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## NOTES OF THE WEEK.

A WRITER in the "Contemporary Review" says of American cities: "There is the most extravagance in New York, the most comfort in Philadelphia, the most philanthropy in Boston, the most etiquette in Washington."

THE progress of Toronto may be judged from the fact that the assessors' returns show an increase in the value of real property this year of nearly \$2,750,000. The increase in personal property and income swells the total to \$3,185,000.

THE Third General Council of the Presbyterian Churches of the world will meet in Belfast, Ireland, on the 24th of June, 1884, and probably in the new Assembly Hall. Great are the expectations, and great will be the preparations for such a gathering. As to hospitality to the delegates there will be no difficulty on that score. Rev. Dr. Knox is chairman of the Committee on Business, and the Doctor is a host in himself.

AT the next General Assembly of the "Free Church" in Scotland, there are expected to be 200,000 signatures to a protest against the introduction of instrumental music. A conference of the leading members of the party promoting the agitation was held the other day, when one of the "divines" stumbled upon the discovery that there is no New Testament authority for singing even the Psalms of David in public worship.

A RIDE of seventy miles in a day on a tricycle is undeniably a good ride, so what are we to say of a ride of 1,040 miles in fourteen days, which gives a rate of over seventy-four miles per day? This feat was performed by Mr. Alfred Nixon, a gentleman of a far from robust appearance, but very well trained for such an undertaking. He rode from Land's End to John o' Groat's: so the roads over which he travelled were in parts the reverse of favourable, and his achievement must be set down as an extraordinary one.

ON Monday evening, the 9th inst., a company assembled at the Hon. A. Mackenzie's residence for the purpose of presenting him with an address from his late constituency at Lambton. The address was highly complimentary, and referred to the spirit of Mac-pure patriotism and true manhood which Mr. Mackenzie had manifested during his noble career of twenty-five years, and which has entered into the character of the people, and is recorded in the journals of Parliament. Accompanying the address was a cheque for \$5,500.

REV. DR. EDWARD JUDSON, in his mission work in New York, has put in operation several devices for interfering with the consumption of liquors by mechanics and labouring men. Not only has he erected an ice-water fountain at the corner of his church, but he has arranged that, at noon, when the mills and factories stop and the men sit down to lunch, pails of pure, ice-cold milk are carried around among them, and sold by the glass at prices less than beer can be sold for. Thus the temptation to drink beer at the noon-day lunch is removed, and many profit by it.

THE bridge which is to be erected across the Forth will be one of the greatest scientific achievements of the century. The main girder will be within a few feet of a mile in length. The bridge is to rest on round cylindrical piers, each weighing 16,000 tons, to which must be added 8,000 tons, the estimated pressure on the top of the pier of the superstructure, rolling load and wind pressure. This gives a pressure at the base of about 24,000 tons, or about six tons per square foot. The foundation is clay, and is considered excellent. Steel will be used in the construction of the bridge, the amount required being about 42,000 tons, and the estimated cost of the bridge is \$7,500,000.

THE meeting of the American Board of Foreign Missions at Portland, Maine, on the 6th inst., witnessed a scene never before equalled by a gathering of men seeking to evangelize the world. Rev. Dr. Alden announced a financial crisis which scarcely admitted of hope. *William E. Dodge, Esq., electrified the assemblage by offering to double his subscription, an example which was instantly followed by a dozen gifts of \$1,000 each! A touching appeal by Dr. Webb, of Boston, caused fifteen hundred men and women to rise to their feet simultaneously and pledge twice the sum they had previously offered, the total amount secured being \$50,000!*

THE age of the Church of England has long been an open question, good Churchmen insisting that it is in the direct line of apostolic succession, Romanists and Dissenters insisting that it dates from the quarrel of Henry VIII. with the Pope of Rome. A legal decision has been rendered in England which may be set down as a judicious establishment of the fact that the Established Church antedates Henry's coronation at least 626 years. A piece of property, which had been leased in A.D. 883 for 999 years, was claimed by the Church by right of reversion, and the court held that the claim was good. The great soldier and statesman, Alfred the Saxon, founder of the British navy, and almost of English literature, was on the throne of England when that lease was executed.

THE "Faith-Cure" theory is being discussed anew, under the influence of the reports from the recent convention held in its interests. It has many respectable advocates. Briefly stated, it is a theory according to which physical diseases can be cured by faith and prayer without the use of physicians or medicines. Dr. Cullis recommends the prayer of faith; that and nothing more. If in any case there has been prayer without the cure, he attributes it to a want of faith. With this in right exercise, the claim is that the recovery is inevitable, because the promise of God is absolute, and no one has a right to doubt it. Many examples are given of persons who have been raised up in this way, some of them, too, having been sufferers from diseases which, humanly speaking, are incurable, and which had refused to yield to any of the remedies applied by the most skilful physicians. They are not usually classed with miracles, though they can be nothing else, and if they have really been effected as claimed the days of miracles are not past, as we so often say they are.

THE population of the earth has long been a fascinating study for statisticians Behm and Wagner, who have just published an emended edition of a former work in Germany. They give the total as 1,433,887,500—which is about 22,000,000 less than their estimate of two years ago. They have concluded that China has 50,000,000 less than they formerly supposed. There has thus been an actual increase of about 38,000,000 in the population of the globe—an increase, however, which must be spread over ten years, as many of the recent censuses are decennial. For Europe the present population is rated at 327,743,400, showing an increase, of about 12,000,000 over the previous figures by the operation of the censuses. In Asia, making allowance for the readjustment of the population of China, there has been an increase of 20,000,000, the present population being set down at 795,591,000. Of course, the estimates must sometimes be little better than guesses—for example, for such places as Africa. For this continent Dr. Rohlf maintains that an estimate of 100,000,000 is quite enough, while Behm and Wagner retain the old figure of 200,000,000 with considerable hesitation.

FEW characteristics of the German Fatherland are more justly and eminently calculated to astonish the intelligent foreigner, visiting that realm for the first time, than the inordinate prevalence of the patronymic Müller within its ethnological boundaries. So striking is this Teutonic specialty, that a French author of no

mean renown, having travelled through the length and breadth of Germany, and being moved, on his return home, to record his *impressions de voyage* in the form of a book, commenced his introductory chapter as follows: "The Germans are a people whose name is Müller." As a nomenclature, in short, Müller is to the German Empire what Smith is to Great Britain, her colonies and dependencies. This is no mere conjecture, but a grave and authoritative statement, based upon official statistics recently communicated to the German nation in connection with the general census of 1881. From these statistics, the correctness of which we see no reason to doubt, it appears that the total number of Müllers having their being in United Germany at the close of last year was 629,987. That the proportion of Teutons whose "front name" is not Müller to those upon whom the accident of birth has bestowed this patronymic should only be as seven to one is surely a surprising fact.

FROM observations at Washington regarding the comet of 1882, it appears that this comet is rapidly receding from the earth. On September 19th its distance from the earth was 103,620,000 miles, and on the 21st September 107,460,000 miles. This comet's velocity at perihelion was 382 miles per second, and at the time of the observation on the 21st September, it had receded to such an enormous distance from the sun that the velocity was reduced to fifty-eight miles per second. The orbit of this comet is, according to preceding elements, almost identical with that of the great comet of 1843. It also almost coincides with the orbit of the comet of 1880, and if subsequent investigations show that these comets are identical, it is evident that the comet must have experienced great resistance during its previous perihelion passages, in order to have its periodic time reduced from thirty-six years to two years, and that before two or three more revolutions shall have been performed the comet will be precipitated on the solar surface. It is difficult to say what the result of such a collision will be, since there is little or nothing known of the mass or quantity of matter in the comet. That it would be followed by a considerable outburst of solar heat is absolutely certain, but whether its intensity would interfere seriously with vegetable and animal life, there is no means at present of determining.

THE Rev. James Cameron, of Chatsworth, recently preached a sermon, characterized throughout by his usual earnestness, in which he made reference to the foundering of the steamer "Asia," in the Georgian Bay. The following extract is worthy serious consideration: "Here is a lesson, and a solemn one, to reckless and covetous corporations, who, in making arrangements for business and calculating as to the year's profits, trust entirely to shrewdness and energy and push to make things profitable, and give no place at all to higher things. Would it not be well for men, for corporations, for boards of directors, to take this momentive fact into account—that there is a God in heaven, that He governs this world, and that breaches of His laws, physical, moral and spiritual, will sooner or later bring, without any miracle, merited punishment! All the money made by our rulers through the sale of strong drink this year, is taken from them next year by fires, deaths, imprisonments and executions springing from sources whence spring their profit. All the money made by slave labour perished, every cent of it, in the civil war by which the slaves were set free. And the profits made by companies, railway or steamboat, by wrong ways, by oppressing their men, by breaking the Sabbath, may be cleared out in a few hours by a storm, a fog, or a fire. And it is sad to think that the officers and crew, who had twenty minutes given for the settlement with God, were all the summer deprived of their Sabbath when a single arrangement by which one boat should leave the Sault Ste. Marie on the Monday, returning thither on Saturday night, and the same with the Collingwood end of the line, would have given on these two boats at least their Sabbaths in port, and if they chose in the bosom of their families, and in the worship of God."