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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

SOME of our readers will remember the Rev. A. C. Gillies, who was educated at Knox College, laboured for a short time in this country, and afterwards went to the United States. He is now in New Zealand, and has recently accepted a call to a church in Dunedin, which pays a salary of \$3,000 per annum.

THE Post-office Committee of the United States House of Representatives has decided to report a bill reducing letter postage to the two-cent rate. The New York "Independent" says: "The one-cent rate would be better, yet the people will welcome the reduction proposed as a step toward the right mark."

INFORMATION has been received of intense suffering on the coast of Labrador. A letter to the Marine Department of Quebec from Pointe de Monts states that the inhabitants are without food except seals and crustaceous fish, and that some of the people have died of starvation. The Indians from the woods, having no means of subsistence, are reported to have swarmed down upon the settlers.

A PROPOSAL has been made to divide the city of Ottawa into school sections, each having its primary school, with one large advanced school in the centre of the city. Is not this the common-sense plan? and if not, what is? Is it not necessary that something of this sort should be done in Toronto? Almost any departure from the present system—or rather the present entire absence of system—would be an improvement.

THE President of the United States has sent a message to Congress submitting the matter of the proposed Peace Congress. The proposition is to send a circular invitation to all the independent countries of North and South America to participate in a General Congress to be held in Washington on the 22nd day of November next, for the purpose of considering and discussing the methods of preventing war between the nations of America.

A CENSUS has been taken of the church attendance in the city of Boston, on the 16th of April, with the following results: Attendance at Baptist churches, 15,775; Congregational, 15,003; Unitarians, 10,131; Jewish, 1,063; Lutheran, 591; Methodist Episcopal, 9,336; other Methodist, 2,058; Presbyterian, 3,230; Roman Catholic, 49,337; Swedenborgian, 530; Universalist, 2,337; miscellaneous, 3,513. The total was 124,909, of whom 77,465 were present at the first service and 47,434 at the second. In some cases the figures represent three services, but these are not numerous.

VIENNA has 577 libraries, containing altogether 5,500,000 volumes, without counting manuscripts. Next to Austria is France, which boasts 500 libraries, containing 4,500,000 volumes. Italy is not far behind, with 4,350,000 volumes, and next Prussia, with about 400 libraries and above 2,500,000 books. Great Britain is reported as having only 200 libraries, but they contain nearly a quarter of a million more printed books than Prussia. The largest is that of Paris, with over 2,000,000 volumes; the British Museum comes second, but a long way behind, with 1,000,000; Munich third, with 800,000; then Berlin, with 700,000; Dresden, with 500,000; the Vienna has only 30,000 printed books, but is very rich in valuable manuscripts, the total of which is 25,000. The most celebrated and largest of the university libraries are the Bodleian, at Oxford, and that of Heidelberg, each possessing about 500,000 volumes.

REGARDING the present movement of the Jews towards Palestine, the "Jewish Messenger" says:—"Judging from the Bucharest correspondence, under date of March 17th, of the Augsburg 'Allgemeine Zeitung,' the preparations for emigration to Palestine

are actively continuing, fully fifty thousand, one-fifth of the Jewish population of Roumania, massing together for that purpose, according to one estimate. It is stated that the wealthy Hebrews show no desire to leave Roumania, the body of emigrants being composed almost entirely of the *proletariat*. In Bucharest, ten thousand of the poorest classes have banded together, and their well-to-do brethren are anxious to expedite their departure, thinking that their own situation will improve in consequence. More trustworthy information shows that the Roumanian Jews do not intend any emigration *en masse*, but are organizing agricultural societies in Berlin, Bacau, Galatz, and elsewhere. These 'colonies' have been formed with tact and deliberation, and are composed of earnest and capable men, who, sick to death of Roumanian duplicity, propose to build new homes in Palestine. The parallel movements in Roumania and Russia will be watched with interest."

THE report of the Medical Superintendent of the Asylum for the Insane, Toronto, supplies the following statistics for the year ending 30th September, 1881: The year was begun with a population of 674 patients. In the course of the year eighty-eight new cases were admitted, making a total of 762 that received treatment for a longer or shorter period. Of these there were discharged as recovered, forty; improved, eight; unimproved, six; and removed by death, thirty-five; reducing the Asylum population to 673—one less than it was at the beginning of the year, but still eleven more than there are beds for. The percentage of recoveries on admissions during the year, compared with that of the previous year, is as forty-five to nineteen; but Dr. Clark says that this item fluctuates very much, as it depends so largely upon the condition of the patients when admitted, in respect to age, physical state, and stage of the disease. The tables showing the causes of insanity tell the same sad tale they told in previous years, more than twelve per cent. of the cases being attributed to secret vice, and five per cent. to intemperance in drink. Increased accommodation is urgently required. This will be quite evident when it is considered not only that the number of patients already exceeds the proper capacity of the institution; but that 135 applications for admission have been refused.

THE "Jewish Chronicle," the organ of the wealthy English Jews, thus refers to the scheme to colonize Palestine: "The movement is irresistible. If we cannot stem the tide, let us at least guide it into fruitful channels. We cannot suffer ourselves to stand by with folded hands when this New Exodus is taking place. The greater the difficulty attending it, the greater the need for careful plans from the outset and cordial co-operation with the initiators of the movement. We Jews have held for nearly two thousand years that the consummation of the ages of suffering we have passed through will only be reached when we again possess the land of our fathers. Is that trust to die away just at the moment when it appears about to be fulfilled? Or is it to be expected that the Return will be brought about by means so mysterious as to be beyond the co-operation of human beings? God works His will through the will of men, and if the prophecies are to be fulfilled it will be because they will be fulfilled by human wills and energies. These may seem to be high topics to drag into connection with a practical plan for placing a few Jewish colonies in Palestine. But it is from small beginnings such as these that great events often arise, and the return of a small body of Jews to the Holy Land can never fail to bring to mind the possibility and the practicability of the larger Return to which all Jewish history and all Jewish aspirations have hitherto pointed."

DOUGLAS P. PUTNAM, writing in the New York "Evangelist," says:—"We are likely soon to become as much surfeited with this word (*cultur*) as a few years ago we were with the word 'culture,' and as more recently we have been with the words 'aesthetic'

and 'æsthetic.' It is all of a piece with the sentiment to some extent prevalent all over the country, which demands that which is 'toney,' starchy, in our religion and manners, rather than that which is vigorous and hearty. Let us throw away this word, and let us stop the discussion before we judge a Christian brother's liberty to use that which he claims is helpful to him in the worship of God. Some seem to be apprehensive lest an effort be made to foist a liturgy with ecclesiastical sanctions upon the Presbyterian Church of the United States. I am more apprehensive that an effort will be made to destroy our liberty in these things by forbidding the use of forms of prayer. Either would be subversive of true liberty. I have no idea that either effort will be successful; our present position of liberty is the true one. I never used a written prayer but once in my life, and I have fully repented of that, and think it doubtful if I ever use another. It was a prayer of my own composing, upon a certain Fourth of July occasion, when I was betrayed into too special preparation by the urgency of a friend, who evidently wanted justice done to Columbia and the American eagle, in my prayer as well as by his speech. Away, then, with this sentimental admiration for another denomination, which ought to be invigorated (the admiration, I mean) and bestowed upon our own Church, which challenges our admiration, and is more worthy of us than some seem to think. There is no Church in the land whose members have so much to say in praise of some other denomination as have certain members of our Church. It is bad taste, if not bad religion. Let us be loyal, and let us keep our liberty."

THE silence until recently maintained by the leading men of the Church of Scotland with reference to the disestablishment agitation has been broken by the Rev. Professor Flint. The tone of his remarks is temperate, and his attitude towards the Free Church decidedly conciliatory. In entering upon such an agitation, the United Presbyterian Church, he thinks, is acting consistently, and in accordance with the Voluntary principle which she has openly avowed; but he is of opinion that the Free Church, in order to act up to her declared principles and keep true to her testimony, ought to seek, not the disestablishment of the Church of Scotland, but her own re-establishment. He expresses his conviction that a reasonable and really practical movement on the part of the Free Church towards re-establishment on the ground of the conservation of national religion and spiritual independence would be welcomed by the Church now established, and he can see no reason why such a movement should fail of its object. He approves of the stand taken by Dr. Begg, Dr. Kennedy, Dr. MacKay and others at the Inverness meeting, and thinks that although these are in the minority the laity of the whole Free Church ought to rally around them. The concluding part of Professor Flint's address contains a threat that is not at all a threat. It is reported as follows: "The Free Church must present her own claims, must formulate her own demands. The Church of Scotland was not entitled to do so for her, and would be very foolish if she attempted to do so. The duty of the Church of Scotland was not to interpose, but to allow the Free Church full time and opportunity to make known her wishes, to remove as much as possible obstacles out of the way of her realization of them wherever they were reasonable, and to welcome every decision come to and every step taken which tended to bring the two Churches more closely together. Should it be found that the Free Church either could not or would not state what she wanted, or that disestablishment alone would satisfy her, then, it seemed to him, the Church of Scotland might become in duty bound to consider whether or not the election of parish ministers might not be transferred to the whole Presbyterian Church membership and Church adherents of their parishes, and whether or not the minister elected might not be chosen from any of the Presbyterian bodies holding by the Westminster Confession of Faith, if he were willing to subscribe their existing formula."