

# The Canadian Independent.

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

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## Topics of the Week.

**THE Pope has issued an Encyclical Letter against divorce.**

SOME of the Congregational churches in Massachusetts are electing deaconesses. And why should not all the churches do this?

DURING the last year the Gospel was preached in one hundred towns and cities in China where it had not been previously heard.

DURING the past year, the American Sunday School Union established 409 new Sunday schools in the North-western department alone.

THE Baptists in the United States have 24,794 churches, 15,401 ministers, and 2,133,044 members. They gained 30,010 members during the past year.

AMSTERDAM is the scene of a great spiritual awakening. We hope it will spread over the kingdom of Holland. Dutch Protestantism is as dead and useless a thing as can be found anywhere.

THE American Home Missionary Society received \$23,767 during the month of January. That promises well for 1880. Fifteen new missionaries were appointed during the month. Our American brethren mean to advance.

THE London Missionary Society made an effort to secure the Rev. Charles Wilson, of Plymouth, for its Foreign Secretary. Mr. Wilson, however, declined the appointment. The post offered Mr. Wilson was made vacant by the death of Dr. Mullens.

THE Continental Committee of the Pan-Presbyterian Council propose to raise \$60,000, so as to add \$100 to the income of each of the twenty-two pastors of the Waldensian Church, who now receive \$300 a year. The Scotch have raised \$15,000 towards the amount.

TWO Irish Catholic bishops are able, in this season of poverty and famine which has come upon their country, to send £850 to the Pope as Peter's pence. Could they not have found any needier recipients at home? Maybe Leo will return it. Couldn't he remit Peter's pence for a little while?

IN the Arcot Mission of the Reformed Church the missionaries extended the hand of welcome last year to over 5,000 persons who have abandoned the worship of idols and professed themselves Christians. On one Sabbath Rev. Jared Scudder baptized 307 and on the next 227 persons, converted from Hindooism.

THE desire to learn English is the great motive which induces Chinamen to attend Sabbath school and meetings, but, being brought thus under Christian influences, many are led to Christ. About twelve hundred reliable converts have been made already on the Pacific coast, many of whom have proved their sincerity by undergoing persecution for their faith. They find it harder to abandon the worship of their ancestors than that of their idols.

THE statistics of Congregationalism in the Australian colonies are as follows: New South Wales, 36 churches and 36 ministers; Victoria, 50 churches and 45 ministers; South Australia, 33 churches and 30 ministers; Queensland, 15 churches and 14 ministers; Tasmania, 16 churches and 14 ministers; West-

ern Australia, 2 churches and 3 ministers; with 19 churches and 14 ministers in New Zealand. The total is 170 churches and 156 ministers. This is better than Canada can shew.

THE American Missionary Association has published its thirty-third annual report. One good feature which it has to mention this time is its freedom from debt. The total income of the year was \$215,431, nearly \$20,000 more than that of the previous year. The Association labours among the negroes of the Southern States and Africa, and is controlled by the Congregationalists. The churches under its care are sixty-seven with a membership of 4,600. Its academies and schools are numerous, and they do a good, thorough work.

THE Reformed Episcopal Church is one of the youngest of Protestant denominations, and yet it is beginning to be vexed with ecclesiastical questions. The important subject now discussed is the extent of episcopal authority. A party in the Church claims that it is very great; but another insists that it is very limited. Human nature is the same everywhere, after all. And these grave questions of ecclesiastical order are of great interest to many men, of far more interest and meaning than the requirements of the divine law, to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God.

IT is a good sign that pastoral visitation which has been in many places for years one of the "lost arts," is giving evidence of new life. It is good for the people, and it is of no less advantage to the pastor himself. Rev. W. M. Taylor, D.D., of the Tabernacle Church (Congregational), New York, at the close of a day spent in this way, writes in the "Christian at Work" to his brethren in the ministry: "Brethren, preach the Word with all the earnestness and ability you can command, but neglect not the work of pastoral visitation, for if you do, you will be like one who seeks to row with but a single oar, and will go round and round in a routine circle instead of making steady progress."

A MISSIONARY having lately returned to Berlin from Asia, reports an interesting discovery which he and two or three friends and co-labourers made in Galilee. In the mountains of Galilee, between Acca and Nazareth, and north of Shefa-Anner they found a village called Bucnah, which is inhabited almost exclusively by agriculturists, professing Judaism, who appear to have been there from olden times, and have no tradition of the exile by Titus. They are distinguished from their brethren in the east and west by several peculiarities: first, they speak only Hebrew and Arabic, not being acquainted with the Spanish or the German languages, as the rest of the Jews are; and second, that they limit themselves to agricultural pursuits without having any communication with others.

A CONSIDERABLE number of German Lutherans, some thousands in all, particularly in the province of Hanover, are reported to have left the State Church, and to have established themselves on an independent basis. The reason assigned for the movement is that the interference of the State is not confined to external regulations, but is felt, also, in matters of doctrine; and the members, while they respect the secular authority of the Government, are unwilling to have pastors imposed upon them with whose theological views they are widely at variance. The new churches are established avowedly on the American model. No State aid is sought or expected. The congregation choose their own pastors, and contribute

the means for their support, and the churches are said to be in a very flourishing condition.

SIR GARNET WOLSELEY says: "I am in great hopes that the settlement effected in Zululand may open up that country to missionary enterprise, and although I, for one, should always be opposed to forcing upon any nation the Gospel of Christ, 'the Man of Peace,' no one would rejoice more than I to see Christianity making rapid progress beyond the Tugela frontier of Natal. Its progress is not, in my opinion, to be secured by force, nor by bullying the Zulus, nor by Government interference. It can, I think, be only satisfactorily arrived at by the quiet, unassuming, and patient enterprise of really godly men bent on doing good work—by men who are indifferent to personal emoluments and to the profits of trading operations."

SPECIAL services on an extraordinary scale have been provided for among the Anglican churches of Brighton, England. The bishop of Chichester issued a pastoral inviting co-operation in the work of the mission, which was designed, he stated, to counteract the prevalent "frivolity and worldliness in the upper classes" and the "gross immorality in the lower classes" of the population of that town. The pastoral letter urged that, in view of the solemnity of the occasion, convivial meetings should be retrenched or suspended during the mission, and that employers should close early each evening, in order that their assistants might attend the services. No less than twenty churches, including both Evangelical and Ritualistic parties, in response, arranged for separate missions, calling to their aid preachers from various parts of the United Kingdom.

THE Edinburgh Free Church Presbytery at its last meeting sat for several hours considering the overture proposed to be transmitted to the General Assembly by Dr. Moody Stuart, desiring the appointment of a commission to inquire into the theological teaching of the Free Church colleges. Dr. Moody Stuart was himself unable to be present, but in a letter to the Moderator he characterized the inquiry as a matter of greater moment than any that had ever been before the Church. Mr. Edward Thomson, of Free St. Stephens, moved the transmission of the overture. He alleged there was a widespread suspicion respecting professors in all the colleges together, and in replying afterwards, he said that they were not slow to speak out if heresy was believed to be in the Established or Episcopalian Churches, but when it came to be in their own they defended the men through thick and thin. Dr. McLaughlan seconded the transmission. The opposition was led off by Principal Rainy, who pointed out from the experience they had had with Professor Smith's case, what the result would be to the Church by the appointment of such a commission, which simply meant the libelling of other professors already suspected, while the Professor Smith case was yet in abeyance. He defended Dr. Davidson from the suspicion held regarding his writings in the "British and Foreign Evangelical Review," and asserted that the teaching in the colleges was the same as it had always been, according to his knowledge and experience. The Rev. Mr. Thomson, Leith, seconded the refusal to transmit, and after a long discussion, in which Sir Henry Wellwood Moncreiff, Professor McGregor, Dr. Begg, and others took part, the Presbytery divided, with the result of refusing to transmit the overture by a majority of 36 to 26. A motion by Mr. McEwan, calling in question the writings of Dr. Davidson, was held over till the ordinary meeting of Presbytery.