

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

OF the present ministry of the Free Church of Scotland there are 120 who joined in the exodus in 1843.

THE "Choya Shimbun," a Chinese paper, says: "An imperial interdiction has been issued against opium smoking, allowing two months for reform, after which severe penalties will be inflicted on all transgressors."

DEATH has been very busy of late among the ministers of the American Presbyterian Church, no fewer than twenty-two, including two ex-Moderators, having died since the meeting of the last General Assembly.

THROUGH the perversity of the Sultan there may be the first beginnings of what may result in a European war, any day. It is evident the "unspeakable Turk" feels that he must go, "bag and baggage," and he is resolved, apparently, to go only on compulsion. It is a pity, but seemingly inevitable.

THE Evangelical party in Holland have resolved to establish a theological college, to be called the "Free Calvinistic University of Amsterdam." Already five Professors have been appointed, and the college will be opened in the middle of September. The Chair of Practical Theology remains to be filled.

DR. LEEDS, of New Hampshire, says that the number of divorces is greater in New England than among any other civilized people; greater even than in France during the break up of the French Revolution. In New England there is one divorce to every twelve marriages, and these divorces are mainly among Protestants.

THE Presidential contest in the States grows in keenness as the important day approaches. The "solid South" fully expects to carry its candidate triumphantly into the White House, and, it is quite possible that its expectations may be realized, though we rather think that the Republicans will be again victorious, and on the old issue which has already given them twenty years of power.

It is in the last degree discreditable for either English journals or individuals to indulge in such insolent abuse as is being at present heaped upon Lady Burdett-Coutts on account of her daring to marry a young man, or even to propose to do so. Surely, after such a life as that lady has led, she had a right to expect very different treatment; the marriage is her own business exclusively as long as she commits no sin.

THE trouble about the disarming of the Basutos threatens to result in another South African war. The British Government are threatening to let the Colonists fight out such quarrels without reckoning upon Imperial assistance. Had this been done long ago, and rigidly carried out, there would have been fewer wars in South African history, and less high-handed injustice and oppression perpetrated in that region.

A CHURCHMAN calls the attention of the Bishop of London to the fact that an ordained clergyman who preaches in that city every Sabbath recently took for his text "The Lord said," and began his sermon thus: "Of course you know, my brethren, that the Lord never said anything of the kind." There are, he says, "two or three score" of preachers of this kind in and about London, who believe those parts of the Bible they like, and reject the rest.

AT a meeting of the Presbytery of London (Eng.), held lately, the Rev. R. Taylor presented a petition from the Presbyterian congregation at Rangoon, British Burmah, asking to be associated with the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of England. The congregation was originated by the Anglo-Indian Union of Edinburgh, and has since been in the charge of

ministers of the Free and Established Church. The congregation asked to be provided with a minister, to whom they offered £600 a year stipend.

AN eminent French medical man, appointed superintendent of the Paris hospitals by the late Emperor, says: "The Sisters of Charity are the curses of our hospitals. They are the tools of the priests, who employ them to secure wills in their favour, or legacies for masses. They do not scruple to terrify their patients by every means in their power, whether of future punishment or by well-arranged apparitions, etc. They withhold medicine and food, if even they do no worse, and they prevent sleep in order to gain their diabolical ends."

SOME Protestant Churches are beginning to fear that there will be a steady decrease in the list of candidates for the ministry. The Romish Church is facing the same discouragement. A vicar-general of that Church says that there are three thousand vacant parishes in France which cannot be filled, and the vacancies increase. He gives one reason for this which has much force in it: "It is the religious life of the general community which ultimately determines the supplies furnished by it for the sacred ministry; and if that life ebb and slacken so will the number of 'vocations' fall off."

FROM the minutes of the General Assembly of the Irish Presbyterian Church, for 1880, it appears that that Assembly was attended by 716 members, viz., 459 ministers and 257 elders. The total number of ministers connected with that Church is 632, and the total number of congregations is 538, while of licentiates and ministers without charge there are 41. The Assembly has 41 committees, 9 Bodies of trustees, 2 colleges with 14 professors, and 7 mission schemes. The total number of families connected with the Church is 80,000; communicants, 105,000; contributors to Sustentation Fund, 38,000; stipend payers, 67,000; elders, 2,000; day schools, 700; Sabbath schools, 1,000; Sabbath school teachers, 8,500; sum raised for Church purposes, \$700,000.

AFTER a late well-known social entertainment a rather prominent gentleman was threatened with great bodily injury, if he had not his life put actually in danger, and some newspapers have waxed hysterical over the occurrence. Others explain it on the simple principle of "too much wine," and say that there was no danger whatever. Whatever were the actual facts in this particular instance, it is notorious that there are no such things as social gatherings, of a public or semi-public character, and with toast-drinking in the usual fashion, without a fair proportion of those present being more or less intoxicated, and the *more* a great deal oftener than the *less*. Yet many of the so-called friends of morality and decency protest that it is all right. It is anything but "all right."

THE question of the separation of Church and State is likely soon to come to the front in France. Meantime, the opponents of the Church, who appear to constitute the majority in France, are practising upon the religious orders. They are refusing to allow them to teach in schools, as a preliminary to refusing them pay for teaching in the churches. The Pope appears to have submitted to the expulsion of the Jesuits, but he is not so hostile to some of the other religious Bodies, whose name is legion. He has compromised with the State in their interest, or he has allowed them to compromise. The compromise is that they will repudiate the supremacy of the Church, or at least that they will recognize the independence of the secular power, if the secular power will allow them to live and teach unmolested, and that they will undertake to teach nothing hostile to the Republic.

THE High Church party in England appear to be very uncomfortable since Dr. Ryle was made Bishop of Liverpool. Dr. Ryle's theories on the subject of bishops are far too apostolic for their tastes. With

them, Low Church is no Church. A correspondence has just been published in a Liverpool paper on the subject which brings this idea out clearly. Some one wrote to Dr. Lee, vicar of All Saints, Lambeth, one of the most prominent of English High Churchmen, asking him in effect if Dr. Ryle could really give valid ordination. Dr. Lee gives no uncertain sound on the subject: "For myself, I may add with the utmost sincerity that I would as soon believe that the laying on of hands of the town clerk or the town crier would confer upon me the priesthood of the Christian Church, as that anything Dr. Ryle might attempt would convey to me that grace." Who shall decide when the "successors of the apostles" disagree?

THE list of delegates to the Pan-Presbyterian Council shews that there were members present from many distant lands. Austria, with three Presbyterian Church Bodies, had two representatives; Belgium, two; France (two Churches), one member; Germany, one; Italy, two; Spain, two; Switzerland (four Churches), two delegates; England, three; Ireland thirteen; Scotland, forty-nine; Wales, three; Northern Presbyterian (United States), forty; Southern Presbyterian, twenty-eight; Reformed (Dutch) Church, twelve; other Presbyterian Bodies in the States, fifty-one; Canada, eighteen; Cape of Good Hope, one; Ceylon, one; New Hebrides, one; New South Wales, one; South Australia, one; Tasmania, one; Victoria (Australia), one—total, two hundred and thirty-six. Besides these there were of foreign missionaries and ministers assigned to duty upward of fifty. And several hundred visiting ministers were also present.

"OUR LADY OF KNOCK" is the latest Roman Catholic title of honour given to the Virgin. The supposed delusion which gave her this new designation arose from the appearance, on the walls of the parish church of the obscure village of Knock, Ireland, one night, of a bright vision in beautiful light of the Virgin, with, we believe, her husband and the Holy Child. According to the evidence, there really was such a vision, and it was probably produced by means of a magic lantern by some wicked Protestants of the neighbourhood. But the wonder grew. Scores of persons saw each his separate vision. One saw stars, another coloured lights, and each imaginative devotee was favoured with his or her own private apparition. The credulous crowds flocked from all parts. They began picking off the mortar, on which the Virgin deigned to appear, from the walls and carrying bits of it to the sick, who were immediately cured. The plaster was soon pulled off as high as men could reach. It was brought to America and sold. Now, the water that has washed over the walls is gathered and bottled for the sick, and pilgrimages are organized from England and America.

IN connection with the late expedition of Lieut. Schwatka to the Arctic region there is likely to result very curious and very painful revelations. Commander Cheyne, who has been on three of the many searching expeditions, similar to the one at present attracting so much attention, does not hesitate to declare publicly that Sir John Franklin, and his men, did not die from the severity of the Arctic winter, but from the villainy of the contractor who furnished the supplies of preserved meats. He will now likely have an opportunity of making good his assertions, for it is understood that the return of the remains of Lieut. Irwin will necessitate a coroner's inquest, and Mr. Cheyne will likely be called to give evidence on the cause of the death. Whether or not the present charge can be made good we shall not say. It is, at any rate, a matter of notoriety that there have often been the most abominable frauds perpetrated in this matter of canned meats. Nothing short of death seems an adequate punishment for such a crime, and if Mr. Cheyne can establish his charge in this case it will be a pity if all the offenders are beyond the reach of earthly punishment. To such, we fear, mere infamy would be no punishment at all, unless, to be sure, it spoiled their trade.