

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE English Parcel Post up to this date has entailed an enormous loss on the Revenue, and will for some time continue to do so, owing to strenuous efforts of private competitors, and also to the element of insecurity which greatly troubles the cautious mind of John Bull.

STATISTICS just published show that only one-half of the population of France lives by agriculture. Upwards of 9,000,000 own and cultivate their land; 3,500,000 proprietors of lots too small to furnish a living work occasionally as laborers on the land of others. The more important industries—mines, quarries and manufactures—give employment to over a million of persons, while 6,000,000 derive a livelihood from the manual arts. Bankers, commission agents and merchants number nearly 800,000, shopkeepers nearly 200,000, the proprietors of hotels, cafes and lodging houses something over 1,000,000. Religion, including religious communities, absorbs 250,000 of the population. There are 139,000 doctors, etc., 111,000 teachers, 121,000 artists, and 23,000 men of letters. About 2,000,000 live on their income, and the number of pensioners is close on 300,000.

A LETTER from the C. P. Railway to the Department of Agriculture shows that the total number of passengers carried into Manitoba during the year 1883 by that railway was 61,426, and out of the province 22,458. Of the latter number, 2,400 were men returning to their homes in the United States who had been employed on railway way work at Port Arthur, and 2,200 navvies who came over in 1882.

THE *Canadian Gazette* alluding to the preparations for the approaching visit of the British Association to Canada, says that the long list of committees appointed for that purpose is the best possible proof that the work of organization is being undertaken in a thorough spirit, and it adds, "We fully expect that before long the satisfactory results of their labors will be apparent, and be made known to the members of the association and their friends."

THERE is talk of founding at University College, London, a somewhat novel—and what ought to be a very useful—professorship. The new chair is to be in the science of politics, and under a wise teacher might be of great value in helping young men, and old men too, to understand the principles of government and the conditions of sound statesmanship. There is a great deal too much playing at government and ruling now-a-days, and now that political power is becoming more extended, it is of the utmost importance that people should be acquainted with the well-trying principles of government.

WE hear from Brussels that an army officer of high grade, well known as a skillful swordsman and crack pigeon shot, has been detected cheating at cards. His gains during one week were very large. He at once offered to resign, but his resignation has been refused, and an investigation has been ordered. Recently, too, we heard that many scions of nobility had been detected in the act of playing for enormous stakes at one of the London clubs. The whole affair is rank and wretched, but the sickly sentimentality which draws the line at cheating, instead of drawing it

at playing for days and nights for stakes, is almost as sickening as the low moral tone displayed in the players. These vampires of society should be ostracized long before the cheating phase sets in, and if society paid a little more attention to other evils attendant on many club-goers, there would not be found so many social sewers near these haunts of high-toned men.

IT seems that the push and advertising qualities of the Yankee have placed him in an improper position, at least, as regards his peculiar inventiveness. The *Boston Journal* puts things in order, and says:—"We brag of our inventiveness as a people, but a few figures will dissipate this notion. In Great Britain last year 30,000 patents were issued, while in the United States the number was 20,000. In England, one patent was issued to every 1,067 people, and in the United States one to every 2,900 people. The British, therefore, beat us two to one."

LAST WEEK, the British House of Commons passed the Army Estimate Bill, and the British tax-payer was soothed into good-humour by being told that three guns, of 110 tons, the most powerful in the world, and several 63 ton guns, would all be ready by the end of the year. The Marquis of Hartington stated that the elastic terms of service and the bounties were inducing men to prolong the period of foreign service, and had attracted 33,000 recruits, the largest number ever known in one year. All this seemed quite satisfactory, and John Bull signed a check for \$21,150,000.

THE remarkable extension of the Canadian postal service during the past seven years is one of the best tests of the development of the country and of the growth of trade. We find that in the past seven years, from 1876 to 1883, the number of post offices in Canada has increased from 5,015 to 6,395, the miles of mail route from 38,391 to 44,643, the number of letters, post cards, and registered letters from 48,220,000 to 78,390,000, and the postal revenue from \$1,484,886 to \$2,264,384. This is certainly a most promising and satisfactory report.

THE wife-beater in Massachusetts is to get his deserts. A Bill has passed the Legislature, providing that the "cat" shall be duly administered to wife-beaters. Humanitarians raise their hands and cry out "degrading." But the lashing is not a fractional part as degrading as wife-beating. There is no better implement of punishment for certain crimes, and no stronger deterrent than the "cat." We strongly recommend its salutary use, not only on wife-beaters, but on all implicated in any way with fiendish dynamite outrages.

IT is reported that the Red River Valley will, in a few years, export at least 70,000,000 bushels of wheat annually. Canada must be careful not to overdo the wheat business. India comes in as a great competitor in this line; for instance, four years ago, the United States supplied 75 per cent. of all the wheat and flour England required; but, owing chiefly to the astounding development of India, that percentage is rapidly decreasing, being now under 46 per cent. Russia is developing her wheat belts with great success, and thus the Canadian farmer would do well not to depend entirely on wheat, but to develop other crops.

THERE are signs of a better state of feeling among the disturbed elements of Russia. The first number of a paper called *Free Speech* has

appeared in St. Petersburg. It summons the youth of Russia to oppose the despotic form of government, and says the Russian state machine is rapidly decaying; discontent is increasing among all classes; revolutionary ideas are spreading everywhere, even in the army, and the day of victory is approaching. The paper strongly deprecates terrorism, and favors a union of all branches of Socialists, who, it says, should pursue a desired end by moral energy, not by brute force. This seems fair enough, and it is a pity that such counsel did not long ago prevail.

THE Canadian Government has objected to some emigrants recently sent out by Mr. Tuke's committee and has notified the English Government that many of them are unsuited for colonial life. The English Agents of the Canadian should keep a careful watch over the class of emigrants leaving England, not only for the sake of Canada, but also for the sake of the poor puny sick persons who must inevitably break down under the strain of one of our severe winters. Many of the poor emigrants come out with not even a stocking on, and are stricken with consumption at the first approach of zero.

SOLOMON SHAPIRA, known in connection with the recent attempt to sell in England a forged manuscript of the Pentateuch, has committed suicide by shooting himself in a hotel at Rotterdam. He was suffering from mental aberration supposed to have been caused by the failure of his transaction.

THE war in the Soudan is by now means over. Osman Digna has a much larger body of followers than he had before the recent fight, and it looks as if the decisive battle has yet to be fought. Meanwhile Gordon Pasha is in a critical condition, and it is difficult to say what the result may be. That his influence is remarkable cannot be questioned, at the same time religious fanaticism may at any moment turn the people against him. More than that, he is surrounded by the enemy—who may make a bold dash for victory. Gordon Pasha has not been idle, and has strengthened his position, and if his own people are true to him the enemy is not likely to succeed. The relief of Halbaya by the garrison of Khartoum will strengthen his influence.

THE action of the British Government is watched with much interest. The position it occupies is an embarrassing one, and the opposition are disposed to make all the capital it can out of the Egyptian troubles. There seems to be only one way out of the difficulty, and that is the permanent occupation of Egypt by the English, and this would not now be objected to by the European powers, unless, indeed, by the French.

THERE should be no hesitation on the part of the religious journalist in condemning the recent outrageous attempt at bribery in Ontario. It turns out that an American is at the bottom of it, and that it was made in the interests of Americans. We do not want an importation of any such villainies from the States. We are bad enough already. The Canadians and Americans implicated should be subjected to the most searching examination, and if found guilty, the heaviest punishment should be visited upon them. This is not a question of party. The honor of Canada is at stake, and no matter to what side of politics the offenders belong, let justice be done, and the Dominion cleared of so foul a scandal.