

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. 9.

TORONTO, FRIDAY, JANUARY 28th, 1881.

No. 4.

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

It is said that 30,000 out of 40,000 townships in France are open to evangelical teaching. A Catholic priest recently said that he could not go anywhere in France without seeing Bibles and Protestant tracts.

Two Indian fakirs at Delhi, India, have been converted, and now go about among the people preaching Christ. They wear the yellow garment of their order, and like all their class, are held in great respect by the natives.

A MEETING under the auspices of the National Temperance League was held at the Mansion House, London, Eng., on Tuesday—the Lord Mayor presiding—for the purpose of promoting temperance in the army and navy. It was reported that the work of temperance was making good progress in both services. There were about 30,000 total abstainers in the army, and 7,000 in the navy.

THE revised version of the English New Testament is promised in England for February next. At the same time Messrs. Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co., will publish a "Companion to the Revised Version of the English New Testament," prepared by Rev. Alexander Roberts, D.D., Professor of Humanity at St. Andrew's, giving the reasons for the changes made in the Authorized Version.

IN the Lower House of the Prussian Diet Herr Windhorst, leader of the Catholic party, supported by all the members of the Centre and the Polish deputies, introduced a resolution declaring that the administration of the sacraments and the celebration of the mass are not subject to the penal clauses of the laws of 1873, '74 and '75. An amendment to the resolution is being prepared, proposing that malcontent clergymen shall only be exempt from liability to prosecution for the exercise of the above function when not performed in churches and chapels, but privately. "Germania" warns the adversaries of the Church of the political consequences of the rejection of the resolution.

AS regards France, the Vatican has decided to act on the advice Father Curci gives to the Pope and the Cardinals. Notwithstanding the dispersion of the Jesuit and other unauthorized corporations by the French Government, the Vatican has intimated that it is willing to reestablish friendly relations with France—doubtless hoping by this policy of conciliation to stay the hands of "the persecutors of the Church." The French Ambassador at Rome lately had an interview with the Pontifical Secretary of State, and a telegram was afterwards despatched to the Papal Nuncio at Paris instructing him to resume friendly intercourse with the Government of M. Grevy.

STATISTICS of the leading religious denominations in Scotland. The Established Church: 16 Synods, 84 Presbyteries, 1,519 churches and preaching places, 1,640 ministers and licentiates; total number of communicants, according to last Parliamentary returns, 515,786; Sabbath school teachers, 16,738; scholars, 173,197; schools, 1,899. The Free Church: 14 Synods, 73 Presbyteries, 1,005 congregations, 1,060 ministers, 230,000 communicants; foreign missionary income, £75,032. The United Presbyterian Church: 30 Presbyteries, and 550 congregations in Scotland and Ireland, 584 ministers, 173,000 communicants. Foreign missionary income, £32,356; raised for church purposes, £336,738.

A CONTEMPORARY on the other side of the line makes the following remarks on the supposed obligations lying upon professing Christians to patronize the theatre in order to purify it. They are quite as applicable to our latitude as farther south: "The clerical apologists for the theatre say that Christians should patronize it, that thereby it may be purified.

But if current reports are correct, a large number of church members do patronize the theatres. Has it been improved by their presence? Are not licentious plays still produced, and do not licentious actors and actresses represent the loose characters in these plays? The 'spiritual' does not grow by reason of contact with that which is earthly and sensual. It can overcome the world and influence it only by keeping itself 'unsponsored' from its taint."

AN exchange says that "the policy of the new papal Secretary of State, Cardinal Jacobini, is indicated by a remark, if truthfully attributed to him, that it belongs to the Church alone to determine the limits which separate it from the State." In other words, after the Church defines its own province, the State may claim what the Church leaves." All very true, but there is no new departure implied in the statement even though the Cardinal had actually made it. Such has been the position and policy of the papacy all along, and such will be its position and policy till it ceases to be. Yes, and some other Churches not at all claiming to be infallible, have occupied, and possibly are now occupying the same position and laying claim to the same right of settling authoritatively the range of their special jurisdiction.

THERE is considerable opposition to the adoption of the proposed new hymnal for the Free Church of Scotland. The book contains 376 hymns, including thirteen paraphrases, ten metrical doxologies, and forty-nine hymns for the young; also two ancient hymns and thirty-two Scripture sentences and prose doxologies. By order of the last General Assembly, it was sent down to the Presbyteries for suggestions and approval. In the Presbytery of Edinburgh it has been very fully considered, Dr. Begg, Sir Henry Moncreiff, and others taking ground in opposition to acceptance of it. There were two motions before the Presbytery after the hymns had been examined and passed upon—one by Mr. Balfour, setting forth that, as the question as to the use of "human hymns" in public worship had never been sent down to Presbyteries for their decision under the Barrier Act, and as the "inspired psalter" had provided material for praise in the church for every possible condition in which it could be placed, they should decline to enter upon the discussion of the proposed new hymn book. Principal Rainy moved that no cause had been shewn for such a motion, which was seconded by Dr. Horatius Bonar, who pointed out that the historical argument was against those who objected to hymns. The amendment of Dr. Rainy was passed by a vote of thirty-three to eight, several members declining to vote.

IN response to the Archbishop of Canterbury's invitation to those dissatisfied with the present government of the Church of England to state what changes they desire, the following is given as the list of wants of the High Church men: "1. We want the immediate repeal of the Public Worship Regulation Act, the dismissal of Lord Penzance, and the legal declaration that all his proceedings are void in law. 2. We want the restoration of the Reformation Court of Delegates, the abolition of Privy Council interference with the Church, save as to temporalities, and the formal annulment of its monstrous miscarriages of justice and policy judgments in Church matters. 3. We want the restoration of the canonical and constitutional rights of the presbyters of the Church of England, so that neither their freeholds nor their professional conduct may be damaged by class legislation in which they have had no representation as a separate order of the spirituality. 4. We want the abolition of the autocratic power of bishops, substituting 'the Bishops in Synod' of the Early Church for the State-made Bishop alone, or in secret with his private chaplain. 5. We want the removal from the House of Lords of all stipendiary bishops, and the retention therein of those only who hold and sit in right of baronies and who are entitled to sit immediately on being consecrated, that is, Canterbury, York, London, Durham, and Winchester, thus rendering it impossible for these

five in future to pretend to represent the other bishops and the whole clergy." The agitation for disendowing and disestablishing the Church of England has received a mighty impetus from the imprisonment of Mr. Dale and his associates. Many of the Anglican clergy are now strongly in favour of such a step.

IN England and Wales there are at the present time 170 different religious sects, among the most recent being the Theistic Church and the Salvation Army. These religious bodies together have 45,000 places of worship, fully one-half of which number have been certified and recorded as such by the Registrar-General. The total accommodation provided in places of meeting for religious worship is between fourteen and fifteen millions of sittings. The stated ministers of religion number 36,000, of whom about 23,000 are clergymen of the Church of England. In addition, there are at the lowest computation twice that number of local and lay preachers, Scripture readers, etc., 36,000 of whom belong to the various branches of British Methodism alone. The officials in the various churches and chapels number 160,000. There are about three million of communicants. The average attendance at places of worship on the Sabbath in England and Wales is about two million of persons. Every Sabbath there are preached no fewer than 80,000 sermons, making a total for each year of upwards of four millions of sermons. It is estimated that about three and a half millions of young persons are at the present time attending Sabbath schools in that country, and that fully 400,000 teachers are voluntarily engaged in this work. Independently of agencies for the moral and spiritual improvement of the people, such as evangelists, Scripture readers, town missionaries, Bible women, tract distributors, etc., there is a stated minister for every 700 persons, comprising 140 families; a place of worship for each 500 individuals, or every 100 families; and a communicant for about every eight of the population. The annual cost of the various efforts for the social, moral, and religious reform, is roundly estimated at £16,000,000.

THE present tendencies in Spain are rather toward increasing restrictions upon religious freedom than the reverse. In fact, ever since Alphonso came to the throne, the liberty of non-Catholics has been undergoing a process of continually severer restriction. A new penal code is being drafted, and by it the public worship of Dissenters is declared to be a crime. The country is being overrun with religious orders in the forefront of whom are the Jesuits, and these are preaching intolerance to all out of the Church with characteristic vehemence. No less than three lawsuits are in progress against Protestant clergymen, all instituted by Government. One clergyman is accused of having buried a Protestant in the general cemetery, and on his pleading the order of the mayor, that functionary has also been accused. Another had, according to law, held a Protestant service with not more than twenty persons, but, on leaving the house he found a number of people on the threshold, which he crossed, and spoke to several of them but did not deliver an address or hold a service. For this he has been condemned by the Court of Appeal to two months' imprisonment. This sentence is not likely to be quashed on appeal, for the judge in the upper court has declared so much as that anyone who does not so much as take off his hat when a Roman Catholic funeral passes is liable to imprisonment. It is scarcely possible, in many cases, for a Protestant or non-Catholic to get buried at all. Sometimes the burial has to be made in the yard which the grave-digger keeps for his pigs, and in some cases the places assigned as Protestant burying grounds have been profaned in every possible way, by bodies being dragged out of their graves and dead dogs and cats be thrown over the whole place, and for all this the authorities will grant no redress. The fact is, wherever Roman Catholics have power, they are to-day as offensively intolerant as they have ever been, all the protests to the contrary notwithstanding.