

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

THE famous London preacher, Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, has withdrawn from the Baptist union. In announcing his decision to withdraw and replying to his critics, he says: "To pursue union at the expense of the truth is treason to Jesus. To tamper with His doctrine is to become traitors to Him. We have before us the wretched spectacle of professedly orthodox Christians publicly avowing union with those who deny the faith, call the fall of man a fable, and deny the personality of the Holy Ghost." Replying to the question why he does not start a new denomination, he says that it is a question for which he has no liking; that there are enough denominations already, and that if another were formed the thieves and robbers who have entered the other gardens walled around would enter it also, so nothing would be gained. Baptists generally regret Mr. Spurgeon's decision, and are urging him to reconsider it.

EMIN PASHA, like his master, the late GENERAL GORDON, refuses to leave his loyal African subjects to the wild Arab slavers. He tells Stanley that all he asks is, that England will open up a safe road to them from the sea coast for commerce.

GEN. BAKER estimates England's military strength as follows: Active military service, 151,867; 1st class army reserve, 52,000; 2nd class army reserve, 5,300; militia, 141,438; in India, 71,691. Total, 422,206. After deductions, Gen. Baker arrives at a total of 123,030 men for a field army, including India and the Colonial garrisons.

FRANCE has once more agreed to cease sending her criminals to the New Hebrides, and to withdraw her troops from thence. Will she stand to this?

THE ALLIANCE of Italy, Germany, and Austria has been renewed for five years, Italy reserving the right to maintain absolute neutrality in the event of a Franco German war.

Premier Crispi and Prince Bismarck in their recent interview discussed the Suez Canal question, and agreed that as England and Italy were in accord on the subject the three powers should act uniformly in connection with the canal.

Despatches also state that Prince Bismarck has effected this alliance preliminary to the formation of a central European zollverein, which will include Germany, Austria, Italy, Servia and Roumania, and place an insurmount-

able obstacle in the path of Russian encroachments upon Constantinople. The *Cologne Gazette* says that a central European zollverein would render Germany entirely independent of Russian timber, corn and cattle, and would realize the object which has long been the ideal of many eminent political economists and many practical statesmen.

RUSSIAN influence seems to be losing ground in Europe; while Bulgaria and her new King Ferdinand are gaining. France too and her favourite Gen. Boulanger are in trouble over the Caffarel scandal and other offences.

THE grog bill for the United Kingdom last year was £123,268,000, equal to the total spent in bread, butter, and cheese; more than the rental of all houses; nearly twice the rental of all farms; and thirty millions more than the entire expenditure of the government. One month's drink bill equalled that of all the national charities and schools; £17 was the average cost to each family, or nearly £4 to each individual. Out of £12,000 paid by a single ship-building firm every week, £4,000 was spent in drink. The grain destroyed as food in making spirits and beer amounted to 74,500,000 bushels, which, if made into 4lb. loaves, would cover a road 10 yards wide and 1,900 miles long—enough to reach from London to Moscow, with 400 miles to spare, or to stretch to Rome and back to London. Above one thousand millions of gallons of beer, wine, and spirits were consumed in the year, and about 600 millions of dollars were spent upon that consumption.

THE American board of commissioners for foreign missions held a long debate on the doctrine of probation after death. The efforts of its advocates to secure a modification of the methods of the board so that candidates for mission fields would be accepted even though holding the doctrine, failed by a vote of 88 to 51.

THERE are 150 female physicians in New York, while more than double the number are to be found in Brooklyn and other adjacent cities. Among those in New York city it is said there are quite a number who have incomes of \$10,000; two or three make yearly sums ranging from \$15,000 to \$20,000, and one has averaged for the last four years a steady income of \$25,000.

THE political machine in the United States is extortionate as well as tyrannical. It requires a rich man to be a candidate for office in the great cities. If he is ever so able and patriotic, if he cannot pay over to the machine the required amount of money, he is forthwith