

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE Londonderry Iron Works are to be wound up, but it is hoped that they will still be carried on and thus a severe blow to the whole iron industry of the Dominion be averted. The disaster to the Stellarton coal mines was the chief cause of embarrassment; since, on that account, the works were obliged to supply themselves with coal, and this necessitated a large expenditure for property, plant, and running material. The works seem to be in a fair way of success. Last year they consumed 80,000 tons of coal. This year it was about 150,000 tons. All other materials used in their operations increased proportionately. This year they will pay out \$400,000 for wages, as against \$300,000 last year. Now they have some 800 hands employed, as against 600 then. With a re-arrangement and a return of confidence the Londonderry Mines may yet hold a prosperous position among the chief iron industries of the world.

THERE is an item in the annual report of the Dominion Superintendent of Insurance which shows that some legislative action is needed to protect life-insurers from the loss incurred by inability to pay up policies. The report shows that policies covering nearly $6\frac{3}{4}$ millions of dollars, terminated by surrender, and lapse during 1882, an amount almost equal to one-third of the Canadian business of all the companies, Canadian, British and American, during the year, and nearly $4\frac{1}{2}$ times the amount terminated by natural causes. This means that hard workers have enriched already wealthy insurance companies to an enormous extent. Often when reverses of fortune come the policy is obliged to lapse and the premium becomes a dead loss to the insured. Some insurance companies meet this contingency in a fair way; others, it is feared, haul in all kinds of insurers hoping to reap a rich harvest from lapsed policies. We hope that some measure will be introduced into the next parliament compelling insurance companies to grant some compensation to those whose policies lapse.

THE State of Missouri has imposed a license of \$500 each upon every saloon in the State, and hopes to collect in this way annually from the liquor dealers \$1,500,000. Some of our cities might follow this example with profit, and would soon find that the moral condition would be purer the number of drunk and disorderly cases lessened, and the taxes of the decent ratepayers considerably decreased.

IF railway receipts afford a fair barometer by which to test the condition of the trade of a country, the following list of the receipts on the Intercolonial Railway for the past five years shows that our trade is progressing favourably:—

October, 1879.....	\$ 129,390.00
" 1880.....	167,045.00
" 1881.....	180,475.00
" 1882.....	219,977.00
" 1883.....	241,313.00

PEOPLE interested in Indian History will learn with pleasure of the discovery of the exact site of the Black Hole of Calcutta. The walls have been laid bare and they are in a perfect state of preservation. The dimensions of the chamber are the same as those usually recorded. It has been suggested that a monument to the victims should be erected on the site.

TRAINS have been run in the new Arlberg tun-

nel, and the final completion, it is hoped, will be accomplished next summer. The tunnel will take rank with the great engineering feats of the world. Its length is six miles 671 yards, as compared with seven miles 1,256 yards of the Mont Cenis, and nine miles 455 yards of the Gothard, but it has been pierced in less than four years (the work having been begun in June, 1880), as compared with fourteen years and a half for the former and eight for the latter.

WE seldom think of the amount of force that is going to waste on all sides. The ever-recurrent rushing of the tides; the wasted power in great water-falls, and the force of the wind, these, when well manipulated, will become more wonderful than the wonders of steam. From these sources of power, the future promises us storage of electricity, and already something practical has just been started to use the water power of the Alps to work electric railways in Switzerland. Operations are already begun to connect the towns of St. Moritz and Pontresina by an electric railway, motive power being supplied by mountain streams.

WE notice from the United States census that there are 64,698 clergymen, and only 64,137 lawyers, across the border. We always believed, notwithstanding the pessimist attacks on that over-vilified republic, that there was much more religion than litigation in the hearts of the people. But the doctors seem to have the best of it, for there are 86,671 physicians in the census list. This number is out of all proportion, and may be accounted for by the fact that D. D.'s and D. C. L.'s are almost as common as the Stars and Stripes in the States, and perhaps these dignitaries have been included among the other doctors.

AN amendment will be proposed in the House of Representatives of the United States, forever prohibiting polygamy in that country. It is aimed at the Mormons who have diffused the poison of their system throughout the territories of Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming. The proposed amendment says:—"Polygamy, being incompatible with our civilization is forever prohibited in the United States and in all places under its jurisdiction." Better late than never, but why was not this gigantic evil long ago banished from the country?

MR. GEORGE L. RUFFAN will probably become a historical personage on account of his colour. He has just been appointed to fill a vacancy on the bench of Massachusetts, and claims the proud pre-eminence of being the first colored man to fill such a position in the States.

MR. ERRINGTON's position at Rome is still an unsettled question. The general feeling in England is that the less the government has to do with the Papacy the better, but it is now announced that Mr. Errington's mission has assumed a pronounced political character, and that he is now a true and proper representative of the English Government, in all save in name, and will confer with Cardinal Jacobini on all questions that may arise between the Pope and England. The truth ought to be told at once and Britons not kept in the dark on the subject.

IN spite of all precautions and necessary rules, it is sad to find that loss of life at sea is increasing. Last year 1,303 British ships went to the bottom, with a loss of 370,000 tons. The year before 1,310 ships were lost, with tonnage of 348,000, the

largest list of casualties which had been recorded. Last year alone in British ships 3,372 lives were lost, and largest death-rate in the register, except in 1874, when two colonial ships went down and 1,200 colies on board perished. Fresh legislation on the subject is imperatively demanded, since it is feared that in many instances rotten vessels are sent out to sea in order to defraud the underwriters.

THE cry of "Outcast London" has stirred the public mind in a deep and strange manner. Sensational accounts of the almost houseless poor have, from time to time, appalled intelligent philanthropists, but it required the London Press to rise in its might and force the facts on the attention of the country. Poverty-stricken, overcrowded, and poison-steeped districts add material to the columns of newspapers usually filled with political speeches and court news. Seldom before has such an agitation taken so strong a hold on the public, and the next few years will find that government has come to the aid of poverty-stricken subjects obliged to live in and pay dearly for the fever dens in which they reside.

THE first call will be to the landlords to put their tenements into a healthy condition; then, if they cannot do that, to forbid their being occupied by any tenants or by more tenants than they can decently hold; and then, if necessary, to pay no more for them than their thus equitably reduced "market value." A similar arrangement will soon be needed in our Canadian cities, where already overcrowded houses are becoming sources of ill-health and of danger to the community.

THIS movement is but the outcome of a discontent, now acknowledged to be real, which has been rankling in the minds of the productive classes for many years past. And yet those who have lived among these classes know that their condition is far better than it was twenty years ago. Wages have risen; the mean duration of life among males has risen from 39 to 49 years; the consumption of meat, corn, sugar and tea has risen very much; and best of all, pauperism has decreased, and the savings of the working classes increased thirty-fold.

THE question might pertinently then be asked—"Why are not these classes contented?" It is the question asked by those who are ignorant of the real feelings of this class. The answer is a telling one. These men will tell you that things are better than they were, the standard of living has risen; but one thing has risen above even the aforementioned, and that is the awakening conception of what constitutes a decent human existence. They bid you look at the hovels in which they now live, and ask Dives if Lazarus does not utter a just complaint.

WE believe that this ruffle is a sign for good. It is often said that the poor are improvident and indifferent to the future. But we must remember that men, as a rule, only become prudent and self-denying when they have something to lose, some aim to strive after. Elevate these people and half the battle is gained. This has been the work of self-denying men like the late Mr. Lowder and others, and we believe that the present agitation takes its rise from the manifest improvement made in the moral and social development of London slums by the saintly and self-denying service of our clergymen who have devoted their lives to the good of the London poor.