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Notes of the Week.

THE city council of Milan recently solicited the votes of the parents sending children to the public schools as to whether they wished to have them receive religious instruction or not. Out of a total school attendance of 27,515, such instruction was requested for 25,380. In Rome, the city council has decided that religious instruction can be given in the elementary schools during the last hour on Saturdays, but attendance is compulsory only at the written request of the parents.

SEVEN lecturers have been engaged by the British band of hope union to give illustrated lectures in day schools on the physiological results of the use of stimulants. These will be so arranged as to assist the ordinary work of the school; and the scheme, for the carrying out of which the union has had \$50,000 placed at its disposal, embraces the distribution of certificates for the best reports of the lectures, prizes in a national competitive examination, and the distribution of suitable literature.

A MONUMENT is about to be erected by the Gaelic Society of Perth to the memory of the Rev. James Stewart, parish minister of Killin for the long period of fifty-two years, in recognition of his accomplishments as a Gaelic scholar, and especially of the lasting benefits he conferred on the Gaelic-speaking people of Scotland by translating the New Testament into the Gaelic language, and giving the Scottish Highlanders the inestimable privilege of reading it for the first time in their native tongue.

THE Divorce Bill which is likely to become the law of all Australia, has stirred much opposition in some quarters. It is, however, mainly an embodiment of Scotch law, and follows the lines advocated by Bishop Cranmer. There are at least two good points in it. The cost of a decree will be lessened so that divorce shall cease to be a rich man's luxury; and, what will receive full approval from Mr. Gladstone, man and woman are placed on an equality—either party being able to sue for desertion, cruelty or infidelity.

FOR the first time for many years the total attendance at the German universities shows a decrease during the present winter term. It is 29,007, or 484 less than during the past summer. In general, the increase in the last three years has been small, and not to be compared with that from 1879 to 1887, when it advanced from 19,769 to 28,763 and gave rise to the strange social spectre, "a learned proletariat." But even as matters now stand the supply of technically educated men is far in excess of the demand.

AT the late meeting of the Board of Directors of Union Theological Seminary, New York, Rev. W. G. T. Shedd, D.D., LL.D., Roosevelt Professor of Systematic Theology, presented his resignation, on account of his advanced age and delicate health. This was accepted by the Board with many expressions of affection and gratitude for his long and distinguished services. He was unanimously elected *Professor Emeritus*, and the appointment was gracefully accepted. A committee was appointed to nominate a successor.

MANY Church of Scotland students on entering the divinity hall are, it seems, unfit to begin their theological studies by reason of their ignorance of the subjects taught in the arts course, and Glasgow Presbytery has agreed to overture the Assembly to take into consideration the subject of the examinations for entrance to the hall. As it is unjust to young men that they should only be made aware of their deficiencies after several years attendance at the university, it was further resolved to represent to the universities' commission the need of an effective matriculation examination.

A GREAT German theologian and exegete has passed away. Professor Franz Delitzsch, whose learned commentaries on Old Testament Scripture are so highly prized throughout Christendom, died

recently in Leipsic, the city where he was born seventy-seven years ago. In the extent and depth of his acquaintance with Hebrew literature, he was without a rival. He was highly esteemed as an instructor, and revered for his personal worth. He is the translator of a Hebrew version of the New Testament, a work which Rabinowitz found so valuable, and was eagerly sought after by many Jews in Southern Russia.

WHEN the *Christian Leader* says that Mr. Roderrick McLeod, speaking at the soiree of St. Columba Free Church, Edinburgh, related experiences in America which will considerably astonish our transatlantic cousins, it is right. Mr. McLeod said the working man in America he found to be a miserable creature; the churches were not larger than Highland byres, their steeples being usually made of three boards joined together; and though he travelled all through New York he never heard a psalm all the time. When he reached the west of Ireland on his homeward voyage this extraordinary Celt thought he was in paradise.

MR. BRUCE, M.P., whose recent work on America has been so favourably received, presided recently at a lecture by Bishop Barry on "Christianity and the Nation," given to working men at the Lambeth Baths, said that a Christian minister could not render any greater service to the people among whom he lived than by showing them how the principles of the Gospel could be applied to solve social questions. If the kingdom of heaven were realised upon earth, there would be no occasion for a State at all. It was a mistake to confound Christian communism with any communism which State force could establish. He had the strongest possible convictions that by far the greatest force which had ever operated in favour of freedom, equality and human brotherhood was the force of Christianity.

THE *Christian Leader* says: Sir Peter Coats, the Paisley millionaire, has passed away in his eighty-second year. He was wintering as usual at his pleasant villa at Algiers, and it was there that he was struck with apoplexy. He never recovered consciousness after the shock and died four days later. Like his late brother, Mr. Thomas Coats of Ferguslie, he recognised the stewardship with which he had been entrusted; and while his public gifts to the town of Paisley were on a scale of more than princely munificence, his hand was ever open to the appeal of those needing help. The United Presbyterian Church loses by his death one of her most devoted members, and her ministry a keenly sympathetic friend who found one of his chief delights in extending to many of their number while suffering in health the best advantages that his wealth could secure.

AT the annual meeting of the Disestablishment Council for Scotland, Mr. Dick Peddie said that when he recalled the fact that in the Parliament of 1885 there were only six members of the Government whose sympathy could be reckoned on, and only twelve or thirteen members ready to vote for Dr. Cameron's motion, it seemed to him that the progress made was amazing. They could now confidently await the beginning of the end, believing that it was separated from them only by a general election. Principal Cairns urged the great necessity of keeping disestablishment and disendowment together. Bailie Walcot affirmed that Scotland was as strong in regard to these questions as she was in regard to the great and wider question of Liberalism. Principal Rainy said their cause was plainly acquiring support in all directions. Men's minds were now coming to the position of either cordially approving or reluctantly accepting their view of the question.

A GLASGOW contemporary tells the following story: Mr. Alexander M. Ross, writing on the attachment of Highlanders to ancient customs, says that some time ago a rural kirk session refused baptism in a certain case for no other reason than that the father of the child wore an unusually large beard. At the close of a protracted discussion, and when they had intimated their ultimatum, the

applicant produced a portrait of John Knox which he had carefully concealed beneath his coat and asked how they could refuse him baptism on such a pretence, when the father of the Church wore such an excellent crop till the day of his death? The Session was non-plussed and no further resistance was offered.

PRESBYTERIANISM in England, says the *Interior*, has been much under discussion of late, in the newspapers of the land, the special occasion for the outburst being the publication of a "History of the Presbyterians in England." One reviewer pronounced the book uncommonly dull and lifeless. He wrote from the standpoint of a very high churchman, and probably could not recognize the existence of spiritual life apart from liturgies and showy services. But the great majority of papers found the book highly interesting both in its composition and its subject matter. And of all the many approving notices, the most hearty and emphatic came from the Methodist quarter. As the Methodists everywhere are experts in all matters pertaining to religious endeavour, we may rest assured that our English brethren have made a record which is neither lifeless or dull.

SOME of our readers, says the *Christian Leader*, would observe the brief but pathetic notice in our last number of the sad death, at the hands of a lunatic, of Erasmus Scott Calman, in an asylum at Cambridge Heath. Mr. Calman, who was over ninety, was at one time missionary teacher in Jerusalem. From Dr. Andrew A. Bonar we learn that the deceased was associated with the deputation to Palestine sent by the Church of Scotland in 1839. In a note with which we have been kindly favoured Dr. Bonar writes: He was an excellent man and most useful to us in our journey all through. Often afterwards I tried to find out his residence in London, in vain—I think he went to the Continent; but at any rate he left the society with which he had been connected and so was out of sight. It was strange for me last night to light on his name in the *Leader* and to read of his melancholy end. It brought back the memory of scenes in Palestine when he was with the deputation, Dr. Keith, Dr. Black, and R. M. McCheyne, helping us to get information and to get access to the Jews.

THE annual meeting of the Lord's Day Alliance was held recently in Ottawa, the President, Hon. G. W. Allan in the chair. The Rev. Joseph Whyte spoke of the progress of the work effected through the agency of the society. The secretary, Dr. Armstrong, read the report of the Executive Committee, which had met five times during the year. There had been 1,500 circulars sent out, 7,000 copies of the form of petition had been distributed, and many returned signed, whilst 10,000 financial circulars had been distributed, but had not met with very much success. With reference to the request to see the Roman Catholic authorities to get their assistance he waited upon Cardinal Taschereau and explained to him the desirability of having a hearty support to the alliance. The cardinal had asked for more information to lay the matter before the three bishops of Montreal, Quebec and Ottawa. This had been done but they did not desire to express their views although he knew they had the sympathy of the Roman Catholic Church. They had petitions to parliament from Halifax to Vancouver. Mr. Charlton discussed the prospects of the Bill now before parliament. Messrs. Charlton and Weldon were thanked for introducing the measure. It was also resolved to present the Bill to the various religious bodies for their approval, to secure the co-operation of the Evangelical Alliance and Labour Associations and to circulate petitions in all parts of the Dominion. The officers were then elected as last year with Hon. Mr. Allen, President; Rev. Dr. Armstrong, Secretary, and Mr. G. Hay, Treasurer, the only change being the Rev. Dr. Ryckman being appointed on the committee to fill the place rendered vacant by the retirement of Rev. W. J. Crothers. Dr. Armstrong mentioned the fact that the finances were low, and moved that the question be referred to the Executive Committee.