

# The Canadian Independent.

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

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## Topics of the Week.

THE Bishop of London, determined to enforce the sentence of sequestration against Ritualist Mackonochie, caused a notice to be affixed to the church door giving notice of the terms of the sentence and of the appointment of an officer to receive the moneys of the church; but indignant hands tore it down immediately.

WHEN everybody was rejoicing at the near prospect of the wretched Afghan war being finally and satisfactorily disposed of, news has come of a great slaughter of British troops in the neighbourhood of Candahar. This may complicate matters very materially. Of course there will have to be another grand "vindication" of British supremacy, a good many more valuable lives sacrificed, and still more treasure expended. Who shall say what may be the end? The only comfort is that the Lord reigns, and that, as of old, He can bring good out of the most gigantic blunders and the greatest crimes, and that He will eventually make even the huge impostures of "gunpowder and glory," "scientific frontiers," and "survivals of the fittest" to work out His own purposes and help forward His own cause.

THE "Whitehall Review" has the following sensible remarks about another foolish man, though one not exactly in the same line of folly with Dr. Tanner: "An infidel colonel of volunteers, named Robert Ingersoll, is making the warm weather in New York much warmer by delivering a series of Sunday evening lectures at a theatre, in which religion is ridiculed and attacked with scarcely any limit of epithet or imagery. The gallant colonel boasts that he has defied the Almighty for years, and has never been harmed by Him. This reminds us of the reply made at the Savage Club by an ex-clergyman named Barton to poor Tom Robertson, who was indulging in a somewhat similar style of idle talk. 'You forget, Tom,' said Barton, 'that the Almighty is capable of infinite contempt as well as of infinite justice.'"

THE English "Nonconformist" gives a report of a remarkable series of services held at Antananarivo, the capital of Madagascar, connected with the dedication of a new church erected within the Palace enclosure. The church has been built for the convenience of the Queen and the court, and has become a necessity since Christianity has been embraced by the royal family. On the day of dedication, April 8, two services were held, attended by the Queen and her courtiers, the Prime Minister giving an address upon the progress of the Gospel in Madagascar, holding in his hand one of the first Bibles printed in the Malagasy language. For fourteen days following the dedication special services were held in the church, attended by the Queen and Prime Minister, and multitudes of people. Isaiah's prophecy concerning the church, that "queens shall be thy nursing mothers," has never been more literally fulfilled than at present in Madagascar.

THE New York "Independent" gives the following as the "Apostates' Creed," and really it is so near the truth that it can scarcely be called a burlesque of much of the childish unintelligible jargon that passes muster as philosophy with a good number in the present day: "I believe in the chaotic Nebula, self-existent Evolver of heaven and earth, and in the differentiation of its original homogeneous Mass, its first begotten Product, which was self-formed into separate worlds; divided into land and water; self-organized into plants and animals; reproduced in like species;

further developed into higher orders; and finally refined, rationalized, and perfected in Man. He descended from the Monkey, ascended to the Philosopher, and sitteth down in the rites and customs of Civilization, under the laws of a developing Sociology. From thence he shall come again, by the disintegration of the culminated Heterogeneousness, back to the original Homogeneousness of Chaos. I believe in the wholly impersonal Absolute, the wholly un-Catholic Church, the Disunion of the Saints, the survival of the Fittest, the Persistence of Force, the Dispersion of the Body, and in Death Everlasting."

THE outlook in France is thus described by "Evangelical Christendom": "Atheism, clericalism, and Protestantism are in full conflict, and the clashing and flashing of swords are heard and seen more than heretofore, thanks to the freedom to print, meet, and lecture, granted almost universally. Hitherto the noise of the battle seems to be above the heads of the great mass of the people. Millions of quiet souls hear it not, or if they do, impatiently wonder what it is all about; and millions more shrug their shoulders and ask, Cannot we be let alone? Yet the long persevering sowing that has been going on for years has, in many instances prepared soil where souls are ready to hear and live. Some places where crowded meetings have taken place and Romanism has been demolished, have turned a cold shoulder to the humble colporteurs with the Bible and Christian books. Some, on the contrary, where Christ has been exalted, and a clear gospel proclaimed, have willingly read, studied, and eventually called for instruction. In some places the sale of Scriptures after the lectures has been large, and followed with good result; in others the effect has been the contrary, enemies having suggested mercenary motives in the sale.

IT is thus the Chicago "Interior" discourses on the manner in which some "advanced thinkers" in Scotland are said to be trying to indoctrinate the Scottish people with German philosophy and religious negations: "It has been stated often that the Scotch dominies are running off after German philosophy, and that is the occasion of the trouble in their three churches, the Established, Free and United. If so, they will get over it shortly. Dr. Tanner's diet of nothing is luxury itself compared with the transcendental chaff of the Dutch metaphysical philosophers. A soap-bubble blown in the sunshine is solidity compared with 'Hegel's Immanent Dialectic;' and the whole school of dreamers, critics included, are of the same type. If the professors and preachers are amusing themselves with philosophic bubble-blowing there will be a reaction. In the first place, the rank and file of the Scottish churches, and churches generally, have no time for so much philosophic study as would enable them to appreciate the destructive critics and the transcendentalists, and if they had there are but a small proportion of them who have either capacity or taste for such studies. In the second place, they offer nothing but intellectual confusion and spiritual starvation. The young Scotch students will find the work of indoctrinating the people with their new ideas to be up-hill work—work which will neither bring profit to the people nor stipends to the pulpits."

WE in Toronto have managed to improvise a new way of Sabbath-breaking which is apparently thought to answer all purposes, and give a certain aroma of piety to the whole proceeding. A well-known tavern-keeper on the Island has secured the services of popular clergymen for a Sabbath afternoon service in his hotel. This necessitates the running of the Sunday steamers, and as of course all the passengers will be

anxious to attend religious service it will, it is thought, come all right, for it is expected to give at once a great impetus to the traffic of the boats, the piety of the pilgrims, and the moderate yet extensive and necessary sale of the "lager," for purposes of course simply of refreshment and temperance, and consequently all will be pleased. Curious to think a good many are anything but satisfied. But then those "wretched bigots" (we think that is the phrase) "are so unreasonable." It was a very astute movement on the part of the taverner at any rate—a big advertisement both of his place and his wares. Whether as much can be said of the other part of the arrangement is not so clear. This, however, is evident. We have it now laid down by popular clerical authority that after canonical hours the religious aspect of the Sabbath is over, and the more people give themselves to relaxation and pleasure-seeking so much the better. We more than doubt if the people of Toronto and Ontario are prepared for this phase of "advanced thinking" and corresponding practice—at least as yet.

THE native Christians of China are like European or American Christians in some respects. They are not all consistent Christians, nor do they always attain to the highest Christian character. Still they are usually devoted, conscientious church members, and are full of gratitude to the missionaries and to the churches which send and support them. The Rev. Mr. Sadler, of the London Society, writes from the Amoy Mission as follows: "As a rule we cannot expect from Chinese converts such rich experiences of divine grace and power as delight the hearts of our brethren at home. Our inquirers are catechumens. All the 'inquiring' has to be done by us, and usually with a view to instruction; still, as they advance to membership and the more select become office-bearers our hearts are sometimes melted by the clear indication of the Holy Spirit's working. At one time, some who have been under severe discipline come to us, giving evidence that there has been a sifting and a winnowing amongst them, leaving the faithful few (to use their own words) 'clinging to the Lord's feet.' At another, misdemeanors in the conduct of a preacher causes his fellow-preachers to gather round him in tearful supplication that he may be brought to a better mind. Proofs are given that the coming of the missionary is looked forward to as a good time for obtaining refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Deep sorrow is evinced over those who bring shame on the brotherhood, and corresponding joy when any are made alive unto God. A father will go a long way, as men did of old, to seek Jesus, and ask for prayer for his son, afflicted with sore mental disorder. Great tenderness for each other's distresses is sometimes produced by the Gospel, not only for fellow-Christians, but for those outside the fold. The national clannishness of the people is being sanctified, and, where one did not expect it, mutual love is evoked. Out of their deep poverty many support the ordinances of religion. Without a bed-covering for themselves, they will try to provide one for their preacher. And, though their meals may be plain, they will sometimes make a feast for him. And all in the midst of the hideous state and circumstances of China—debts and dunning, undying quarrels, innumerable diseases, cruel wrongs practised on children, women crushed, those willing to escape from gambling frequently enthralled, the Sabbath opposed by all the institutions of the country, family life a terror, social life all hard, mendacious, selfish, and a paternal (?) government built upon might against right. Let the self-denying friends of China missions know that the word they send of rest to the weary and heavy-laden is not less sweet here than when first uttered by the Lord."