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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

A REPORT presented to the Buffalo General Assembly showed that in eleven States, old and new, eastern and western, there are 749 vacant churches, but only 301 ministers without charge, proving that there is not an oversupply of ministers.

THE Moderator of the Synod of the Scottish United Presbyterian Church congratulated the Synod on the fact "that we have full confidence in the Principal and Professors of our theological college in their ability and willingness 'to hold the fort' against all assailants."

PROFESSOR ROBERTSON SMITH has intimated that he will on no consideration betake himself to a civil court for protection against the decision of the Assembly which deprives him of his status as a Professor, and also that he will never consent to eat the bread of a Church which refuses to allow him to render it the corresponding service.

DR. CREVAUX gave recently an interesting account at the Sorbonne, Paris, of his travels in Equatorial America. He discovered a river which he has christened *Lesseps*. He and his companions were frequently pursued by caymans, the American alligators, and often narrowly escaped. His journey lasted a year, and after many perils he gained Venezuela, and embarked for France.

THE "Catholic Mirror" announces to its readers the pleasant intelligence that on Trinity Sunday, June 12th, all Catholics "who should have approached the sacraments of penance and the eucharist" during paschal time but have failed to do so, will be excommunicated from the Church, and "their souls will be dead." This sounds like the days of the Duke of Alva, in the Spanish campaigns against the Prince of Orange.

ACCORDING to the recent census the population of London is 3,814,571. In 1861 there were in London 359,421 dwelling houses, and 2,803,034 inhabitants. In the next ten years the number of houses and of the inhabitants had increased about twenty per cent. In April, 1871, the time of taking the census, there were found to be in London 417,348 dwelling houses and 3,251,804 inhabitants. The rate of increase during the past ten years has not been less than during the preceding decade.

THE late millionaire, Mr. Charles McAllister, of Philadelphia, bequeathed \$10,000 toward founding a Presbyterian church in Townsdales, N.J., as soon as a "respectable number" of communicants could be got together to form a church. Seventeen persons constituted themselves a church and claimed the money. The executors refused to pay it, alleging that seventeen was not a "respectable number." The courts have just decided that it is, and have ordered the executors to pay.

THE "Tablet," the English Roman Catholic organ, while expressing thankfulness for the good work done for Rome by the Ritualists, adds significantly: "But while, as we thus frankly own, our sympathies are with them, we as frankly confess our judgment is against them. It seems to us contrary to common sense to maintain that they have any just cause of complaint if the law is invoked to prevent them from revolutionizing the services of the Protestant Church of this country, as by law established."

THE number who voted on Principal Rainy's motion in the Scottish Free Church Assembly in reference to setting aside Professor Robertson Smith was 668 out of a total of 736. This gave sixty-eight absentees, and curiously enough these were equally divided, thirty-four ministers and as many elders. Some of the Synods did not shew a single absentee. The Synods of Ross and Galloway, the most remote in different directions from the place of meeting, were in

this position. The Synod of Moray had only one absentee, as had the Synod of Glenelg. Aberdeen had four, while Glasgow and Ayr had sixteen, and Lothian and Tweeddale seven.

THE Belfast Presbytery has followed the example of the Belfast Methodist District Meeting, in expressing its indignation at the action of the three Belfast magistrates, who recently found certain Methodist ministers guilty of "indecent behaviour," because of their singing hymns in the streets. The Presbytery is determined to take steps to have the liberty of open-air preaching vindicated. Two other ministers of the Methodist Church in Belfast have been summoned for similar "indecent" behaviour, although it has been their practice for years to conduct open-air services in the Protestant districts of Belfast without the slightest molestation or disturbance.

MR. ANDREW S. SYMINGTON recently quoted the following words of Carlyle on the Darwinian theory: "The short, simple, but sublime account of creation given in the first chapter of Genesis is in advance of all theories, for it is God's truth, and, as such, the only key to the mystery. It ought to satisfy the savans, who in any case would never find out any other, although they might dream about it." Then alluding to the development hypothesis, waxing warm, and at the same time bringing his hand down on the table with a thump like the sledge-hammer of Thor, he emphatically added: "I have no patience whatever with these gorilla damnifications of humanity!"

FROM the report of Dr. Wilson it appears that the Sustentation Fund of the Free Church of Scotland keeps up remarkably well. The sum reached this year is £171,976, being £256 above the grand total of last year. The Convener, however, frankly acknowledged that he had been disappointed. He reckoned on being able to declare an equal dividend of £300, but this had not been attained. He calculated, that an average of 4½d. a week from each member would give an income of £300,000, and surely, he said, that rate of contribution might be reached without much difficulty. Everything considered, however, the sum actually contributed was very encouraging. The whole amount raised for all purposes during the year was £590,333, very nearly three millions of dollars.

DISTRESSING news has been received from New Guinea of the massacre by natives of a number of missionaries connected with the staff of the London Missionary Society. The intelligence of the outrages was forwarded to Melbourne by the Rev. Mr. Beswick, who, with others, made a miraculous escape in the attack on the band of the messengers of peace. For the outrage there was not the slightest provocation, and yet it was of the most cold-blooded character. The persons killed were twelve in number, consisting of four members of the London Missionary Society's corps of agents, the wives of two of the number, four children, and two servants. An attempt was also made to massacre four native youths who accompanied the missionary party, but they, happily escaped by swimming. The despatches forwarded to this country further state that, dreading a renewal of the attacks, the missionaries have deserted the station at Kato to Port Moresby.

THE N.Y. "Evening Post" says that a prominent clergyman of Washington has decided, if possible, to obtain a discussion with Colonel Ingersoll. The clergyman, as reported in the "Post," says: "My plan is to maintain the discussion in a written argument. Colonel Ingersoll to have two weeks to prepare his answer, and the same time to be allowed to me for a rejoinder, the argument to go on until both parties are satisfied to present their views, printed side by side, in a pamphlet. Both sides equally to bear the expenses attending the publication. Mutual friends can arrange all the preliminaries. If Colonel Ingersoll is a man of honour, he should accept the discussion or cease his bitter attacks on ministers of the Gospel." The "Post" does not give the minister's

name, but whoever he is, he need not bother. Colonel Ingersoll is much too astute a man, and has too wholesome an idea of his own weakness to commit himself to any such discussion. It would be entirely out of his line. He has neither the faculty nor the scholarship for any controversy of the kind, and he knows it. He likes to play the buffoon and to gather in the quarters, but to engage in any serious written discussion on the points at issue is quite another story. That would expose far too rudely the exceeding nakedness of his land. It would force the Colonel to be serious and to argue, and of either of those processes he knows nothing—at least, so far, his public appearances would indicate that such is the fact.

DRUNKENNESS was not long ago the subject of an elaborate editorial in the London "Times." Its lamentation is pathetic and startling: "Drinking baffles us, confounds us, shames us, and mocks us at every point. It outwits alike the teacher, the man of business, the patriot, the legislator. Every other institution flounders in hopeless difficulties; the public-house holds its triumphant course. The administrators of public and private charity are told that alms and obligations go with rates, doles and pensions to the all-absorbing bar of the public-house. But the worst remains. Not a year passes in either town or village without some unexpected and hideous scandal, the outcome of habitual indulgence, often small and innocent in its origin." The drink bill of the country, it states, has enormously increased since 1860, with multiplied horrors of every kind coming from drunkenness. In that year the drink bill was \$434,488 41½. In 1879 the cost of the liquor consumed in the Kingdom was \$736,443,800. The probability is that the year 1900 will be as much above 1880 as that is above 1860, and that the drink bill will then be \$1,230,000,000! For the whole population of the isles the average expenditure in drink is more than \$75 for each family. It is vastly more than the public revenue; vastly more than the most inflated and extraordinary expenditure in twenty years. It is more than ten times as much as is spent for the poor, watched by economists with such jealous eyes. In short, with a vast number of all classes the yearly drink bill is a great deal more than the tenth of the whole income.

THE N.Y. "Independent" says: "Very great gains are to be credited to the temperance cause in the past six or eight months. In our own country there has been much good and practical legislation in various States, designed to suppress or, at least, to regulate more stringently the sale of intoxicating drinks. The new law in Kansas, if properly enforced, as it is expected to be, will effectually close all the drinking saloons and prevent an enormous needless waste of money. In Great Britain a greater degree of interest seems to be felt in the suppression of intemperance. The churches are putting themselves right on the question. It seems strange to American Christians, to whom drinking habits among members of the churches seem as much out of character with the profession of religion as violations of the commandments, to read in the proceedings of the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland a recommendation that the use of liquor at induction or ordination dinners be discouraged. Not long ago it was stated that total abstinence principles were professed by a certain number of English bishops, less than half, we believe, of the whole number, and that the cause was gaining. In the way of legislation, a bill has been passed for Wales for the closing of drinking houses on Sunday, and it gives great satisfaction in that principality. Says a London paper: 'The measures of a similar character already in force in Scotland and Ireland have already produced secondary as well as immediate effects. In both countries they have reduced the sum total of drunkenness. They have also educated public opinion in the other parts of Great Britain. Now Wales is to come under the protection of similar legislation. The success of this experiment in Scotland, Ireland, and Wales is bound to influence opinion in England.'