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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

PRINCIPAL CAIRNS, of the United Presbyterian Church delivers this year the Cunningham course of lectures. His subject is "English Unbelief in the Eighteenth Century."

THE theological students of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland have remitted to the Biddle University at Charlotte, N.C., \$6,120 for a fund, the interest of which is to be appropriated to aid students preparing for mission work in Africa.

IN Holland, owing to the strict exclusion of Christian teaching from State schools, a movement has been set on foot by the earnest Christians of the country to establish schools in which shall be given instruction in the Scriptures, and \$4,500,000 has been already raised for this object.

SIR. H. ELLIOT, the English minister in Austria, has asked for explanations from Baron Haymerle respecting the position of the Free Reformed Church in Bohemia. Baron Haymerle replied that the Austrian Constitution guarantees religious freedom, and the Government would enforce the law in the strictest manner.

THE Roman Catholics in Cochin, South India, having lately obtained possession of a church which had formerly been the property of the Syrian Christians, searched the houses in the village for Bibles and other books which the people had bought from a Church Missionary Society colporteur, and made a great bonfire of them in front of the church.

FATHER CHINIQUY has left Australia for New Zealand *en route* for America. A farewell meeting was held which was well attended. In the address presented, several conversions from Roman Catholicism were spoken of as the result of his visit. It was also stated that in the colonies £4,790 had been contributed to his mission in America, of which £2,200 had been given by New South Wales.

WE understand that a unanimous call has been addressed to the Rev. Dr. John Gibson, of Chicago, by the St. John's Wood Presbyterian congregation, London, England. It might be difficult to say whether Dr. Gibson's present position, or that to which he is invited, is upon the whole the more important and influential. We have no doubt that the doctor's final decision on the subject will have been arrived at from an honest and single-hearted desire to do what, on the whole, would be most likely to advance that cause to which he has consecrated his life. Let us hope that the result will be that he remains on this side of the Atlantic.

THE "Christian at Work," from its favourable position of intelligent observation, says: "The Independent Irish Catholic movement is daily strengthening and broadening. The number of Roman Catholic priests who have renounced their allegiance to the Pope, and have accepted Father McNamara as their bishop, increases. Many in the Romish Church are restive under the yoke imposed upon them, and feel that it cannot be endured by men who respect their own reason and conscience. Bishop McNamara tells the Irish in America, if they ever want to be free, they must cut loose from the Italian priesthood, take the Holy Scriptures for their spiritual guide, and obey politically only the Constitution of the United States."

INSTEAD of the concessions confidently expected before the anniversary of the Czar's accession, regarding the position of the Jews, there is increased severity toward them. The Jews are driven to represent themselves as Protestant Christians to escape expulsion by the police from St. Petersburg. In the Governments of Lusa, Orel, and Kharkoff, Jews established in business many years are ruthlessly expelled. Still, the general tendency of Count Melikoff's efforts is de-

clared to be liberal. He has daily consultations with the Czarewitch, from which good is likely to result. The well known barrister Sinnow, who has already been several times arrested and released, has been once more arrested on a charge of complicity with the Nihilists.

THE latest archaeological exploit has been the unearthing of a great Asiatic empire, whose name and existence, until recent excavations in the Asiatic provinces of Turkey brought it to light, were previously unknown. The unearthed empire was called the Empire of the Hittites, and its rule extended from the Caspian to the Ægean Seas. The Hittites were a literary people, and one of their principal cities was called Book City. There are a few scattered notices about this people in the Bible, but archaeologists contend that they were then in their decadence. Some blocks covered with inscriptions in the language of the Hittites have been sent to the British Museum for Oriental experts to ponder over and decipher if they can.

BISHOP COLENZO has published a letter in reply to a statement that he had been deposed by the Bishop of South Africa, after due trial, on his failure to appear according to notice. He denies that he was cited to appear before the Synod of Bishops, at which a sentence of deposition was pronounced against him. The Privy Council, he states, pronounced Bishop Gray's proceedings null and void, and the trial before the Synod of Bishops, he has every reason to believe, was an afterthought, when it was feared that the proceedings under Bishop Gray's letters patent might be declared invalid. If the bishops "formally pronounced sentence against me," adds Bishop Colenso, "they did so against an absent man, who had not only never been heard in his own defence, but had never even had notice that he was about to be tried."

ON a recent Sabbath the Pope received the homage of Catholic philosophers and scientists, of whom many were in Rome from different countries. In the Sala Ducale, where the reception was held, there was a congregation of upwards of 4,000 persons. An address in Latin was read to the Pope, who responded in the same language. He expressed great joy at seeing himself surrounded by such a multitude of doctors and students of true philosophy, and dwelt upon the importance and significance of the event, especially in these days, when science is so highly lauded. He dwelt upon the importance of the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, and especially on its great utility as a means of combating the scepticism of the present century. He pointed out that it was not opposed to the progress of natural science. He strongly exhorted those present to cultivate natural science, but in a Christian manner.

ACCORDING to Herr von Puttkammer, the Prussian Minister of Education, there has been a steady increase of crime and immorality in the great towns of Germany during the last ten years; and the Minister declared in Parliament the other day that this unsatisfactory state of things had not been without effect on the teachers of elementary schools. He had no fault to find with the majority of the schoolmasters; still the tone of the class had degenerated in all the chief centres of industry with the exception of Berlin. This was to be attributed in a considerable measure to the increased facilities for drinking, which had been provided by recent legislation, and which had injuriously affected large sections of the community. Herr von Puttkammer also urged that elementary teachers had lately been spoiled by too much attention, politicians of all parties having vied with each other in the attempt to win their support.

THE Rev. W. T. Stevenson of Rathgar, Ireland, has been delivering a course of lectures to the students of the Free Church in Edinburgh and Glasgow, on Foreign Missions, and that with such success that before his departure from Edinburgh Mr. Stevenson, was presented with a memorial requesting him to re-deliver, at an early date, a portion of the series in the

form of six public addresses, the meetings to be held in the Free Assembly Hall, so that the people of Edinburgh generally, as well as the students, may have an opportunity of listening to the Irish Convener's stirring pleas for Foreign Missions. The memorial itself appears to be a unique document, and rarely has such a request been presented in a manner so honourable alike to the recipient, and to those who prefer it. It is signed by representatives of all denominations in the city, and expresses the most cordial sense of the benefit which the lectures are calculated to confer upon the aggressive work of all Christian Churches. It is signed amongst others by the Lord Provost of Edinburgh. Among Free Church names appear those of the Moderator (Mr. Chalmers Burns), Principal Rainy, Dr. Begg, Sir Henry Moncrieff, Dr. Gould, Rev. Alexander Whyte (St. George's), Rev. J. H. Wilson (Barclay), Rev. Dr. Wilson (Convener Sustentation Fund), together with numerous elders and deacons. Among Established Church names appear those of Dr. Robertson (Greyfriars), Dr. Macgregor (St. Cuthberts), Dr. Herdman (Convener Foreign Missions), etc., etc. Among Episcopal names are those of Dr. Cotterell (Bishop of Edinburgh), Dr. Sandford, etc., etc. Among United Presbyterians Dr. Cairns signs, and among Independents Mr. Cullen.

AN important discovery has just been made in Japan in certain Sanskrit MSS. The Japanese are Buddhists. In China there are many millions of Buddhists, whose religion was, of course, introduced from India. There are, however, no Sanskrit MSS. in China; at least, none have rewarded very diligent search. It has just been discovered that there are Sanskrit MSS. in Japan. Buddhism did not reach Japan direct from China, but from Corea, but it was known that Buddhist priests came from Japan to study in China. Some years ago, Dr. Edkins, the learned Chinese scholar, who had formerly assisted Professor Wilson, sent a small vocabulary printed in Japan to Professor Max Müller. It contained Sanskrit words, explained in Chinese, and transliterated in Japanese. This proved that at one time or other Sanskrit had been studied in Japan. Another piece of good luck followed soon after. One of the greatest Buddhist communities in Japan sent a young Buddhist priest, Mr. Bunyin Nanjio, to Professor Max Müller at Oxford, in order that he might learn Sanskrit and Pali, and thus be able to read the sacred writings of Buddha in the original. Professor Max Müller urged his pupil to make inquiries through his friends at home for Sanskrit MSS., and in December last a learned Buddhist priest, Shunta Tshukawa, sent the Professor a book containing one of the sacred texts of their religion in the original Sanskrit. The Sanskrit was written in the old Nepalese alphabet, each word transliterated with Japanese letters, and translated into Chinese. He requested Professor Max Müller to read the text, correct it, and send it back to Japan. Though the Sanskrit was written in a difficult alphabet and full of mistakes, Professor Max Müller was able to lay a correct copy, with translation and notes, before the members of the Royal Asiatic Society at their last meeting. It turned out to be the hitherto unknown Sanskrit original of a Sûtra, translated into Chinese 400 A.D., possibly 200 A.D., and contained a description of the Buddhist Paradise, which with the Northern Buddhists took the place of Buddha's Nirvâna. It may be hoped that new treasures will be forthcoming from the same quarter. Anyhow, this one discovery has proved two important points—first, that the Chinese translations of Buddhist texts, when compared with their Sanskrit originals, are full of misunderstandings, sometimes affecting the very essence of Buddha's teaching; secondly, that the Buddhism of Japan, being chiefly founded on the Mahâyâna school, is in many points in direct opposition to the original teaching of Buddha, and that no greater boon could be conferred on the 30,000,000 of Buddhists in that country than to have the simple words of Buddha translated for them into Japanese direct from Sanskrit and Pali.