

tribes invited or compelled. The discovery of the diamond fields also called for a further annexation, no wonder that the Boers stood at bay at Boompletz, and only succumbed to superior arms and numbers, after a short struggle, which one who had seen war in Spain and India pronounced "one of the most severe skirmishes ever witnessed." The Orangefree state, where many had settled has had its independence partially acknowledged, but the spirit of restless enterprise which characterizes these "trekking" Boers, urged them, re-inforced by some of their brethren from the Orange Republic, now established, to cross the Vaal and plant settlements here. The Transvaal territory is that which in 1877 was annexed during a period of political atrophy there, against which act the present hostilities are earnest protests. In religious faith the Boers are of the reformed and Calvinistic stock, the men who on tented field or behind the dykes of Holland opposed the house of Lorraine and Alva are in blood represented among them. No wonder that such men, man for man, are at least the equals of our best soldiers; and to an onlooker it does seem hard that men with their families who have three times sold their possessions and "trekked" into African wilds, expatriated themselves to be free, should be followed with a national allegiance they detest. On the other hand, Livingstone gives a not favorable account of their treatment of the native tribes, which treatment, however, may be no worse than that generally meted out by the civilized races to the uncivilized; and the exigences of empire may to a statesman seem to prohibit the possibility of a free Boer state in the midst of possessions belonging to the British Crown. The fortune of war proves often a sorry fortune, it is no fault of the present generation that a Dutch colony is under the British flag, and the large influx of British people and interests prohibits the cession back to Holland as of the Ionian Isles to Greece; nor is it a contingency to be looked forward to with complacency, the establishment by revolt of a Transvaal Republic with an ill-affected Orange State on one side, and a vast native population on the other, who will thereby be encouraged to make constant inroads upon the rising colonies. Nor is it pleasant to contemplate on the re-establishment of order, which must be accomplished, a bitter war between the European settlers and the permanent alienation of the two principal races. We can only pray that with an armistice Christian statemanship may prevail, mutual concessions be made, and the brave, though apparently restless, Boers become allies rather than foes, to the end that true civilization may follow the missionary path through the wilds of the dark continent.

NIHILISTIC ATROCITY.

As no doubt our readers are aware, the Emperor Alexander of Russia has at last fallen a victim to Nihilist conspiracies. On Sunday last two bombs filled with nitro-glycerine were thrown at his carriage; the first failed to accomplish its design, but the second fell at the feet of the Emperor, who had alighted from his carriage, and so shattered his frame

that he died in a couple of hours afterwards. The idea of the Nihilist is, of course, to shake terror into the Royal Family of Russia, and to wring from their fears the concessions their will has not granted. Will this succeed? It is hard to think so. More likely at first to be followed by severer measures of repression, and certainly when we consider that the late Emperor was liberally inclined, and had actually done much for the enfranchisement and advancement of his people, it will not be surprising if his successor should ask himself if his first mission is not one of terrible reprisal and severe repression. That he will ultimately share the fate of his father at the hands of the same society seems to be a foregone conclusion, if he should have the same conviction he may think it nobler to die fighting the enemies of law and order than endeavouring to conciliate them. As to the Nihilists themselves, if any sympathy for them has lingered in the breast of a single English-speaking man, this last atrocity will, we should think, utterly destroy it, and convince all that they are the natural enemies of mankind, and should be hunted down like wild beasts. Some months ago we gave an extract from various utterances and writings of their leaders. In those the doctrines of assassination and universal confiscation and robbery were unhesitatingly avowed, and this last act is but the natural outcome of such theories. Let us see to it that these ideas do not find a place amongst ourselves; it may be hard to name the present Irish agitation in the same connection, but it has unquestionably developed the bud of teachings and actions, which, if not checked, will blossom and ripen into Nihilist atrocities. The one remedy, and the only remedy, is the Gospel of Jesus Christ; get men to understand that, and yield obedience to its teachings, then Nihilism and all its kindred become an impossibility. Let every lover of his country, of peace, of righteousness, order and truth, feel that he can do something to ensure these, by working to spread the cause of Christ, and to fill the world with the peaceable spirit of his Master.

WHAT SHALL WE DO TO-NIGHT?

A book with the above title is before us. It professes to give various games and amusements by which an evening among young people may be spent enjoyably. We are not about to review the book or to quote any of its many suggestions, some of which are harmless enough, and would help, no doubt, to make a hearty laugh and a good time, while to some others we should object as being neither amusing or profitable. We want rather to make it a text for a word or two about a subject that is prominent at this season of the year, and in which our young people especially have considerable interest—evening parties.

Let us say at the outset that we have no sympathy at all with those who would condemn entirely these gatherings of young or older friends. There is no reason why they should not be perfectly harmless, nay helpful to a broader and more loving spirit, lifting people out of the nar-

row rut of their own ways, and cutting out channels of sympathy and good will to others. Rightly managed, it is possible that they may be made alike pleasant and profitable—rightly managed—aye, there's the perchance which so often mars the whole; for that these parties are as a rule rightly and wisely managed no one who knows anything about them would, we expect, be bold enough to affirm.

We are not going to give a homily on these gatherings, or to suggest ways of carrying them on. These will differ with the place, ages of the visitors, position in society, mental status, and so on. What would be proper and interest an average class of Sunday School scholars might be quite inappropriate to a gathering of teachers, and what would form the occupation of a pleasant evening to young people would be quite discarded by their elders. We would mention two things which to us appear very important on these occasions—first, the time. It is not decent or respectable for young people to be going home at the small hours of the morning—one, two, three and four o'clock, as we have heard is sometimes the case, to say nothing of the injury to health which such practices inflict; for, as a rule, the fashionable evening party frequenters are sickly, spending a considerable amount of time in bed. The practice beget a spirit of dissipation, and deadens those delicate feelings which are the ornament and charm of the maiden. To our minds, the idea of two young girls walking for a couple of miles through the streets of a city, or along the roads in the country at the hours we have mentioned is, to speak mildly, very undesirable, and whatever others may do we think that all Christian ladies, Christian mothers, should resolve that any gatherings at their houses shall terminate at hours not later than they would like their own daughters to be passing through the streets from other homes.

The other thing we want to say is of the character of amusements to be provided. We have heard it said that it is impossible to entertain a company of young people for an evening without dancing. We don't believe it, in fact there are plenty who can say that they have done it, have given their friends a thoroughly enjoyable evening and dancing has not been mentioned. What harm is there, say some, in a few young people getting together and having a dance? Not much, perhaps, in itself, but like the "no harm" in a moderate glass it leads to further indulgence, many a man has been ruined because he concluded that "just one glass" would do him no harm, but it has proved the precursor of many others, and has at last overmastered him and left him a drunken, ruined sot. So, many an innocent young girl has learned the fascination of the dance in some respectable house and has been dragged at last through its leadings to the depths of degradation and sorrow. There are plenty of amusements and occupations for a pleasant intelligent evening from which all questionable things may be banished. It is possible, we are sure, to get a number of young people together and send them away without a suggestion of evil, having had that best of all

medicine, merriment and laughter, having learned to know each other better, to enjoy each other's company, and to be prepared to work more heartily together in the business of life, and in their duties as Christians. Fathers and mothers, think of these things when you are asking in view of the coming of friends, "What shall we do to-night?"

Correspondence.

CONGREGATIONAL PROVIDENT FUND SOCIETY.

The Editor, "Canadian Independent."

DEAR SIR,—I beg to acknowledge through you with thanks, as follows:

For Retiring Minister's fund branch: Emmanuel Church, Montreal, \$25; Danville Church, Quebec, \$6; Winnipeg Church, Manitoba, \$3; Mrs. C. H. Waterous, sr., Brantford, Ont., \$30.

So far, twelve churches have responded to my appeal of 24th November. Some have promised a collection later, but from a large number I have not heard at all.

Yours respectfully,

CHAS. R. BLACK,
Sec.-Treas.

At the last meeting of the Liverpool presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of England, Mr. S. Stitt gave notice of the following overture, to be discussed at the next meeting of the presbytery: Whereas, Christ has entrusted the government and support of His Church to the graces and gifts of His word and spirit, whereas, the connection now existing between Church and State contravenes the law of Christ's House, is opposed to its spiritual independence, and to the sole Headship of Christ as its King, produces bitterness and strife in society, secularises the life of the Church, has led to the toleration of much erroneous teaching, and to the prevalence of Ritualistic practices utterly at variance with Scriptural worship and with the spirit and principle of the Reformation; whereas, the severance of the churches now established from State connection would promote their freedom, develop the resources of Christian liberality, and remove causes of heartburning and contention among Christians and promote the advancement of true religion, whereas, by the constitution of the Established Church in this land, spiritual superintendence is claimed over the entire population, and we must, therefore, share in the responsibility for its character and action; and whereas, further, as members of the Church of Christ we are under obligation to contend both for the honour due to its Great Head, and the freedom, purity, and efficiency of His Church; and the Dis-establishment of the Church is needful to secure these great ends. We, the presbytery of Liverpool, humbly overture the synod of the Presbyterian Church of England called to meet in Newcastle on Monday, the 25th day of April, 1881, to take this matter into consideration, and appoint a committee to mature a course of action for presentation at a future meeting of synod. Mr. Thomas Mathe-son gave notice of the following amendment:—"That it is inexpedient to discuss in this presbytery the relations between Church and State, or to transmit any overture on the subject to the synod."

A society of Mormon girls, having for its object the securing of monogamous husbands, has been discovered and broken up at Salt Lake City. The members vowed to marry no man who would not pledge himself to be content with one wife. Five grand-daughters of Brigham Young had joined it.