran Church is regarded as a dangerous institution, and is treated accordingly. Its simple members are beguiled by art and treachery to renounce the faith of their fathers, and those thus deceived are held by violence to a strange faith and strange altars, with which they wish to have no relation, thus heartlessly casting them into the most severe conflicts of conscience, even unto despair. Our Church is, without reason, robbed of rich property possessed for many years, and assigned the lot of poverty; her ministers, as the reward of their fidelity, without being brought face to face with their accusers, or being given an opportunity for defence, are sent by an arbitrary decision into banishment. Thus one of the most flourishing provinces of the Lutheran Church is devoted to desolation. In the presence of such unheard of acts of violence, we can no longer be silent, but must unite in raising our voices, and accusing the persecutors of our brethren, before God and men, before the judgment seat of the Omniscient and Just God, before the Church of our Lutheran faith in all lands, before all Christian consciences, before all honourable men.

PECULIAR interest, says the *Christian Leader*, attached to an open-air meeting which was held recently at Gateshaw Brae, Morebattle, Scotland, in celebration of the ter-jubilee of Border Seceders. The Secession branch of the United Presbyterian Church originated on the Borders with the Morebattle congregation; and Rev. John Hunter, its first pastor, ordained in 1739, was the first minister from the Established Church ordained by the Seceders. The celebration had an added interest from its being held on the historic Brae where the old pioneers worshipped till 1749. Principal Cairns preached the sermon, and the other parts of the service were conducted by Revs. William Ritchie, D.D., Duns; Peter Mearns, Coldstream, and J. W. Pringle, M.A., of Boston Church, Jedburgh. At a second service, where Rev. David Cairns, of Stichel, the Principal's brother, occupied the chair, addresses were delivered by Revs. A. S. Mactavish, of the Free Church, Morebattle; T. C. Kirkwood, Kelso, and Alex. Oliver, D.D., Glasgow. Rev. James Christie, B.A., Carlisle, also took part in this service. Amongst many interesting reminiscences the fact was recalled that both the parents of the late Dr. Robson, of Glasgow, were brought up from their earliest years in connection with this ancient Border Church.

THE most effective speech in the debate on the subject of tests in the Scottish universities, says the *Christian Leader*, was that of Mr. Gladstone. Where was the necessity of such tests, he asked, in a country which is the most Protestant in Europe and five-sixths of whose people are Presbyterian? "There are," he continued, "great theoretical and practical objections to the present state of the law, and it is most unjust that the whole body of Free Churchmen and United Presbyterians who are as firm defenders of Presbyterianism as the members of the Established Church, and I believe rather firmer defenders, should be excluded from these chairs because the committee choose to retain an arbitrary test requiring them to submit not only to the doctrine but to the discipline and authority of the Established Church of Scotland." Mr. Gladstone might have added that even the Established Church is striving to escape from the necessity of imposing these same tests on her own ministers and office-bearers. Yet their retention in the case of the theological chairs was voted by a majority of 62, there being 219 against 157. The majority was swollen by the votes of men like Mr. Finlay, who, on account of the awkward necessities of the present condition of parties, were compelled to stultify themselves by supporting the retention of this last rag of sectarian exclusiveness which they had themselves denounced in the debate.