

The Canadian Independent.

'ONE IS YOUR MASTER, EVEN CHR' 478 Guy-st. 'BROTHERS.'

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Current Topics.

—Opium eating is said to be on the increase in Chicago. It is stated that fifty druggists have 235 regular customers.

—The American-French archaeological expedition under command of M. Charney, about whose safety some fears have been entertained, has been heard from, and has arrived safely at Palenque, in the state of Chiapas, Mexico.

—The London *Times* says that thirty-eight miles of new streets, on which houses are rapidly built, are annually added to the city of London. Such a huge city, growing at this rate, indicates the immense industrial and commercial thrift of Great Britain.

—Ten dioceses of the Protestant Episcopal Church, including those of New York and Long Island, are united in support of a system of uniform Sunday-school lessons. The lessons for six months of 1881 were recently selected by the committee.

—One who appears to know, out in New Mexico, states it as the general belief in Grant County, that it was a drunken army officer who ordered the raid on the Apache Victoria and his band of Indians at Ojo Caliente, a raid that has so far resulted in the killing of more than three hundred persons.

—The English consul at Han-Kow, China, reported to his government last year that, "Numerous parties have gone inland either on business or pleasure, and the invariable testimony has been that although the convenience and comfort of European travel along established routes are not to be met with, you can travel through China as easily and safely as you can in Europe when and where you leave the main road."

—From the returns just completed it appears that during last year 185,502 emigrants left Liverpool, against 117,914 in 1879, an increase of 65,588. Of the total number, 74,969 were English, 1,811 Scotch, 27,986 Irish, and 74,115 were foreigners. During the month of December 5,243 emigrants set out, against 8,843 in the previous month. The greatest rush of emigrants was in April last, when 29,491 left the Mersey.

—Beyond the Mount of Olives, to the north-eastward, about ten minutes' walk, and below the spot where, not long ago, the stone of Bethphage was discovered, the people of Bethany recently have been making excavations. In so doing, they have laid bare dwellings of small size, having mosaic floors and two very large cisterns, together with fragments of marble and columns. Though for the most part in various colors, the character of the mosaics is somewhat crude. The locality is called by an unintelligible name—Khirket Ankesheh.

—The "Foreign Missionary Record" says in its "Concert of prayer," that when Carey went to India (1793), a body of ministers resolved on holding a meeting on the first Monday night of each month for united prayer for the success of every attempt by all denominations of Christians for the spread of the Gospel, and a paper was drawn up inviting similar meetings, and addresses to independent associations of ministers in England and Wales, and that this paved the way for the formation of the London Missionary Society in 1795.

—The Primus of the Scotch Episcopal Church is greatly displeased because the lay-men make such slow work of raising a fund whose income shall support the bishops and clergy. He has published a tirade in which he says that the failure is caused by three evils: individual selfishness, congregationalism, and vestrydom. He says "congregationalism [meaning the supremacy of the congregation, rather than of the priest] is the gangrene of our Church," while vestrydom, or the rule of the vestry, is characterized as "the very sanctuary and inner shrine of congregationalism." We do not wonder that lay-men are not eager to endure an order that is attempting to take away its rights.

—The Rev. R. W. McAll, the well-known evangelist, of Paris, writing of the work in France recently, says:—"Every day's observation tends only the more impressively to call us to breathe the fervent prayer, *May God Save France from Atheism!* Truly, it is against the daring and blasphemous assertions of the Atheist leaders that we have now, above all, to endeavour to shield the people of this land. The campaign we need to wage is not against the dogmas of Romanism—the revolt against Romish idolatries and priestly claims is strong enough already. We have to contend against that utter denial of all religious truth to which the teachers of materialism strive so hard to drive those who have already abjured Rome.

—Wherever infidel attacks on the Sabbath have succeeded, working men have suffered. Look at France. Mr. Smiles, in his work entitled "The Huguenots," furnishes the following striking testimony: "When the Revolution abolished Saints' days and Sabbath days alike, Sunday work became an established practice. The museums and galleries are open on Sundays, but you look for the working people in vain. They are at work in the factories, whose chimneys are smoking as usual; or building houses, or working in the fields, or they are engaged in the various departments of labor. The government works all go on as usual on Sundays. The railway trains run precisely as on week-days. As you pass through the countries on Sundays you see the people toiling in their fields. Their continuous devotion to labor cannot fail to have a deteriorating effect upon their physical as well as upon their social condition. And this, we believe, it is which gives to men, and especially to the women of the country, the look of a prematurely old and over-worked race."

—A letter from a Protestant in Belgium states that the slumbering war between Liberals and Catholics will soon break out afresh. Two questions are before the Belgian Chamber: "The reduction of the bishops' salaries and the inspection of convents, which the Liberal majority appeared determined to vote, so soon as the government shall take the initiative by bringing forward the two bills. While awaiting this battle, the Liberals have occupied their leisure with the schools question, as under the consideration of the parliamentary commission. The constitution of that commission is not satisfactory, nor its proceedings free from partiality or suspicion. It has, nevertheless, served to make known some curious details of the action of the clergy and their friends in favor of what they style 'instruction according to God.' Some of the facts disclosed are hardly credible concerning the

pressure and intimidation brought to bear upon 'the liberties of fathers of families,' with the view to emptying the lay schools. The priests pursue their efforts to the bed of death. Take, for example, the case of one poor man, who in the very agonies of dissolution was asked to promise, before witnesses, to withdraw his children from the communal school, on pain of being refused absolution."

—One of the stations of the London Missionary Society's (Tanganyika Mission) is at Mtowa, in Uguha, on the western shore of the Lake. Mr. Hutley, in the February number of *The Chronicle* of the Society, gives a very interesting sketch of the country and its people. The part of Uguha in which the station is situated is north of the Lukuga and contains 15,000 or 20,000 people. The Waguha are peaceable and industrious generally, and indulge in drink chiefly after harvest; but liquor does not make them at all quarrelsome—quite the reverse. They have numerous slaves, who, with their wives, assist them in their gardens or catch fish for them in the Lake. The people give great attention to the dressing of their hair, the women are profusely tattooed, and the men have their front teeth chipped. Their clothing is somewhat scanty. The freemen live in one part of a village and the slaves in another. The chiefs have very many wives, sometimes several hundred; the freeman usually two or three. The houses, which resemble a beehive outside, are built of wattle and mud plaster. The young people and sometimes the women dance, but Mr. Hutley never saw the men dancing. One of the singular customs is that each household has two sets of kitchen utensils—one for the males and the other for the females. The sets are always kept separate. And more than that, if the fire in one kitchen goes out, it must be lighted from another fire of the same kind; otherwise it is not *mbara*. When a native was invited to eat with Mr. Hutley's servants, he first asked them where they got the fire to cook with; and, on learning, he refused to touch the food, saying it was not *mbara*. All wear charms, for protection from evil spirits. Their idea of Heaven is that it is a place where the good are gathered, and whence the bad are shut out.

—In the course of an address on the principles of Congregationalism, delivered by Mr. Carvell Williams at the ordination of the Rev. C. Jewellin Allen, of Daventry, recently, he said that in regard to some aspects of their principles, Congregationalists were in the present day under no temptation to abandon their ancient ground; since they were making way among other bodies. "If Congregational simplicity was not regarded with growing favor, Congregational freedom unquestionably was. That kings and queens were not fitting heads of Churches; that Parliaments were incompetent to manage Church affairs; that the laws of the State were cumbrous, and often injurious means for promoting the welfare of a Church; that the regulations which our ancestors formed for themselves were the bonds of their descendants; all these things were seen to-day with a clearness quite painful to those who had not the liberty to act upon their new convictions. The Congregational principle, that all religion should be strictly voluntary—voluntary in choice, in mode of profession, and in the means adopted for

its diffusion—this principle, at least, was fast permeating the mind of the whole community. Penal statutes against any religious acts were now abolished; compulsory exaction for spiritual purposes had nearly ceased; ecclesiastical tests in connection with public offices and public advantages, if not wholly gone, were on the way to that limbo to which the faggot and the axe have been long ago consigned. Among Presbyterians and Methodists, and most notably among Episcopalians, there was an increasing disposition to respect the necessities and the feelings of separate congregations. In spite of Acts of Parliament and of General Assemblies and Conferences, there was more and more of liberty being accorded to local bodies, who were permitted to do what most commended itself to their own judgment, or was best adapted to their local peculiarities. That was simply the liberty which had been the ancient possession of Congregationalists, who were rejoiced to see that its inestimable value was appreciated by others as well as by themselves."

—The present ruler of Abyssinia, King John, is very like Philip the Second of Spain. Not only has he banished all the missionaries who have arrived at Massowah, after a long and very painful journey; but, under the influence of the bishops and priests of the Church of Abyssinia, he caused diligent search to be made in the houses and huts of the people for copies of the Bible distributed by the missionaries. Whenever a copy of the Scriptures was found, the luckless owners were loaded with chains and cast into prison, and their home burned down. "He persecutes the Jews," writes Theophilus Waldmeier, a missionary; "He kills the Mohammedans; he causes destruction among the Gallas; and enforces the penalty of death upon each one who does not agree with the unscrupulous, confused, and foolish ideas inculcated into his ambitious mind by his fanatical and selfish clergy. The poor Abyssinians are suffering desperately under this tyrant." Mr. Waldmeier goes on to speak of mission work. "The Swedish missionaries," he says, "had a prosperous work on the eastern frontier of Abyssinia. The London Jewish Mission was working most successfully among the Falashas, or Abyssinian Jews, by native preachers, who were trained in Europe, and had two stations in the northern part of the kingdom. Two German missionaries are engaged in Shoa, the southern part of Abyssinia, under King Menelek's dominion. Now it seems that all these messengers of peace cannot do anything, on account of the overwhelming warfare and bloodshed of King John, who is really like a tiger." Mr. Waldmeier speaks highly of Menelek, as also does Mr. John Mayor, a missionary in Shoa. One of the King's recent acts was the abolition of the slave trade in his dominions, but more recent intelligence states that, under pressure from King John, he issued a decree commanding all Moslems to be baptized and to become Christians. King John enforced the same stringent law in his own country, and banished all who would not consent to become Christians, of whom there were very few. He destroyed all their mosques, and built churches on the sites. Soon afterward King John summoned the Roman Catholic bishop, and said to him: "I will allow no foreign teachers in my kingdom, especially no Catholic bishop."