

The Canadian Independent.

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

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Topics of the Week.

FROM some of our British exchanges we learn that a discussion is going on in the High Church papers on the part unconfirmed children ought to take in "offering the Holy Sacrifice" and "adoring the Presence." In a letter on the subject, the Rev. J. W. Horsley, the chaplain of Clerkenwell Prison, introduces the questions of private confession and absolution; and he says "I could, and would, if necessary, hear or make a confession in a pair-oar on the river, or under a lamp-post in the street." When is all this foolery to end? and how?

NEVER has Toronto seen such a funeral as that of the late Hon. George Brown, which took place on the 12th inst. Crowds from all quarters of the country were present, and the general and genuine manifestation of sorrow for the dead and of sympathy with the widowed wife and fatherless children gave the most unquestionable proof of how deeply the heart of the country had been touched and how powerful was the hold which the dead Senator had secured, not only upon the respect of the people of this Province, but upon their personal and unfeigned affection.

THE May meetings held in this city during last week were, upon the whole, fairly successful, though the proceedings were not of such general interest as to call for any lengthened report. The speeches were all very respectable, and the different reports were in general very encouraging. The Bible Society had rather a falling off to report, both in the way of income and issues. The Tract Society was reported to be holding on in its useful, unostentatious course. The Women's, and the Young Men's Christian Associations were also shewn to be in healthy and vigorous operation.

"WE are sorry," says the Lucknow "Times," "to learn that Dr. Valentine, the well-known medical missionary at Jeypore, is compelled to go home, completely broken in health. He takes also with him his motherless girl, Nellie. Many, as he departs, will remember him in their prayers. The last numbers of the 'Missionary Record' and of the 'Children's Magazine' contain deeply appreciative notices of the death of his little daughter Ettie, which followed so soon after that of his wife—a sketch of whose devoted missionary labours appeared in the November number of the 'Record' from the pen of Dr. Shoobred."

ON the 26th ult. a series of evangelistic services was commenced in Rome by Dr. Somerville of Glasgow. Despite the opposition of the municipality, which, pandering to clerical intolerance, set its veto on the contract already concluded by him with the proprietors of the Argentine Theatre, and sanctioned by the Government, the reverend doctor was able to address 1,500 persons in the Alhambra. A large crowd had assembled outside the Argentine in ignorance of the veto. At the close of the meeting Dr. Somerville was by acclamation invited to continue the series, which at Florence and Naples has already attracted such numerous audiences, and which nowhere but in Rome has encountered municipal opposition.

IN reference to the removal of Dr. John Gibson from Chicago to London, the Ministerial Association of the Chicago Presbytery at its last meeting adopted the following minute: "Whereas, our beloved brother, Rev. J. Monro Gibson, has felt called upon to resign his pastoral charge within our bounds, and to accept a call to the Presbyterian church of St. John's Wood, London, and we, the members of the Chicago Presby-

tery and his associates in the work of the ministry, desire to convey to him some further expression of our high regard and Christian love, therefore resolved, That we do hereby, as a Presbytery, give expression to our conviction of the very marked and signal usefulness with which it has pleased God to attend the labours of Dr. Gibson during his residence in this city. His ministry has been rich in precious result not only to his own church, but to all the churches of our order, and to the cause of evangelical religion throughout the city and far beyond. We rejoice in the substantial fruit of his Christian scholarship, in his fidelity both as a pastor and a presbyter, and equally in the influence which has been so constantly felt amongst us of his cheerful, wise and humble life. We tender to him our sympathy in the painful separation which he feels called to make from a Church and from Christian brethren by whom he is so warmly loved, and can only add our heartfelt hope and prayer that in his new field of labour God will give him open access to the people, and clothe his ministry with increasing power. And, finally, we would address ourselves to the Presbytery of London, to which Dr. Gibson has now been transferred, and entreat them to receive him from us as a brother greatly beloved, a helper of the faith of many, as one destined, we trust, to be a new band between us and our Christian brethren of England.

It has long seemed strange that with ten Presbyterian churches there should not be a solitary Congregational one in Buffalo, the chief interior city of the Empire State. If I am rightly informed, however, what is now the First Presbyterian Church was formed on the Congregational platform, but like many others in Central and Western New York and Northern Ohio, under the influence of the pernicious and ever to be lamented "Plan of Union," they were transformed into the Presbyterian shape. Presbyterianism in Buffalo is largely made up of original Congregationalists from New England and elsewhere, and others are continually going there, and being absorbed by that denomination. Recently, however, there has been a large secession of those who were among the most spiritual and excellent members of La Fayette street Presbyterian Church (formerly Dr. Heacock's and more recently Rev. H. M. Parsons') with the design of forming a Congregational church. *It was a movement wholly spontaneous among themselves, without any external pressure whatever.* They invited Rev. J. C. Holbrook, D.D., of Syracuse, Secretary of the N. Y. State H. M. Society, to meet with them and advise them as to the necessary steps to be taken, and on Sunday, May 2, he preached for them twice, to large audiences, and the following Thursday evening there was held a meeting to organize a church. Letters were presented by *eighty-five* persons, seventy-nine from the La Fayette street and four from the Westminster Presbyterian Churches of the city, and four from Congregational churches in other places, and one proposed to join on confession of faith. These, *eighty-seven* in all, were then duly constituted a church by the adoption of the Articles of Faith, with slight alterations, of the La Fayette street Presbyterian Church, and the Covenant of the same. Five deacons and a clerk and treasurer were chosen, and a committee to prepare a constitution and rules, and another to call an ecclesiastical council to recognize the church and receive it into the Congregational fellowship. It is confidently believed that considerably more than one hundred members will soon be enrolled. A very centrally situated and pleasant hall has been rented for a year for the exclusive use of the society, which is to be carpeted and fitted up for public worship, and a number of prominent Congregational clergymen in the State and in

Cleveland and Detroit are expected to supply the pulpit for the present, and until a pastor shall be secured. The Buffalo papers all speak of the enterprise as very hopeful, and of the leaders as being well known gentlemen of that growing city of some 15,000 inhabitants. Certainly very few new movements of the kind have ever begun under more favourable auspices or with better prospects of success. Rev. F. A. Valentine has been engaged as a permanent supply of the church at Mannsville, and Rev. T. W. Walters has a call to be installed as pastor at South Canton (Crazy's Mills). The Free Will Baptists will unite with the Congregationalists at present, in sustaining public services in the house of worship of the former in Philadelphia, Jefferson Co., the pulpit to be supplied by Rev. Mr. Barber of the latter Church. Rev. G. A. Flower, Jr., has discontinued his labours at Harrisville. On May 2, four united with the church in Jamestown. Rev. Mr. Hubbell, the new pastor, is doing a good work there.—*J. C. H., Correspondence of Boston Congregationalist.*

SOMETIMES rather whimsical mistakes are made from the similarity of the names of distinguished or notorious individuals. A worthy Presbyterian exchange, on the other side of the lines, a week or two ago afforded rather a curious illustration of this. It made Professor Blackie of the Edinburgh University do duty for Professor W. G. Blackie, D.D., of the Free Church College in that city, and, forthwith dubbed the erratic and anything but orthodox Professor of Greek "one of the prominent men of the Free Church of Scotland, and also distinguished as a worker for the general interests of Calvinistic Presbyterianism in Great Britain and the world." Is Saul also among the prophets? We should just think he was, when that most genuine but most eccentric and most unorthodox (not to put it positively) of the sons of men and genius—John Stuart Blackie—does duty as a champion of Presbyterian Calvinism and becomes the substitute of that most proper, most particular, we had almost said most prim, and—well—slightly prosaic gentleman, who has an "i" in his last name instead of a "c," and whom his greatest enemy has never once thought of accusing either of heresy or genius. To think of Professor W. G. Blackie being fathered with the mocking suggestion that was first, we believe, thrown out by the Edinburgh "Scotsman" to the effect that a few of the ablest sermon writers and preachers of Scotland should be detailed for the special purpose of composing first rate sermons, a few hundred copies of each of which should be sent in good time to be on hand for Sabbath morning, so that all the duller brethren might read them to their congregations, and thus there be a systematic course of instruction going on over large districts at the same time, is so awful that it might be worth the excellent Free Church doctor's while to put out a card certifying that he is *not* the gentleman referred to. In the absence of such a disclaimer, we put in this modest caveat for the benefit of our Presbyterian and other fellow editors in the States, who, in the prospect of Professor Blackie's appearance at the Pan-Presbyterian Conference at Philadelphia might seek to honour him and explain his position and views by quoting the following, which refers to the "other" Blackie: "He thinks our preaching work is overdone; that there should be more public catechetical instruction, and more attention given to praise and psalm-singing. Then he would have a special class of ministers, mighty in the Word, who traversing the country at stated times, would utilize the pulpits of certain districts, so that one really good sermon might be preached to a score of congregations in the course of a month to the great advantage of preachers and