

## NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THERE are fearful famines in Mesopotamia and Kurdistan.

A ROME despatch states that the College of the Propaganda will give 7,000 francs to the relief of the Irish distress.

THE wealthiest denomination in New York State is the Presbyterian, numbering 128,228 communicants, 1,042 ministers.

THE Woman's Board of Missions held its annual meeting in Springfield, Mass., on the 14th and 15th ult. It was reported that there are now in connection with this Board 20 branches, 865 auxiliary societies, and 560 mission circles for children. The treasurer reported the receipts of the year at \$73,793. This Board is doing a good work in aiding to send the Gospel to heathen lands.

REV. JOHANN HODJA, a priest in charge of the Bohemian Catholic Church of St. Wenceslaus, Baltimore, has forwarded his resignation to Archbishop Gibbons. This church was erected a few years ago for the special use of Bohemians, and at the request of the Archbishop, Father Hodja came from Bohemia to minister to it some eight months ago. He has united with the Lutheran Church and is said to be a ripe scholar and an able theologian.

THE unusually severe weather is causing great distress throughout Italy. A correspondent writes: "The Arno is frost-bound, the Venetian lagoons are frozen, nearly all work is suspended, and the working population is clamouring for work or bread with more or less violence. In some parts the distress is truly appalling, the Italians having no sort of social organization for the relief of distress. There is no poor law; nothing is guaranteed to the poor save the parish doctor—not even medicine. The charitable institutions, which are enormously wealthy, are badly administered.

THERE is a colony of Christian Kaffirs at Middleburg, in the Transvaal, the result of twenty years' labour by a Lutheran missionary. A handsome brick church, built by Kaffir hands, affords accommodation for 1,500 worshippers, and rows of brick-built workshops resound with the noise of industrial pursuits. Waggon, furniture, and wood and iron work are turned out in abundance. Schools have been provided for the children, and the mission owns 30,000 acres of good land, once prairie wilderness, but now divided into small farms, and worked under the supervision of the missionaries.

AT the first meeting of the Western Committee of the National Bible Society of Scotland for the year, held in Glasgow, it was reported that the total income for 1879 had been £25,953, almost identically the amount received in the previous year; a deficiency in ordinary revenue having been made up by the receipt of a large legacy. The expenditure on foreign work had been upwards of £15,000. The issues had been 409,107 copies or parts of Scripture. Seven new auxiliaries had been formed in 1879—the total number being now nearly 300, and their contribution close on £8,000. In China, the issues had been 19,184; in Japan, 8,735; in Spain, 39,774.

AMERICAN Protestants have furnished the Turkish empire four excellent colleges. Robert College at Constantinople, the Syrian College at Beyrout, the Central Turkey College at Aintab, and the American College at Harpoot, two of which are independent of missionary control, but all of which co-operate with the missions and receive missionary co-operation. During ten years fifty-nine students have been graduated from the college at Beyrout, of whom four are engaged at the college, ten are practising medicine where good doctors are needed, two are druggists,

eleven are studying medicine, and eighteen are missionary teachers, preachers, translators, etc. Forty-six have been graduated from the medical department, and five from the pharmaceutical department, and are helping to build up the reputation of the college in distant parts of the empire.

A NEW denomination has been added to the already long list. "The Methodist Church" has come into existence in Philadelphia. It seems to be a break-off from the American Methodist Episcopal body, whose doctrines it adheres to. Its distinctive points are, one order in the ministry—differing in this from the Methodist Episcopal, which has two, the diaconate and eldership and practically a third, the episcopate—and the eligibility of women to the ministry. We had almost come to the conclusion that the world would see no more new sects; but it seems that there are sufficient reasons for further divisions. At least, so some people think. Well, it may be, that there will be, and that there must needs be, a breaking up of the old order of things, before there can be much of a fusion of the conglomerate ecclesiastical elements in the Christian world.

THE Presbyterians in England are discussing the subject of "lapsed communicants." A letter addressed to the "Messenger" says: "Year after year the report of the Synod's Committee on statistics records the fact that more than two thousand of our church-members fall out of communion with us, and are simply lost sight of. Some doubtless connect themselves with other churches without obtaining formal disjunction from us, but that does not excuse our neglect of these persons, or our failure to account for them, and it is to be feared that these are the smaller number of our 'lapsed' communicants. In any case they are all lost to us, and many of them are unquestionably lost to religion, too, when they pass from our spiritual oversight. It is an alarming confession for a Church to make, which numbers only some fifty thousand members, that there is an annual leakage of a twenty-fifth part of the whole body."

WE take the following from the "Protestant Standard": "The New Testament in the original has been ordered by the Department of Education to be used as a reading book in the public schools of Greece. This is a new and interesting phase of things. There are in the kingdom 1,300 schools of the primary grade with about 90,000 scholars. The 'Record' of the American Bible Society, which has received this important intelligence, gladly remarks: 'It makes the heart swell with emotion to think of schoolboys at Athens reading Paul's sermon on Mars Hill, and of Corinthian lads growing wise over the apostle's letters to the church at Corinth.' And it makes our heart swell with emotion to learn that the blessed Word of God is so honoured in Greece as to be placed in the schools and used as a text book. But here in America, the vaunted 'land of Bibles and of Bible privileges' the Holy Scriptures must be kicked out in a weak and vain attempt to conciliate Roman Catholics. May God forgive the people of this country their shameful folly!"

IT seems very ridiculous in the organs of the Roman Catholic Church to cry so much for liberty to their side when they will give none wherever they have power. This is well put in the following extract: "Her policy now is against liberty in all countries where she is dominant, and she favours it only in those countries where she cannot impose herself by force. She was the friend of Catholic emancipation in England; but where has she been the friend of Protestant emancipation in Spain? She has asked for liberty of public worship at Geneva, but she has never granted it in Rome. The Church has given her hearty support to every tyranny that has been established in Europe in the present generation on the single condition that the tyrant should be a Roman Catholic, and she has combated every movement towards political emancipation. To the friends of political liberty the Church of Rome—whatever may be the beauty of

holliness to which many of her sons and daughters have attained—is at once the most redoubtable and most insidious of their foes."

THE "Aurora," which, the London "Times" correspondent declares, draws its inspiration in the main from the supreme Pontiff himself, after referring to the principles advocated by England on the Continent, virtually demands an independent Legislature for Ireland. The "Voce Della Verita" publishes simultaneously an article on the same subject, and in the same strain. There is no mistaking the moral of the Vatican policy. As put by the correspondent of the "Times," it is that Leo XIII. calculates that in an Irish Parliament a Catholic vote would largely predominate, and hand over to the Church that which she most desires—absolute control of educational matters. In the mind of the ruling spirits of the Vatican this may be the predominant idea. It is doubtful however, in practice, if a Roman Catholic Legislature would do much more for Ireland in this direction than a Protestant Government and a Protestant Legislature have already done. The Romish hierarchy like education much, but they like money and power more, and, judging from the example presented in some Roman Catholic countries, they have less hope of both from Roman Catholics than from Protestants—if a Romish Legislature in Ireland would follow the example of Romish Legislatures elsewhere. One thing, however, is certain, that Papal intervention has seldom been without some injurious effect on the fortunes of Ireland. From the first Pope that sold it to England to the last that received Peter's pence, the main interest of the Vatican in Ireland has been the sum that it could make out of it, or the part it could make Ireland play in the great scheme of Papal aggrandisement.

THE Washington correspondent of the "Christian Union" writes: "The ladies would generally vote for Mrs. Hayes for a second term. It is safe to say that no lady in the present generation has produced a more favourable impression by the grace and simplicity of her manners in presiding at the White House than has she. It is worth a journey to Washington to see so simple and unconventional a lady at the very head of the best American society. Her portraits do her scant justice. Her face is wonderfully mobile; it constantly expresses her own genuine enjoyment in the enjoyment of her guests. Her laugh is contagious; and it would be as impossible for a photograph or even a portrait to picture the life that sparkles in her face as for a picture to portray the sunshine that dances on the dimpled surface of a lake which ever and anon breaks out into a quiet rippled laughter. Her social victory is complete, and has been won after a hard battle. The story has been told before, but it is worth retelling. She came to Washington determined not to offer wine to her guests; this was the determination of a lifetime, and she would rot and could not abandon it. To give a State dinner without wine was declared to be impossible; all Washington was opposed to her; I believe it even became a Cabinet question. For a year she was a target for the sort of arrows which it is so hard for any woman to bear unflinchingly. But she bore it all; by her patient persistence and her tact carried the day; and conquered Mrs. Grundy in her own field. She never has offered wine, Washington follows her lead; and I doubt whether any State capital, not excluding the capital of Maine, is a more thoroughly temperance city than Washington to-day. The exclusion of wines and liquors from the Capitol dates from the days of Senator Wilson, but I judge that public sentiment has grown stronger, and that the exclusion is more complete now than ever before. As you go to Capitol Hill along Pennsylvania Avenue you come to a liquor shop with a sign extending out over the sidewalk. On it are the words: 'The Last Chance.' On the reverse side, seen as you come back from the Capitol, are the words: 'The First Chance.' Possibly a man who understands the appropriate signals can find a chance for a drink at the House or Senate restaurant; but nothing stronger than lager is drunk publicly."