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Notes of the Week.

NOT Mrs. Besant, but an American lawyer, William Judge, is to be the new leader of the Theosophists. Madame Blavatsky, the dead queen, is said to have appeared in the spirit at her old headquarters in St. John's Wood and made the selection of this lawyer to wear her crown.

MR. SPURGEON on one occasion remarked to a friend that he made a practice of reading through Carlyle's "History of the French Revolution" once a year for the sake of its style. "It is a mass of rocks and boulders," he said. "Its rugged strength corrects the too great smoothness into which one is apt to glide."

EDINBURGH United Presbyterian Presbytery have adopted a report of their disestablishment committee in which it is recommended that the pulpit be used to instruct the people on the subject of the spirituality and independence of the Church and the violation thereof constituted by a civil establishment. Mr. Carr informally dissented from the proposal so far as political action is concerned.

AN elaborate work is published by Brugsch Bey, the noted Egyptologist, giving in a partly autographic form the inscription on a stone discovered near Luxor by the American traveller Wilbour, together with an interlined translation. The reference to an Egyptian famine of seven years is clear, and the editor seems to make good his statement that we have here the first monumental testimony to the truth of the biblical account of the famine in the days of Joseph.

THE Presbyterian Women's Mission Union of Victoria are keeping pace with the Fellowship Union of the same church, and have just appointed two lady missionaries to labour with the Rev. J. H. Mackay in Korea. Of these Miss Anderson is to act as medical agent, holding the certificate, after special training and examination, of a hospital nurse. She has also had considerable experience in evangelistic work, and it is believed that her fine cultivated voice and earnest and attractive manner will contribute not a little to her success in the Hermit Land. The other young lady is Miss Menzies, favourably known as Secretary of the Ebenezer Presbyterian Women's Mission Union, Ballarat. Their allowances are respectively \$300 and \$500.

COMMENTING on the Clergy Discipline Bill, the *Christian Leader* says: This Bill shorn of all the clauses that were deemed contentious, presented itself in the House of Commons last week for second reading. Its object is to enable the Church to get speedily rid of immoral clergymen. But so great was the opposition of such Voluntaries as Mr. Samuel Evans and Mr. Esslemont, whose only cure for all troubles in the Church of England is disestablishment, that Mr. Goschen took alarm and got the debate adjourned. This, too, notwithstanding the support given to the Bill by Mr. H. H. Fowler with the approval of Mr. Gladstone. While the attitude adopted by the extreme Voluntaries is intelligible, we question if it is wise. So long as a state Church exists why should it not be made as efficient as possible, when its work is in the main for the spiritual good of the people? These ungracious acts of the extremists are often hostile to the cause they have at heart.

THE *Evangelische Kirchenzeitung* is devoting several articles to a rather curious subject—the overcrowding of German universities. Professor Lexis, of Göttingen, has prepared tables showing that in all the learned professions there are far too many candidates. He considers it an alarming sign that the number of Protestant students of theology should be eleven hundred in excess of the normal figures. Many of these students have hardly any chance of obtaining pastorates. Nearly all will have years to wait. At Hallé and Königsberg there has lately been a slight decrease. The number of Roman Catholic students is surprisingly small. Instead of a surplus of eleven hundred, there is a minus quantity of sixty. "In the interests of both Church and State," says the writer, "we desire fewer students and a higher standard of merit."

A CONTEMPORARY says: No district of England had such a splendidly equipped Presbyterian pulpit at the beginning of this year than that lying on the Cheshire shore of the Mersey; but a few months have seen it swept of its chief ornaments. Dr. Alexander McLeod was taken, then followed the variously accomplished Dr. Macleod Symington, and this week it is our painful duty to record the death of the oldest of them all, Rev. James Towers, of Grange Road Church, Birkenhead. Born in 1808, the son of a farmer at Airth, near Falkirk, he was educated at Glasgow University, and, after license in the United Presbyterian denomination, was ordained to Wigtown, where he remained for thirteen years, and whence he removed to Birkenhead. An enthusiastic advocate of the temperance cause, he also when in Galloway rendered notable service to the Voluntaries, one debate in which he was their champion being well remembered and still often quoted from by the elder generation in that region.

THAT march of the 107 poor Jews—men, women, and children—from the steamer to the station in Leith, says the *Christian Leader*, was a sight that must have deeply impressed all who have noted in history God's dealings with the Ancient People. So miserable was their condition that, on the clothes supply of the relief committee being exhausted, Rev. William Paterson took off his own coat and put it on one of the poor fellows, receiving for reward the blessing of many an astonished child of Abraham, who expressed the wish that they could remain in a land where such things were done by Christians. The rats leave a sinking ship. The Jews are being driven out of Russia, but they will yet be thankful for the cruelty of their oppressors, for assuredly the day of reckoning is at hand. The flower of the country's manhood and womanhood in the mines of Siberia, and God leading forth His Chosen People! And General Gourko, of Schipka Pass fame, condemning a Polish boy of ten for a trifling offence to twenty-five lashes, which threw the lacerated lad into convulsions! Russia will soon run with blood.

It is much to be regretted, says the *British Weekly*, that the Conference went wrong in the Horncastle case. The Wesleyans have passed many general resolutions on gambling. At the time of the baccarat scandal no religious body was louder in condemning the Prince of Wales. On Friday the testing opportunity came to themselves and they lost it. The circumstances presented no difficulty. Mr. Slack was accused of bringing forward his motion without warning, but, as the *Nottingham Express* points out, the gambling festival at Horncastle is known over all South Lincolnshire. Tickets for the archery tournament are on sale in all the villages and towns of the district. The Wesleyan School is mentioned on the poster announcing the gathering. The same tournament has been held for years, and the wonder is that the matter has not come before the Conference long ago. The whole tone of the debate was most unfortunate. Pitiful excuses were made; timorous anxiety was expressed about offending devout Methodists in Horncastle. Dr. Waller's attitude was particularly regrettable. Dr. Rigg took the opportunity to explain that at great personal inconvenience he had put down raffling at bazaars.

Then he went on to suggest that the principle should be condemned, but that the Horncastle people should be spared. Mr. Hughes, as might have been expected, spoke out manfully. "If the Conference does not put down its foot on this matter we shall be shamed before the whole world." Conference, however, preferred to palter with the question, and the colourless amendment of Mr. Cooper was carried. No wonder that the friends of Methodism are indignant.

GERMANS who select this continent for their home, do not weaken in their love of music when they leave the Fatherland. Wherever they settle, whether in Canada or the United States, they institute musical associations and cultivate the pleasing art with assiduity and enthusiasm. Of late years, through combination, they have given monster demonstrations of the success with which they have cultivated music. Last week the eleventh Peninsular Saengerfest was held in Hamilton with most encouraging and pleasing results. The citizens did their best to accord their musical guests a generous welcome. The city was tastefully decorated and illuminated at night, and a fine spirit pervaded the entire proceedings. The first day was given up to welcoming the incoming guests and a grand reception concert in the Drill Hall closed the public events of the day. Hamilton showed on that occasion that it is a musical city where a high degree of excellence has been attained. The Thirteenth Battalion Band, under the leadership of its experienced and able conductor, performed several selections with excellent effect. The Germania Club of that city acquitted themselves well in their "social greeting." The singing by the chorus, nearly five hundred in number, was very pleasing and effective; the only point offering for criticism being the comparative lightness of the bass. The individual performers, Miss Schumacher and Mr. George Fox, delighted the vast audience with their brilliant efforts. The singing by the members of the Buffalo Orpheus Club, under the leadership of Professor Lund, was one of the finest things of the evening. The subsequent events of the Saengerfest were fully up to, if not beyond, expectation.

THE *Christian Leader* remarks that Mr. Price Hughes, in his striking article on "Gambling and Betting" in the August *Sunday Magazine*, has no hesitation in affirming that both practices spring from a vulgar greed for money. The common belief that those who stake small sums do not really care for the pence they win will not bear investigation; he has known cases of really wealthy people who have felt a miserly gratification in grasping a few shillings won in this disreputable way. One of the saddest facts connected with the subject is the rise of professional women bookmakers in some of the great centres of population in the north of England; and it is appalling to add that the vice has descended to the children. There are even boy bookmakers! One of the most curious features of the discussion on gambling is the apparent difficulty of great ecclesiastical dignitaries to lay their finger upon the ethical objection to the vice; and it is certainly a reflection on the cloth that the best definition of the essential evil of the system is given by Mr. Herbert Spencer. First, it is gain without merit; and secondly, it is gain through another's loss. Mr. Spencer lucidly points out how utterly anti-social gambling is—searing the sympathies, cultivating a hard egoism, and so producing a general deterioration of character and conduct. Mr. Price Hughes would make short work of the gamblers, whom he rightly ranks with thieves. Gambling stands in the same relation to stealing that duelling stands to murder. And we might be surprised that the convocations of York and Canterbury have not found this out were it not for the fact that these spiritual courts have in most ethical matters lagged in the rear of the common people. Mr. Hughes insists—and most heartily do we sympathize with his proposal—that the publication of betting odds in the newspapers, the transmission of bookmakers' circulars through the post, and the use of the telegraph wire by the gambler should all be prohibited.