

The Canadian Independent.

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

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Topics of the Week.

THE Committee of the King's College Lectures to Ladies in London are about to found a permanent college for the higher education of women. The classes which the Committee have provided for during the last three years are very large, and maintained with little variation, still averaging upwards of 500 in each term.

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. It should be remembered that Madagascar has been Christianized by the agency of the London Missionary Society, which though unsectarian is, for the most part, sustained and directed by the Congregationalists of England. Would it not be well if we in Canada could form an auxiliary society to that long established institution?

THE report of the Committee of the Privy Council on Education in Scotland, for the year ending August 31st, 1879, has lately been issued. From this it appears that during the year referred to the inspectors visited 3,003 day schools, to which annual grants were made, containing 3,313 departments under separate teachers, and furnishing accommodation at eight square feet of superficial area per child for 585,629 scholars. There were on the registers of these schools the names of 508,452 children, of whom 108,863 were (infants) under seven years of age. 363,143 were between seven and thirteen, and 36,446 were above thirteen. The accommodation has increased by 22,148 school places; the scholars on the register by 13,964; those present at inspection by 8,780, and the average attendance by 7,852, while the number of children individually examined has increased by 10,017 (or 3.62 per cent.). The local effort which has resulted in this improvement may be measured by the continued support derived from voluntary subscriptions (£39,369 from 9,104 subscribers), and by an advance in the contributions from rates to the maintenance of public schools from £207,308 to £207,577. The annual Government grants to elementary day schools rose in the year from £314,506 to £325,754, or from 16s. 8d. to 16s. 11d. per scholar in average attendance, while the grant for the current financial year is estimated at 17s. 8d. per scholar. The night schools examined during the year were 271 in number; 13,790 scholars above twelve years of age were on an average in attendance each night; 15,090 scholars were qualified for examination by having made the required number of attendances during the night-school session. Of these 12,270 were actually examined, and out of every 100 scholars so examined 95.25 passed in reading, 85.05 in writing, and 81.14 in arithmetic.

A VERY painful case of seduction and death has been before the public for some short time past. Of course the details have been given with the usual

offensive minuteness and on the old plea of its being for the public good. No possible punishment can be too severe for the principal offender in such cases. Ordinary murder is almost a bagatelle in comparison. But the evil will not be stayed except by the tone of female virtue being generally so raised as to make the wiles of the seducer all but powerless, and at the same time by public opinion on the whole subject being so quickened and purified as to make such conduct dangerous and disgraceful in the extreme. As things are at present what can be done? Some of the most prominent men in the country are drunkards and debauchees, and even rather glory in their shame. Young men point to them as standing excuses for, and as encouragements in, the rather wild ways they follow. Notoriously, homes have been wrecked and lives have been blasted by those who socially hold their heads high and have brows of brass which know not how to blush. What does public opinion say to and of them? Nothing worth while, except, perhaps, to tell them good-naturedly that they are very "naughty." Religious people condone their offences, nay, hunt round for some excuse which may almost justify their conduct. So long as such a state of things continues how is it possible to convince young rakes that there is anything very wrong in their conduct, or anything very mistaken, not to say infamous, in the celebrated public statement of Major Yelverton during the notorious and disgraceful Longworth trial, to the effect that the criminality of seduction all depended upon the rank of the person seduced? Whether the Major's theory is held to any great extent in Canada we shall not say. That his practice is often followed is too notorious to need either argument or illustration. Let the victimizer be treated socially with at least as great severity as the victim, and Restalism, with all its abominations, will be less heard of because less required.

THE temperance question is entering upon a very important and most encouraging phase of its onward progress. It is coming to be seriously and earnestly discussed at large public meetings, and the defenders of the liquor traffic are finding themselves obliged to put in an appearance and say all that is possible in support of their position and their conduct. They can no longer treat the whole movement with either silent contempt or insolent abuse. The time for that has passed. The matter is becoming altogether too serious, and public attention is too generally and too earnestly aroused to make the tactics of other days either safe or prudent. Time was, and not so long gone by, when total abstainers had to shew why they were what they professed to be, and to do so in the midst of a great deal of ridicule and insolent scorn. The tables are being turned, and now the "other side" finds itself constrained to shew cause for its opposite course of conduct. The discussions accordingly in Hamilton and elsewhere are all most encouraging indications of progress, and Mr. King Dodds himself, by his present position and efforts, a standing proof that the tide is rising and that the liquor trade feels itself to be in danger. More and more the Christian people of the country are realizing the gigantic evils of intemperance and are gathering their forces for its overthrow. The most thoughtful, intelligent, and religious portions of the community are becoming rapidly and instinctively total abstainers both in theory and practice. For ministers of the Gospel of any denomination to be anything else is now generally regarded as both singular and inconsistent; while those of them who still "drink in moderation" have a deprecating, apologetic air in defending their position which is as different as may be from the pitying and patronizing arrogance with which they were wont, not so long ago, to treat their "weaker brethren" who had a foolish ten-

dency in the teetotal direction. They can't, in short, help themselves. It seems as if it were in the very air, so that even those who "drink" most freely themselves have an instinctive feeling that it is better and more consistent like for the preachers of the Gospel to steer clear of intoxicants altogether and not to allow themselves in the use of even the most moderate quantities of such dangerous liquids. Some clergy men, of course, still protest, and may occasionally be heard talking rather wildly, and not without a certain measure of excitement, about the marriage at Cana. But the current is too strong for them and is always gathering force. We for our part should be glad to see the liquor dealers having a paid agent in every county of the Dominion. It would at once indicate progress and help forward the good cause immensely.

NOTHING could be more startling, and nothing surely ought to be more stimulating to God's people than the contrast presented between the amount of money annually contributed for the extension of the kingdom of righteousness and peace and love, and the all but fabulous sums every year expended by the nations of Europe—all professedly Christian though they be—in the maintenance and extension of armaments the very object of which is to be in readiness for a temporary repeal of the ten commandments, which actual war really amounts to. Recently in the House of Commons Mr. Richards stated the case as far as the cost of the armaments is concerned in the following terms: "The new edition of the 'Encyclopædia Britannica' under the word 'Europe' contained certain statements founded on elaborate statistical calculations which went to shew that between 1859 and 1874 there had been an addition to the armed forces of Europe of nearly two millions of men. Not long ago Lord Derby expressed his belief that there were 10,000,000 men trained to arms in Europe, and the 'Times' about the same period spoke of 12,000,000 men. In these estimates of course all the reserves were taken into account. It would be no exaggeration to say, however, that at any moment 4,000,000 men might be found under arms in Europe. It was obvious that the cost of such enormous armies was necessarily very great. A French statistician had estimated the total at £500,000,000 annually, a sum which included three items, of which the first was the actual amount extracted for warlike purposes by means of taxation; the second the loss occasioned by the withdrawal of so many men from industrial pursuits; and the third the sum lost by the non-productive employment of capital on warlike implements." Referring to this estimate, Mr. Gladstone said that he wished he could reduce it, but he added, "I cannot." In other words he did not think the cost of wars and the necessary preparation for them throughout long years of peace had been overestimated. The added remark of the Premier is significant and suggestive: "As a general rule the wars which have led to the creation of the national debts of the world have been chiefly reactionary and dynastic wars, and almost all of them wrong and unjust." On the other hand take the total yearly income of all the missionary societies in Great Britain, and to that add all that is raised on the European continent for the extension of the same cause of peace, good will and genuine brotherhood, and it will be found that the whole does not amount to £2,000,000; in short not one three-hundredth part of what is presented on the other side of the account. The same violent contrast is not presented by the state of matters on this side of the Atlantic. Still there is sufficient material even here for the inquiry whether after all the cause of Christ is being treated as its acknowledged importance evidently requires, and as a great many people are saying that they estimate it.