

JUST OUT: The "Presbyterian Year Book,"

EDITED BY REV. JAMES CAMERON.

This valuable ANNUAL for 1881 is unusually full of excellent and suggestive reading. The paper, by the Editor, on the proceedings of the Presbyterian Council at Philadelphia, occupying forty pages, is worth the price of the book; while the general articles are exceedingly complete and interesting.

The N. Y. "Independent," in noticing the volume for 1879, says: "It is one of the best ecclesiastical Annuals published in the world."

The present issue is better than any previous one; and every office-bearer, at least, should have a copy.

Mailed free on receipt of twenty-five cents.

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE King of Congo, Africa, has joined the Baptist Church. He is the only crowned head in the denomination.

THE British and Foreign Bible Society have circulated 784,000 copies of the Hebrew Bible, in whole or part, among the Jews.

THE Waldensian Church in Italy has had an increase of 17,807 during the past year in occasional hearers at public worship.

THE Buddhist priests in Japan have taken the Bible in their course of study so that they can the better oppose the missionaries.

IN one district in Japan 71 Buddhist temples have been diverted to secular uses since 1873, and over 700 in the whole empire since 1874.

OF the present House of Commons, which legislates for the Church of England, it is said that 150 members are in favour of the disestablishment of the Church.

MICHAEL DAVITT has been committed to prison in London. He has an unexpired term of imprisonment of three years and a half to serve out. This arrest has caused great excitement in Ireland.

AT the Free Church College, Edinburgh, there are at present among the enrolled students one from Bohemia, one from Moravia, four from Hungary, one from Alsace, one from Constantinople and one from Italy.

CONSUL GARDNER, of Chafoo, China, in a survey of twenty years just past, is struck by the vast strides which Christianity has lately made, and compares the condition of China to that of the later Roman empire, when faith in the older religions had almost entirely died out. "The spread of Christianity is inevitable."

THE Calcutta "Star of the East" says that there are one hundred and fifty students in the Baptist Theological Seminary at Ramapatam, who are in training for the Christian ministry. Some of the students are married, and their wives are obliged to spend a part of their time in study, and some of them keep up with their husbands in the full course.

WE have been favoured with a copy of the report for 1880 of the Inspector of Asylums, Prisons, etc., for the Province of Ontario. As usual this report shews an immense amount of work done, and done in a very complete and painstaking manner. The institutions under Mr. Langmuir's supervision may be classed under the following heads: 1st, Asylums for the Insane; 2nd, Prisons, Common Gaols, etc.; 3rd, Institutions for Deaf and Dumb and Blind; and 4th,

Hospitals and Charitable Institutions. We have neither time nor space to notice the facts connected with these various establishments. We hope to be able to go over each of the departments somewhat in detail. In the meantime we can only repeat what we have said once and again before, that everything indicates that the management of the different classes put under the care of the country is upon the whole of a very careful and painstaking character.

GREAT sympathy is felt in England for the sad state of the Nestorians in Persia. Having escaped the terrible ravages of the Kurdish invaders, they are now threatened by the Persian troops and Moham-medans, who are incensed at the favour shewn them by the Kurds and charge a secret alliance between them. The property of the Nestorians has already been plundered to a large extent by the Persian soldiery. Crushing taxes are also being levied upon them. This, following in the wake of two years' famine and the devastation produced by the Kurds, has caused intense privations to the surviving Christians of the district. British aid and British influence with the Shah are, therefore, freely promised.

THE "Jewish Messenger" takes the legal view of church lotteries: "The profits of charity fairs will be curtailed by the action of the police in prohibiting raffling in any form; but cool reasoning will conclude that the authorities are right, and that, if fairs cannot be conducted except on a demoralizing basis, they had better be discontinued entirely. Fair 'subscriptions' or 'chances' are a species of lottery and gambling, and it is no credit to religious congregations of any sect that they have been so widely encouraged. It is hard to understand why the dice are to be condemned in the one place and favoured in the other; why smiling ladies and girls should be allowed to sell lottery tickets at a fair, and men and boys engaged in a like practice in their shops should be sent to gaol."

THE great change in medical opinion as to the use of alcohol is evident from the following recent deliverance of the London "Lancet," as to its use in the hospitals: "The most rigid teetotaler may well be satisfied with the growing tendency in physicians to use alcohol strictly, and to be satisfied only by distinct proof of its utility; and the most generous believer in the medicinal virtues of alcohol must know that the public and individual patients are taking a keener interest in this question, than they ever did before, and are making very shrewd personal experiments on the subject. We have not concealed our conviction that good health is most consistent with very little alcohol or with none; that he who uses alcohol free or frequently, or by itself and apart from food, is surely laying up disease and degeneration for himself, and probably for his descendants."

THE Pope, it is reported by the London "Standard," has lately been engaged in the preparation of his political last will and testament, including notes and provisions respecting the holding of the next conclave. The correspondent says he is informed "on high authority that it is the Holy Father's purpose that the Cardinals should proceed to the election of a new Pontiff by methods differing in some respects from those hitherto practised. His Holiness has caused to be placed before him all the Bulls of his predecessors relating to this matter, with a view of making such modifications in them as may seem desirable. My informant adds that the Pope has been moved to add this care to the many others which impose upon him an amount of labour he is ill able to bear, by the persuasion that his life will not last much longer—an opinion, I am grieved to say, which is shared by all those about him."

THE jargon of some of the scientific men of the present is not unfavourably ridiculed by a cotemporary in the following fashion: "'Language was given to men to conceal thought,' is a *bon mot* attributed to Talleyrand, Voltaire and others. One realizes that it is not an altogether unfounded witticism when one reads

the writings of certain modern 'philosophers.' What could be more incomprehensible to an ordinary reader than Mr. Spencer's definition of evolution, 'Evolution is a change from an indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity, through continuous differentiations and integrations?'—a definition at which Professor Tait pokes fun by translating it thus: 'Evolution is a change from a nohowish, untalkaboutable all-alikeness to a somehowish and in general talkaboutable not-all-alikeness, by continuous something-elseifications and stick-togetherations.' But after all, this definition of Mr. Spencer's fades when compared to Mr. Kirkman's formula for Universal Change: 'Change is a perichoretical synechy of pamparallagmatic and horroteroporeumatical differentiations and integrations!' No mud was ever clearer than that."

THOMAS CARLYLE, at the advanced age of eighty-five, sank quietly to his rest last Saturday, and has been buried in the churchyard of Ecclefechan "amid kindred dust." It was thought that he would have been laid beside his wife, in Haddington burying ground, but it seems that such is not the case. Dean Stanley wished him to lie in Westminster Abbey, but this on the part of the relatives was declined. Of course, "sketches" of the "Cynic of Chelsea" of every variety of merit and the reverse have been the order of the day; and hero-worship has had full scope, sometimes in very eloquent words, sometimes in inflated and ill considered rant. Everyone has thought himself called upon to give the world the benefit of his opinion on the surpassing excellences of the deceased, and, as usual with not a few, the most noticeable defects in Carlyle's character and work have been elevated to the place of his chiefest virtues. We have had all over again about his enthusiasm for earnestness, his hatred of shams, his worship of force, his scorn for never so many things, and his love for all that was "beautiful and true," etc. We yield to none in our admiration of much that this great man both said and did, but to speak of him as some are doing who ought to know better is sheer nonsense and something worse. With not a few he is being elevated to the highest rank of saintship, and is even claimed by some as a devout and humble follower of Jesus of Nazareth. We suspect none would have been more astonished at such talk than the old man himself. That he had a wholesome and growing contempt for the shallow, pretentious materialism of the day is very evident. That he had also a large measure of inherent reverence in his nature may go without saying. But that he had any regard for Jesus of Nazareth, except as one of His "divine men" and "heroes," will not be easily shewn from anything he has either said or written. That he was often and conspicuously in the wrong in the discussion of some of the great questions of the day is beyond all reasonable controversy. It would have been strange had it been otherwise, and what then is the use of people denying what the man himself, we should hope, would have been the readiest to acknowledge? That he helped many amid the troubles and throes of spiritual perplexities and agonized soul difficulty, we more than doubt. The Gospel according to *Sartor* is not of the most elevated or encouraging description, and that Carlyle ever found anything higher or anything better does not appear. It may be thought by some all very well, and all very manly, to say "what is the use of hanging down your head like a bulrush? If you are going to perdition, go with head erect and manly bearing." But if that is all it is but poor encouragement and cold comfort, and at any rate it is anything rather than Christian. While we say this we cannot but add that none could possibly rejoice more than we should if evidence could be given that, after all his perplexities and soul trouble, Thomas Carlyle realized at last his own interjected remark on the spiritual agonies of one of his chief heroes, "Courage, courage, the depth of thy darkness is the gauge of thy nobility; the lower thou sinkest the higher thou shalt rise," and that at last he "entered the kingdom" "even as a little child,"