

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

A CASE containing a wax figure lately arrived at New York from Rome. It was seized by the Custom House officers, who were about to break it open to ascertain the quantity of wax on which to charge duty, when appeal was made to the Collector, and the following facts were made known: The box was a reliquary, or shrine, containing the effigy of "Saint" Discolius, martyr. The bones of the Saint were discovered in 1802. They have been articulated and covered with wax, so as to reproduce the form of the original, who appears to have been a very young man, with long, fair hair and almost feminine features. The imitated flesh is semi-transparent, shewing the outlines of the bones beneath. On the forehead is a cut or scar, designed to shew the manner of death. The body is richly clothed in silk of various colours, magnificently embroidered with gold. Near the head is a glass bottle set in brass, and supposed to contain some of the blood of the martyr. The case is consigned to a nunnery at Cincinnati. Superstition doubtless sets a high value on such a relic, and when it reaches Cincinnati it will probably be deeply venerated, but to those who worship God in spirit and in truth the relic partakes of the character of the brazen serpent which Hezekiah broke up because the people burned incense to it (2 Kings xviii. 4).

THE "Society to Encourage Studies at Home" has become a woman's college of the most popular and economical sort. Miss Ticknor's report of last year's work shews how fruitful this effort to help young women to educate themselves in their homes has become: 887 persons entered themselves for study, counting, with double and treble courses of study, 1,137 correspondences; 242 took the first rank—that is, achieved decided success; 347 were noted for their diligence, and 90 did passably well. Ladies to the number of 155 have been engaged in the actual work of the society, and 22 who were once students are now on the staff of teachers, and 4 are on the committee which controls the society. The correspondence for instruction exceeded 8,000 letters written to students and about the same number received from them. In the list of studies, English literature was selected by 417, history by 331, science by 143, art by 120, German by 50, and French by 40. The students are found in 37 States, besides Canada. The lending library, the books being sent by mail, consists of 920 volumes, of which only one has ever failed to come back, and 940 books have gone to 330 persons from Boston alone. The teachers give their services. The tuition fee is only \$2, and with an annual expense of \$1,732.64 Miss Ticknor is able to report \$491.87 in the treasury.

THE following Sabbath school statistics may be regarded as approximately correct:—

	Sabbath schools.	Teachers.	Scholars.
Canada.....	5,400	41,712	340,170
United States.....	82,261	886,328	6,623,124
England and Wales.....	422,250	422,250	3,800,000
Scotland.....	47,972	47,972	494,553
Ireland.....	32,548	32,548	384,627
Australia.....	3,910	3,910	57,925
New Zealand.....	1,101	1,101	9,947

The total number of teachers and scholars in the British dominions was 547,553 teachers and 5,067,102 scholars, or altogether 5,614,655 souls connected with Sunday school work in the British Empire, not including India. In the various countries of Europe there were 20,000 teachers and 100,000 scholars; in India, China, Africa, Polynesia and the West Indies 2,000 teachers and 100,000 scholars; in South America 3,000 teachers and 152,000 scholars. Added altogether there was this important exhibit: in the world, 1,460,881 teachers and 12,340,316 scholars, or a grand total of 13,801,197. In Europe the statistics of the number of Sunday schools in each country were as follows:—

Switzerland.....	405
Spain.....	100
Portugal.....	30

Italy..... 150
France..... 1,050
Germany..... 1,977

In Japan there were forty schools. All this accomplished within a hundred years. Who shall say what a mighty harmonizing as well as saving influence the work thus indicated has exerted all these years?

SINCE the verdict of the Scottish Free Church Assembly on the now well known Robertson Smith case was given various private conferences have been held among the different sections of that Church. The outcome of these is that the manifesto of which we spoke last week has taken definite shape, and will in all likelihood be in course of signature throughout Scotland by this time. Very great care, it seems, has been taken in drawing up the paper. Everything like personality has been avoided, but at the same time the tone adopted is such that the friends of Professor Smith are likely to feel it necessary to say something in reply. Should this take place it is thought to be altogether likely that an effort will be made to have the whole question of the views actually held by Mr. Smith reopened. It seems also that there are those in the Church who are dissatisfied with the said manifesto, as in their estimation it does not go far enough. These are taking measures for a far more decisive course of action. A circular, it seems, is in course of signature among elders and members of the denomination giving the following "reasons for renouncing the fellowship of the Free Church of Scotland:—(1) Because its professors and ministers are now allowed to teach, admittedly contrary to all historical evidence, that there are interpolations in the Book of Deuteronomy; and there is no reason why they may not assert the same thing of the Acts of the Apostles, or any other book of Scripture, if they choose. (2) Because it is now allowable to teach that the Song of Songs got into the Canon of Scripture by mistake, through the Church erroneously supposing it to be allegorical. (3) Because it is now allowable to teach that the Books of Jonah and Esther have poetical inventions of incidents in them, which destroy their credibility as trustworthy historical documents. (4) Because it is now allowable to teach that 'the Synoptical Gospels are non-apostolic digests of spoken and written apostolic tradition'—in other words, they were not written by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, but by some party or parties at the beginning of the second century. (5) Because it is now allowable to teach that the Gospel of John is an 'unhistorical product of abstract reflection'—in other words, it is not a historical account of words spoken, or actions done, by the Saviour. (6) Because it is perfect insanity to suppose that men will attend church now to hear sermons on such books as Deuteronomy, Song of Songs, Esther, Jonah, or the Gospels, any more than they would to hear sermons on Tobit, or Bel and the Dragon. (7) Because this is already clearly evidenced in Germany, where not above five per cent. of the whole so-called Protestant population attend church on the Sabbath, and where Socialism and Nihilism are the natural results. (8) Because, as it is only by the aid of State funds that Rationalism is able to live in Germany and Holland, and as it will only be by the Sustainment Fund it will be able to exist here, it is the imperative duty of every friend of the truth to withdraw from supporting such a bulwark of deadly error. (9) Because these doctrines are a breach of the Mutual Eligibility Act, and warrant the United Presbyterian, the Irish Presbyterian, and the English Presbyterian Churches in raising the question of its continuance. (10) Because by allowing these teachings, the Free Church has sunk beneath the level even of such Unitarians as Lardner and Channing, who would have repudiated them with horror. (11) Because they are founded only on conjectural criticism—a principle repudiated by all sound critics and scholars—and are maintained only by the profoundest ignorance of the plainest Bible facts." It is only necessary to add to the above rumours that it is currently understood this document has been drawn up by an office-bearer of the Free High Church, Edinburgh, who took a prominent part in the movement

which secured Dr. Walter Smith as the successor of Rev. Wm. Arnot, but who left the congregation when the man of his choice shewed strong sympathy with his more widely known namesake. If the protest is widely signed it is expected it will be brought before the Assembly's Commission.

At the last anniversary of the General Prussian Bible Society, Professor Theodor Christlieb, of Bonn, spoke at some length concerning the spread of the Bible throughout the world, and its mission among many peoples. He said, in part: "In 2 Thessalonians iii. 1, the Apostle Paul urges: 'Finally brethren, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you.' A Bible Society is really nothing more than the embodied prayer. 'Brethren, pray that the Word of the Lord may have free course.' The apostle stands at the beginning of the course, but sees the Word of God already upheld in this victorious course through manifold opposition, and therefore he speaks of bad and perverse people, and recognizes, as the right weapon to overcome all, the prayers of the believing Church. It is for that reason that he commends himself and his work to the intercession of the Thessalonians: 'Pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free course.' Wherefore, then, does the Word of the Lord so wonderfully run, notwithstanding such opposition? Wherefore does it run, in that century when it is more than opposed, strongest and broadest as an infinite stream over the earth? We have the answer: It is a living power of God. At the commencement of this century we had translations of the Scriptures in about fifty languages, and about five million copies of the precious book were spread abroad; but to-day it is translated into three hundred and eight languages and dialects, and circulated to an extent of one hundred and fifty million copies. That I call a boundless course! It is my comfort, when I look out upon the adversaries of the Word, that the greater part of all the inhabitants of the earth, if they can read at all can read the Word of God. Then it is spread in those languages which are the most widely understood in the world. I may mention the sacred language of the Mohammedans, the Arabic. In that a most excellent translation has appeared, and has already gone everywhere. From Fez and Morocco on through Africa, from Constantinople on through all Asia Minor to Persia, there are innumerable villages and cities, in which at least one copy of the Holy Scriptures is to be found. The Word of God is spread also through eastern Asia. For from thirty to forty years the Chinese have had the translation of the Bible made by Morrison, and to day they have a translation in a style as elegant as any in the world. I rejoice that the inhabitants of the world to-day, when they are able to read at all, can have access to the divine Word. Nor do I forget how many private Bible Societies the Lord has formed for himself. When our Rhineland missionaries came to Sumatra and Borneo, they found that the inhabitants had for the most part no writing at all; and as soon as any had learned writing, they wrote down sentence after sentence upon bamboo leaves, and took them to their woods, and read them to their whole tribes. That, too, is a kind of Bible Society, and one, indeed, which we will not despise. The Lord has many other ways and means to bring the Word into free course. It runs and makes itself felt everywhere as the living power of God. It has been said that a single chapter, that even one verse, has worked wonders. I remember how once in India a single chapter of the Holy Scriptures took mighty hold upon the inhabitants of a whole village. A man of the village had taken home a fragment of the Gospels, and read and re-read it several times. It made such an impression upon the village people that they resolved to destroy all their idols. Ten years afterwards a missionary reached them, and found, I will not say a Christian church, but the porch of a Christian church. Only one chapter, he heard to his great astonishment, had been publicly read and listened to again and again. He now opened to the village people the whole riches of the grace of God in Christ Jesus."