

# The Canadian Independent.

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

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## Topics of the Week.

THE English "Congregationalist," for January, publishes a portrait of Samuel Morley, Esq., M.P., and some of the papers notice this in words of deserved panegyric of the man. Few are worthier than he.

MANY of our readers will learn with sorrow of the death of the Rev. Dr. Bathgate, of Kilmarnock, Scotland. The event took place on the evening of Sunday, December 28th. He had preached to his congregation in Win'on Place church in the afternoon of that day. Dr. Bathgate had long been a leader in the Evangelical Union churches.

THE Woman's Board of Missions held its annual meeting in Springfield, Mass., on the 14th and 15th ult. It was reported that there are now in connection with this Board 20 branches, 865 auxiliary societies, and 560 mission circles for children. The treasurer reported the receipts of the year at \$73,793. This Board is doing a good work in aiding to send the Gospel to heathen lands.

IT seems that the Rev. David Macrae is meeting with success in his independent church in Dundee. It is said that the church will need a larger building than was originally designed. On a recent Sunday 114 new members were received and now there are over eleven hundred in fellowship. This fact is an indication of something, namely, that on Mr. Macrae's recommendation, the church has decided to use only unfermented wine at the communion table. It shews that there is a temperance sentiment in the church.

THE Continental Sabbath is an institution very different from what most English-speaking people have been accustomed to. We learn with pleasure that the recent Synod of the Evangelical Church of Prussia passed resolutions for the better observance of the Lord's day. It also adopted a memorial praying the Government to do away with certain secular work on that day. This is a move in the right direction. We hope that a sentiment will be developed throughout Germany that will give the people a day of rest.

THE native college at Malua, Samoa, in charge of Dr. Turner, is a most important institution. It numbers about one hundred students preparing for the Gospel ministry and other useful callings among their countrymen. This is doubtless the fountain whence flows most of the regenerating influences for Samoa. There are about two hundred acres of land belonging to the college (which of course belongs to the London Mission Society), and each married student is allowed to cultivate three acres, which in this tropical climate furnishes ample provision for him and his household.

THE General Association of New York in its last "minutes" reports 255 Congregational churches in that state and ten in Pennsylvania. This does not cover all the Congregational churches in the two states, by any means. The membership in these churches reaches 34,000; the benevolent contributions during the year amounted to \$55,300. Two new churches were formed and two received from Presbytery. Altogether the shewing is very good. Congregationalism would be numerically stronger in New York to-day, however, had it not been so extraordinarily catholic and liberal.

WE see from an English paper that the Congregational Year Book is out. The preface states that forms had been prepared for fuller statistics of the churches than had previously been obtained. An

effort was intended to get a statement of church membership and of contributions, and such things; but the Committee declined to sanction such a proceeding at present. As it is, the returns are very unsatisfactory. No one can tell from the Year Book the numerical strength of Congregationalism in England. We hope that our conservative brethren across the water will take a leaf out of our book here before many years shall have passed.

A NEW denomination has been added to the already long list. "The Methodist Church" has come into existence in Philadelphia. It seems to be a break-off from the American Methodist Episcopal body, whose doctrines it adheres to. Its distinctive points are, one order in the ministry—differing in this from the Methodist Episcopal, which has two, the diaconate and eldership and practically a third, the episcopate—and the eligibility of women to the ministry. We had almost come to the conclusion that the world would see no more new sects; but it seems that there are sufficient reasons for further divisions. At least, so some people think. Well, it may be, that there will be, and that there must needs be, a breaking up of the old order of things, before there can be much of a fusion of the conglomerate ecclesiastical elements in the Christian world.

TO DAY, 160 missionary societies of Protestant Christendom have 2,500 missionaries in the various fields, with 20,000 native labourers and probably 700,000 communicants, and 1,650,000 native Christian adherents. Nearly, if not quite, \$7,000,000 are spent annually in this department of Christian work. 500,000 scholars are being taught in 12,000 mission schools. The Bible has been translated into 226 languages and dialects, and printed in nearly 400 versions. Many of these languages were first put into writing by the missionaries. Many countries were first explored by them; they, more than any others, have developed the resources, material and intellectual and spiritual, of the nations among whom they dwelt. With a world-wide co-operation, truly sublime, the Christian workers toil on. The great Christian army has now its camp fires lighted in almost every country on the face of the globe.

ROMAN CATHOLICISM cannot have made so many converts in England as have recently been claimed, for, according to the "Catholic Directory," which is issued under Cardinal Manning's auspices, there are only thirty-eight peers and forty-eight baronets. Lord Berr, Lord Bray and the Earl of Ashburnham are the latest additions. There are now 127 archbishops and bishops in Great Britain, Ireland and the colonies. The whole number of priests in Great Britain alone is 2,211, which according to popular estimates, is not twice that of little Malta, with its 150,000 inhabitants. When these figures are considered, the enormous strides boasted of in certain English papers as taken by the Church can hardly be worthy of apprehension, for the number of priests well indicates the number of parishioners. It is a curious fact that Catholicism is on the increase in Scotland. But this is chiefly, if not exclusively, due to the influx of Irish. Of Scottish converts to Popery except among the weaker minded of the gentry, there are few, if any.

M EMILE DE LAVEVEYE, in a letter to the "Non-conformist," says: "A reign of terror is being inaugurated. They (the priests) refuse all sacraments to the parents who send their children to the normal schools belonging to the State, or to the communal (primary), and also to the teachers of both sexes who continue to give instruction in them. The number of

people thus violently expelled from the Roman Catholic Church will be very considerable. In the large towns the priests will not push matters to an extreme, for fear of losing three-fourths of the population, but in the country districts they will persevere in the hope of attaining their end—namely, the ruin of the communal schools. What is to become, religiously speaking, of the families thus expelled from the Church? They will gradually sink into free thought (*libre pensee*)—in other words, into indifference and infidelity. Is not this, then, a fitting time for Protestantism to approach them? . . . Never have Protestant missions had such a chance of success, because the only issue open to the excommunicated Liberal, who does not forsake his faith, is to accept the Reformed faith."

WHEN the Germans entered into possession of the grounds and ruins once the establishment of the Knights of St. John at Jerusalem, a discovery was made of coins dating from the eighth to the tenth centuries of the Christian Era. An earthen lamp contained forty-one pieces of gold, and a vessel one hundred and eighteen silver medals, together worth about one hundred and twenty-five dollars in precious metal. Some of them were of great rarity, and a few of them hitherto unknown to collectors. Deposited at once in the Cabinet of the Berlin Museum, they are now briefly noticed by Dr. Ad. Ermann, in the "Zeitschrift" of the "Deutschen Palaestina-Vereins." Several belong to the period of the Omniade dynasty, whose coins have almost wholly disappeared. Many struck in Syria and Palestine are of peculiar interest. For example, whereas down to the present time only a single silver coin of Tiberias has been known, this collection embraces one of gold and another of silver, both dating about 320 of the Flight, or 931-2 A.D. Damascus is represented by a single *dirhem*; and *Hums* is elevated from the rank of copper currency alone to that of silver, by two silver pieces. Possibly Jerusalem is intended by the title *Filestin*, literally Palestina, borne by one silver and by several gold coins of the greatest rarity. Even Egyptian money found its way into this region, and contributes a large number of medals, of both silver and gold.

IN Protestant Germany the progress of absolute secularism has produced a reaction, but toward ecclesiastical domination rather than toward a devouter spiritual life. The recent Synod of the Evangelical Church of Prussia adopted, by a large majority, resolutions for the better observance of the Lord's day, a memorial praying the Government to abolish military musters, to limit railway traffic, and to cease secular instruction in the public schools on that day, and resolutions against intemperance, and recommending the adoption of the policy of the compulsory imprisonment of habitual drunkards in asylums provided for that purpose; all of which indicates a true revival of moral life, at least. But the resolutions providing for ecclesiastical discipline of members who do not bring their children to be baptized, or who are married without the rites of the Church, and for the discipline of ministers who even in private express opinions adverse to the creed of the Church, indicate a reaction against the religious indifferentism of Germany of not so healthy a character. Sceptical utterances, in or out of the pulpit, are to be checked, not by such regulations, but by a spirit of devout faith which will leave in the heart no scepticism to be uttered. These resolutions are as yet but indications of public sentiment; under the laws of Prussia they must first be submitted to the Minister of Religion, and after his approval must be sanctioned by the Emperor, who is the head of the Church.