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'ONE IS YOUR MASTER, EVEN CHRIST, AND ALL YE ARE BROTHERS.'

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Current Topics.

—Arrangements have been made for the erection of a statue of Dr. Norman Macleod, near the Barony Church, Glasgow.

—Forty-four Mormon missionaries are on their way to Wales, on a proselyting expedition. They will work in the mining and iron districts of Wales.

—The possibilities of Methodist discipline as administered in a colored church are tremendous. A presiding elder of a Western African Methodist Conference was suspended from the ministry one day, expelled the next, restored to the ministry on the third day, and reappointed presiding elder on the fourth. If there had been a general conference handy, he might have been elected bishop on the next.

—The latest report of the minister of education shows a steady increase of public instruction throughout the Japanese Empire. The school attendance is now 35,000,000, the males, however, unduly preponderating. There is a good deal to do yet in the proper payments of teachers in Japan. School teachers' wages in that country are rather infinitesimal, something less than \$25 a year sufficing for the average schoolmaster.

—The "Salvation Army" was recently attacked by a mob in the streets of Enniskillen, Ireland, and stoned; in consequence of which the authorities forbade the Army to hold open-air meetings. The "Salvation Army" has rivals, it seems, in the "Salvation Mission" and the "Hallelujah Army." Each publicly disavows connection with either of the others. A detachment of the "Army" in Paris was assaulted by roughs, who mistook them for Jesuits in disguise. The meetings have been prohibited.

—A special effort is about to be made to raise the sum of £12,000, needed by the growing prosperity and demands of the Methodist New Connection at home and abroad. A circular has been issued by the President of the Conference, the Rev. Dr. Cocker, of Sheffield, stating that influential deputations will shortly visit the circuits on behalf of this object. The Wesleyan Methodist Thanksgiving Fund has now reached a total of £193,000, of which amount £164,000 has actually been paid into the hands of the general treasurers. It is intended to close the lists in August, before which time it is expected that the amount proposed to be raised—300,000 guineas—will be realized.

—The Free Church of Italy, according to the tenth annual report, made little advance in the past year. There are fourteen ordained ministers, a decrease of one; fifteen evangelists; forty-eight elders, a loss of one; seventy deacons, a gain of three; 1,780 communicants, a loss of twenty; 254 catechumens, a loss of eleven; thirty-five churches, a decrease of one; thirty-seven outstations, a gain of two. There was an increase of nearly 3,000 francs in the collections, the total being 15,000. The receipts from all sources were 180,852 francs, and the expenditures 174,408. Of the receipts 32,961 francs were from America. The Report, the first signature to which

is Alessandro Gavazzi, speaks of "an eloquent sermon" by Gavazzi, "the powerful preaching of Gavazzi," "the indefatigable Gavazzi," "the valuable prelections of Mr. Gavazzi," etc.

—The opposers of the new hymnal of the Free Church of Scotland have succeeded, under the lead of Sir H. Moncreiff, in carrying a motion in the Edinburgh Free Presbytery for an overture to the General Assembly asking a year's delay in adopting the book. Sir Henry said he dreaded extremely the hasty approval of a book which contained hymns of Ritvalistic and Broad Church tendencies, and one of his supporters believed this matter of the hymn-book was more important and difficult than the composition of the Confession of Faith. An elder said that if certain hymns were admitted to the Church they would drive many people out of the Church altogether. Mr. Macaulay objected to a book which was framed so as to be an introduction to the use of a liturgy and instrumental music in the public worship of their Church.

The Barbadoes *Official Gazette* contains a copy of a Bill by which it is proposed to raise the annual grant from State funds to the Wesleyan Mission in that island from £700 to £1,400, on condition that the mission continues "to provide chapel accommodation in the island, not less than that now provided by them, to keep the chapels referred to in the petition in good order and repair, and to provide ministers, not fewer than seven in number, to serve in the chapels and attend the several ministrations and rites of the Wesleyan Communion." The proposed change is no doubt influenced by a desire to reduce rather than extend the interference of the State in religious affairs, but the whole matter is a scandal, to the removal of which we earnestly hope our Wesleyan friends will apply themselves before the Lord Mayor renews his motion in the House of Commons for the discontinuance of analogous grants to other religious bodies in the island of Ceylon.—*Non-conformist.*

—The fierceness and bitterness of religious animosities have received another illustration, on a small scale, by events which have recently occurred at Marsala, in Sicily. An agent of the Wesleyan Mission at Naples, under the superintendence of the Rev. T. W. S. Jones, has lately been placed in charge of the little Methodist community at Marsala, and appears to have shown ability and zeal in his work. At any rate, since his appointment in August last, the opposition to the Protestant movement, led by the priests, seems to have increased in violence and malignity. The priests lately secured the services of a Lenten preacher, of some notoriety as a bigot and a firebrand. His preaching appears to have been the means of stirring up the rough element in the population, and of inciting them to a furious attack upon the mission premises at Marsala. The mission agent narrowly escaped with his life, finding refuge on the roof of a neighboring house, while the premises of which he was in charge were sacked, and their furniture and contents burnt in the public street. The authorities on the spot seem for some time to have been powerless to quell the violence of the mob, and, in-

deed, it is suggested that the municipal officials lent a quasi-sanction to the proceedings. The communication from Mr. Jones, who writes from Naples, states that "the mob, after completing their work of vengeance, entered the cathedral in triumph, and were blessed by the clergy, and the arch-priest, the solemn benediction being given by the latter." It is gratifying to know that a Constitutional King, not the Pope, is in the ascendant now in Italy, and immediately upon these events being officially reported in Rome, steps were taken by the Government to secure freedom of worship and of conscience to the Protestants of Marsala.

—An article in Herzog's *Encyclopedia* gives the following statements: "The total number of Jews throughout the earth is commonly reckoned at from six to eight millions. This estimate, however, is far too low. On the ground of information derived from many quarters, we reckon it at the lowest figure at twelve millions. We must remember that the science of statistics is yet in its infancy, and all who have experience of the work of collecting statistics are aware how difficult it is to ascertain the truth, and, in particular, statistics of religious persuasion are beset with difficulty. It is not difficult especially to see that there may be many more Israelites than official returns make apparent. The Jewish population of Europe has been given by a recent estimate as rather over five millions—one Jew to every fifty-five of the whole population; but this is decidedly below the mark. In Amsterdam alone there are 36,000 Jews; in Poland there are a million of Jews; in Africa, Algeria, Tunis, Fez, Morocco, are 100,000 Jews; and the lands of the Nile have them in multitudes. Statistical returns of Asia are extremely imperfect, but in Arabia, Persia, Afghanistan, India, there are large Jewish populations; and even China has a sprinkling of Israelites. A return of half a million is far too small for the United States of America; and there are Jews in Mexico, the West Indies, and the Brazils as well. In Palestine there is still a Jewish population of 16,000, in Jerusalem about 6,000, in Safed 3,000, in Tiberias 1,500, in Jaffa 300.

—The following statement shows one Israelite in—

Norway and Sweden	to 4,300 inhabitants,
Belgium	to 2,500 inhabitants.
Greece	to 560 inhabitants,
North America	to 75 inhabitants,
Italy and G. Britain	to 700 inhabitants,
France	to 800 inhabitants.

—By books and correspondence from the Transvaal, a good deal of light is being thrown upon the manners and customs of the little-understood Boers who, owing mainly to British ignorance and blundering, have of late been so much trouble to us. A point in their favor is thus referred to in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, apropos of what has recently happened at Potchefstroom, where the British garrison surrendered while the armistice was in force:—

"The Boer leaders, we are told, having discovered that Commandant Craije had forced the surrender after the armistice had been concluded, and while the garrison was in ignorance of the suspension of hostilities, offered to cancel the capitulation, restore the material of war, and permit

the garrison to reoccupy the position. General Wood has accepted their proposals, and Potchefstroom has been duly restored to its former occupants. It is a small thing, no doubt, but it is just such an act as might have been expected from a race which has sprung from the chivalrous Huguenots of Holland. The conscientiousness that prompted both the recognition of the wrong and the immediate restitution of the position unfairly seized, is too often absent from the dealings of States, either great or small; but in the Transvaal both sides appear to be courageous enough to admit their mistake when they find themselves in the wrong."

From another source, a Boston (U. S.) paper, we get some little insight into the religion of the Boers, whose tenets mainly coincide with those of the Dutch Reformed Church. The following is the testimony of the Rev. Mr. Aldir Grout, a missionary in the Transvaal region:—

"Their children are baptized in infancy, and in due time confirmed; hence all the population become members of the Church. So much do they think of their Church, its forms and customs, that they do not allow any man to administer its rites who is not able to give evidence that he has been regularly trained and is fully qualified for the office. Such a man is a Predikant, or minister, but a man of inferior fitness and qualities is allowed to preach to blacks or low whites and he is called a 'sendling' or missionary. When they proposed to make our missionary brother Lindley their minister, they would make no move to effect this till he had sent to the place and people where he was ordained and obtained certificates from them—his own assertion, or that of his fellow missionaries, not being sufficient. The Church has its Communion season once a quarter, and it is expected that every able-bodied person on the Church list will then appear in his place, even if he live many days' travel from the Church. They then 'span in' the large family waggon with water-proof cover, take in the whole family, old and young, and travel to the church, where they 'span out' their oxen and live in the waggon over the Sabbath. They get the young children baptized and the older ones confirmed, receive together the Holy Communion, and receive the benediction of the minister and return home. They place great value on all the services and rites of the Church. They carry the Christian idea so far at times as to apply it to the cattle, calling their own cattle Christian, in opposition to the heathen cattle belonging to black people."

But there is a darker side to the picture, for Mr. Grout adds:—"The Boers have great contempt for black people, thinking them only fit to be the slaves or servants to the whites, and not capable of becoming Christians—opposing all efforts for the blacks designed to civilise or Christianise them. They do not allow the blacks to attend worship with them in their church, or favor their attending worship at all." This view is, alas! too fully confirmed by Dr. Moffat, his son, and other missionaries in that far-off region.