

Notes of the Week.

TERRIBLE stories have come from the Labrador coast of the destitution said to be prevalent there. Concerning the actual state of affairs there is much ignorance. It may be that accounts are greatly exaggerated, but all seem to agree that the Arctic ice still remains, rendering fishing and the cultivation of the ground impossible. From the sterile and inhospitable nature of the region it is evident that almost any untoward circumstance would cause great hardship to the inhabitants of that dreary coast. There should be no uncertainty about the condition of these people. Aid should be sent at once. It would be a disgrace were Canadian charity to be strangled by red tape.

THERE are twelve thousand miles of telegraph in India, ten thousand miles of railway, and no river of any size, however sacred, is free from the vulgar plunge of screw and paddle wheel. The remarriage of widows, the suppression of cruelties at festivals, and changes more radical than any the missionaries would dare to advocate are openly discussed in native papers. The leader of the Brahmo Somaj holds up the missionary to the everlasting gratitude of India. More attention is given to the education of the girls of India now than was given to that of the boys thirty years ago. On the tables of cultivated Brahmins may be seen copies of Euclid, Blackstone and Cowper, often sacrilegiously bound in the skin of the sacred cow.

MUCH that appears at the present time in the public prints is of a purely sensational character. It is the silly season, and it would seem as if a premium were offered to whoever could palm off the most incredible fabrication. Some of these are as harmless as silly lies and stupid jokes can possibly be, while others may be intended to have different results. Marvellous crimes and unwonted occurrences generally take place a long way off, and, were it worth while to trace them, their origin would usually be found in the disordered brain of an alleged newspaper correspondent. The attempt to blow up the Brazilian Prince, now visiting New York, turns out to have been nothing else than the idiotic freak of an intoxicated man. The terrible bomb that caused magnates to turn pale with terror was an empty bottle to which ignited waste was attached. Mares' nests are plentiful at this season.

It is, says a contemporary, an old Roman Catholic charge against Luther, that he was the author of the famous rollicking couplet:

Wer nicht lieb Weib, Wein und Gesang,
Der bleibet ein Narr sein Leben lang.

which may be freely translated,

Who loves not woman, wine and song,
Remains a fool his whole life long.

Absolutely no evidence of the truth of the libel has ever been discovered; and now Dr. Schulze brings evidence that the old couplet, substantially, is considerably older than Luther. In the "*Reformatorium Vita Clericorum*," published at Basle in 1494, it is said:

Bring the best wine, for

Absque venere et mero
Rite lactabitur nemo;

or, in common language:

On schon Frowen und gute Win
Mag nyeman frolich syn.

Here we have evidence that this uproarious couplet, in its various forms, Latin and German, is older than Luther.

LAST week Mexico was in the throes of a revolution; this week the impulsive southern neighbours of the American republic believe that they are on the eve of a great war. Armed men are pouring into Paso del Norte. Mexican journals are breathing defiance and scorn against the United States. The cause of the trouble is the arrest and detention of an

American editor, whose liberation the American authorities have demanded. What has this representative of modern journalism been guilty of, whirling him into prominence in this international quarrel? Simply this. He had gone to Paso del Norte, and established a journal, printing it in Spanish. A Mexican, seeing that the venture was likely to succeed, attempted to start a rival journal. Cutting then posted him as a dishonourable man and a fraud. Hence the complications. America is calm; in due time Mexico will cool down, and Editor Cutting will tranquilly resume the pen and scissors, and the Rio Grande will flow peacefully on.

IN a recent communication Washington Gladden says: Many a Church member seems to suppose that the reason for going to church is simply to be taught and inspired, and that, if one does not feel like going, the loss is all his own. But this is far from being true. You go to church not only for the good you can get, but for the good you can do. You go to help to kindle, by your presence, in the great congregation, that flame of sacred love which makes the souls of those who listen sensitive and mobile under the touch of the truth. You go to help others to listen, to help to create the conditions under which they can listen well. You go to help the minister preach; to add vitality and warmth and convincing power to his words. Good preaching cannot be produced by one man, it is the fruit of the combined power of an inspired preacher and an inspired congregation, acting upon one another. If the people fail to supply their part of the power the work of the minister will be much less effectually done.

THE only person of note who has spoken in mitigation of the social verdict—much more complete even than the legal one—pronounced on Sir Charles Dilke is Mr. Justin McCarthy. A Chicago journal for this takes him severely to task. The press, British and American, has spoken with singular unanimity. This is what the *New York Independent* says. Sir Charles had before him a future as promising as any man in England. He had rank. He had wealth. He had proved his literary ability by writing a book universally praised, whose subject, "Greater Britain," suggested by his own tour, would help him in his political aspirations. He had shown himself possessed of forensic power. He belonged to the political party of the future, the more radical wing of the Liberals. He was a member of Parliament, and of the Cabinet. His place was assured in society and in public life. No man had a better prospect of becoming the leader of his party and Prime Minister of England. It is all gone, all but his wealth and his baronetcy, sacrificed to a criminal intrigue with a foolish woman. Public sentiment does not pardon immorality in men now as it did some years ago, thanks, not to Mr. Stead and the Social Purity crusade alone, but also to the steadily rising moral principles of which they are the indices.

THE Principal of the Ontario Institution for the Blind, at Brantford, Mr. A. H. Dymond, writes: The Institution for the Blind at Brantford reopens for its next session on the 1st of September, and as there are always a number of pupils graduating at each vacation, applications to the Principal for the admission of new comers are now doubtless in order. Considering the almost utter helplessness and dependence of an uneducated blind person in after life, no arguments should be needed to induce all who have blind children under their care to avail of this opportunity of obtaining for them a thorough education, with instruction according to the pupil's capacity, in music, in industrial work, and, in fact, in everything by which the blind may be made useful and happy. When, too, it is remembered that board and education are provided for by a legislative grant, and so cost the friends of pupils not one cent, the last shadow of an excuse is removed for keeping a blind child at home in idleness, and thus losing a golden opportunity for acquiring inestimable permanent benefits. We strongly

advise all who are interested in this matter to communicate at once with Principal Dymond, who is always ready to give full information to inquirers. It may be as well to mention that the Institution is not for those who are totally blind only, but for all young persons resident in Ontario between seven and twenty-one years of age, who by reason of impaired or defective vision are unable to be educated at the public schools.

THIS is how an Edinburgh journal speaks of the Rev. D. J. Macdonnell: The Rev. D. J. Macdonnell, of St. Andrew's Church, Toronto, who is at present in Edinburgh on a visit, preached in New Greyfriars' Church last evening. Mr. Macdonnell, who is a well-known preacher in his own country, was about ten years ago the subject of a "heresy hunt" regarding his views on the question of eternal punishment, which had the effect of increasing his former popularity. Preaching from the text, "Ye are the salt of the earth," Matt. 5: 12, Mr. Macdonnell, in the course of his sermon, urged his hearers to season their speech so as to combine suavity with pungency, and to avoid insipidity. That did not mean the introduction into their talk of what were called religious topics—ministers and churches might be amongst the most irreligious of subjects but it meant talking about the common things that God gave them to see, and do, and enjoy, in a religious spirit in a godly, not a godless spirit. That did not entail absence of wholesome fun, between frivolity and which there was a wide gulf. Frivolity was a curse, but they might thank God for the bubbling up of merry laughter and the play of genial humour. Further, he said, apart from the influence of Christ, society tended to become corrupt. Did wealth, he asked, prevent moral decay? No! it sometimes hastened it. Did education or culture prevent it? An educated villain was only the more clever villain, a refined rake was only the more dangerous and detestable. May God, he added, bring a curse upon the machinations of some very refined and highly-polished, well-mannered, well-bred, well-brought-up devils!

I WAS against the Scott Act, said a large contractor to a representative of the *Ottawa Free Press*, at one time, but I ain't so now. You know I ain't a total abstainer myself, but I know how the Scott Act affects my business. I have had contracts in more sections of the globe than one—in Australia, Canada and other places, and always had to make allowance for waste of time, on account of some of my men getting drunk, which of course, threw my machinery idle and made me have to calculate my prices with an allowance for such waste. I have now a contract for the construction of the Brockville, Westport and Sault Ste. Marie road, and a large section of it runs through townships where the Scott Act is in force. Those that say the Act can't be enforced don't say true. Well, perhaps in towns it can't, and even in the country places it can't perfectly, but, I must own up, it puts down a pile of drinking. There are some men who will have whiskey at any price, and some men that will sell it, even if they are law breakers, and know they are so, long as they can make money. I don't expect the Scott Act, or any other Act, will stop whiskey drinking, but I do know that I never had more satisfaction with my men than under the Scott Act working. I find that I can get a better class of men, men glad to get away from whiskey, men I can depend on, men that will be steady at work every day, excepting when sick, and there ain't many of them get sick. No, I'm not against the Scott Act now, my best men endorse it, are saving money from their wages, and that is the best proof as to how it works. I am like all contractors, and can afford to give the best pay to the best workers, and the best workers are the temperance men. Experience has taught me that most of the men who are with me are well satisfied with the Act, and are laying up money weekly. I only wish that it could be more vigorously enforced. But in all such matters, there will be a leakage somewhere.