

The Canadian Independent.

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

Vol. 29.]

TORONTO, THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 1881.

[New Series. No. 42

Current Topics.

—An altar of great beauty has been uncovered in excavating at Ostia in Italy. It has upon it illustrations of the birth of Romulus and Remus, sculptured in high relief.

In England the Roman Catholics in the past three years have gained 92 priests and 80 churches, having in all 1,962 priests and 1,175 churches. In Scotland they have gained 35 priests and 33 churches.

—A recent breach of promise case has attracted much attention in Edinburgh, as showing the efforts of the Romish priests to shape marriages according to their own desires, but the case was arranged privately, in time to prevent the details from becoming public.

—A society of Mormon girls, each pledged to marry only one man, has been broken up in Salt Lake City. It is said that five grand-daughters of Brigham Young belonged to it. If the women themselves will but take the right position the outlook is hopeful.

King John of Abyssinia will be crowned as Negus Negussim and Emperor of Ethiopia at Gondar, next month. At one time the city of Gondar had from fifty to one hundred churches and about 50,000 inhabitants. Its population numbers at present about 7,000.

—Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, who is exploring at Niveh and Babylon for the British Museum of London, has discovered an ancient Babylonian city, hitherto overlooked on the ancient canal called Nahr-Malka. He has found also many valuable inscriptions.

John Brown's Bible, which he read in prison, he gave to J. F. Blessing of Charlestown, Va. In it is written: "There is no commentary in the world so good in order to a right understanding of this blessed book as an honest, childlike and teachable spirit."

—Both houses of the Parliament of Brazil have adopted Article VIII. of the reform of the Constitution, "which gives to Protestants and their religion the same civil and political rights as the Catholics enjoy. In a word, the government has thrown the whole country open to the sowing of Gospel seed as never before."

—Mr. Carlyle left his estate of Craigenputtock, Dumfriesshire, paying about \$1,500 a year, to the University of Edinburgh for the founding of ten bursaries or scholarships, to be known, after his wife's father, as the "John Welsh" bursaries. Five are to be given for mathematical excellence and five for classical.

—It is estimated that of the one hundred and twenty thousand Mormons living in Utah nearly fifty thousand, men and women, are living in polygamous relations, while the rest, though not practising the system, believe in it. The Mormon leaders and priests encourage the practice. That this Government should tolerate the continuance of such an enormity is a burning shame.

—As showing the little interest that has been taken in the subject, it is stated that not more than a single page can be found on the pastor's work in the Sunday school in all the Yale Lectures

that are printed. But now that the demand begins to be made and reiterated for such work, and for better methods, there is no doubt whatever that more attention will be given to it by those who would naturally be looked to as leaders.

—The Romanists are advocating the starting of a new Catholic daily newspaper in New York, as they object to the secular newspapers, which, say they, foster a desire for scandal. The *Watchman* well replies that it is notorious that those papers most full of objectionable matter are those most favoring Romanists. Doubtless the daily press is opening the minds of the voters on the public school question and other matters, and if Patrick's vote is to be entirely controlled he must be confined to his own newspaper and to his own Bible.

—In the first fifty years of this century there were over 3,000,000 added to the Evangelical churches of the United States. The ensuing twenty years showed as large additions numerically as the preceding fifty. In the decade between 1870 and 1880 two-thirds as many additions to the churches were reported as in the previous twenty. In 1879 our population was estimated at 43,500,000, and the number of communicants in Evangelical churches had increased to 9,500,000, or one in five. While the population of the United States has augmented since 1800 nine times, the number of professing Christians has increased twenty seven times.—*Rev. M. M. G. Dana, D. D., St. Paul.*

—Protestants generally believe that the world is growing better and religion more diffused. But such is not the fact, if we may judge from the Pope's Apostolic Letter appointing an ecumenical jubilee, or, as we should call it, fast. He says that "they who bear ill-will to the Catholic name are now growing more than usually insolent, in number, strength, and audacity of purpose," and that "the contagion of iniquity is creeping more and more through the body of the Christian Commonwealth, and becoming more propagated." As the Pope says so, no Catholics can well doubt it. We are glad that there is no religious obligation resting upon us to be pessimists.

The prosecution of Herr Moet, proprietor of the German paper, *Die Freiheit*, published in London, by the English Government, is an indication that the home of the oppressed is not to be turned into a plotting ground against foreign governments, and especially that all hints of assassination of monarchs will be at once met with the strong arm of the law. This is to be rejoiced in, for however much all may be jealous of the preservation of the sacred rights of hospitality, no true Englishman will want his country to become the nursery of Nihilism and Communism.

—Mr. Collins, the head of the firm of William Collins and Son, well-known in this country, the Lord Provost of Glasgow, in an examination before the Select Committee of the House of Lords, said:—"There is a large district, inhabited entirely by working men, called Possil Park. There is a population of 6,000 people there, and there is one licensed grocer, and no public-house, and no crime.

There is one policeman, and no lock-up; but the superintendent told me yesterday that if there was a public-house they would require five police and a lock-up."

—At least twenty-nine commercial or exploring expeditions, to say nothing of missionary parties, are now moving from various quarters towards the interior of Africa. Business enterprises are being inaugurated, new lines of steamships established along the coast, and scores of commercial and scientific stations have been permanently occupied in regions which heretofore have rarely been visited by travellers. The Christian church in its various branches is doing much for the opening of Africa, but she must bestir herself greatly if she is to be in advance of commerce in reaching the native populations of the interior. *Missionary Herald.*

—The latest mails from West Africa state that the Rev. J. Milum, superintendent of Wesleyan missions in Yoruba and Popo District, has visited Porto Novo, Whydah, Abomey, and other places, and he reports that during his stay at Abomey the annual "customs" were being held. These were of the most horrible description, several hundred natives being killed in the most barbarous manner and offered in sacrifice. The "customs" were observed, notwithstanding the presence of Mr. Milum. Abomey is under the French protection, King Gelele being the reigning monarch. Mr. Milum had a conference with the king and the prince respecting the re-establishing of a mission house at Whydah.

—Cider has been placed in the category of intoxicating drinks by the Connecticut Legislature, and rightly, too, in the opinion of many. In the cider producing districts of the United States and Europe, the people are neither noted for health nor prosperity, which is attributed to the habits engendered by excessive cider drinking, while it is asserted by some that the desire for stronger liquor is provoked. As certain ciders are also very apt to disagree with some constitutions, it would appear by taking all things into consideration, to leave it alone or make vinegar out of it, though cider vinegar is a little too sharp for some people. Perhaps it would be better still to eat the apples, and when a country produces more than enough for its own use, export them. An apple in India, for instance, is regarded as great a luxury as grapes are in Canada in winter, if not more so. Send the apples to India instead of converting them into cider.

—Alexander II., the late Czar of Russia, was persuaded to adopt many devices to protect him from assassination. At one time he wore a chain breastplate under his tunic; but he could not bear its weight, so the expedient was adopted of causing his tunics to be padded with cotton wool, steeped in a preparation which rendered it, at least, knife-proof and difficult for even a bullet to pierce at long range. An attempt was made to poison the Czar, by sending him a petition covered with some noxious powder. After that he ceased to receive letters, papers, or petitions. For a similar reason, he gave up smoking, though he used to

like a cigar; and he drank no wine but from bottles uncorked in his presence. In the imperial kitchen the Czar's food was prepared by a French cook, who plied all his vocations under the eyes of two police guards; not that the cook himself could incur any suspicion, but because some conspirator might have got at the ingredients he was preparing. The food was always cooked in the simplest way, without sauces, and it was tasted by two officials before it was served at the Czar's table. Everything that Alexander II. ate or drank was tasted in his presence.

—In an article on "The Mode of Slaying Animals for Food amongst the Jews," contributed by Doctor MAURICE DAVIS, to the *Sanitary Record*, attention is drawn to one important feature of the civil legislation of the Talmud, to the observance of which is ascribed the comparative immunity from scrofula and tubercle which is known to distinguish the Jewish community. The researches of modern science increasingly evidence the wisdom of the provision for draining from the food of man the blood which frequently contains disease-germis which have not to that time affected the mature flesh. The "careful inspection of the pathological state of the beast" slaughtered was specially directed to the state of the lungs, in "the air passages" of which, "with their moist mucous membranes," modern science recognises "highly probable inlets" of the sources of infection. If these points are, as we have no reason to doubt, fairly stated, the propriety of the *Nonconformist*.

—The *Nonconformist* says—Traffic in livings is, as we know, largely carried on by the clergy both as presenters and presentees, but considerable inconvenience attaches to an appeal to the law for the enforcement of the terms of such compacts. The beneficence of Great Smeaton and Appleton, in the diocese of Ripon, may be regarded as by no means an ineligible acquisition for a clergyman who desires a comfortable income without any very considerable tax upon his energies—the revenue being returned at £650 and the population at 772, while there are three Nonconformist places of worship within the boundaries. The Rev. S. T. MOSE, who is the patron, was also the incumbent, but, for unexplained considerations thereunto moving him, he thought fit in 1878 to transfer these advantages to the Rev. R. S. KILICK, with an alleged reservation—not a very onerous one, if that was the sole stipulation between the parties—as to the Rectory house, which which had been let for a term to a military man to recoup, it was urged, expenditure incurred in its repair. The new incumbent having received from the tenant £67 for rent, replied to a claim from the patron, that the claim was "simoniacal," and the Common Pleas Division has upheld that contention. The solicitors to the defendant have since published an intimation that "the action has been before the Court on a question of pleading only, and not on a trial of the issues of fact," and requesting a suspension of judgment until after the coming trial.