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Notes of the Week.

WE understand, says the *London Christian World*, that Dr. Pierson, of America, has been invited to conduct the services at the Metropolitan Tabernacle during three months commencing with October. It will be remembered that the Doctor's occasional ministry, when in England some two years ago, was much appreciated. We believe there is every probability of the invitation being accepted.

SEVERAL of the Presbyteries have taken action with reference to Union Theological Seminary. The Huron Presbytery recommends its theological students not to attend Union Seminary. The Presbytery of Zanesville advises all candidates under its care to pursue their theological studies in other theological institutions where destructive biblical criticism is not taught. The Iowa City Presbytery gives similar advice to its theological students.

THE *British Weekly* says: Sunday morning's service in the Metropolitan Tabernacle was conducted by the Rev. Dr. J. Monro Gibson, Moderator of the English Presbyterian Church Synod, who discoursed to a large audience from the familiar text in 2 Cor. v. 17: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." Dr. Monro Gibson, it is worth noting, is the sixth Presbyterian minister who has occupied the Tabernacle platform during the present protracted sickness of the pastor.

A writer in the *Monthly Tidings* says that the late Dr. Owen Thomas, when a youth, committed to memory almost the whole of the Scriptures. He was a great lover of books, and when in lodgings in London his library was so large that it is said the servant girl of the family thought he was engaged in the book trade, and one day she commiserated him greatly to a friend, saying: "This poor fellow is always bringing books in, but I never see any customers coming to buy." It is recorded that Charles Dickens one day stood in amazement as he heard him preaching at Bangor at an association to a crowd of 15,000 people, keeping his hearers spell-bound.

THE lady managers of the World's Fair have, by a vote of fifty-six to thirty-six, declared in favour of closing the gates of the Exposition on Sunday. This will have an undoubted influence on the Board of Commissioners when the question comes before them for final decision. Accounts from Chicago all agree that a profound impression has been made upon the minds of the Commissioners by the recent hearing, and by the expressions of the Christian public which have been pouring in upon them. The editor of the *Herald and Presbyter*, who has been on the ground and has had an opportunity of making up an intelligent opinion, is satisfied that the Commissioners are inclined to close the gates.

GENERAL BOULANGER, warrior and political adventurer, has followed the example of President Balmaceda by committing suicide. The brave General, as he was sometimes designated, has made a sad ending of a chequered career. Ambition and vanity seem to have been his impelling motives in the changeful life he led. Circumstances gave him for a time a degree of prominence utterly disproportionate either to his capabilities or his merits. For a brief period he was really a disturbing element in

France. The imputations that he was used chiefly by the reactionary monarchical and imperial factions to overturn the Republic have been justified by events, and the poor, broken-down exile had not the fortitude to bear up against the pressure of adversity. His shattered dreams, ending in blank despair, enforce anew the lesson that ambition and vanity without principle lead to lamentable failure.

MISS GOLDING, the nun whose escape from a convent in France is still occupying public attention, says she never took the perpetual vow, but merely renewed her vow from time to time, thereby preserving her liberty and her money. The lady superior of the convent has stated her defence, which is very lame, leaving Miss Golding's story and that of her London solicitor substantially uncontradicted. The Rev. W. Lancelot Holland, of St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Edinburgh, writing of Miss Golding's case, says that many of the Roman Catholic laity are not aware of the true character of convent life. Even during a nun's novitiate she is taught the fearful consequences to her soul of abandoning the vocation. Drugs of the most noxious character are administered, and he mentions a case of a peer's daughter who, though quite sane, narrowly escaped being sent from a convent to an asylum because she wanted freedom.

RECENT reports still speak of Mr. Spurgeon's improvement in health. He has been able to drive out on several occasions and as will be seen from the following letter, which he wrote to his congregation, that he is hopeful of recovery: Dear Friends,—I cannot write much, but I cannot withhold my heart and pen from saying, "O bless the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together." This week has, by its fine weather, set me free from a three months' captivity. Those believers of all denominations who so lovingly prayed for me will now help me to praise the Lord. Verily, the loving God heareth prayer. I fear my doctors would have a mournful tale to tell of my disease, and from inward consciousness I must agree with them; but I feel better, and I get into the open air, and therefore I hope my face is turned toward recovery. Reading, writing, thinking, etc., are not yet easy to me. I am forced to vegetate. I fear it will be long before I can be at my beloved work. I send my hearty love to you all, and my humble gratitude to that great army of praying people who have been heard of the Lord in their cries for the prolongation of my life. May we believe more, pray more, and therefore receive more. Yours, in bonds of true affection, C. H. SPURGEON.

THERE has been considerable question, says the *New York Independent*, as to how much confidence could be placed in the announcement that henceforth polygamy was to be discouraged in the Mormon Church. We have ourselves believed that however insincere the announcement might be, yet it must be effective. It seems to us as if this one peculiar and hateful doctrine of the Latter Day Church, that which has put it into conflict with public morality and with public law, was confessedly doomed, that Mormonism was beaten and on the run, that nothing could save its pet institution. We have been charged by many with taking too rosy a view of the subject, but have seen no reason to question the correctness of our view. The National Utah Commission has just been holding its annual meeting in Chicago, and it is stated authoritatively that this year's report will be of particular interest to those who have studied the Mormon problem. The Commission will report to the President that polygamy is gradually dying out in the Territory, and that the law has done far more toward stamping out polygamous practices than the Commission imagined could be done when it was enacted. The Mormons are beginning to recognize that in supporting polygamy they are waging war not only with the Gentiles of Utah but with the unanimous sentiment of the entire population of the United States.

CONSIDERABLE anxiety, says the *Belfast Witness*, was felt in Presbyterian circles in that city for some days as to the fate of Dr. Greig, the General

Assembly's medical missionary in Newchwang, China. A Reuter telegram announced the assassination of a Rev. Dr. Greig, a missionary, and it was naturally feared that it referred to the fine, young Scotchman sent out a little more than two years ago. Inquiries were instituted at the Foreign Office, and the Rev. George MacFarland, the secretary of the missions, received a telegram giving assurance that our Dr. Greig was alive, but though he escaped with his life, he appears to have been subjected to gross violence, and was kept in imprisonment for three days. Unless this maltreatment took place before the date of the Emperor's decree, announced last week, it would go to show that even he was unable to control the violent spirit that had been let loose upon the country. The latest report is that a joint naval demonstration has been threatened by the foreign powers, and certainly it is not a moment too soon for action, to say nothing of threats. Some of the governors as well as the people have given themselves over to the most ruthless and ruffianly violence towards foreigners and it will require demonstrations of a decided nature to make the ignorant and fanatical people understand that foreigners must be protected. The interests of commerce and civilization, to say nothing of higher interests, demand that a lesson should be taught and taught with effect. Life and liberty must be made safe if China is to maintain relations with European powers and enjoy the advantages which this is calculated to ensure. Christian missions were making great progress, though they had only permeated limited districts, and the Emperor himself bore testimony to the blessings and benefits they were bringing in their train.

THE *New York Independent* says: Professor Briggs has returned to his duties in Union Theological Seminary, notwithstanding the refusal of the Presbyterian General Assembly to express its approval of his appointment. Of course we are not surprised that he should do this, since the directors of the Seminary voted, almost immediately after the General Assembly by an overwhelming majority had exercised its right of veto, to disregard the General Assembly's wishes, and stand by the professor. The directors being satisfied and the faculty warmly espousing his cause he had no reason, except that of loyalty, for suspending his professorial work. And yet we cannot help thinking his case would have been much stronger if, in obedience to the expression of the chief ecclesiastical court, he had refrained from meeting his classes in the seminary, at least until the Assembly's committee could have conference with the directors and pending the actual progress of his trial before the New York Presbytery. It would have placed him in a far better position in the regard of judicial minds. As it is he is in an attitude of defiance toward the highest and most representative body of his Church—the body that speaks authoritatively for the Church. At the same time he practically suspends his work in the Seminary in order to be able to attend his trial in the Presbytery. Another professor is to take his classes while he is busy defending himself. If he is confident, as he is reported to be, that his doctrinal views are such as the Church must and will approve or at least tolerate ultimately, he would have lost nothing but gained much, if in a spirit of loyal submission he had recognized the voice of his Church and waited patiently for his vindication. But he has not chosen to do this. He has chosen to retain the chair which the General Assembly has emphatically refused him permission to occupy. He must, therefore, expect that the Church will regard him not simply as an offender but as a defiant offender. Prof. Marvin R. Vincent delivered the opening address at the Seminary last week, and chose a topic best suited to an expression of sympathy and accord with the particular views of Dr. Briggs, which the Church regards with concern and alarm. With his assertion that "Union Seminary holds by the Bible" no one will care to take issue. That is to be presumed of a Christian theological school which claims to be loyal to the Westminster Standards. But there is room to question whether some of the professors of the Seminary are wise in their line of defence of the Bible.