

## THE CHURCHES.

At a recent consistory the Pope appointed the Right Rev. F. X. Lerac archbishop of New Orleans, and the Right Rev. D. Mauncy bishop of Mobile.

THERE is a proposal to bring out Professor Robertson Smith as the Liberal candidate for the representation of the universities of Glasgow and St. Andrews. It is not yet known whether he will accept the nomination.

MEMORIAL busts of Drs. Morley Punshon and Gervase Smith have been placed in the City Road Wesleyan chapel, London. Distinguished Methodist clergymen and laymen were present at the ceremony of unveiling the busts.

THERE are eight spiritualistic newspapers published in Spain, five in France, four in Belgium, three in Germany, two each in Holland and Italy. Austria, Russia, Mexico, Chili, Brazil, Uruguay, the Argentine Republic, Australia, India and South Africa have one each.

THE Roman Catholic bishop of Cleveland has received from Archbishop Gibbons letters of convocation for the Third Plenary Council to be held in Baltimore on the 9th November of the present year. It is expected to be the greatest Catholic Council ever held in America.

IN a recent lecture, Dr. Joseph Cook animadverted somewhat strongly on the negative aspect of the new Congregational creed. The complacent serenity of several admiring friends has been disturbed thereby. Their criticism of the Boston Monday lecturer's opinions lack the repose by which they are usually characterized.

SINCE the Italian government by decree of the court of Cassation has taken possession of the Propaganda, it is expected that the American College at Rome, which is an adjunct of the Propaganda, will likewise be confiscated. The college was for the most part maintained by contributions from America, as it was there many American candidates for the priesthood were educated.

COLONEL ROBERT INGERSOLL has been lecturing on his favourite theme—infidelity—to a large audience in Chicago. Three thousand people assembled to listen to him. On the Sunday following numerous rejoinders were made by more or less prominent clergymen. Their modes of argument varied, but all were earnest in upholding the fundamental principles of the Christian faith.

DURING the Lenten season at Madrid a Jesuit preacher, Father Mon, has been inveighing in forcible language against the fashionable dissipation, court frivolities, and the French plays performed in Spanish theatres during the holy season. Cardinal Moreno having been appealed to by the Minister of Public Works, forthwith silenced the plain-speaking preacher and sent him off to Seville College in disgrace.

SOME people attach great importance to pastoral visitation. Mr. Spurgeon apparently attaches very little. He says: "With all the force of my being I say whatever you do not do, keep your preaching up to the mark. You can do much better by a thoroughly good sermon than by dropping in here and there and talking a little chit-chat. By all means keep the sermons up. The pulpit is the very Thermopylæ of this war. Hold the pulpit!"

A VERBATIM report of Henry Ward Beecher's sermon on a recent Sunday was telegraphed to a Chicago journal, in which it appeared next morning. The subject was the Sermon on the Mount. The Brooklyn divine holds that literal, absolute following of its precepts would destroy law and order, morality, and human nature itself. It is only, he said, when one brings his spiritual sense to bear on the words of Christ that they can be properly interpreted and understood.

By the death of Dr. Ezra Abbot, American Biblical scholarship has lost one of its foremost representatives. He held the appointment of Bussey Professor of New Testament Criticism and Interpretation in the Divinity School of Harvard University. Though a diligent, painstaking and accurate scholar, he has left no work behind him giving an adequate representation of his critical aptitude and labours. Dr. Abbot lent valuable assistance to the critical efforts of Tischendorf, Tregelles and others.

A SHORT time since Prince Leopold and Princess Gisela of Bavaria visited Rome. They were not accorded a reception at the Vatican. The following note addressed to all papal nuncios explains the reason why:

The Vatican can neither now nor henceforth consent to receive Catholic Princes who have been welcomed as guests in a place which, although confiscated by the Italians, is still the property of the Papacy. The co-existence of two Governments in Rome is inadmissible. The Vatican declines to acknowledge any authority but one in Rome—the authority of the head of the church, Leo XIII.

As was expected, the recent decision pronounced by His Honour Justice Ferguson on the rectory lands case is to be appealed to the Court of Appeal.

At a recent meeting of the vestry of St. James' Cathedral to consider what action should be taken, there were two distinct opinions entertained. Several prominent Churchmen, among them Canon Dumoulin, were in favour of accepting the decision of the Court as final. Others thought that an appeal should be entered. Those favouring this view being numerically the stronger party, succeeded in carrying a motion to proceed with the appeal.

THE 21st of May is the five hundredth anniversary of the condemnation of the doctrines at Blackfriars, London, of John Wyclif, "the morning star of the reformation." Efforts are being made for a celebration in honour of the intrepid reformer who is supposed to have been the faithful minister described in the "Canterbury Tales." Special religious services are to be held at Lutterworth, a popular demonstration at Exeter Hall and a Conference in the Mansion House under the presidency of the Lord Mayor, to consider the best mode of doing honour to the memory of John Wyclif.

Two subjects of public interest were freely discussed at the recent meeting in London, Ont., of the Western Congregational Union. These were the Salvation Army and the New Theology. While several speakers acknowledged that many who had led abandoned lives had been rescued from their degradation through the efforts of the Salvationists, their methods were destructive of true religious feeling, and repellant to all ideas of good taste. A paper by Rev. C. Pedley on the New Theology elicited wide divergence of opinion. Mr. Pedley is an earnest advocate of liberal thought, while several of his brethren acquiesced in the remark of one of them that "the old theology was good enough for him." ASTERISK.

## A MODERN PALADIN.

It is not generally supposed that the camp and the battle-field are the places best fitted for the development and exercise of the religious life. Asceticism and church tradition would rather point to the cloister or to the multiplicity of activities and organizations characteristic of our own day. And yet men of strong religious conviction, whose sincerity is unquestioned, have adorned the profession of arms. In the "History of Frederick the Great," the "Old Dessauer" who described *Ein feste Burg* as "God Almighty's Grenadier March," never went into action without offering a brief but fervent prayer. The Protector of the English Commonwealth was a man who strove to realize the Puritan idea of God's kingdom on the earth, Hedley Vicars, whose religion was of a conventional and unrobust type, was thoroughly sincere, while Henry Havelock was a Christian hero.

The great soldier on whom public attention has recently been bestowed, is a man of most fervid religious belief. The brilliant and invariably successful military service begun in the Crimea, and continued in China, the Soudan, and Africa is no more a distinct part of General Gordon's personal history than are his inseparable religious convictions. It may not be uninteresting to glance briefly at some of these while the heroic deeds of the soldier and rare dexterity of the diplomat have a fitting field for their exercise in the endeavour to disentangle the intricacies occasioned by the impotence of Egyptian rule, and the sinewless vacillation of English intervention.

The reality of the divine existence and presence is a fundamental article in General Gordon's creed. These and the other chief characteristics of his religious belief seem instinctive, rather than the final result of reasoning processes. His system of belief is not ransacked from the lumber-room of the past. He has spent no time in weaving meshes of metaphysical subtlety. The great problems of existence have been looked at with keen, clear eyes squarely in the face. What he has seen he believes, and his is not a nature to be perplexed with distracting doubts. In all things he seeks to obey God and follows the divine guidance. His Bible is his constant companion. But on occasion he adopts a course which it would be hard to describe otherwise than as superstitious. He says, "tossing up about difficult questions relieves me of much anxiety." More healthy and manly, however, is this maxim, which he generally follows: "In following the divine direction you have not to consider difficulties. Keep your eye on the cloud by day and the pillar by night, and never mind your steps. The direction is the main point."

In the main he obviously accepts the leading features of the Christian system, though he entertains but little respect for conventional dogma. Indeed, for conventionalism in every shape and form he has but scant tolerance. He looks at the Saviour's life and teachings not through the lenses of tradition, but with the common every-day gaze of the nineteenth century. The humanity, the tenderness, the all-embracing sympathy of Jesus have great attractions for him. No less clearly does he see through the meaningless conventionalism of the Christianity prevalent in churches and religious circles of our time. His censure of Christian Pharisees, like all else, is intense. The essence of Christianity, in Gordon's opinion, consists in submission to God's will. "There will be times," he says, "when a strain may come on me, but it is only for a time, and as the strain so will your strength be."

There is nothing of the sour ascetic nor the prim Puritan about General Gordon. With him there is no virtue in a long face, no merit in exclusive austerity. He lives in an atmosphere of radiant cheerfulness. "Why,"