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Notes of the Week.

A FAMINE in British India is again feared. In some provinces there has been long continued drought and in others destructive and disastrous floods. These, it is stated, have covered an area of 3,500 square miles, causing an immense loss of property and many lives. There is much destitution prevailing, and if prompt relief is not afforded the misery and loss of life will be greater still. The authorities are doing what they can to alleviate the sufferings of the people.

FRANCE has reaped little glory from the foreign conflicts in which she has recently engaged. The Tonquin campaign has been inglorious, and its results must be sadly disappointing to its projectors. Recently efforts have been made to push the conquest in Madagascar. There, too, the results have been disappointing to the French. The Hovas, who feel the injustice of the invasion, have hitherto been able to offer a stubborn and effective resistance to French aggression. Admiral Miot attempted the capture of a strongly entrenched position on the 10th ult. at Tarafat; but was repulsed and had to fall back on Tamatave, where he is awaiting the reinforcements for which he has asked.

THE Rev. Dr. George Jeffrey, of London Road Church, Glasgow, for many years one of the clerks and recently Moderator of the United Presbyterian Synod, has preached more than forty-six years to the same congregation. To one of his former parishioners, now a New York merchant, Dr. Jeffrey explained the secret of his being able to maintain an unbroken ministry in the same place so long. I read every new book that has a bearing upon my special work, and make extracts from it, and index them, so that at any moment I can find them when wanted. In this way I keep myself from moving in a rut. I work as hard as I used to do at twenty, and I keep so far ahead with my sermons that there are always ten or fifteen unfinished ones lying in my drawer ready to receive the results of my latest readings. I call them "sleeping sermons"; but it is they that sleep, and not the people who hear them.

The United Presbyterian Church in Scotland has lost its Moderator by the sudden death on the afternoon of Sabbath, 13th ult., of the Rev. J. Logan Aikman, D.D., minister of Anderston Church, Glasgow, in his sixty-fifth year. On the previous Sabbath he preached thrice to his own congregation, though feeling somewhat unwell. He continued ailing during the week; but no serious result was anticipated, till Saturday evening, when his disease took an acute form. A native of Lanark, Dr. Aikman was ordained to the ministry in 1845, and after eleven years service in the pastorate of St. James' Place congregation, Edinburgh, he was translated to Glasgow as colleague and successor to Dr. Struthers. He leaves a record behind him of much and varied work. He also rendered important service on the School Board of Glasgow, to which, on one of the occasions of his election, he was returned at the head of the poll. He was the author of "Evenings at Calvary," and two other popular volumes of a similar character, as well as of a "Cyclopædia of Missions."

SINCE the outbreak of the small-pox epidemic Montreal has been an unfortunate city. The large death-roll from this scourge is being daily lengthened. As a consequence there has been much privation and suffering. Business has been materially injured and affairs are going from bad to worse. While many energetic and public-spirited men have been urging thorough and prompt measures for the suppression of the disease, others, through ignorance, unreasonable prejudice and the contemptible arts of designing demagogues, have been doing all they can to thwart effective measures for the stamping out of small-pox. It is natural enough that Montreal papers should seek to belittle the riots of last week; but even their own columns afford ample evidence that, whether the rioters were roughs or boys, or French anarchists, the outburst found its strength in the cry against vaccination. The Board of Health was the principal object of vengeance. It is reassuring to observe that the members of that Board are resolute and unflinching men, resolved to do their duty at all hazards. Montreal is suffering from two diseases, small-pox, and the excited vapourings of race cranks.

THE *Week* says: Archbishop Lynch has again been expatiating on that delightful theme: the diversities of Protestantism as contrasted with the unity of Roman Catholic faith. The unity of Roman Catholic faith is not quite so perfect as the Archbishop imagines. The religious belief of Pascal was far from being identical with that of the Jesuits. The modern teacher of Roman Catholic seminary, Suarez, differs, if not in formal dogma, certainly in spirit and in essential tendency from Thomas Aquinas and other theologians of the Middle Ages. The Ultramontanes of the present day differ widely from the opposite school. That Cardinal Newman writhes under the Syllabus, though he dare not directly impugn it, is manifest to all his readers. Archbishop Lynch has seen at his own door a fierce battle between the Gallican tenets of the Sulpicians and those of the Ultramontane invaders of Montreal. We say nothing of the feuds between different Monastic Orders, or the battles between Popes and Anti-Popes, in which, even if they were not in their main character doctrinal, there was usually some doctrinal element. Still, had the Roman Unity been preserved by free consent, without coercion of conscience, it might have been worth something as an evidence of truth.

IT is a most remarkable thing that horrible cruelties should for so long have been perpetrated on the poor victims of mental disease. Into the present century even absurd ideas in reference to the insane, and still more absurd methods of treatment, have lingered. Happily at last the humane spirit of Christianity has been applied to the care and cure of those afflicted with brain and nervous disorders. Dr. Daniel Clark, who, as Medical Superintendent of the Toronto Insane Asylum, has been so successful in his humane and enlightened management has written a brochure, "Insanity of the Past," in which he briefly mentions some of the former methods of treatment and shows how through ignorance and superstition the insane were subjected to terrible tortures. He traces the rise and progress of the more kindly and common-sense methods of dealing with the insane of our own day. By this great reform he tells us that the cruelties and neglects of over 2,500 years were put into juxtaposition with a benevolent Christianity, so that the shadows from the dark mountains might look the more sombre in the light of that "charity which suffereth long and is kind." The upward progress of the last half-century toward forbearance, pity and intelligent treatment of these brain-afflicted and storm-tossed mortals has yet to be told, and it will bear repeating as an unanswerable chapter in the evidences of Christianity.

How, asks *The Week*, has the Unity of Rome been preserved? It has been preserved by fettering conscience and stopping the mouth of free discussion. It has been preserved by the massacre of the Albigenses, by the butchery of a hundred thousand Reformers

in the Low Countries, by the extermination of the Huguenots, by the atrocities, literally without a parallel in history, of the Spanish Inquisition, by launching upon Germany the devastating hordes of Tilly and Wallenstein, by a series of crimes which have steeped the robe of religion in innocent blood and made her hateful in the eyes of mankind. If the people in Roman Catholic countries do not secede to other forms of Christianity they secede in masses to total infidelity. Let Archbishop Lynch, when he is indulging himself in flattering comparisons, compare the state of Christianity in any Protestant country with its state in France, that eldest daughter of the Church. Protestantism leaves conscience free, and the inevitable consequence is divergence in secondary matters, which, now that the intolerance with which the soul of Christendom had been deeply infected by ten centuries of Romish domination has departed, we are learning daily more to reconcile with agreement in fundamentals and co-operation in all Christian works. There was divergence among the early Christians, and the treatment prescribed for it by St. Paul was not the Index or the stake, but charity, with a large measure of comprehension. But religion being a practical thing, unity in morals, as the Archbishop will probably admit, is not less essential than unity in dogma. Let him tell us, then, plainly and frankly, whether he deems the acts of the Spanish Inquisition moral. If he says they are, we shall know with what we have to deal. If he says that they are not, there is between him and the Popes who sanctioned the Inquisition, as well as the ecclesiastics who officiated in *autos-da-fe*, the widest moral divergence that it is possible to imagine.

At the recent meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, at Aberdeen, Sir Lyon Playfair delivered the inaugural address on "Science in its Relation to the Public Weal." It was just such an address as might be expected from the eminent scientist and politician. It was comprehensive, and well-suited for an audience of general intelligence. Speaking of last year's meeting at Montreal, he said: "The inhabitants of Canada received us with open arms, and the science of the Dominion and that of the United Kingdom were welded. We found in Canada, as we had every reason to expect, men of manly and self-reliant character, who loved not less than we did the old home from which they had come. Among them is the same healthiness of political and moral life, with the same love of truth, which distinguishes the English people. Our great men are their great men; our Shakespeare, Milton and Burns belong to them: as much as to ourselves; our Newton, Dalton, Faraday and Darwin are their men of science as much as they are ours. Thus a common possession and mutual sympathy made the meeting in Canada a successful effort to stimulate the progress of science, while it established, at the same time, the principle that all people of British origin—and I would fain include our cousins in the United States—possess a common interest in the intellectual glories of their race, and ought, in science at least, to constitute part and parcel of a common Empire whose heart may beat in the small islands of the Northern seas, but whose blood circulates in all her limbs, carrying warmth to them and bringing back vigour to us. Nothing can be more cheering to our Association than to know that many of the young communities of English-speaking people all over the globe—in India, China, Japan, the Straits, Ceylon, Australia, New Zealand, the Cape—have founded scientific societies in order to promote the growth of scientific research. No doubt science, which is only a form of truth, is one in all lands; but still its unity of purpose and fulfilment received an important practical expression by our visit to Canada. This community of science will be continued by the fact that we have invited Sir William Dawson, of Montreal, to be our next President at Birmingham. The succeeding topics on which he spoke were: Science and the State; Science and Secondary Education; Science and the Universities; Science and Industry; and Abstract Science the Condition of Progress."