

The Canadian Independent.

"ONE IS YOUR MASTER, EVEN CHRIST, AND ALL YE ARE BRETHREN."

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Topics of the Week.

A PARIS despatch says the Minister of the Interior has told the Prefects to make a clear distinction between the Jesuit and other unauthorized orders. The Jesuits are not to be invited like others to have themselves authorized, but are ordered to dissolve, and by the 30th of June the company of Jesuits must disappear and evacuate their establishment. The other unauthorized orders will receive, before the 30th inst., official summons to declare whether they intend submitting to the decrees.

It would seem as if a wave of suicidal mania were passing over this and other countries at present. There is scarcely a day without its record of attempts of the kind, successful or unsuccessful. And what is strange, the majority of these occurrences seem to take place in the country, where it is generally supposed people are peculiarly healthy, happy, and prosperous. How is this? Has the new philosophy and the decay of vital goodness anything to do with it? Or are all who make such attempts to be regarded as really insane and consequently irresponsible? It shews something at any rate far wrong some way.

A CORRESPONDENT of the "Western Christian Advocate," writing from Edwards Co., Ill., tells what it has done in that county. The correspondent writes as follows: "There has been no place for eighteen years where a man could buy intoxicating liquors as a beverage. On a recent visit to Albion, a seat of justice, I learned some facts in reference to the subject that are worth knowing, which would settle some questions satisfactorily to everybody, unless it would be to whiskey sellers and political demagogues. Here are the facts. The terms of court in that county are from two to three days in length. The imprisonments in the county gaol are from one to two persons in a period of five or six years. Only one person has gone to the State prison from that county, and he went outside of the county and got drunk, went home and killed his wife. But little litigation is had before justices of the peace. The people are not in debt. In May, 1879, there were but two mortgages on record in the county. The poor expenses of the county are but \$500 a year, while in a neighbouring county, only half as large, where they sell liquors, it is \$6,000 a year. The taxes assessed and paid are 33 per cent. less than in any county in Illinois. A large per cent. of the citizens are German and English. A very large per cent. of the people are religious. I visited that county last May and saw great evidence of thrift. I found Albion a quiet town, no billiard saloons, no horseshoe pitching, no store-box whittling. When men come to town they come because they have business. I was impressed with the thought that these were good places to live in."

DURING the past two or three years the Swedish missionaries in Abyssinia have encountered many obstacles and much persecution. Many of them have fallen by disease and violence, and the others have been driven from one place to another, and their labours hindered in every possible way. The latest news from the unfortunate mission states that last year Mr. Soensson and Mr. Carlsson and their colleagues had an interview with King John, who received them courteously and provided them with quarters and food. The missionaries presented him—when at last they had permission to state their request—with a watch and an umbrella, with which he was much pleased. But, in response to their request to be allowed to preach the Gospel, he gave an unfavourable answer.

He said he could not allow them to teach in the country, because he did not want two sorts of Gospels. Abyssinia had been Christian 250 years. The Falashes he had assigned to Mr. Flad's disciples; the Comanties and Wantes he was teaching himself. In conclusion, he told the missionaries to return to their own country and teach the Falashes and heathen there. He ordered them away at once and forbade them to stop anywhere along the road more than one night. The missionaries had a long and wearisome journey, and were badly treated by the people, because of the king's contemptuous dismissal of them. They returned to Massowa, the rest of the missionary force residing at Mensa. At last accounts, those at Mensa were fearing an assault by the rebel Waldo Mikael's forces, and those at Massowa a raid by the Mohammedan governor of Hamazan.

JAMES ABRAHAM GARFIELD, the Republican nominee for President, is a striking illustration of the possibilities of American citizenship. Born of poor parents, on the 19th of November, 1831, in the township of Orange, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, with none of the connections, social or pecuniary, with which to facilitate him in life, his early career was characterized by many hardships and heart-burnings. But he was industrious, ambitious, and studious; and, in order to acquire the means of getting an education, worked successively at the carpenter's bench, on the farm, and finally, on the Ohio Canal, the means thus acquired enabling him to attend an academy, preparatory to entering the junior class in Williams College, which he did in his twenty-third year. He graduated from that institution in 1856, and subsequently connected himself with Hiram College, in Portage County, Ohio, as instructor of the ancient languages, and afterwards became its president. While still acting as president of the College, he was elected, in 1860, to the State Senate. At the breaking out of the war, in 1861, he became colonel of the Forty-second Regiment of Ohio Volunteers, an infantry regiment, many of the soldiers in which had been his former students. For his conspicuous military service at the Battle of Chickamauga he was promoted to a major-generalship, and while still in the field, his constituents, without consulting him, placed him in nomination to succeed Joshua R. Giddings in the National House of Representatives. He was duly elected, and took his seat in 1863, where he has remained ever since. He was elected to the United States Senate by the last legislature of Ohio, to succeed the Hon. A. G. Thurman, Democrat, whose term of office expires on the 4th of March, 1881.

VERY serious charges, we are sorry to say, have been made against the missionaries of the Church of Scotland at Blantyre Station near Lake Nyassa, Central Africa. These charges, of which painful particulars are given, have been printed in pamphlet form in London, by a Mr. Chirnside, and have been reproduced in the British press. It is alleged that the missionaries have taken it upon themselves to try and sentence two natives for the murder of a native woman, and that a habit of "horrible flogging and inhuman imprisonment" has been in force at the station. The chairman of the Committee on Foreign Missions has made a statement to the Assembly, giving such facts as are in possession of the Committee. He admitted that the murderers had been tried, Dr. Machlin presided over a jury of head men of the villages, who pronounced a verdict of guilty. The natives demanded the death penalty on the offenders; but the missionaries hesitated to pronounce it until one of the murderers escaped, when the other was shot. The Committee, on receiving an account of these facts expressed the "deepest distress" at hearing that the missionaries

had thought it necessary to take into their own hands the power of life and death, disavowed all responsibility for the matter, and forbade the repetition of such an act. In regard to the charges of flogging and inhuman imprisonment the chairman said: "These charges must be thoroughly sifted. Meanwhile, they were incredible. It is true there have been cases of corporal punishment. The first was in 1877, when Mr. James Stewart was in charge. The Committee believe the instances to have been rare." The Assembly, seeing the gravity of the case, directed that a special commissioner be sent out to make an investigation. The good name of missions is involved in these charges, and if they are established, the missionaries at Blantyre should be immediately removed and their act condemned by all friends of missions and of Africa.

THE eighty-first anniversary of the Religious Tract Society finds that noble organization increasingly prosperous and useful. We learn from the report that during the year the total circulation from the home depot reached 65,616,690, of which 27,216,190 were tracts, being an increase upon the previous year of 5,274,940. The issues from foreign depots were estimated at 12,000,000, making a total circulation of 77,616,690, and of 1,930,958,440 since the formation of the Society. These are wonderful figures. One tract has often accomplished incalculable good. What measureless benefits must have flowed from this vast array! The total amount received from sales, missionary receipts, and all other sources was over \$750,000, and the total expenditure somewhat less, leaving a balance in favour of the Society of about \$13,000. It is worthy of remark that the total amount received from subscriptions and other contributions, amounting to nearly \$125,000, was available for the missionary objects of the society, without any deductions. The missionary expenditure exceeded \$200,000, and consisted of foreign money grants, foreign grants of paper, electrotypes and publications, grants to emigrants, to domestic applicants for tracts, circulating libraries, school libraries, seamen's libraries, prison, police, lighthouse, coastguard, and workhouse libraries, and grants to colporteurs. There is not a single department of Home Missionary work which has not thus received invaluable assistance. The Tract Society has one peculiar and valuable feature. It has two departments, one publishing, conducted on strictest business principles; the other missionary, which is, as in other societies, benevolent. The affairs of the Society are so well conducted that last year the publishing department, after paying the entire management of the Society, yielded \$75,000, which were devoted to its benevolent missionary operations. Besides its work in England and English-speaking lands, the Tract Society is carrying on extensive operations in foreign countries. In France it has published a new series of tracts in connection with Mr. McAll's mission. In Spain it has started a new periodical for the educated classes. In Italy it has published important theological works and distributed large numbers of tracts among the soldiers. It has assisted an Evangelical periodical in Servia, published a work on Christian Evidences and numerous tracts in Bulgaria. In Syria a new illustrated periodical in Arabic has been started. In China, Japan, and India it is doing immense service in forming a pure and Christian vernacular literature. These are but samples of its good works. The press is being nobly utilized. Through its instrumentality Christians are only beginning to awake to a sense of their opportunity and their responsibility in this respect; but there is already grand promise of a future brighter and more powerful for good than any age the world has seen.