

The Canadian Independent.

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

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Current Topics.

There are at present three hundred and fifty Christian churches in Burmah, India, and nine tenths of the work of evangelization is in the hands of native teachers.

The outlook for Protestantism in Florence, Italy, is promising. There are now eight Protestant churches in that city, and the population numbers 5,000.

—Professor Proctor, who was lecturing in Toronto last week, is soon, it is reported, to marry an American lady, and, after a visit to England, will makethis country his permanent home.

—From a temperance census among the voters in the burgh of Denbigh, Wales, it was found that 664 voters were in favor of Sunday closing, twenty-four were against it, and thirty remained neutral.

—The Rev. Dr. H. Tyng, Jr., long the honored pastor of the church of the Holy Trinity, New York, has been obliged by the premature breaking down of his health to resign his charge. His resignation takes effect on the first Sunday of May.

—On Tuesday, 5th April, the regular census was taken in Great Britain in one day, an army of 35,000 enumerators being employed for England and Wales alone, and the Canadian census drags its slow length along, to be finished nobody knows when. How can it be expected to be reliable?

—The great zeal of the Mormons is seen in the fact that the Book of Mormon has been published in French, German, Italian, Danish, Polynesian and Welsh. Probably seventy-five thousand foreigners have already cast their fortunes with Utah and polygamy. This does not include those who are now being worked upon to be induced to come from other shores. Is the Mountain Meadow massacre already forgotten? This curse of polygamy needs to be extirpated.

—More than forty years ago Wm. H. Pratt under the patronage of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, went to Guiana to labor among the Indians there. He labored with little apparent success; but did a great pioneer work; and those who have entered into his labors are now reaping a rich harvest. Of late there has been a spirit of earnest inquiry among several of the tribes. Nearly 1,400 persons have been baptized by a single missionary. And "those baptized were immersed in the clear water of the river," we are told. "None were baptized who could not repeat the Lord's Prayer or the Apostles' Creed."

Cincinnati's new Mayor—may his tribe increase—seems to be of the opinion that when a man has been elected by the people to a high executive office, it is his duty to execute the laws. Cincinnati has, as Chicago and all other recently well-governed American cities have, laws which forbid theatrical and other similar places of amusement being kept open on Sunday. On Monday of this week a large number of arrests were made of proprietors, exhibitors and leading actors, who had defiantly violated the laws. Mayor Means, when he took his oath of office, meant what he said. We wish as much could be said for our Mayor Harrison. *Chicago Advance*, April 21.

—The average salary of the 451 ministers serving Congregational churches in Massachusetts is \$981. The average salary in the 298 parishes in Connecticut is somewhat over one thousand dollars. This is thought to be larger than in any state, and the tendency here now is toward an increase. But, the support in the United States of the whole clergy of all denominations is said to cost annually \$6,000,000, while the tobacco used in the United States costs over \$600,000,000. The United States spends a hundred times as much for tobacco as for clergy.

The New York Herald has brought out from the census report of 1870 as compared with that of 1880 some facts of special interest. In the old slave States with the exception of Texas, during this decade the increase of the colored population has been more than 33 per cent., showing that at the same rate of increase we shall at the beginning of the next century have more than ten millions of negroes in these States alone. During the same time the increase of the white population in these States has been less than 28 per cent., which will give them something over eighteen millions in 1900. The facts are a suggestive reminder of the "drowning of the Israelites under the discouragements of Egyptian legislation.

—The *Scotsman* states that the Free Church seems to be more divided than ever in regard to Professor Robertson Smith's case, "one section urging the settlement of the case on the basis of the decision of last Assembly, and another going the length of contending not only that Professor Smith should be relieved of his college duties, but that a manifesto should be published declaring that his views cannot be tolerated in the Free Church. Since the announcement of the publication of Professor Smith's lectures in Glasgow and Edinburgh on 'Elements of Biblical Criticism,' the leaders of the traditional party in the Church have, we believe, had under consideration the propriety of issuing the statement prepared immediately after last Assembly," which shows that the views of Professor Smith are not those of the Free Church.

—The new prohibition law of Kansas forbids the use of wine in the sacrament, and on this account is meeting with strong opposition from some of the churches. Last Sabbath an Episcopal clergyman administered the sacrament as usual, regardless of the consequences, having previously announced to the congregation his determination so to do. He said, "We are willing to render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's but we will still give to God the things that are His. I say, as did Peter, 'Judge ye whether we should obey man rather than God.' Of one thing you may be assured, we shall never recognize for a moment the attempts of human legislation to destroy the great sacrament of the Christian Church." This action will probably arouse a storm from those pecuniarily interested in the liquor traffic, that may result in the complete overthrow of the new law.

—The Salvation and Hallelujah Armies have been assaulted in Ennis-killen whenever they attempted to hold their services. Disturbances occurred,

several persons being hurt with stones. One night the magistrates proclaimed the town and dispersed the Armies when they went to sing. The mob had to be charged by the police, and the streets cleared. Aide-de-Camp Gillas, of the Hallelujah Army, was arrested under the terms of the proclamation. He went to goal singing and preaching. There-after, accompanied by a Methodist minister, the Army and several leading merchants of the town proceeded to the Protestant quarter to hold a meeting. They were doing so when the constabulary charged and tried to disperse them. The people said they were in the right, and refused to go. A number of scuffles took place between the people and the police. The Methodist minister, the Rev. Mr. Quarry, then held a meeting, and the military were sent for, but before they arrived the meeting had concluded. Great excitement prevailed. The disturbances of the first nights were with Roman Catholics, those of the latter were with influential Protestants.

—The five Nihilists accused of complicity in the assassination of the Czar, four men and one woman, Sophie Pieoffsky, having been duly tried and convicted, were hanged on Friday in presence of an immense crowd of spectators. The other woman implicated is only waiting for the birth of her child, when she will share the same fate. In a measure the late Czar is avenged. Will this put an end to the Nihilistic mania? If the new Emperor shall show an intelligent determination to secure the general education and elevation of the eighty millions of his subjects, and bring in such reforms in the administration of the laws, and such extension of the popular responsibility for the national government, wisely allowing his own absolute autocracy to be modified somewhat by the principle that "government should be by the governed," the sympathy of all civilized nations will be with him. There is a grand history in store for Russia. But more effective to the safety of the Emperors and the advancement of the Empire than any league of European sovereigns, will be, as some one has suggested, the better moral training of Russian children.

—In the last number of the "Contemporary Review" Rev. J. H. Hopkins, of Williamsport, Pa., urges upon the English Church to give to "the lady in England the same position which they enjoy in the Church (Episcopal) in America." And with more force than politeness he ridicules those in America, who are striving to assimilate this American Church to the Established Church of England. "We have American students (bishops included) who, while abroad among you, talk of the superior advantages" (Heaven save the mark!) of a "union of Church and state;" and some of our dignitaries bring back with them strings and rosettes in their hats, and braided coats, aprons, and leggings, and even call each other 'My Lord' on the sly, in a semi-jocular way, when no dangerous ears are within reach. We have a natural genius for making church lunders over here, and we have not done with it yet." Dr. Hopkins doubtless knows of what he affirms.

—Accounts vary as to the number of the killed by the recent earthquake in the island of Sico and on the main land adjacent, but there can be no doubt that the disaster was one of the most terrible in history. Occasional shocks still are felt, and the universal terror is so great that little has been done as yet for the relief of sufferers. The United States corvette *Gilboa*, and French, Austrian and English war vessels have been ordered to the island to render aid. Out of a population of fifty thousand, nearly seven thousand perished in the catastrophe. Those who survive are left with their homes in ruins. Scio (Skio, Khio, Chios,) is an island of historic renown, the reputed birth place of Homer, now belonging to Turkey, situated off the west coast of Asia Minor, four miles west of cape Bianco. It is thirty two miles in length, by eighteen in breadth, and contains only five hundred square miles. It is one of the fairest and richest of the islands of the Levant. Sixty years ago, some of its inhabitants having joined the Samians in a revolt, the "unspeakable Turk" who ruled at Constantinople, wreaked his utmost vengeance on the island, causing the massacre of over a hundred thousand of its people. In this instance of calamity the sympathy of the world will not be slow in reaching them. Collections have been opened in London, and English and American physicians are already on the ground to aid in caring for the sufferers.

—Dr. Rule, a Wesleyan missionary in Spain, writes that the downfall of the Spanish Cabinet is the greatest event since the revolution of 1868, when religious liberty was proclaimed. "During the last six years, king, cabinet, and priests had been steadily, yet not quite openly united in an effort to reinstate civil and religious despotism, and gradually to extinguish liberty of worship; but in one day the king found himself compelled to give up the cabinet that would have provoked another revolution and overturned his throne. The members of the present cabinet, the leaders of public opinion and the most intelligent and influential Spaniards, are declared advocates of religious liberty; but the ground is open to the propagators of atheism and the preachers of the Gospel." The Spanish Liberals and Democrats are demanding more toleration for Protestants and Rationalists. The influence of the prelates and clergy makes it very difficult for the cabinet to pursue a policy of toleration. In March the cabinet resolved to give a free pardon and liberty to a native Protestant pastor condemned to several months' imprisonment, under the Canovas cabinet, because he held prayer-meetings in Catalonia, and the village authorities prosecuted him under the law of public meetings. The judicial proceedings against several Protestants will also be abandoned in the provinces, under the orders of the ministry. The reply given to the Papal Nuncio states that neither the Concordat nor the constitution is violated by the toleration the government is determined to grant to Spaniards who are not Catholics, and that no interference of the bishops and the Holy See against the rights of the government under the constitution will be tolerated.