

The Canadian Independent.

"ONE IS YOUR MASTER, LAEN CHRIST, AND ALL YE ARE BROTHERN"

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Topics of the Week.

EIGHT years ago the first Protestant church in Japan was organized, and the first \$1,000 toward the erection of its building was sent by the Christian converts of the Hawaiian Islands. More than 2,500 native communicants are now reported in the Japanese mission churches.

MR. GLADSTONE has been compelled by political exigencies to postpone publishing his magazine estimate of Dr. Chalmers. It may, however, appear about the end of autumn or beginning of winter, and will embrace a characterization of Chalmers in all the departments of intellectual activity in which he shone.

THE Rev. Dr. Begg, of Newington Free Church, Edinburgh, who has long occupied a prominent position in the Scottish religious world, lately completed the fiftieth year of his ministry, and received several congratulatory addresses on the occasion. Dr. Begg is one of the few Non-Intrusion leaders who still survive.

A MOSCOW correspondent of the "Cologne Gazette" describes the misery and starvation prevailing in the south and south-east of Russia as unknown in the memory of man. No food is to be got for the horses and cattle for any money, and the animals are consequently dying everywhere of starvation in the Transural steppes and the Don steppes.

ACCORDING to the report made to the Southern Presbyterian General Assembly, the Columbia Theological Seminary is in a deplorable financial condition. It was closed. Dr. Garandau had resigned, Dr. Howe had remained in charge of the property and library, and Dr. Plumer, the distinguished author, had been retired as Emeritus professor, on a salary.

IT is about one hundred years since the commencement of modern foreign missions. There are at least one million and a half of converts from heathenism. The Bible has been translated into two hundred and twenty-six different languages, and the copies circulated amount to 148,000,000. More than seventy barbarous languages have been endowed with a grammar and literature.

IT is expected the Great Wesleyan Thanksgiving Fund will reach the astonishing sum of \$1,500,000. While great spiritual good has followed many of the thanksgiving meetings, either the hard times or this special fund is seriously interfering with the regular income of the ordinary funds. The missionary income is \$50,000 below last year, and the other funds are behind in a proportionate degree.

THE final settlement of the long standing dispute in England over the right of Dissenters to bury their dead in the parish churchyards according to the forms of their particular churches, has been already virtually accomplished by the present Government. The liberty long craved has been conceded or will be shortly—a measure for that end having already been introduced into Parliament under Government auspices.

THE Pope, over-worked and much worried, requires rest. His medical advisers have told him this in the most imperative manner, and have also commanded that his Holiness should take a change of air. The Pope has come to the conclusion, not unwillingly as some people suppose, that his doctors' advice is sound, and if he were a free agent he would willingly spend the summer at Perugia. But his personal desire and

his physical needs must give way before the wishes of the Cardinals, who choose to keep the holy Father not only nominally but actually a prisoner at the Vatican. And yet his remaining there during the summer months, according to his medical advisers, means an immediate risk of life.

SWITZERLAND has been one of those countries in which both Protestants and Roman Catholics have been subsidized by the State. This it has been found does not work well, though it is the only consistent form of Church Establishment, and so it has been thought better to withdraw State endowments altogether and let each Church depend for its support and propagation on the zeal and liberality of its own adherents. If those who professedly believe in a religion won't support it, it is scarcely to be expected that those will who don't.

CADET WHITTAKER, the coloured student at West Point, whose case has excited so much attention, has been found guilty of injuring himself, writing the threatening and warning letters, etc., and has been sentenced to expulsion. The animus shown throughout the whole proceedings by the officials of the college and others has been such that the case is to be brought under the review of the higher authorities. The evidence against Whittaker is all circumstantial, and it is difficult to see what motive the lad could have had for following a course so foolish and suicidal.

LEO XIII. has recently had his attention much called to the Protestant accusations and objections to which certain modern miracles have given rise, and also to the reasons there are for asserting that in some of the cases speculation of a very base sort has been mingled with, if it has not altogether taken the place of, fanaticism. Very special and categorical instructions have accordingly been sent to the bishops, impressing on them the necessity of great caution in admitting the existence of any so-called miraculous phenomena, and desiring them to instruct their clergy that it is not permitted to them to institute or patronize any new forms or practices of religious observance towards the Madonna.

THE following is the conclusion of the decree which has been issued against the Jesuits and which it will be observed comes into force at the end of this month.—"A delay of three months from the present decree is granted to the unauthorized combination or association called the 'Society of Jesus,' to dissolve itself in compliance with the laws above mentioned [February 13-19, 1790; August 18, 1792; Article 11 of the Concordat; 18 Germinal, Year X.; 3 Messidor, Year XII.; Articles 291 and 292 of the Penal Code and the Law of April 10, 1834], and to evacuate the establishments it occupies upon the territory of the Republic. This delay will be prolonged to the 31st of August, 1880, in the case of establishments in which literary or scientific teaching is given by the association to youth. Done in Paris, March 29, 1880. Jules Grevy, President of the Republic; Ch. Lepere, Minister of the Interior and of Worship; Jules Cazat, Keeper of the Seals, Minister of Justice."

A CHURCH of England periodical speaks in the following sensible fashion of what may be expected as some of the results of the late British elections:—We have a right to expect that the incoming Government will at once and resolutely take up the question of temperance legislation, and that we have seen the last of "going down to Egypt for help." The second is, that moral questions are coming to the front in politics, and exercising an appreciable influence to

the displacement of the simple party considerations which have heretofore prevailed. That "government by party" should exist in England so long as representative institutions exist is, we suppose, inevitable. But that it should be able to be said of a professedly Christian country, that in one year, by an increased consumption of ardent spirits, "it drank itself out of the Alabama difficulty," and that every year it is raising seven millions of revenue in India by growing the poppy, and then forcing its product, the opium, upon the Chinese nation, and that both parties in the State should look on at such a state of things unmoved, while questions of foreign policy and every kind of home reform, except that of the moral reformation of the people, are allowed to engross their attention, is an anomaly which, from present symptoms is, we trust, passing away.

MR BRADLAUGH has issued a statement embodying the grounds on which he has decided to take the oath as member for Northampton. He believes, he says, that he was legally entitled to affirm. The oath, although to him including words of idle, meaningless character, was, and is, regarded by numbers of his fellow countrymen as an appeal to Deity to take cognizance of their swearing. It would have been an act of hypocrisy to voluntarily take this oath, or to take it without protest, as though it meant in his mouth any such appeal. The committee having decided against him, to appeal to the house against their decision would be ungracious, and would certainly involve great delay of public business. Should the decision be in his favour, it could only be after a bitter Parliamentary debate, in which the Government and the Liberal party would be unfavourably sought to be burdened with his anti-theological views, and with his return to Parliament. He will consider himself, in taking the oath, as bound by the spirit which affirmation would have conveyed, had he been permitted to take it. Mr. Bradlaugh is not the only man who has ever offered to take an oath in the terms of which he did not believe, but it does not follow that it is less discreditable to his manhood and honesty for him—a rabid and ostentatious Atheist—to be ready to make a solemn appeal to what, in his own estimation, was nothing at all.

WE understand that there have been returned to the new British Parliament two elders of the United Presbyterian Church, Mr. Dick Peddie and Mr. Middleton, and four active members (three of them elders) of the Free Church—viz., Mr. Russell of Bute; Mr. Currie, of Perthshire; Dr. Webster, of Aberdeen; and Mr. Stephen Williamson, of St. Andrew's. Mr. Williamson is a son-in-law of Mr. Guthrie. His wife was a great help to him in canvassing. Her beauty and talent exercised such an enchanting influence on the fishermen, that Principal Tulloch publicly complained of the "female blandishments" to which they were exposed during the election. When all was over Mrs. Williamson made a short speech, which, of course, evoked thunders of applause. Those named are all new members. In addition to them there is a goodly number of Presbyterians who have been re-elected. There are also two excellent Congregationalists, Mr. Baxter of Montrose, and Mr. Henderson of Dundee. Almost all the Liberals have gone to Westminster pledged to support a Bill for Disestablishment when the time comes. Some of these expressed themselves very cautiously, going the length only of saying that they would vote for a measure if it was brought in by Government. A considerable proportion, however, are ready to go further, and evidently the day is approaching when the question will really become one of practical politics.