

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

STANLEY has again been heard from. He has been establishing stations, discovering new lakes, and coming across densely populated districts. He tells us that the number of the products and the character of the people are likewise remarkable. Gums, rubber, ivory, camphor wood and a host of other things would repay transportation, even by the very expensive mode at present in use. The people are born traders, and are, for Africans, very enterprising and industrious. And then the undaunted traveller closes with an account of his customary offices of mediation between contending tribes. These, when peace was brought about by his efforts, elected him, "Father and Mother of their country."

THE great traveller is anxious to see England exercise authority over these African tribes. He tries to arouse the British lion, with language almost tropical in its luxuriance, and ærial in its spread-eagleism when he says:—"Would you rob the natural birthrights of the millions of Englishmen yet to enter here? For what? Is the robust empire called British in its wane that you will put a limit to its growth! Such an idea is simply self-murder and a present confession of impotence. Follow the dictates of nature!" Just what England will do. She will follow what is her duty and her interest, and will not be led on by the robustious rhetoric of the sanguine traveller.

RUSSIA is making extensive military preparations along the Austria and German frontier. A list has been made of all the private steamers on the Black Sea, the captains being ordered to prepare for transporting ammunition, troops, and provisions. On the other hand it is stated that Germany and Austria have entered into a special alliance directed against France and Russia. In the event of war between Germany and France, Austria would maintain an armed neutrality; and similarly, should there be a war between Russia and Austria, Germany would adopt a like course. There is no doubt that Russia is coquetting with France and this action will cement the bond between Austria and Germany.

PETROLEUM will soon prove to be one of the greatest sources of wealth to Russia. In Baku and the neighbouring district the production of crude petroleum last year was two hundred million gallons, and it is capable of indefinite expansion. From one well it is said that the oil is flowing 300 feet high, at the rate of two million gallons a-day, and forming a huge black fountain, visible in the clear atmosphere for many miles round. Seven thousand workmen are engaged at the new wells, and one thousand four hundred oil trucks carry the petroleum to all parts of Russia. The remarkable success and growth of this industry will considerably affect the price of American oil in Europe.

SWITZERLAND is likely to find the imprisonment of Miss Booth and other Salvationists a rather troublesome affair. The Constitution guarantees the fullest religious liberty and right of meeting, and the point arises for settlement by international lawyers, whether or not a constitutional guarantee can be set at nought by a simple resolution of Councils. The arbitrary nature of the rule is proved by the clause which will not allow meetings even in a forest where a breach of the peace is hardly possible. A great deal too much power

and dignity is often assumed by those "dressed" in a little brief authority," and the propagandists should remember, too, that what is good for the Salvationist may also in other countries be good for the Socialist.

It is a singular fact that with the colonising activity of France, her trade is falling off to a considerable extent. There has been a falling off to the extent of 10 per cent. during the past ten years, and there is every appearance of a greater fall this year. France, in this direction, is not progressing as she should. If she spent less on gunpowder and military displays against semi-savages, and spent a little more on commercial travellers, this state of things might be changed.

THE grand review at Homburg was a magnificent affair, and shows what an amount of vitality is still stored up in the Germany Emperor. He is now eighty-seven years of age, and yet could keep on horseback in bad weather for over three hours and next day discharge many important functions of Royalty towards Regal guests. There was but one note of increased age when the old King said:—"It was a joy and honour to me to see the Army Corps once more. Probably it is the last time. At my age one makes no plans."

AN item of news comes from India, the purport of which may in time do much to effect one of the greatest revolutions in the world. At a meeting of the Bombay University it was proposed by a Brahmin that in the regulations the pronoun "he" and its derivatives should be deemed to denote either sex. An Englishman seconded the motion, and it was carried without a division. It is singular that in laws imposing duties and liabilities "he" applies to both sexes, while in laws conferring privileges "he" is construed in its strict sense. Agitators for "woman's rights" will certainly make a bold note of this Indian precedent.

THE recent destruction of life and of property at Woolwich, England, by the explosion of military rockets stored in the government warehouses, shews that towns situated in the neighbourhood of these storage places are liable at any moment to undergo a sudden and real bombardment. War-like weapons increase in size year by year, and charges of gunpowder consequently become greater. This being the case, more than special precautions must be taken to ensure safety, since it too often happens that these accidents are the result of careless handling and neglect of ordinary rules. Enormous guns become frightfully dangerous only on the field of battle, but a rocket is an apparatus like a perpetually loaded gun, ready to explode when the trigger is pulled. More than that, the rocket not only kills and destroys in the immediate neighbourhood, but it is liable to rush through the air, with death-dealing effect, a distance of two miles. As these rockets may now be numbered among the multitudinous perils of modern life, the question may pertinently be asked, ought not the military authorities be compelled to store these articles at least six miles from any thickly populated district?

THERE is another dangerous compound which must be put on the list of "ills which flesh is heir to." It carries with it a caution. Last week quite a number of persons were poisoned by eating ice-cream at a Methodist festival at Union Springs, N. Y. This is no less than the sixth case of ice-

cream poisoning during the past summer, and (here comes the caution) they all occurred under the auspices of the Methodist Church.

THE discovery that London has in circulation no less than twenty-thousand counterfeit sovereigns has set the whole town in commotion over the matter of change. Tradesmen anxiously scrutinize every coin, and none but persons well known can offer sovereigns for purchases. It is asserted that the counterfeit money has been passed by a clique of Americans.

MR. BRADLAUGH evidently wishes to pose as a political martyr, imprisoned for the rights of the people. He grows more desperate in his language, and threatens unheard-of disasters to the sitters at St. Stephens. In a letter to Sir Stafford Northcote he seeks to absolve himself from the course which will "waste many lives, injure many innocent folk, and destroy much property, besides irreparably damaging the reputation of parliament." But the member for Northampton has never been moderate in his language, and has often used similar expressions. The sensible people of England have learned the value of his bark, and as they do not dread his bite, he will probably not gain the martyrdom and advertisement he so anxiously awaits.

THERE has just been discovered on the Kentish Coast in the middle of the stream the buried hull of an old smuggling vessel. It must have lain embedded in its resting place for several centuries, inasmuch as some of the wood of which it was composed had undergone petrification. It is supposed that the vessel was engaged in carrying on a contraband trade when she was sunk right in mid-stream by a well-aimed shot from some Government ship. This supposition is rendered almost certain by the fact that in the disintombed vessel were found several stone jars of antique shape, and packages of decayed and mouldy tobacco, while a fourteen pound ball was embedded in the timbers of the hull. The vessel will be raised and carefully investigated by archæologists. The smugglers who loaded that vessel with their surreptitious goods hundreds of years ago little thought that they were providing materials for a museum of curiosities in the Victorian era.

NEW YORK contains no less than three hundred millionaires. It is said that in no other city of the world could there be enumerated so many men of wealth aggregating a sum so enormous as the added wealth of these three hundred men. With very few exceptions the list comprises self-made men who have pushed their way in the world by energy and sagacity, and whose success is mainly due to the unrivalled growth of population, and the inexhaustible richness of the natural resources of the American continent.

THERE is a Society for the Suppression of Mendicancy in Philadelphia which has two wood-yards where all able-bodied beggars and tramps will be compelled to work four hours a day in return for their accommodations in the way of food and lodgings. If the tramp refuses to work he will be sent to the House of Correction as a vagrant. Some such institution is needed in some of our Canadian cities.

NEWFOUNDLAND is awake to the necessity of having a representative of her own in England. Following the example of Canada and Australia, she is making arrangements with the Colonial Office for a proper representation of her interests at Home.