

The Canadian Independent.

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

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Topics of the Week.

THE death of the Right Honourable William E. Baxter, M.P., of Dundee, Scotland, is announced. Mr. Baxter had long been before the public, and had made his mark as a public man. He was also well known as a Christian man, having long been connected with all the prominent movements of the Congregational churches in Scotland.

THE Congregational Home Missionary Board of Minnesota have issued circulars addressed to Congregationalists of New England and to those of Great Britain, calling attention to the opportunities there offered. Among other things it says: "We have 137 churches with 6,654 members, of which ninety are under the care of the Home Missionary Society. Thirteen of these were organized in 1879, and a larger number will doubtless be formed this year. We are now third on the list of distinctively Protestant denominations," and much more to the same import, for the purpose of encouraging the immigration of Congregationalists.

A CASE containing a wax figure lately arrived at New York from Rome. It was seized by the Custom House officers, who were about to break it open to ascertain the quantity of wax on which to charge duty, when appeal was made to the Collector, and the following facts were made known: The box was a reliquary, or shrine, containing the effigy of "Saint" Discolius, martyr. The bones of the Saint were discovered in 1802. They have been articulated and covered with wax, so as to reproduce the form of the original, who appears to have been a very young man, with long, fair hair and almost feminine features. The imitated flesh is semi-transparent, shewing the outlines of the bones beneath. On the forehead is a cut or scar, designed to shew the manner of death. The body is richly clothed in silk of various colours, magnificently embroidered with gold. Near the head is a glass bottle set in brass, and supposed to contain some of the blood of the martyr. The case is consigned to a nunnery at Cincinnati. Superstition doubtless sets a high value on such a relic, and when it reaches Cincinnati it will probably be deeply venerated, but to those who worship God in spirit and in truth the relic partakes of the character of the brazen serpent which Hezekiah broke up because the people burned incense to it (2 Kings xviii. 4).

THE "Society to Encourage Studies at Home" has become a woman's college of the most popular and economical sort. Miss Ticknor's report of last year's work shews how fruitful this effort to help young women to educate themselves in their homes has become: 887 persons entered themselves for study, counting, with double and treble courses of study, 1,137 correspondences; 242 took the first rank—that is, achieved decided success; 347 were noted for their diligence, and 90 did passably well. Ladies to the number of 155 have been engaged in the actual work of the society, and 22 who were once students are now on the staff of teachers, and 4 are on the committee which controls the society. The correspondence for instruction exceeded 8,000 letters written to students and about the same number received from them. In the list of studies, English literature was selected by 417, history by 331, science by 143, art by 120, German by 50, and French by 40. The students are found in 37 States, besides Canada. The lending library, the books being sent by mail, consists of 920 volumes, of which only one has ever failed to come back, and 940 books have gone to 330 persons from Boston alone. The teachers give their services. The

tuition fee is only \$2, and with an annual expense of \$1,732.64 Miss Ticknor is able to report \$491.87 in the treasury.

THE following Sabbath school statistics may be regarded as approximately correct:—

	Sabbath schools.	Teachers.	Scholars.
Canada.....	51,400	41,712	340,170
United States.....	82,261	886,328	6,623,124
England and Wales.....	422,250	422,250	3,800,000
Scotland.....	47,972	47,972	494,553
Ireland.....	32,548	32,548	384,627
Australia.....	3,910	3,910	57,915
New Zealand.....	1,101	1,101	9,947

The total number of teachers and scholars in the British dominions was 547,553 teachers and 5,067,102 scholars, or altogether 5,616,745 souls connected with Sunday school work in the British Empire, not including India. In the various countries of Europe there were 20,000 teachers and 100,000 scholars; in India, China, Africa, Polynesia and the West Indies 2,000 teachers and 100,000 scholars; in South America 3,000 teachers and 152,000 scholars. Added altogether there was this important exhibit: in the world, 1,460,881 teachers and 12,340,316 scholars, or a grand total of 13,801,197. In Europe the statistics of the number of Sunday schools in each country were as follows:—

Switzerland.....	405
Spain.....	100
Portugal.....	30
Italy.....	150
France.....	1,050
Germany.....	1,977

In Japan there were forty schools. All this accomplished within a hundred years. Who shall say what a mighty harmonizing as well as saving influence the work thus indicated has exerted all these years?

At the last anniversary of the General Prussian Bible Society, Professor Theodor Christlieb, of Bonn, spoke at some length concerning the spread of the Bible throughout the world, and its mission among many peoples. He said, in part: "In 2 Thessalonians iii. 1, the Apostle Paul urges: 'Finally brethren, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you.' A Bible Society is really nothing more than the embodied prayer: 'Brethren, pray that the Word of the Lord may have free course.' The apostle stands at the beginning of the course, but sees the Word of God already upheld in this victorious course through manifold opposition, and therefore he speaks of bad and perverse people, and recognizes, as the right weapon to overcome all, the prayers of the believing Church. It is for that reason that he commends himself and his work to the intercession of the Thessalonians: 'Pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free course.' Wherefore, then, does the Word of the Lord so wonderfully run, notwithstanding such opposition? Wherefore does it run, in that century when it is more than opposed, strongest and broadest as an infinite stream over the earth? We have the answer: It is a living power of God. At the commencement of this century we had translations of the Scriptures in about fifty languages, and about five million copies of the precious book were spread abroad; but to-day it is translated into three hundred and eight languages and dialects, and circulated to an extent of one hundred and fifty million copies. That I call a boundless course! It is my comfort, when I look out upon the adversaries of the Word, that the greater part of all the inhabitants of the earth, if they can read at all can read the Word of God. Then it is spread in those languages which are the most widely understood in the world. I may mention the sacred language of the

Mohammedans, the Arabic. In that a most excellent translation has appeared, and has already gone everywhere. From Fez and Morocco on through Africa, from Constantinople on through all Asia Minor to Persia, there are innumerable villages and cities, in which at least one copy of the Holy Scriptures is to be found. The Word of God is spread also through eastern Asia. For from thirty to forty years the Chinese have had the translation of the Bible made by Morrison, and to day they have a translation in a style as elegant as any in the world. I rejoice that the inhabitants of the world to-day, when they are able to read at all, can have access to the divine Word. Nor do I forget how many private Bible Societies the Lord has formed for himself. When our Rhineland missionaries came to Sumatra and Borneo, they found that the inhabitants had for the most part no writing at all; and as soon as any had learned writing, they wrote down sentence after sentence upon bamboo leaves, and took them to their woods, and read them to their whole tribes. That, too, is a kind of Bible Society, and one, indeed, which we will not despise. The Lord has many other ways and means to bring the Word into free course. It runs and makes itself felt everywhere as the living power of God. It has been said that a single chapter, that even one verse, has worked wonders. I remember how once in India a single chapter of the Holy Scriptures took mighty hold upon the inhabitants of a whole village. A man of the village had taken home a fragment of the Gospels, and read and re-read it several times. It made such an impression upon the village people that they resolved to destroy all their idols. Ten years afterwards a missionary reached them, and found, I will not say a Christian church, but the porch of a Christian church. Only one chapter, he heard to his great astonishment, had been publicly read and listened to again and again. He now opened to the village people the whole riches of the grace of God in Christ Jesus."

BOYS, READ AND HEED THIS!

Many people seem to forget that character grows; that it is not something to put on ready made, with womanhood or manhood; but, day by day, here a little and there a little, grows with the growth, and strengthens with the strength, until, good or bad, it becomes almost a coat of mail. Look at a man of business; prompt, reliable, conscientious, yet clear-headed and energetic. When do you suppose he developed all these admirable qualities? When was a boy? Let us see the way in which a boy of ten years gets up in the morning, works, plays, studies, and we will tell you just what kind of a man he will make. The boy that is late at breakfast, late at school, stands a poor chance to be a prompt man. The boy who neglects his duties, be they ever so small, and then excuses himself by saying, "I forgot! I didn't think!" will never be a reliable man. And the boy who finds pleasure in the sufferings of weaker things, will never be a noble, generous, kindly man—a gentleman.

THERE is more marrow in a wise man's jokes than in a fool's solemn inanities. But a wise man "sets a watch on his lips," even when he utters a pleasantry. Especially, he never jests at the wrong time, or about sacred things. He never utters puns and parodies on the Bible; for what men have once laughed at, they seldom reverence. Heartily do I wish that I had never uttered a ludicrous application of a Scripture-line, and had never heard one; for the profane or indecent burlesque will often shoot into my mind in the midst of a sermon or a prayer.—Cuyler