

The Canadian Independent.

"ONE IS YOUR MASTER, EVIL CHRIST, AND ALL YE ARE BRETHEREN."

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Topics of the Week.

—General Roberts, the hero of Afghanistan, is a staunch teetotaler, and almost every English regiment serving in the Afghan campaign has a Good Templar Lodge attached to it.

—During the sixty-four years of its existence, the American Bible Society has issued 37,408,208 copies of the Holy Scriptures. During the last year, its issues were 1,366,113, of which all but 226,961 were circulated in America. The New Testament has been translated into Japanese, and part of the Old.

—A Sunday school has been opened at Wittember, in the church to whose door Luther affixed his ninety-five theses. At first it had seventy scholars, but it grew so rapidly that it was soon found necessary to use another part of the school. The scholars now number 400, of whom three-fourths are girls. Five of the teachers are men and eight women.

—The marriage of Rev. Auguste Laine, a priest of the church of Rome, to Madame Lopez, in Paris, has afforded M. Loyson (Pere Hyacinthe,) who officiated, an opportunity to comment on the marriage of priests. He remarked that this union marked a great advance as compared with his own marriage in 1870, when he had to obtain in another land the bare legal sanction denied him at home. He denounced the celibacy of the priest-hood, and maintained that marriage no more degraded the priest or rendered him unfit to discharge his religious functions than it unfitted other professional men. He has never known any priest too holy to contract marriage, but he had found many that were unworthy to do so.

—Mr. Joseph Thompson, the African explorer, has returned to his home at Gateaway, Scotland. Mr. Thompson accompanied Mr. Keith Johnston as an assistant in the expedition of the Royal Geographical Society, and on the death of that gentleman assumed command of the party, including 170 blacks, and completed the task appointed. He is an abstainer, and travelled 6,000 miles without needing to be carried once, though often enfeebled by fever. A bottle of brandy was taken by the expedition, lest it might be required as a medicine, and it was brought back unopened.

—The Rev. E. Fawkes, vicar of Woolney, in the compulsory expulsion of a small congregation of Wesleyans, who met for worship in a cottage belonging to himself, has done a very un-Christian and unwise thing. This Guy Fawkes way of "blowing up" Dissent doesn't suit modern taste, and the sooner the few remaining bigots in our National Church are plainly told so by their friends the better. We may as well add a word of warning to a very High Church contemporary, the *Church Times*, which offends in this way habitually. Its columns seem to be freely at the disposal of every rampant bigot, every crazy noodle, who thinks the world is rounded by a shovel hat of Ritualistic cut. For example, in a recent number, we find "A Lay Churchman" writing as follows:—"We should, every man of us, rise to defend our churchyards. Metaphorically speaking, we should line and loophole the churchyard walls, and if necessary die (surely a good place to die in—with open graves behind us) fighting for our just rights, betrayed by the Bishops, Prime Minister, and Lord Chancellor; from all

of whom I feel inclined to say, as Oliver Cromwell said of some one else, 'The Lord deliver me.' —*The Western Mail*.

The formal annexation of Tahiti and the Society Islands to France appears to have given much satisfaction in Paris, where, if one is to believe a somewhat gaudy newspaper, "the emotion over this happy event is indescribable." This annexation does not, it appears, stand alone. Contrary to the express terms of the treaty of 1817, the French have also assumed the protectorate of the Leeward Islands. An I. says a correspondent of the *Times*, "The French have cajoled the people of Raiatea and Tahaa to accept their flag. Other groups will certainly be swallowed up, and this means a check to British commerce and influence in these seas. Probably the French will soon tire of the fever of annexation in this archipelago of islands like Germany, which has washed its hands of Samoa. Most of them could, at any time during the last quarter of a century, have been incorporated in the British Empire. But such possessions, as our experience at Fiji goes to show, do not pay. It is, however, to be hoped that the French Republic, in its new acquisitions in Polynesia, will respect the Protestant Christianity of the native races, and lend no countenance to the mischievous intrigues of Romish priests.

—What will the Evangelicals say? And the High Churchmen? The Rev. C. F. Lowder, vicar of St. Peter's, London Docks, died lately in the Tyrol, where he was taking his holiday. Mr. Lowder, who was a High Churchman of a very pronounced type, has long been known for his firm adherence to a ritual and practices which connected his name with many exciting scenes in the history of Church anomalies during the last twenty-five years. He was from 1851—for seven years vicar of St. Barnabas, Pimlico, under the Hon. and Rev. Robert Lillicoll. He afterwards became curate to the Rev. Brean King, at St. George's-in-the-East, and established a successful mission in Wellesley-square. Amongst those who joined him in that work was Mr. Mackenzie. All kinds of institutions were started, having for their object the material and moral good of the people in that neglected neighborhood; and in time the handsome church of St. Peter's was erected. He seems to be better remembered by his parishioners. The late Mrs. Felt, the Archbishop's wife, was one of his warmest supporters; as were also many persons of exalted rank. At several Ritualistic churches on Sunday, the congregations were asked to pray for the repose of his soul, and to "remember in their prayers the bereaved congregation, by petitioning that a priest of Catholic views might be sent to fill the vacant cure."

—Exeter Hall having been purchased for the Young Men's Christian Association, at a cost of £25,000, the time-honored structure is now being adapted to suit the requirements of its future occupants, at an additional outlay of something like £15,000. The *Builder* publishes plans showing the alterations now in progress, from which we learn that the whole area will be devoted to the work of the Association, and will comprise a spacious reading-room and library, supper-rooms, and domestic offices. The lower hall will be suitably enlarged, while the

large hall will be so arranged as to secure increased accommodation and facility of egress and access. There will also be added a gymnasium, lecture room, and spacious night and Sunday schools, together with the necessary class rooms. These alterations will occupy some months, but the whole will be well out of hand before the May meeting of 1881.

—The Premier is irrepensible and incorrigible. He reached Chester Station from Mentmore (Lord Rosebery's seat) at about half-past seven, in company with Mrs. Gladstone. Knowing that the Bishop of Chester (Dr. Jacobson) had been unwell, Mr. Gladstone and his wife made their way on foot to the palace to make inquiries, and then Mr. Gladstone started off for the Hawarden Castle, in the bright star-light, just as if he were twenty five instead of seventy. This is not the way in which Prime Ministers moved about in the days of my youth, but then, men of Mr. Gladstone's type are rare. I heard the other day that when he was visiting his brother, Sir Thomas Gladstone, at Fasque, on the last occasion, he was accustomed to go forth upon unconsciously long walks amongst the hills. One day, "towards evening," he walked into a station after a long stretch, and was recognized by the adoring station master. The man invited him into his house for a rest until the train became due, asking him if he could offer him anything. Mr. Gladstone said he would like a bannock and a cup of milk, if he could oblige him. This request was readily complied with, and in due time the train came up, and bore him safely toward Fasque.

—The *Nonconformist* says:—"Those who have been in the habit of sneering at the burials grievance as fanciful will be rather surprised to find how promptly the provisions of the new Act have been had recourse to. There have been during one week, and in different parts of the country, some half-dozen burials under the Act. However much disposed Dissenters may be supposed to be to make the most of their grievances, their bitterest antagonist will hardly charge them with dying prematurely in order to illustrate an Act of Parliament. In due time, we doubt not, even clergymen of strong views will wonder why they have so long resisted this reasonable concession, as to which Bishop Cloughton has written in such suitable terms, and has been honored by the endorsement of Dr. Parker. We observe that the redoubtable Archdeacon Denison proposes there shall be a clerical conference at Leicester in connection with the Church Congress for the purpose of agreeing upon a course of passive resistance in respect to Nonconformist burials, except to prohibit such arrangements on Sunday, Good Friday, or Christmas-day. This is unwise churchmanship. Is the venerable Archdeacon bent on playing into the hands of the Liberation Society? Here is an account of a funeral under the new Act, and how the Clergy are meeting the new law: It was attended with incidents of a very painful character. We give the particulars from the *Birmingham Post* of Monday last: At the beginning of last week a young man named John Parsons, a collier, died from the effects of bruises received in Lord Dudley's Saltwells Colliery. It was decided to bury him in Netherton churchyard, this being the only available spot within the district in which his home was situated.

As the deceased man had been, during his life, a member of the Baptist body, and, as all his relatives belonged to the same religious community, it was thought well that the Rev. W. Millington, the pastor of the chapel at Netherton, should read a service over the grave, under the provisions of the new Act. As, however, the funeral was to take place on Sunday, the family found it necessary to ask permission of the vicar of the parish, the Rev. S. J. Marriott. The Rev. W. Millington accordingly called at the vicarage, and found that the vicar was away from home. He, however, saw the curate, the Rev. E. J. Crowther, and mentioned the desire of the family. At the same time Mr. Millington asked for Mr. Marriott's address that he might ask for the permission. Mr. Crowther replied that he would write to the vicar, and he did so. In due time, Mr. Marriott, who was in Leicester, replied that the service, agreeable to the friends of Parsons, might be read in the churchyard. Arrangements were then made for the interment of the body on Sunday, but on Saturday notice was received that the vicar had withdrawn his consent, and to inquiries the only answer vouchsafed was that the requisite notice of forty-eight hours had not been given. It was pointed out that this could not be done, as much as there was not time between the receipt of the notice of withdrawal of the consent and the day fixed for the burial. The friends and relatives of Parsons took legal advice, and were informed that the consent could not be withdrawn under the circumstances, and so it was determined to proceed with the funeral as though Mr. Marriott had not revoked his promise. Yesterday afternoon, about half-past four, the funeral procession left the Baptist Chapel, Netherton-hall, where Mr. Millington had held a short service, and proceeded to the churchyard. Here four police officers guarded the gates, and allowed no one to pass into the grounds except those connected with the funeral and the reporters. The Rev. E. J. Crowther met the body at the church door, and walked with the procession to the grave. The Church of England service for the dead was then read by him, and the body was lowered into the grave. The moment the benediction was pronounced, Mr. Millington, who was standing at the head of the grave, commenced a service. He was interrupted by Mr. Crowther, who said, "Mr. Millington, I cannot, Mr. Millington, I cannot allow you to read any service here." Mr. Millington continued without allowing the interruption, and then the curate interposed, and said, "In the name of the vicar in the name of the vicar, the Bishop, and the Queen, I forbid you to read that service. You will hear of this again." Mr. Millington still continuing, Mr. Crowther retired; but as he passed the father and mother of the deceased, he exclaimed, "It is no use; you should have given proper notice." Mr. Parsons replied that it could not be done, and then the curate went into the church, and Mr. Millington concluded a brief service. In the course of this he prayed that all the clogs on religious freedom might be speedily swept away, and that a more generous spirit might prevail in religion than had been shown that day. The assemblage then dispersed. Notwithstanding the heavy rain during the whole of the afternoon, some 200 persons hung about the churchyard.