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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE new rules called the *Cloture* excite great interest in the British Parliament, and may lead to the defeat of the Ministry.

AN International Conference in behalf of Sabbath observance is to be held at Pittsburgh, beginning in the First Presbyterian Church in that city on the 28th of March, and continuing three days.

THE American Board sent out last year forty new missionaries, including nine ordained men, two physicians, and thirteen unmarried ladies. Fifteen labourers of both sexes were sent to Africa alone.

THE "Christian Intelligencer" says that "the Church to-day does not need new theological truths any more than it needs a new multiplication table; but it does need an earnest, bold, loving declaration of the plain truths of the Word of God."

A PERIOD of increased material prosperity is confidently expected in Great Britain. There is considerable activity in the principal manufacturing industries; trade, both foreign and domestic, is improving; and the agricultural prospect is so far favourable.

THE Rev. Dr. McCosh, of Princeton College, tells a story of a Negro who prayed earnestly that he and his coloured brethren might be preserved from their upstettin' sins. "Brudder," said one of his friends, at the close of the meeting, "you ain't got de hang ob dat ar word. It's besettin', not upstettin'." "Brudder," replied the other, "if that's so, it's so; but I was prayin' de Lord to save us from de sin ob 'toxication, an' ef dat ain't an upstettin' sin I dunno what am."

PRINCIPAL RAINY, of Edinburgh, has a letter in the London "Times" on Church Disestablishment, in which he says that the question "has been practically tabled in all its aspects since 1874. At any rate, it has," he says, "been recognised as a practical and present question, and we have been summoned by the heads of the present Government to declare our minds upon it. When we do so, and when we exert ourselves to educe the convictions of our people on the subject, we do not feel that the course we take requires any special justification."

A LONG despatch, dated February 4th, has been received from Lieut. Danenhower, of the *Jeannette* expedition, from which it appears that at the time of writing DeLong and his party, if alive, must be in a certain circumscribed region between the rivers Lena and Oleusk, a barren region without inhabitants. Before entering upon it they were in an extremely destitute and suffering condition, so as to be unprepared for long surviving the privations of such a locality. It is stated that the general health of the crew during the twenty one months' drift was excellent. Divine service was regularly held.

IN Egypt there is a pseudo-legislative body called the Chamber of Notables. The Notables coerce the Khedive, and the army-chiefs coerce the Notables. This double process is now going on at Cairo. On the 3rd of this month the military commanders threatened the Chamber with the interference of the soldiery if the policy demanded by them of resistance to European intervention were not persisted in. Affairs in Egypt are evidently ripening fast for the direct interposition of English and French troops to prevent anarchy. There seems to be no vital self-governing force in the country.

THE Toronto Coffee House Association has got its philanthropic enterprise fairly started. The first house under its auspices was formally opened on the 16th inst. by the Lieutenant-Governor, in the presence of a large number of influential citizens. It is situated in a busy locality, and is said to be already attracting a large custom. "The fare offered," says

a daily paper, "is excellent, and what is next in importance, very cheap. A cup of tea, coffee or milk, can be had for three cents, a bowl of soup for five cents, and a plate of any kind of meat, any sort of a pie, or a couple of poached or scrambled eggs for five cents. At breakfast, oat or cornmeal porridge or milk toast is also sold for five cents. A dozen count oysters, cooked in any style, or raw, will be supplied for twenty cents. Other articles are given at equally reasonable figures." It is to be hoped that many such establishments will soon be in active operation in various parts of the city.

THOSE who tell us that the Christian religion has passed away from the hearts and lives of men are measuring other people's corn with their own bushel, and describing things not as they really are, but as they would have them to be. "Once in a while," says the "Sunday School Times," "we still hear the old croak that religion has lost its hold on the general public; that the Church and the pulpit are no longer a power in the world; and that religious reading has given place to the daily newspaper. To this venerable fiction there is no better answer than that given by the annual statistics of the number of books in the several classes of literature published in America and England. From the figures of the English book trade for last year, it appears that 'as usual, theology heads the list with 945 works; educational and classical publications are second, with 682,' etc. Publishers issue books to sell, and they are not accustomed to put forth, year by year, that which nobody buys; so that the regular publication and sale of religious books is a perfectly fair test of the general demand. That little coterie of readers which no longer cares for religious books, makes the ostrich's mistake of measuring the capacities of other heads by the situation of its own."

MR. J. A. ALLEN, writing to the Kingston "Daily News," compares the 'wretchedness' of Ireland with other European countries, notably France as described by Lady Verney, Miss Nightingale's sister. The result is to show that Ireland by no means stands "alone in the hideousness of her misery," that her complaint is one that is common to humanity wherever a low moral standard prevails, and that the true remedy is to be found in the reformation, not of the laws, but of the people. The following are Mr. Allen's concluding sentences: "When English statesmen are blackened and reviled for not making Ireland happy, I ask the censorer to point me to the government that has succeeded in making any people, among the millions of Europe, so. I have read a page or two of history as well as he, and I know the ground on which I stand. The doctrinaire may have his nostrum, and the orator his indignant cry, but it is a cry against (with all their faults) the widest-minded and most magnanimous government (of whichever party) the world has ever seen; yet the hard facts remain insoluble as ever. And if ever they be solved, it will not be by doctrinaires, or hot orators, or governments even, but by the people themselves—the people truly educated and enlightened as to their real interests and as to the means of securing them, and who have learned to postpone the passions of the present to their future higher good. But no people ever have been, or ever will be, legislated into prosperity and happiness. Into these, so far as attainable, they must legislate themselves. These may seem cold words, but are they true? It is pleasanter, I know, to preach and hear utopias."

IT would appear that the services of the Salvation Army in England are better attended than those of the various churches. At Gateshead on a single Sabbath the aggregate attendance was 11,036; in Hull, 11,394; in Sheffield, 4,064; in Nottingham, 4,245; in Bradford, 4,206; in Scarborough, 3,380; in Portsmouth, 3,000. The permanent results, however, are said to be very small. A correspondent of the "Nonconformist" points out the following among the defects of the organization: "There is no provision

for improvement and development in manner and matter as men's minds enlarge and their feelings change. The preaching of the captives, both in style and sense, is the same now as it was in the beginning. Those who heard their first addresses hear nothing different and nothing better now. They do not *edify*, they merely *assist*. They *turn men round*, but they do not move them on, and thus shows both the power and the weakness, the success and the failure, the usefulness and the imperfection of their organization. The Salvation Army, from the very nature of its operations, from the very nature of its purpose, can *only convert men*. It succeeds in doing this; but unless those converted are moved on into a higher school, in which they may be built up and established, mere conversion will in time make little or no practical moral improvement in them. Unless they move on to something better, they will turn back to something worse. It is impossible for them to remain long without moving one way or the other; and it is because no means are provided to move them forward that the thousands who profess conversion from the evangelistic services of Moody and Sankey and others, and from the services of the Salvation Army, relapse into sin and vanish again into the darkness of godlessness."

THE Brorkville "Recorder" publishes a letter written by the Rev. G. Barnfield, M. A., B. D., from Athens, while on his way to Palestine. The following extracts give his impressions of the Greeks and their chief city: "After a sail from Naples through the Straits of Messina, which I enjoyed much, we rounded the south of Greece and landed in this fair city of Athens, so famed in ancient story for philosophy and poetry, for learning and art. . . . Greece is small, and Athens, its principal city, contains only 50,000 inhabitants; but every step taken is on historic ground, where great men lived and great deeds were done. . . . And the Greek, though a lazy fellow, as most eastern people are, yet retains an inherent self-respect, a pride in the past glory of his nation, which prevents him, no matter how poor, from degenerating into the importunate beggar which Italy produces. The usual dress of the men is a white cotton garment, something like a Highland dress; the trousers are short and also white. They have long blue or dark stockings coming above the knee, boots of untanned leather, pointed like a canoe at the toes, turned up, and having a round tuft or ball on the point, and on the head they wear a red turban or fez, with a tassel hanging down at the side. The people live much on the street, many of them doing business under awnings; and those possessed of shops spend much of the time at the door, waiting for customers and news, now, as of old, the *news* being as welcome as the customer. There are three places here of special interest to me—Mars Hill, the Agora or market-place, and the Acropolis. On Mars Hill Paul delivered his grand address, which is recorded in the seventeenth chapter of Acts, and which is full of the noblest truth, and was so well adapted to find entrance to the minds of his audience. From the Agora on the north and west (to which the Areopagus slopes down) Paul came. He had been teaching the people who were doing business in the market-place, and he now ascended the Hill to declare to the philosophers the new doctrine. He taught that God is the Creator of all things, and He, the Lord of heaven and earth, dwelt not in temples made with hands. He also declared unto them Jesus and the Resurrection. And Paul must have cast his eyes as he spoke upon those heathen temples, filled with statues of their gods, and of their great men who had died, and who were now worshipped by them as gods. But of the philosophers who heard him, some mocked; others said, 'We will hear thee again on this matter,' waiting, as Felix did, for the more convenient season which never came. At present the American Presbyterian Church is doing good work in Greece. Dr. Kalophakes, a native clergyman, related by marriage to Mr. John Kyle, on Perth street, Brockville, is settled in Athens, where he is doing what he can for the Master."