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Notes of the Week.

THE *Independent* informs its readers that the ministers of Philadelphia have, in view of the possible visit of the cholera next summer, been requested to preach a sermon on the duty of cleanliness and the general observance of sanitary regulations. Whatever objections may be urged against political preaching, there certainly can be no objection to this sort of preaching. Nor will there be any difficulty in finding texts in the Bible appropriate for such a service.

THE four counts in the libel against Dr. A. Stuart Muir, of Leith, have been found relevant by the Edinburgh Free Presbytery, which is wasting as little time as possible on this paltry case. Mr. Muir was the only member who dissented; he tabled his shilling each time, but the money was afterwards returned to him. The libel was served upon him, and this action debars him from exercising ministerial functions till it is disposed of. Further proceedings are stayed meanwhile owing to his appeal to the Synod. Rev. George Philip, M.A., St. John's, has been appointed Moderator of the congregation.

MUCH has been said concerning the demoralizing effects of the dime novel. It is hardly possible to exaggerate the mischief that is being wrought by this deadly agency. It is one of the most injurious foes that family life has to fear. The following facts speak for themselves: The report of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice for 1885 classifies the crimes of the youth of both sexes (under 21), as follows: Murder, 74; attempted murder, 104; burglary, 179; highway robbery, 84; grand larceny, 72; larceny, 230; forgery, 18; arson, 4; manslaughter, 2; counterfeiting, 5; train wreckers, 3; mail robbery, 4; picking pockets, 8; suicide, 37; attempted suicide, 24. A band of a dozen boys is mentioned—all under ten years of age—who had voted to kill their mothers. One of them proposed to practise upon a servant girl first, but she objected, and the plot was discovered.

NEWS from Europe for the last few days has been of a rather more pacific character than for some time past. A slightly more conciliatory spirit characterizes the Anglo-Russian negotiations. The Russian Foreign Minister has to some extent modified the arbitrary tone, too apparent in his recent despatches. There is a disposition to reach an understanding as to the settlement of the Afghan frontier, and for the present it is probable that impending war will be averted. The continuance of peace cannot with confidence be counted upon. Immense preparations for war on a great scale have been made by both nations. The truce looks like an armed one, and it is probable that a favourable moment for striking a blow will not be neglected. An immediate war may be averted, but a permanent peace is not yet assured. There are also indications that the Franco-Chinese conflict is nearing an end. We regret the French proposal to occupy Formosa pending negotiations. That means the exclusion of our missionaries until a treaty of peace is signed.

THE French people have been engaged in a series of foreign wars. They fight for an idea it is said. Cynics are disposed to say that they fight to gratify their national vanity and call it glory. In the conflicts in which France has recently been engaged, the idea has been intangible and the glory has failed to dazzle them. Madagascar has been crippled, but remains untaken. In Tonquin the French have met with serious disaster, and the [Annamese who were thought to have been subdued are meditating how they may avail themselves of the reverses in Tonquin to regain some of their lost advantages. The Chinese, by overwhelming numbers, have for a time imperilled the safety of the French forces now in Tonquin. Reinforcements are eagerly and anxiously awaited. The news of the defeat excited the Parisians to the utmost, and occasioned the wildest feeling in the Chamber of Deputies, which resulted in the overthrow of the Ferry Ministry. The Irreconcilables spoke with their usual ferocity. Somehow the average Frenchman loses his head in prosperity and his equanimity in defeat.

ONE of the most successful diplomatists of the time is a former Governor-General of Canada. Lord Dufferin has earned fresh laurels in every country to which his official duty has called him since leaving the Dominion. He managed to gain the good esteem of both political parties in this country, and met with enthusiastic receptions from Halifax to Victoria. Nor was he less warmly welcomed in the great American cities east and west. He had difficult and responsible duties assigned him in Constantinople at a critical time. His subsequent career at St. Petersburg gave full scope for the exercise of his peculiar talents. Now, as Viceroy of India, he is at present in a position of tremendous responsibility. His marvellous adaptability has a fine field for its display among the people of the East. The scenic splendours at the Ameer's reception at Rawul Pindi were no doubt in perfect harmony with Lord Dufferin's intentions, but they were merely designed to facilitate the more important objects of the meeting. He may be depended upon to discharge the duties of his high office with consummate skill.

AMONG the healthful and beneficent agencies of the time the Sunday newspaper cannot fairly be reckoned. The concurrent testimony of all sections of the Evangelical Church is decidedly against it. Its beginning is too serious for a jest. No amount of special pleading can justify the publication of a secular or any other kind of newspaper on the Sacred Day. If the moral law is binding, then the wilful infraction of it is unjustifiable by Christian people. Last week, in Toronto, several of the dailies published successive editions, and the newsboys were briskly plying their trade. The excitement caused by the North-West Rebellion was adroitly seized as an excuse for the beginning of a practice that a majority of the people will emphatically condemn. Under pretext of publishing late war news the American papers began to issue Sunday dailies, but they have continued the custom ever since. The best of them supply their readers with the news of the day and choice literary extracts and the worst of them the vilest sensationalism and gossip. The advent of the Sunday paper in Toronto can only be regarded as a serious calamity because of its demoralizing influence. The *Globe*, as was to be expected, gives no countenance to this latest but most ominous exhibition of journalistic enterprise.

THE following extract appeared in a recent number of the *Bombay Guardian*: On the anniversary of the death of Keshub Chunder Sen, the friends, admirers and disciples of the deceased assembled at Lily Cottage, and passed the preceding night and the whole day in devotion and holy exercises. All the parties of the Brahma Somaj of India were present. Many outsiders, amongst whom was a large number of students, were present to testify their respect for the dead. The *devalaya*, or sanctuary, which Baboo Keshub Chunder Sen had caused to be erected immediately before his death is now complete. In front

of it is a pillar of white marble erected on the spot where his ashes are deposited. Upon this pillar is the symbol of the New Dispensation—a cross, a crescent, a *khoont*, an *onkar*, and a trident, representing the harmony of the great prevailing religions of the world. It is a melancholy satisfaction to know that the popularity of Keshub Chunder Sen's name is growing from day to day. Photos and lithographs of the deceased are being sold by the hundred, and yesterday the demand for his books was so great that the Brahma Tract Society could hardly meet it. Two or three of his works were exhausted, and new editions must be struck off in no time. The proceeds in cash of yesterday's town sale alone amounted to 800 rupees up to the time of our writing.

MARTIN F. TUPPER, the proverbial philosopher, has met with the proverbial fate meted out to that distinguished class of individuals. If ever a book realized its market value to the full, that book was "Proverbial Philosophy," and its author was richly refreshed with the golden showers that fell. But he has met with serious reverses and is in financial difficulties. He has qualified for a place in the "Calamities of Authors" catalogue. It would be cruel and unchristian to rejoice in any man's misfortune, and it is not for this purpose that reference is made, but to show that the impecunious poet can bear his trials with the equanimity and fortitude that accord with his philosophy. He writes to an American magazine editor: I never had an abundance of riches, though I have always lived honestly and liberally, and for the matter of actual poverty, I undoubtedly decline to plead it, while everybody else is suffering from the hardness of the times. However, it is true that I have lost fortune and am vexed by debt, incurred not by my own fault, though I do not care to accuse others specifically. Of course, I have to complain that a life of some useful labour has come to seventy-five years without adequate reward, but after all, God provides for every day, and I trust in Him to do so to the end, here and hereafter. He then gives specific directions how to communicate with his bankers.

IN the *Christian Leader* it is stated that the venerable evangelist, Dr. Somerville, of Glasgow, has lately preached on the sites of all the seven churches of Asia, except Pergamos, of which Antipas, the martyr, is said to have been Bishop, and which was too far out of the way to be reached. The service at Thyatira, held on January 23rd, was attended by about 130 persons, chiefly Armenians; and it is to be hoped that in the old Macedonian city where Lydia dwelt, hearts were opened to attend to the things spoken by the devoted messenger from Scotland. At Sardis the Gospel was preached in the Sheik's house to twenty-six Mohammedans, at Philadelphia, which alone of all the seven has been saved, "still erect—a column in a scene of ruins," as Gibbon remarks, Dr. Somerville spoke to a gathering of Greeks; at Laodicea, whose desolation is a terrible warning to the lukewarm, a small meeting was held in the open air. At Sokia, some thirty miles south of Ephesus, there is a large liquorice factory, the proprietor of which, Mr. Forbes, a Scotchman and an earnest Christian, gave Dr. Somerville and his party a cordial welcome; and, aided by this good man, six meetings were held in the place, two for the English, and four for the Greek population. At Smyrna there were several meetings, and a few more at the neighbouring village of Bucjah. Between the 4th of January and the 13th of February, on which latter day he sailed for Constantinople, Dr. Somerville addressed sixty meetings in Greece and Asia Minor; the only places in which he was forbidden to speak were Corinth, where the Archbishop interfered after he had addressed one crowded assembly, and Patras, where, however, the prohibition was subsequently withdrawn. In Smyrna Dr. Somerville addressed seventeen meetings in English, eleven for Greeks, nine for Armenians and Turks, and three for Jews. The last-named were held at the request of the Jews themselves, and were full of hopeful interest.