

# The Canadian Independent.

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

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## Current Topics.

—The French are talking about a rail-road at an early day from Algeria to Soudan, across the Sahara, about 1,600 miles. The most serious question is that of water, and the heat of the sun is so great that it might not be safe to run a train for a few hours in the middle of the day.

—From the returns just completed it appears that during last year 183,502 emigrants left Liverpool against 117,914 in 1879, an increase of 65,538. 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.

—The Friends of England, says the *Christian World*, are adopting new ideas and dropping old peculiarities and customs. There are heard at times hymns in the meeting houses; some of the ministers are found filling Methodist pulpits, and the question whether members should be allowed to be baptized is discussed. It is a matter of opinion whether the Society gains or loses by this partial change in practice; but there are some who look with regretful eye upon the growing tendency to change in the Society's views upon some matters of belief. There are at present two tendencies: one towards a more evangelical position and the other in an opposite direction.

—Sir Henry Wellwood Moncreiff, secretary of the Scottish Bible Board, in answer to an inquiry writes:—"It is a great mistake to suppose that the new revised version of the scriptures will, on its publication, become an authorized translation or supersede the present one. That can only be after the Queen has adopted it and allowed the substitution. It is impossible to say when, if ever, such adoption and allowance will take place. Objections may be taken to the revisal. Its publication now is only to enable the public and all authorities to judge of it. It may be approved of, but it may be disapproved of."

—The genial editor of the *National Baptist* has had his first Atlantic voyage and safely reached England. Alluding to the effects of sea-sickness, he says "The judgment of history needs to be revised on a great many little points. We have lavished a vast deal of praise upon the Pilgrim Fathers for landing on Plymouth Rock. Now, I don't think they deserved a spark of praise; I don't think that it displayed a gleam of heroism. In the light of my experience, I should say that if they had declined to land on any spot however rocky, however beset by savages, they would have given evidence of a courage beyond all comparison, and approaching to fool-hardiness."

—Liberty is widening and strengthening in France. The soldiers are now released from compulsory attendance on religious services. Protestant officials are no longer obliged to attend mass on public occasions. Religious books, whether sold or given, are no longer the objects of prohibitive laws. A simple declaration is all that is necessary to hold a meeting or deliver a lecture. Public schools may be taught by Protestants as well as by

Roman Catholics, and just a few weeks ago perfect freedom for all in respect of burial grounds has been voted by 348 to 150. What is true of France is equally so of Italy, and to a good extent is getting to be so even of Spain. The onward progress of liberty and toleration is becoming as marked and unmistakable as the most sanguine could have anticipated.

—The *Foreign Missionary* says a female medical mission in every popular centre is one of the most crying needs of India. The death rate among women and children is enormous and constant. Two thousand children, not very long ago, were left to perish of small-pox in one city, and with the women it was even worse. A medical lady is welcome as an angel of mercy and received with open arms. "This morning," writes a female medical missionary, "a Brahmin suddenly appeared at my door, and with quivering lip exclaimed: 'You are a mother; I have brought my wife, the mother of my six children, for you to save.' The wife and mother was healed, and the missionary was permitted to kneel with that heathen family around her, and give thanks to the Christian's God for His restoring mercy." Here is a grand field for woman's work.

—Chautauqua, under Dr. Vincent, will have its usual attractions this summer. The Normal School of Languages will open July 7, closing August 18. Greek, Latin, German, French, Hebrew and English will be taught. Elocution will also be taught under the general direction of Prof. J. W. Churchill who will give twelve lessons and two lectures. Frank Beard, Esq., and Prof. J. L. Corning will deliver lectures on art. Among the lecturers this season will be Drs. Taylor, Ward, Schaff and Fowler of New York, Dr. Townsend of Boston, Bishops Warren and Foss, Governor St. John, John B. Gough, and many others. The Jubilee Singers will be in attendance from July 30 to August 22. A children's course of reading is being prepared with the co-operation of a Boston committee. It is so designed as not to interfere with the busiest school life. The *Foreign Missionary Institute* will be held July 30-August 4; the S. S. Assembly August 2-22. Temperance Day will be on August 2.

—The Massachusetts State Bureau of Statistics of Labor, just issued under the careful supervision of Hon. Carroll D. Wright, gives many suggestive facts. In the courts of Suffolk County, which means in Boston, agents have investigated every case during the past year to find if possible what relation intemperance sustains to crime. The total number of sentences for the year was 16,897, of these seventy-two per cent. were directly traceable to intoxicating liquors. Twelve per cent. more were given to persons under the influence of liquor at the time the crimes were committed, thus making a total of eighty-four per cent. due to liquor. This traffic in our very midst makes seven-eighths of all our crime, with the consequent costs for arrests and trials, jails and prisons, putting an enormous tax upon honest and law-abiding citizens, tearing down character faster than churches and Sunday schools can build it up, despoiling homes, robbing children and wrecking manhood. The words of the official making this report, and commenting upon the figures and facts he has

collected, are worth being quoted and considered: "These figures paint a picture, at once the most faithful and hideous, of the guilt and power of rum. Men and women, the young, and the middle-aged, and the old, father and son, husband and wife, native and foreign born, the nightwalker and manslayer, the thief and adulterer, all testify to its ramified and revolting tyranny. Therefore the result of this investigation, in view of the magnitude of rum offenses, and considered in connection with the notorious tendency of liquor to inflame and enlarge the passions and appetites, to impart chaos into the moral and physical life, to level the barriers of decency and self-respect, and to transport its victims into an abnormal and irresponsible state, destructive and degrading, calls for earnest and immediate attention at the bar of the public opinion and the public conscience of Massachusetts."

—Mr. H. S. Newman, a late visitor to Calcutta, says he finds "in the mission schools some of the most clever teachers avow themselves to be Brahmos." The address of Chunder Sen, which we have lately published, shows how much Brahmoism is borrowing of Christianity. The following account of their ceremony of communion with Christ is taken from one of the late Brahmo tracts:

"Jesus! Is the sacramental rite meant only for those nations that are in the habit of taking bread and wine? Are the Hindus excluded from partaking of the holy eucharist? Wilt thou cut us off because we are rice-eaters and teetotalers? That cannot be. Spirit of Jesus! that cannot be. Both unto Europe and Asia thou hast said: 'Eat my flesh and drink my blood.' Therefore, the Hindu shall eat thy flesh in rice and drink thy blood in pure water, so that the Scriptures might be fulfilled in this land.

"On Sunday, the 6th of March, the ceremony of adapting the sacrament of Hindu life was performed with due solemnity, in accordance with the principle above set forth. The Hindu apostles of Christ gathered after prayer in the dinner-hall, and sat upon the floor upon bare ground. Upon a silver plate was rice, and in a small goblet was water, and there were flowers and leaves around both. The minister read the following verses from Luke xxii:

"And he took bread and gave thanks, and brake it and gave unto them, saying: This is my body which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me.

"Likewise also the cup after supper, saying: This cup is the New Testament in my blood which is shed for you."

"A prayer was then offered, asking the Lord to bless the sacramental rice and water:

"Touch this rice and this water, O Holy Spirit, and turn their grossly material substance into sanctifying spiritual forces, that they may, upon entering our system, be assimilated to it as the flesh and blood of all the saints in Christ Jesus. Satisfy the hunger and thirst of our souls with the rich food and drink thou hast placed before us. Invigorate us with Christ-force and nourish us with saintly life."

"The Lord blessed the rice and he blessed the water.

"And these were then served in small quantities to those around, and

men ate and drank reverently, and the women and children also ate and drank, and they blessed God, the God of prophets and saints."

Why was not such worship accepted by the Master?

—The *Lee, Mass., Valley Gleaner* says: From an interesting letter lately received by Amos G. Hulbert, from his son, Henry C. Hulbert, of New York, who is now travelling in the East, we take the following sketch of a look at one of the oldest Hebrew manuscripts in existence, and probably one of the most valuable. Mr Hulbert says:

"While at Cairo I visited the Coptic church from which Peter wrote his Epistle (see First Peter 5:13). The church is to this day called Babloun or Babylon, and Dr. Lansing, our missionary at Cairo for the last twenty-five years, says he has no doubt it is the spot. We also visited the Jewish synagogue in hopes to get a chance to see the manuscript of the five books of Moses, which was left there by Ezra the Scribe. They do not show it, and it is only by chance it can be seen. Dr. Lansing has been able to see it but once or twice, and he hopes to get possession of it, or at least to have it photographed. Fortunately the old Rabbi was away, and the attendant, who knew Dr. Lansing, allowed us in the synagogue and locked the door. We then had full sweep. Dr. Lansing went up a ladder to a hole in the wall with a wooden door and curtain, some fifteen feet from the ground or floor, and took out a portion of it. It is in a long, round box that opens in the middle, with a peg through each half on which the parchment is rolled, and as fast as read it rolls from one peg to the other. Dr. Lansing had with him a copy of the Hebrew in two versions, and he and Mr. Peham, an English clergyman, with E. P. I. (Rev. Dr. Ingersoll of Brooklyn), and Dr. Ludlow and myself standing round, compared a portion of the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy, and found that it compared exactly with the accepted Hebrew version from which our Bible was translated, and not with what is called the Samaritan version. I measured it, and found the width of manuscript 2 feet, length of written page 18½ inches, and margin top and bottom 2½ inches each, width between the pages 1½ inches. Five lines measured 2 inches. It is in a very good state of preservation, and though the margin is crumbling with age, the writing is clear and distinct.

"An old rabbi, who taught Hebrew to Dr. Lansing's children, says their tradition is that after the return of the Jews from captivity, Ezra the Scribe came down to Cairo or Egypt to correct the genealogy of the Jews who had fled and found refuge in Egypt (see Ezra 2:26), and before leaving, at the request of the rabbies, left this copy with them, and it has been here ever since. Macrasi, the historian, wrote 500 years ago that this synagogue was built 45 years before the destruction of the second temple, and also refers to the manuscript left by Ezra. Dr. Lansing believes this the oldest copy of the five books of Moses in existence. It is not kept for show, and can only be seen by a chance shot, which we had. It is truly wonderful, and I enjoyed it very much."