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## Notes of the Week.

THE Rev. D. McKenzie, of Melbourne, who is now on a visit to his native land, in the course of a brief address to Edinburgh Presbytery, said that as an old friend of the Church he wished to say that when any Church sent men to the colonies the Presbytery certificates of these men should represent their true character. They should not allow anything to lie behind, any history to be unravelled. They would thus do a good service to the cause of Christ in the colonies.

AT a large and influential meeting held in Edinburgh recently it was resolved to form a Laymen's League in connection with the Church of Scotland for the purpose of declaring against Disestablishment, to promote union among the Presbyterians of Scotland, and to aid in any legislation that may remove any obstacles to that union. A small committee was appointed to prepare a constitution and to confer with similar organizations of other churches with the view of forming a combined league.

THE rebellious Gaelic-speaking portion of the congregation at Strathpeffer gave Dr. Adam and the other members of the Commission appointed by the Assembly a most ungracious reception; they would allow nothing to be said by the English section of the congregation, and behaved in such a rude and unmannerly way while the Commissioners were speaking that Dr. Adam brought the unprofitable conference to a close, stating that he deplored the reception the Commission had received. The deputies will report to the Commission of Assembly.

ITALY has not less than \$400,000,000 bound up in the benevolent institutions under the control of the Pope and the priests. Many of these have no longer any reason to exist; one of them at Palermo, for example, is for the redemption of slaves from the Turks! The money is diverted to ecclesiastical purposes; in Rome nearly one-half of the entire revenue of the institutions is absorbed by the priests. The State is claiming the right to use these large properties in more useful ways, and the question is agitating the country to an extent that shows how completely Italy is escaping from ecclesiastical bondage.

A SERIOUS accident befel the members of the Shanghai Missionary Conference which might have proved much more disastrous than was the case. A wish having been expressed that a photograph, as a pleasant memento of the occasion, should be taken before the delegates dispersed, arrangements were made for the purpose, a platform consisting of several tiers being erected. Just as the photographer was about to take the picture the platform gave way, its three or four hundred occupants being thrown, frightened and shaken, to the ground. It is a matter for thankfulness that several were not killed on the spot, but between thirty and forty were more or less seriously injured. The medical missionaries were, of course, in great request.

NO trustworthy statistics, says a contemporary, can be procured from Roman Catholic sources; but, if certain figures may be trusted, it would appear that the idea of a great increase of Romanism in Britain, which it is so anxiously sought to foster, must be rejected. In 1801, when the population of the United Kingdom was 16,345,645, the Roman Church estimated her membership as fully one-third or 5,448,800; whereas now, with a population of 39,000,000, she only returns 5,641,000. Deducting the number of foreigners, estimated at over a million—an element almost entirely absent in 1801—it follows that the actual number of native Roman Catholics in the United Kingdom is now less than it was at the beginning of the century, although the population has more than doubled.

THE results of Sir L. Simmons' special mission to the Vatican, says the *Christian World*, are the subject of a minute by the Executive Committee of the Liberation Society. The British Government,

it is pointed out, has given way to Rome with regard to the appointment of bishops and the celebration of marriages where either party is a Roman Catholic. The Committee feel bound to protest against the action of the British Government in shaping their policy in accordance with the views of ecclesiastical functionaries, instead of with those of the people for whose government they are responsible. The plea on behalf of the government is that the Maltese are Roman Catholics, and that the agreement with the Vatican was made in their interests and subject to their ratification. It is certainly an anomaly to have a Roman Catholic Church established in a country under Protestant rule.

THE Chicago *Interior* makes the following comment: One of the most enthusiastic Presbyterian preachers and organizers in the United States passed six days in Paris last April. He offered himself as a helper in the McAll Mission work, if occasion should arise for his services. It will be observed that he did not get much time for sight-seeing, when it is told that he was assigned to conduct fourteen meetings in those six days, at widely separated halls. Our brother did the work to which he was called, and when he went on to Rome he carried with him the distinct impression that there are other men beside Americans who know how to "hustle." The fact appears to be that Mr. McAll works himself and urges all his co-labourers to work harder than a due regard for their health and strength would warrant. He is the sort of a leader, however, who feels intensely the importance of his mission and if he cannot get all the help he needs, he just rushes ahead, trying to make up the deficiency by extra exertion.

THE *Australian Independent* has an important article on the Society of Christian Endeavour in its May number, extending to eight columns. It is written by the Rev. W. Scott, late of Albion Church, Hull, Eng., now of the premier Congregational Church, of Queensland. He first saw this society on its native soil—America—and quickly discerned the magnificent ideas and possibilities which underlie its conception. He introduced the society to his church in Hull, where it fulfilled its promise beyond all expectation. His association with the Society of Christian Endeavour preceded him to Brisbane, where since he arrived he has been in request to explain the working, and to help in the formation of such societies. Already there are three flourishing societies in the city; that in Wharf Street is the strongest, having an active membership of nearly one hundred. In the church parlour, which has lately been handsomely refurnished specially to accommodate this society, its meetings are held every Tuesday evening. Here, as in the other city churches, it is proving itself a spiritual power.

THE *Christian Leader* remarks that the energies of some men are inexhaustible; and Mr. Walter Besant is one of them. Not content with making fairy tales and founding fairy palaces, he has taken up his cudgels for authors against all and sundry, especially publishers. His policy is based on comprehensive ideas of copyright and broad notions of profit-sharing that sound fair enough in the abstract; and writers may well be glad to have so doughty a champion. He smites and spares not even a religious corporation. He puts the Christian Knowledge Society into the pillory and pelts an association whose profits are over \$35,000 a year with allegations of sweating that almost curdle the ink with which we write. If his facts are indisputable, women are fleeced abundantly and a book may reach a seventh edition and the writer be unable to obtain a promised share in the success. Probably an ordinary book rarely yields much profit on the first edition, even if exhausted. The printers' and advertisers' bills run up to high figures. There are customs that encourage the latter and habits that compel the former. The bill for corrections is often in competition with that for putting up the manuscript. Even Max Müller asks plaintively, "Is there no means of checking the charges for correction?" Perhaps his own writing looks like Sanskrit to the compositor. One remedy is to hand for this and is in the writer's own power: "Be correct and never correct."

AS indicating the prosperous condition of the Free Church of Scotland the *Christian Leader* gives the following facts: In 1844 the amount contributed to the Sustentation Fund was \$343,500; this year the total is \$858,995. In 1844 full dividend was drawn by 470 ministers; now, when the ministers number above a thousand, 828 draw full dividend. In 1844 the dividend was \$525; last year it was \$800. Rev. M. P. Johnstone, of Greenock, to whom we are indebted for these figures, considers the returns for the last four years as most extraordinary, in view of the commercial depression prevalent during nearly the whole of that period. In 1887 the total income of the Free Church was \$2,823,210; in 1888 it rose to \$2,964,275; last year it rose again to \$3,194,695; and this year it has risen again to \$3,248,565, an increase of more than \$50,000 over last year. These figures form the most conclusive and satisfactory reply to a world of criticism. One might expect from the wails of the defenders of orthodoxy and the anti-political purists, as well as the sneers of marplots outside, that the church of Chalmers and Candlish was going to the dogs; but the worthy Greenock pastor is justified in his remark that the ministers and members of the Free Church have every reason to be grateful to God for His goodness. And the record is one of which every loyal-hearted Scotsman, no matter what his ecclesiastical connection, may well be proud.

IN the new preface to a third edition of "The Kingdom of God," Prof. Bruce quotes from his former work, "The Miraculous Element in the Gospels," to show his belief that the Gospels bear the unmistakable stamp of apostolic inspiration, if not of apostolic authorship. He adds an expression of his belief "that inspiration does not exclude the hypothesis that the evangelists may in some instances have modified the form of our Lord's words, for good and worthy reasons, such as a regard to the spiritual needs of their first readers. If Luke acted on this principle in his omissions and modifications," continues Dr. Bruce, "he only followed the example of the Master, who said to His disciples: 'I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.'" From this, says the *Christian Leader*, one might infer that Prof. Bruce fails to perceive what is required to constitute an analogy. There is a vast difference between the reserve of our Lord's message and the positive "modifications" of the Master's words attributed to the evangelist by Dr. Bruce. This new preface will probably deepen the suspicion with which the Professor is regarded by his opponents, while even his friends must acknowledge that he has yet to learn what the term analogy really signifies. Dr. Bruce lacks lucidity. The perfect integrity of his purpose, however, no one can doubt who is not blinded by partisan feeling. It is his honesty that has won the heart of his students.

THE Rev. Dr. Whigham, of Ballinasloe, after a severe illness died on the 3rd inst. This, says the *Belfast Witness*, has been a fatal year for our ministers. If we mistake not, this makes the twenty-fifth death in the ministerial ranks of the Assembly since last meeting. Throughout the bounds of the Irish Presbyterian Church the melancholy announcement of Dr. Whigham's death will be read with the profoundest grief. Only a few weeks ago Dr. Whigham was moving about among us apparently in the full vigour of health, and busily occupied with plans and projects about the Sustentation Fund and other objects in which he was interested. Then suddenly came the news that he was seriously ill, and great anxiety was aroused. But the medical reports reassured us, and it was believed that he was recovering, when yesterday morning the news of his death, during the previous night, arrived. Dr. Whigham is no more, and all that we can now do is to cast our garland on his grave and then bid him a sad and long farewell. Dr. Whigham will be long remembered as one of the ablest and most devoted ministers of the Irish Presbyterian Church. An earnest preacher of the pure Gospel, a faithful pastor, a sagacious ecclesiastic, an ardent patriot, a faithful friend, we are the poorer to-day because his bright, genial countenance, his warm grasp of the hand, his kindly smile, his wise, affectionate words, his incessant labours are henceforth to be but memories.