

Indians of Oka. Being connected with the Methodist Church these Indians have the first claim to the care and consideration of the Supreme Court of the Church to which they belong. If the Conference resolutely pleads the cause of this people who have been despoiled and whom it is now proposed to dispossess they will be supported by all Protestant denominations and by every fair-minded Roman Catholic. The day has surely gone by in Canada when even the humble and helpless can be persecuted for conscience sake. No one pretends to believe that the Oka Indians, had they remained in connection with the Roman Catholic Church, would have been molested.

The feeling in favour of extending the term of the ministry in one charge seems to be gaining strength and the proposal for the change was supported by strong arguments. It failed, however, to carry, but it is likely to come up again. One thing in connection with its consideration is worth noting. A respected layman in the course of his remarks referred to the existence of wirepulling on the part of some for the purpose of securing appointments to the more desirable fields. The gentleman referred to was afraid that the proposed change would not lessen but might aggravate this evil. If there is any foundation for the belief that such methods for obtaining appointments are practised, it is high time to adopt means for the effectual checking of a mode of action that cannot but act injuriously on ministerial character, and lessen in a marked degree the esteem and confidence of Christian people in the uprightness and honourable dealing of the ministry. In this respect the ministers of all churches must have clean hands if they wish to retain their ministerial usefulness.

On moral and social questions the Conference has pronounced with the vigour and directness characteristic of Methodism. On the temperance question there has been no retrogression, rather a determination to advance vigorously in the direction of prohibition. There was an effort made to make the use of tobacco an ecclesiastical offence; no one quoted Spencer's sonnet beginning, "Hail, divine tobacco," or even Ralph Erskine's "Thus think and smoke tobacco." The habit was denounced in most vigorous terms even by those who were not prepared to go as far as others in the matter of ecclesiastical legislation. On the advice of leading men in the Conference a resolution condemning the use of the weed and earnestly counselling its discontinuance was adopted.

The letter of Dr. Laing, Moderator of the General Assembly, expressing regret for his absence was a model. It expressed in briefest form the fraternal courtesies pertinent to the occasion, and evoked evidences of the hearty good feeling existing between the two bodies. Long may that continue. And it is within the lines of sober truth to say that there is a desire for closer fellowship and co-operation in all forms of Christian work on the part of both Churches that exercise so great an influence on the spiritual and moral life of the Canadian people.

### THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE.

ALL great evils die hard. They become imbedded in the social fabric, and it takes long for the popular mind to awaken to the perception that they are evils and that they must be dislodged. All moral reforms have to go through well-defined stages before they reach their triumph. People must first be convinced that reform is necessary. Many have no doubt that certain moral and social reforms are highly desirable and ought to be achieved, but they have only a languid interest in seeing their accomplishment. To lift this dead weight of indifference is often the hardest work that even philanthropists of the most earnest type have to encounter. Then there are many who have a direct interest in the gains that great evils are the means of bringing. Those who cannot defend social wrongs on moral grounds fall back on the last line of defence and plead vested rights as a reason for leaving abuses undisturbed. In the end that entrenchment also is carried, and then all are disposed to claim a direct share in bringing about the reforms whose first advocates were branded as impracticable cranks.

But moral victories once achieved must be maintained. Human nature under the most favourable conditions is inclined to lapse. The house that is swept and garnished may become the resting-place of spirits more wicked than those ejected. Recent events in connection with the slave trade in the South Sea Islands and on the African Continent prove that "the sum of all the villainies," human slavery, is far from being a thing of the past. When

emancipation was effected by Great Britain in 1834 it was thought that it would soon be ended everywhere. It lingered in the United States till the famous proclamation of Abraham Lincoln wiped out the stain that disfigured their history till 1863. The slave trade in the United States led to the most gigantic civil war of modern times, but the end was gained. Slavery was washed out in blood. Yet after all efforts at the suppression of the African slave trade, it is remarkable that it is being extended by indefatigable Arabs who are lacking in the ordinary feelings of humanity. As is invariably the case wherever slavery exists, the most revolting cruelties are perpetrated on the wretched victims of this accursed traffic. The benevolent members of the Brussels Conference have met, deliberated, formulated resolutions condemning slavery, and have departed much satisfied with their labours, but the slave hunters are as numerous and ferocious as ever.

The startling news of last week from Zanzibar that a proclamation permitting the prosecution of the slave trade in the African territory under German control has raised quite a commotion. The excitement occasioned by the publication of the statement is in itself a healthy sign. It is far more hopeful than if it had been received with unconcern. Had the matter been unnoticed it is in every way probable that the slave trade would have obtained a fresh impetus from the apathy of the Christian nations that desire the extension of human freedom. While the relations between the British and German nations have of late been of an amicable character, brought about by visits of courtesy on the part of the imperial and royal families, and recent diplomatic negotiations, British manhood has spoken out in unmistakable terms regarding this unlooked-for encouragement of slavery under German influence. The strong moral sentiment of Great Britain will sustain the Government in making the most energetic protests against what is roundly denounced as an outrage.

From Germany within the past few days denials have come that such proclamation has been issued, but these denials are far from being graciously received. A military gentleman has been despatched to Bagamoyo to make enquiries as to the real state of affairs there, and has hastened to telegraph a general denial, which, like all other statements of the kind, has been received with incredulity. This is accounted for by the tone of the German press, which, while disputing the accuracy of despatches that announced the proclamation, use extenuating expressions, as for instance: "Determined as it has hitherto been to relentlessly oppose slave-hunting and professional trading in slaves, the German Government reserves to itself the choice of the proper moment to further restrict slavery." It is stated that the report of the proclamation will likely be traced to the Arab dealers, who, if the denials are credible, thought they could force the hand of the German authorities who thus would be led to give their sanction to the slave trade. At all events the affair has shown that the friends of humanity are on the alert. It will only strengthen the determination to use every legitimate effort to suppress a traffic that is an outrage on human nature and in direct defiance of the Gospel law of love.

Another instance of the persistence of the slave-traffickers occurred in South Africa last week. It is stated that a Portuguese steamer on its way from Mozambique loaded with a cargo of kidnapped natives put into Cape Town. Efforts were made to detain the vessel, but the tribunal decided that it was powerless to interfere. In the meantime fourteen of the unhappy victims made their escape. Here again the do-nothing policy of the court came in, but this time it operated in favour of the escaped slaves. It declined to exercise its authority for the recapture of the runaways. A leading London paper urges that the British Government should remonstrate with the Cape Town authorities for their remissness, and enforce the measures for the suppression of slavery. From these and many other recent instances it is evident that those interested in this vile traffic are determined to carry on and extend, if possible, the abominable trade in the helpless natives of Africa. The friends of the Gospel, all interested in Christian missions must, if the work they love be not hindered, earnestly seek the entire suppression of slavery. In this, as in other things, eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. How can it be expected that the Gospel can gain acceptance with the native races if Christian nations export rum and rifles for their destruction, and stand tamely by while humanity is outraged in the stealing, buying and selling of the weaker tribes. Slavery is doomed, but all who connive at it incur guilt and condemnation.

## Books and Magazines.

BOOK NEWS. (Philadelphia: John Wannamaker.)—Many busy people with literary tasks have little time to read the books they would like to read. One method of compensation is to read about the books that are constantly making their appearance. *Book News* every month gives much interesting information concerning the doings in the literary world.

FROM Mr. A. G. Watson, of the Willard Tract Depot, we have received copies of three of "Pansy's" admirable stories. They appear in neat and attractive form, and are offered at a price that brings them within the reach of all. Their wide circulation will do good and convey pleasure to all into whose hands they may come. The stories are "Links in Rebecca's Life," "Chrissie's Endeavour," and "Mrs. Solomon Smith Looking On."

MESSRS. HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN & Co., of Boston, announce for publication this month "A New and Complete Issue of the Works of James Russell Lowell, in their Riverside Edition." They also announce a limited issue of a Large River Edition of Mr. Lowell's complete works. Among other works announced by this firm may be mentioned "Economic and Social History of New England, 1620-1780," by William B. Weedon; "The Gentleman's Magazine Library, Vol. 10," "Archæological Antiquities," a popular edition in one volume of Ralph Waldo Emerson's "Nature," "Lectures and Addresses," and "Representative Men."

THE ENGLISH ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE. (New York: Macmillan & Co.)—F. Marion Crawford opens the September number with a most interesting historical paper on "Philippine Welser," which is copiously illustrated. The Hon. Maudé Stanley discusses the servant question and Mr. Woodall, M.P., tells about "Potters in Rhineland." Other papers in this attractive issue are "Overland from India," "A Glimpse of Osterly Park," "Education and Working Men," "The Beefsteak Room at the Lyceum," and the "Identification of Criminals in France." William Morris' story "Glittering Plains" is completed. The present number completes the seventh volume of this excellent magazine.

THE WEED. By James Brand, D.D., pastor of First Congregational Church, Oberlin, Ohio. (Chicago: Advance Publishing Co.)

Dr. Brand has written a little tractate in condemnation of tobacco, in which striking facts and urgent arguments are skillfully marshalled against one of the most prevalent of the bad habits of our time. He discusses the causes of the rapid spread of the tobacco habit, gives some curious instances of legal and moral efforts for its restriction, and details the physical, social, financial and moral effects of the use of the weed. The proposition he establishes is "that the tobacco habit as it is to-day is physically, socially, financially, mentally and morally, a hurtful, dangerous, and degrading vice."

ONE of the important features of the coming volume of the *Century Magazine* will be a series of papers on "Tibet," written by a well qualified and adventurous American traveller, Mr. W. Woodville Rockhill, formerly of the American Diplomatic Service, who has recently returned from a long and perilous journey through the unknown heart of Asia. For seven hundred miles he passed through a country where no white man had ever set foot, journeying, of course, in disguise. It is only within the last few years that the Chinese have been able to plant themselves in the country he travelled through, so hostile have the natives always shown themselves. It is said that in Tibet nearly every crime is punished by the imposition of a fine, and that murder is by no means an expensive luxury. This, of course, greatly increases the danger of travel in that remarkable land. The series will be fully illustrated.

AIMEE'S MARRIAGE. By P. H. C. (Philadelphia: The American Sabbath School Union.)—"I do not like to read this book, because it makes me so angry," said a lady; but you may be sure she did read it to the end. Why were her angry feelings excited? Because she saw Aimee persecuted, made miserable and almost brought to death by the efforts of her Roman Catholic husband and friends to make her unite with that church. Unfortunately she had become engaged to be married before she learned that her accepted lover was an adherent of the Romish communion. When the discovery was made her mother refused to consent to the marriage; but the objections were finally waived, with the understanding that the Protestant girl was to be left entirely free in the exercise of her religious faith. However, such pledges have been made and broken so often that the reader need not be surprised to find that the promises made to Aimee were persistently violated when she was brought into a Catholic household. Most strenuous attempts were made to keep her from superintending the education of her children, in order that they might not imbibe Protestant sentiments. What crafty and unscrupulous people hide their trickery under the guise of religion! But the reader will find all this out, and we will not spoil the interest by anticipating the end. The book will make its mark.

RUDOLPH OF ROSENFELDT; or, The Leaven of the Reformation. A Story of the Times of William the Silent. By John W. Spear. (Philadelphia: The American Sunday School Union.)—This is a historical story. It opens in October, 1566. Philip II. was king of Spain, then one of the mightiest realms on the earth. The dark ages, so called, had passed, but certainly that period was dark enough. The great Protestant Reformation was working like leaven: it was felt throughout every Roman Catholic country. The Romish Church, allied with the civil power, was using every means of craft and cruelty to suppress the Reformation. People who embraced reformed principles did it at the cost of fortune, liberty and even life. It was a short step from the Inquisition to the place of death. Women were walled up alive and left to perish, families were severed, parents were turned against children and children against parents. The power of the Romish Church, open and secret, extended everywhere. Those who uttered even the slightest criticism upon the doings of the Church were liable to severe punishment. Rudolph, the son of a titled family, became a Protestant. Catholic emissaries were bent on making him recant or die. He was taken from his own father's castle to suffer torture, which he escaped only by the intervention of a monk who was not what he seemed. He was separated from his betrothed and the engagement declared void. Thrilling adventures keep the reader upon the alert, and there is a mystery which comes into the story early, and is not solved until the close. There are readers who may catch the spirit of former times better from a historical story than from actual history.