

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

DURING the last forty years crime has very much diminished in Scotland. It has fallen off 59 per cent., and sixteen prisons have been closed for want of occupants. The wealth of Scotland has increased in the same time from £196,000,000 to £970,000,000.

MEXICO has a summary way of dealing with scoundrels. Five men who attempted to destroy a bridge on the Mexican National Railway on Friday last, were caught Sunday, and by order of the Governor of the State of Mexico they were immediately shot.

WINDSOR CASTLE is to be lighted by electricity. How its brilliancy would have dazzled the eyes of William the Conqueror, its original builder, 850 years ago, or of Edward III., who in 1340 reared the Round Tower from which one of the burners is now to flame out!

A SCHOOL of fine arts is to be established at Princeton College. Dr. W. C. Prime, of New York, and General McClellan were appointed the first directors, and requested to draw up a plan of the new institution, which will stand alongside of the academic and scientific departments.

THE original sketch of Leonardo da Vinci's great painting of the Last Supper is said to have been discovered. A gentleman in Nice, who has bought from a picture dealer of Milan a so-called Last Supper on a panel 20 feet by 3, was cleaning it, when beneath the oil a beautiful distemper painting was disclosed, signed "Leonardo da Vinci, pinxit 1489."

DR. WM. M. TAYLOR, of New York, has been preaching a series of evening sermons on Household Religion to crowded congregations in the Broadway Tabernacle. The subjects have been the Christian husband, the Christian father, wife, mother, family worship, and the like. It is expected that they will be issued presently in the form of a book; if so, it will be the eleventh volume which Dr. Taylor has published since he settled in the United States.

A RUSSIAN writer of the first rank, a keen Slavophile, Herr von Katkoff, has published an article declaring the Jewish outrages to be an unheard-of scandal, and demanding that the Government shall put a stop to events that compromise the empire before all Europe. All trials for outrages on the Jews are to be proceeded with as urgent, on the command of the Czar. The indignant protests uttered by Britain and America have not been made in vain.

THE two most notable features of the current number of the *Protestant Times* are a violent attack on church bazaars, denounced as "swindling," and a still more violent assault on Canon Wilberforce for the way in which he dares to talk against brewers—"a class who not only pursue a perfectly legitimate calling, but are as benevolent, charitable, as enterprising and useful a body of men as any other portion of the body politic." This is surely straining at the gnat and swallowing the camel.

A MOVEMENT has begun in Rome, having for its object the better observance of the Lord's-day. It will be a great gain to the cause of Christ when Sunday is observed as a day of rest and worship in Italy. At present, the absence of all special regard for the weekly day of rest is as a great mountain damming up the stream of evangelization. Even the municipal offices are open and the clerks employed on Sunday. Perhaps the majority of the people cease from work, or from business, the latter half of Sunday, when they first go for a walk, or sit and drink, and then comes the theatre to crown the day.

A NATIONAL declaration, signed by Sir William Collins, Principals Cairns, Rainy, and Douglas, Archbishop Strain, and several hundreds of influential

clergymen and laymen, has been published. It states that "no legislative measure affecting the liquor traffic can be approved or accepted by us which would give power to grant or renew licenses for a longer period than one year; which would give power to levy a public tax for the purpose of providing compensation to the liquor sellers and the proprietors of licensed premises; or which refuses to confer upon a majority of the ratepayers the full legal power to prohibit the drink traffic in their respective localities."

A WHOLESOME blast of indignation from the Sutherlandshire Association in Glasgow, says the "Christian Leader," has been the means of staying some cruel evictions that were threatened by the factor on the estates of the Duke of Sutherland. We can well understand how his Grace shrinks from the revival of memories that form an unpleasant chapter in the history of his house. Glasgow is becoming to the cause of the Highland crofters, in some respects, what America is to the peasantry of Ireland. There is this happy difference, however, that the Highlanders resident in the great city are animated by purely patriotic motives. They do well to use their influence on behalf of their compatriots at home, who are the victims of a land system that stands pressingly in need of reform.

HERR M. MUNKACSY's great picture, "Christ before Pilate," is now on exhibition in London. The Christ of Munkacsy is a pale, gaunt figure, "marred more than any man," full of intellectual dignity and eagerness, but lacking spiritual elevation. The head seems more that of a martyr to political freedom or to scientific progress than to religion. Pilate is a figure of force and dignity, and the artist has emphasized his Roman type of face and build in contrast to the groups of thronging, whispering Jews. Close to the Christ is a burly Pharisee, an odious impersonation of tyranny and superstition; a beautiful young woman, holding a child in her arms, and leaning against a pillar, was introduced by the painter to represent the dawning of Christianity. This great picture is one of the first of modern compositions.

REV. PROFESSOR FLINT gave the concluding lecture on "The Faiths of the World" in St. Giles' Church, Edinburgh, on Sabbath, 23rd April. His subject was "Christianity in relation to other Religions." He said Christianity was founded on the religion of Israel. It was the fulfilment of the law and the prophets, having done away with all that was imperfect, and retained all that was of permanent value in them. All the parts of the religion of Israel contributed to raise, sustain, and guide faith in the Saviour—a perfect Prophet, Priest, and King. It was pervaded with a Messianic ideal which could only have been realized in Christ, and which had been completely fulfilled in Him. He further showed that Christianity was the absolute religion, giving a clear, self-consistent, adequate view of God, as no other religion does, and so leading to true communion between the worshipping subject and the worshipped object. And further, Christianity was the only religion which has a complete revelation.

A GENTLEMAN who made a pilgrimage to Haverdun during the Easter holidays, and who attended service in the parish church on Sunday morning, informs us that the Prime Minister read the lessons. Though he read in low tones his rich deep voice filled the spacious edifice. The voice of Mr. Gladstone could also be heard joining heartily in the singing. At the close of the service a large crowd waited outside the gates expecting to have a better view of the illustrious statesman, but they were disappointed, as he waited to lunch with his son at the rectory. Our informant, however, strolled into the park in the afternoon, where he observed the Premier stretched on the lawn of the terrace before his house, with a large rug under him and a sun shade in front. There he lay reading, and taking no notice of the passers by. At the evening service he was again in his place in the church, and read the lessons as in the forenoon. When

he entered the church at night he was wrapped up in a heavy Scotch plaid.

A PAINFUL sensation has been caused in Vienna by a story from Cracow, according to which a nun in a convent there has been inhumanly treated. She belonged to a good Silesian family, and gave all her property to the convent eighteen years ago. But for a faithful old servant who followed her into the convent in order to be near her, she would probably have died under the treatment she received. Her brother could only obtain an interview with her by calling in the police. She had to be supported by two nuns, and appeared in a terribly emaciated condition. Having refused to accept a young confessor introduced into the convent some years ago, she was confined alone in a cell, and the Sisters were forbidden to approach her. The story runs that she had worn the same gown for eighteen years, and had had no change of underclothing or shoes or stockings for seven years. Her cell had not been cleaned for a twelvemonth, and she was never allowed to leave it. The straw of her bed was rotten and full of vermin. The Sisters with her contradicted her statements, but she persisted in imploring her brother to free her from her terrible position. The brother could only provide her with food and clothes. Until the affair has been decided in a court of justice, the nun will have to remain where she is.

DR. and Mrs. Murray Mitchell have transferred their constant labours among the men and women of India from the Bombay to the Madras province. Writing from Coonoor on the 12th of March, Dr. Mitchell gives these rapid glimpses of the good work: "We have just arrived at Coonoor, on the Neelgherries, after a protracted, and latterly somewhat trying, peregrination through Southern India. We have been most deeply interested by what we have seen of missionary work, especially in Madras, Madura, Tinnevely, and Travancore. The work is, of course, in essentials alike, and yet it is in particulars unlike, that both in Western and Northern India. It passes my comprehension how any man can travel through Southern India with his eyes open and yet pronounce Christian missions a failure. Everywhere I have witnessed large congregations worshipping the true and living God, composed of men who were once avowed worshippers of demons; and when I preached to them—as I was continually doing through interpreters—I felt that I had never, even in Scotland, addressed audiences that manifested deeper interest and sympathy. I was greatly gratified, not only with the evangelistic work in Southern India, but with the educational work as well. The Christian college and the schools of our own mission, I do not require to inform you, are admirably conducted. Even so, we were greatly pleased with nearly all the schools we saw. For one thing, nothing can be more important than the training of the children of native Christians; and in the various missions the greatest care is taken to bring them up in 'the nurture and admonition of the Lord.' Evidently the native Church in Southern India is steadily rising in character, position, and influence. I must express in my next letter some of the thoughts suggested by a review of what I have seen since I returned to India, rather more than a year ago. It has been both to my wife and me a time of incessant but delightful labour. We have done what we could to aid in the glorious work. One's whole mind and heart are called out by what is doing in India. And clearly, although the battle is sore, and may still be long, there is an advance all along the line, and one stronghold of the foe is taken after another. You will observe that I am speaking now of missions to the heathen, and of the native churches. I am not speaking of the state of religion among Europeans and Eurasians. My first duty was to study the missions; but, as I have had opportunities, I have noted the spiritual necessities of my own countrymen and East Indians, and I must sorrowfully confess them to be very great. But I will not enter on that subject now, though it bears, and very directly too, on the progress of missions."