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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE Queen's return from Mentone is announced by recent telegraphic despatches.

THE President of the British American Business College annually presents a gold medal to the student who shows the most accurately kept and best-written set of books, and a silver medal to the student who has made the greatest improvement in penmanship. This year the gold medal was awarded to Mr. W. S. Gage, and the silver medal to Mr. J. Creery. The judges were Mr. S. B. Harman, City Treasurer, and President of the Institute of Accountants; and Mr. W. H. Eddis, Secretary of the same body.

THE aborigines of Australia are dying off very rapidly. The annual report of the Ramahyuck Mission of the Moravians states that the census returns of the colony show that the natives have decreased in ten years from 1,330 to 768. It says that this decrease is not so apparent at the stations, from the fact that there are constant accessions by those who have wandered from different parts of the country; but there is every indication that the future decrease at the stations will be much greater. Of the seven infants born the past year, all but three, despite the utmost care, died.

THE full text of the Rev. Dr. Jenkins' letter, from which we gave an extract two weeks ago, will be found in the March number of the "Presbyterian Record," for which publication it was originally written. We happened to miss seeing that number of the "Record," and took the extract from some newspaper which had, without acknowledgment, copied the letter or part of it. On the strength of internal evidence, we said it was written to "a friend in Montreal"—a statement which we now find was perfectly correct as far as it went, but somewhat misleading on account of its indefiniteness.

ACCORDING to a recent report of the French Minister of Public Instruction to the President of the Republic, the total amount spent in France since June 1st, 1878, for new school buildings and the improvement of old ones, is 207,830,969 francs. Of this amount, the State contributed 74,457,806, the departments 6,961,736 francs, the communes 126,411,427 francs, total 207,830,969 francs, or say, \$41,566,194. The obligatory education law will require the erection of new schools in almost every department of France. An additional sum of \$25,000,000 will hardly suffice to accommodate all children of school age.

THE Ritualistic churches in London and vicinity are steadily increasing, as appears from the annual table of statistics. Some thirty-seven churches out of 907 now use eucharistic vestments, against fourteen in 1869. Last year there were thirty-five. Ten use incense, against eight in 1869 and eleven last year; fifty-nine have altar-lights, whereas thirty-six had them in 1874. Forty-five have candles on the altar, and in 270 against seventy-four in 1874, the "eastward position" is taken. The gain the past year in the number of churches is twenty. Forty-six churches have daily communion, and 476 have surplined choirs. 319 have free seats.

ANENT proposed remedies for Irish troubles, the "Christian Leader" says: "Even Mr. Goldwin Smith is going heartily in for coercion, and for more of it too, believing, as he does, that it is absolutely necessary until 'the savage clansman is worked out of the Irishman's character.' But is this really the element that causes the trouble? The Scottish Highlander has probably quite as much, if not more, of the clansman left in his character as the Hibernian Celt, and there is no such need of working it out in his case. Why? Because he has been liberated from the bondage of Romish priestcraft. It is strange that even men of courage like Mr. Goldwin Smith should be afraid to admit a fact that is clearly demonstrated to

anyone who will simply compare Ulster with the rest of Ireland."

MR. SPURGEON opens his magazine this month with an apology. "We could not postpone the affliction," he says, "or we would have had the magazine first, and the gout afterwards; but the sickness waylaid us, and stopped us just when the hour for labour had arrived." He has been obliged to cancel all his engagements. "For some time," he writes, "before we were taken ill, it was a daily burden to refuse all sorts of applications, presented either in writing or by deputations. Those who could not possibly write their business, and therefore forced an interview; those who waylaid us at odd corners and inconvenient times; those who bored us with twenty requests to do the same thing when we told them that it was not possible, have our richest blessing for the chastisement which they alone have brought upon us."

At the monthly meeting of the Executive Committee of the Grand Lodge of Good Templars of England, held at Birmingham, a copy of the following resolution was directed to be sent to Mr. Tennyson: "Resolved,—That this Executive of the Grand Lodge of England of Good Templars observes with regret that the Poet Laureate's new national song invites to repeated drinking as expressive alike of loyalty, patriotism and freedom, thus pandering to a fast-decaying convivial custom, which inflicts manifest injury upon so many of Her Majesty's subjects, hinders national advancement, and enslaves both body and mind." The note in which Mr. Tennyson's son replied to the foregoing resolution runs thus: "Sir,—My father begs to thank the Committee of the Executive of the Grand Lodge of England Good Templars for their resolution. No one honours more highly the good work done by them than my father. I must, however, ask you to remember that the 'common cup' has in all ages been employed as a sacred symbol of unity; and that my father has only used the word 'drink' in reference to this symbol. I much regret that it should have been otherwise understood. Faithfully yours, Hallam Tennyson."

REV. DR. SOMERVILLE, the Scotch evangelist, who is at present, or was very recently, at Hamburg, has received an invitation to visit South Africa, signed by twenty-eight ministers and laymen belonging to the Dutch Reformed, Scottish Presbyterian, Episcopal, Congregational and Wesleyan Churches. Their letter is as follows: "We have heard with deep interest and pleasure of your evangelistic visits to various parts of the world, and of the fullness of 'the blessing of the Gospel of Christ,' which has by God's grace accompanied them. South Africa alone is left of the British empire for you to visit, and we now unitedly and cordially invite you, if strength and health be given, to come over and help us in this far-off end of the earth. Nowhere perhaps are colonial churches and missionary operations so intermingled and so intimately related; and their mutual sympathy is a matter of the greatest importance to both. In visiting this country, you would naturally make an extended acquaintance with all forms of Christian effort, and from your long and varied experience you would be able to give to all profitable counsel; and spiritually, your visit might be productive, under God, of the happiest results. Some of us have been for some time making a visit similar to those you paid to India and Australia a matter of prayer to God; and we shall continue to ask that God in His providence may open up the way for you to come here, and that the blessing of His presence may come with you. We shall readily guarantee all local expenses, and also undertake to pay a portion of the expenses of the journey to and from England."

THE April number of the "Quarterly Statement" of the English Palestine Exploration Fund contains the particulars of Captain Conder's latest explorations. He has found among the numerous stone circles, dolmens and menhirs already known to exist east of the Jordan, four undoubted great centres,

round which the monuments are disposed. These are at Mushibiyeh, at El Mareighet, at Mynyeh—all three south of Hesban—and in the Ghor, near Kefrein. The first of these Captain Conder identifies with Bamoth Baal; the second with Baal Peor; the third with the top of Baal Peor, "that looketh toward Jeshimon;" the fourth with the sanctuary of Baal Peor, in the Jordan valley, where the Israelites worshipped while in Shittim. Captain Conder also claims to have found that a building already seen and described by several travellers, at Amman, is of Sassanian character, which seems to connect it with the curious ruin discovered by Tristram at Mashita. He has also discovered near the city many rock-cut tombs, presumably those of the ancient Ammonites, but ruder in character than those commonly found in western Palestine. The citadel of Amman he considers to be late Roman work. He has discovered at Arak el Emir, the great palace of Hyrcanus, the method of conveying the immense stones—some of them twenty feet long and ten feet high—from the quarry to their destination. At Jerusalem he has explored the tunnel of Siloam, and discovered the place where the workmen met, and he has obtained a cast and made a reading of the now famous Phoenician inscription.

IN a letter to the Woodstock "Sentinel Review," the Rev. G. L. Mackay, D.D., of Formosa, says: "Many of your readers may like to know something of Chinese enterprise in Formosa. Travelling around the world, I heard from a thousand lips, that enterprise and Chinese could not be associated together. From such an opinion I claim to differ, leaving facts to speak straight out. Note the change since I landed here ten years ago. Now there is a coal pit worked, where hundreds of tons are turned out daily. There are only two Englishmen now—all the work, from the anvil to the engine, is done by Chinese. Chinese steamers, built by themselves in their own arsenal, take the most of the coal away. Four days' journey south they are at work with an English engineer sinking a shaft for petroleum. Another day further south, and the lieutenant of this province is carrying on a gigantic work with fully 50,000 men. There is a bed several miles wide covered with stones about the size of a man's head. In dry weather I travelled over without getting my feet wet (they are blistered, however), but when the rains descend and the mountain torrents swell, the whole place is like a sea, fretting, foaming and dashing along, carrying houses, logs, trees, etc., out into the rolling sea. The governor himself is on the spot, superintending the work without any foreign aid. He has iron bridges, made by the Chinese themselves, to be used. When finished, I will write again to you. Now there is a little steamer running between this and Bang Kah three and four times every day. We can go up in an hour. This is all Chinese from first to last. The owner is going to build another out of a wrecked schooner which he bought at Ke-lung. Last year, the 'Hing Shing,' a Chinese merchant steamer, appeared at Tamsui as the first movement in that line. The foreign merchants put on several steamers at once, and the Chinese left; but it is only a matter of time, and that time will not be so long as some imagine. There is a telegraph line in the south of the island, and they are contemplating putting a cable across to the mainland. The governor, of his own accord, issued a very good proclamation regarding Christians. Let the world know and believe it, that this mighty empire, hoary with age, is moving, and her destiny is in the hands of God, not in those of the few narrow-minded, prejudiced, selfish men who cannot see beyond their own miserable shadows. Once the heart will be filled with the glorious Gospel it will vibrate—it will roll on, thundering down through 10,000 streets and into 400,000,000 homes, driving tablets and gods into the flames. 'Imagination!' I hear some one say. Never! never! Hold! and let the mighty God of nations speak. Man, stand back and hear the voice of Jehovah: 'Behold, these shall come from afar; and lo! these from the north and from the west, and these from the land of Sinim.'"