

## NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE state of matters seems to be becoming continually worse in Ireland, and open rebellion appears more and more likely in the not far off future.

It is very seldom that such a distressing accident takes place as that which occurred on Monday week when Mr. Robert Wilkes, of this city, with two of his children lost their lives. The sympathy with the bereaved wife and children has been wide spread and sincere, and no wonder.

THE Rev. Daniel Edward, Free Church minister of Breslau, writing on the subject of religious intolerance in Austria, states that the gendarmes appeared on a recent Sabbath in a Presbyterian meeting-house in Nedwes and took down forty-one names, which means that hearers and minister would alike be heavily fined.

DEAN STANLEY was not equal to his opportunities when he performed the marriage ceremony of Prof. Tyndall. The Dean should have asked the groom: "Do you take this authropoid to be your co-ordinate, to love with your nerve centres, to cherish with your whole cellular tissue, until a final molecular disturbance shall resolve its organism into its primitive atoms?"

FROM the report on statistics, presented at the late meeting of the Presbyterian Synod of Jamaica, in connection with the United Presbyterian Church, Scotland, it appears that there are now thirty-nine stations connected with that mission; that during the past year 754 persons had been admitted or restored to fellowship; that the members in full communion at the close of the year were 6,960, an increase of 267 over the previous year; that the number of candidates for Church fellowship was 1,425 and the attendance of young people at the Sabbath classes was 4,862. The money raised in the different congregations for religious purposes was £4,182, and the number of pupils at sixty week-day schools connected with, and supported by, the missions was 4,559. Yet some people are continually saying that missions of this kind are not successful and effect no good!

EDMUND YATES says that "London just now is presenting a *fac simile* of the social conditions and incidents which existed in Rome less than a score of centuries ago." The end in Rome was the complete corruption of society and the decay of the empire. Are we to pass through a similar process and reach a similar end in modern days? Unless Christianity prevent such a result there is no reason why any other should be expected. But, while a certain section of London "society" may be as bad as was that of Rome in the first century, we more than doubt if the evil is so widespread or so all-pervading as it was then, even though morality is voted by many to be an old-fashioned fraud, and decency is too often turned out of doors. Fashionable harlots have not yet everything their own way in London's so-called "best society," though things tend pretty much in that direction.

MR. JOHN RUSKIN administered a test to Darwinism after his own fashion. He went to Mr. Darwin's work for the law which regulates the distribution of colour in the peacock's feather. He says that he was informed that peacocks have grown to be peacocks out of brown pheasants, because the young feminine brown pheasants like fine feathers—just as a maiden of the period considers a suit of white cricket flannel on a young man "perfectly lovely." Whereupon Mr. Ruskin argued, "Then either there was a distinct species of brown pheasants originally born with a fine taste for fine feathers, and therefore with remarkable eyes in their heads—which would be a much more wonderful distinction of species than being born with remarkable eyes in their tails—or else all pheasants would have been peacocks by this time." So Mr. Ruskin dismissed Mr. Darwin and evolution,

THE following is given by "Whittaker's Almanac" as the extent and population of the British Empire at the beginning of 1880: Great Britain and Ireland, area in square miles, 121,115; population, 35,590,000. Indian possessions, etc., area in square miles, 1,558,354; population, 251,000,000. Other eastern possessions, area in square miles, 30,000; population, 3,200,000. Australasia, area in square miles, 3,173,370; population, 2,500,000. North America, area in square miles, 3,620,500; population, 4,000,000. Guiana, etc., area in square miles, 100,000; population, 200,000. Africa, area in square miles, 12,707; population, 1,500,000. West Indies, etc., area in square miles, 12,107; population, 1,140,000. European possessions, area in square miles, 120; population, 160,000. Various settlements, area in square miles, 96,871; population, 200,000. Totals, area in square miles, 8,981,197; population, 379,400,000. The same authority says: "This table, short as it is, presents a result unparalleled in this world's history. The British Empire is grander than those of Greece or Rome, or any other country. And it may be safely asserted that its rule is more beneficial."

THE tiresome nonsense that is so often heard about murderers, and the idiotic sympathy often got up for them when they are awaiting trial or under sentence of death are well rebuked in the following sentences, from the New York "Evening Post": "Not long since two burglars, armed to the teeth, broke into a gentleman's house at Bay Ridge. An alarm was given; the men were invited to surrender, the house having been surrounded. They were fired upon as they attempted to fight their way out, and both of them were killed. This was an awful and summary retribution visited upon the law breakers. But the verdict of the community, without exception, was that they were served quite right. The owner defended his property and his personal safety by taking life, and he was thoroughly sustained by public opinion. If one of these burglars had been surprised in his midnight prowling, and had slain the owner of the property, and had been caught, tried, condemned, and reprieved, he might have been alive to-day, a prosperous gentleman. He would have been able to plead that he did not intend to kill anybody, merely to rob the house; and multitudes of well-meaning, weak people would persuade themselves that he was a poor unfortunate whose life should be saved, if possible, and who, in any event, should be petted and delicately tended if he must go to the gallows. The householder kills the murderous burglar, and his act is applauded. The law hangs the murderer, and silly people weep."

THE "Christian at Work" utters some sensible comments on the treatment which known murderers receive. It calls for a legislative investigation of the conditions which make it a fact that only four per cent. of that class suffer capital punishment. It requires, secondly, a revision of the laws of such a character as would be influential in preventing crime. Thirdly, it declares that "all capital cases of trial and appeal should take precedence of all pending cases." And fourthly, it exclaims: "An immediate stop should be put to the pampering and glorification of this criminal class; and the first step should be taken by the chief transgressors—the daily press, which almost daily from the hour of sentence report the murderer's conversations, compliments, jokes, prayers, letters, and even tell us what particular article he ate for dinner and how much coffee he drank—all this, until the coroner holds his inquest." Wealth and political favour seem to be the most powerful shields of the offender, we would answer; but these are wonderfully reinforced by public indifference or a sentiment really opposed to the death penalty. Such a revision of the laws as is demanded would, of course, include legal prohibition. The fourth position assumed by our exchange is invulnerable; but the reform in the press must proceed from the managers and the reading public. Even the "Tribune" devoted nearly a column of fine type to an account of Balbo's last hours. The editor doubtless found it a repulsive thing to do; but

the "Tribune" must be read, and New Yorkers like such trash.

THE following are the more prominent deputies from the Presbyterian Church (North) of the United States to the Pan-Presbyterian Council: Ministers—William Adams, D.D., LL.D.; John Hall, D.D.; Thomas S. Hastings, D.D.; Henry A. Nelson, D.D.; William H. Green, D.D., LL.D.; Villeroy Reed, D.D.; Henry A. Boardman, D.D.; George Musgrave, D.D., LL.D.; Thomas J. Shepherd, D.D.; J. T. Smith, D.D.; James L. Brownson, D.D.; Arthur Mitchell, D.D.; Joseph F. Tuttle, D.D.; Thomas H. Skinner, D.D.; Arthur T. Pierson, D.D.; and Aaron L. Lind-sley, D.D. Ruling Elders—The Hon. William Strong, LL.D., Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States; The Hon. Thomas W. Ferry, ex-President of the United States Senate; George B. McClellan, LL.D., Governor of New Jersey; Professor Stephen Alexander, LL.D.; Hon. Stanley Matthews, LL.D.; Hon. Benjamin Harrison; Hon. James Richardson; Hon. L. B. Parsons; Professor Ormon Beatty, LL.D.; Hon. Joseph Allison, LL.D.; Hon. Theodore W. Dwight, LL.D., and Hon. Edwin D. Morgan. Many are asking what this Council is going to do. It will hear essays on various topics, reports from committees, and engage in discussion. The list of subjects proposed is a long one. In theology there are to be papers on Inspiration, Authenticity, and Interpretation of Scriptures; the Vicarious Sacrifice of Christ; Future Retribution; Modern Theological Thought; Theology of the Reformed Church; Religious Science and Philosophy; Modern Infidelity. In Ecclesiology: Christian Life and Worship; Principles of Presbyterianism; Ruling Elders; Creeds and Confessions; Bible Revision; Presbyterianism and Education; Presbyterianism and Liberty; Presbyterian Catholicity; Admission to Sealing Ordinances; Church Discipline; Systematic Beneficence; Support of Ministers; Pastoral and Parochial Visitation; Training of Candidates for Ministry. Among practical subjects are: Religion in Secular Affairs; Family Religion and Training of Young; Application of Gospel to Employers and Employed; Christianity the Friend of the Working Classes; Sabbath Schools, their Use and Abuse; Sabbath Observance; Temperance; Popular Amusements; Revivals of Religion; Personal Religion. Foreign missions, church extension, evangelists and evangelistic work will receive special attention, and reports on the state of religion in the various countries represented will be given. Among the reports of committees to be presented, that of the Committee on Consensus of Creeds of the bodies composing the Alliance. It may be well to quote the instructions of the Council held in Edinburgh to this committee, of which Dr. Schaff, of New York, is chairman. They are as follows: "That this Council appoint a committee with instructions to prepare a report to be laid before the next General Council, shewing, in point of fact: (1) What are the existing creeds and confessions of the churches composing this Alliance, and what have been their previous creeds and confessions, with any modifications thereupon, and the dates and occasions of the same, and the Reformation to the present day. (2) What are the existing formulas of subscription, if any, and what have been the previous formulas of subscription used in those churches in connection with their creeds and confessions. (3) How far has individual adherence to those creeds, by subscription or otherwise, been required from the ministers, elders, or other office-bearers respectively, and also from the private members of the same. And the Council authorize the committee to correspond with the members of the several Churches throughout the world who may be able to give information; and they enjoin the committee, in submitting their report, not to accompany it either with any comparative estimate of those creeds, or with any critical remarks upon their respective value, expediency, or efficiency." It is probable that the question of co-operation in some foreign mission scheme, as proposed by Dr. Duff, will be discussed; but Dr. Blaikie thinks the time has not yet come for such co-operation.