

Current Religious News.

Principal Cairns has been delivering an oration in Glasgow on the Luther celebration, and mentioned that forty years ago, in Tanfield Hall, in the first General Assembly of the Free Church, he had seen Dr. Merle d'Aubigne, in addressing Dr. Chalmers, who stood up to receive him, take out a pocket Bible, and begin his address by solemnly reading Romans 10: 5-9. This, said Dr. Cairn, was like a charge to the whole Scottish Christianity to hold fast the great cardinal article of salvation, and was a pledge of union with the living Church of the Continent in all its branches.

A correspondent writing to the London Times says: "It is an admitted fact that among the clergy of the Church of England there is an amount of personal poverty simply appalling. It is, I believe, also admitted that to the hardworking, thoroughly efficient and intellectual clergy, disestablishment would, in a pecuniary sense, prove a blessing instead of a curse; for purchase would cease, and the people themselves would in some form or other have more power in the appointment of clergy to livings than they now have."

The reports of colportage made to the October meeting of the Board of Managers of the American Bible Society, shows that in August 245 colporteurs visited 75,184 families, and supplied with Scriptures 7,272 families that were destitute of them, and 3,702 destitute individuals besides. The value of books sold was \$11,832, and of those given away \$2,201. Four new Bible Societies were recognized as auxiliary, one in Dakota, one in Montana, and two in Texas. The total receipts in September were \$39,606.55. The number of volumes issued was 96,017.

The editor of the *Central Baptist* having seen it stated that Mr Spurgeon had said he would rather be a cannibal than a close communion Baptist, wrote to him concerning the truth of the report. In reply Mr. Spurgeon said: "I never thought so, and certainly never said so. I have not the slightest wish to be one or the other; but I rejoice in being a loving brother to the latter." It is related of the same Mr. Spurgeon that he surprised his congregation one Sunday last summer in the following manner: He began his sermon as usual, and got through

his "firstly" pretty well. Then feeling very warm himself, and seeing his congregation growing listless, he interrupted himself with the remark: "That is the end of 'firstly,' and it's so warm to-day that I think the secondly and thirdly will keep for a cooler Sunday." So the congregation went its way and Mr. Spurgeon went his way.

In China the Roman Catholic Church has 41 bishops, 1,006 priests (452 native Chinamen), 64 colleges, 34 convents, and a Catholic population of 1,092,000.

Mrs. Mattie Booth, a colored woman, has opened a school for women in her husband's parish in Selma, Ala. In the three months of the school, she has welcomed forty who were unable to go elsewhere. She writes, "One old woman, seventy-five years of age, came tottering in with her primer. A younger pupil said, 'Why, Sister Grant! you are too old to go to school;' 'I know,' she said, 'my time is almost out here, but I would like to learn just to spell the word God; then I shall be satisfied.'"

It is stated that 19,000 persons, including 600 avowed infidels, were converted during the past eight years through the preaching of Major Penn, the Texas evangelist.

Rev. John George Wood, M. A., F. L. S., the distinguished naturalist, has accepted appointments to deliver lectures in Lowell Institute, Boston, and Cooper Institute, New York. He sailed for Boston on the 17th ult.

The North Classes of Long Island of the Reform Church, at its meeting last week in the South Bushwick Reformed Church, adopted a resolution calling attention to the approaching four hundredth anniversary of the birth of Luther, and recommending the churches to hold special services in honor of it. The Classis of New York, at its stated meeting, in the Collegiate Church, on the 16th inst., also resolved to ask all ministers to preach upon the life and work of Martin Luther on Sunday, November 11.

WOMAN'S WORK FOR WOMEN IN INDIA.—Rev. Joseph Cook spoke recently at Chautauqua on "Woman's Work for Women in Pagan Lands." He spoke of child marriage and enforced widowhood in India, declaring that the British Government should reform these

features as it had abolished the crushing of men and women under the wheels of the car of Juggernaut. If the Christian women of America, England and Scotland, should unite in memorializing the British Government to abolish these wrongs, they would do a timely and dignified act. Woman in India suffers from the neglect of the education of daughters, the arbitrariness of divorce, the coarsest and severest physical toil, infanticide, and polygamy. The British Government is responsible for more polygamy than exists in the United States. Mr.

Cook pointed out as the remedies the teaching of women by female missionaries, homes for temporary assistance to women, female medical missionaries, female schools, the admission of women to university examinations, the abolition by law of child marriages, a pure gospel taught to the whole community, native Christian helpers in abundance, and a new fashion to be set by imperial courts and the upper classes.

Mutilated Scripture.

"Save me from my friends!" is a prayer which, if the Bible could speak, it might oft times offer; and in no respect more than in regard to the piece-meal fashion in which it is quoted. Scraps of Scripture torn from their connection, are adduced as equivalent to a "Thus saith the Lord;" and the consequence is that the Lord is represented as saying irreconcilable things, and the Bible is made to appear as a storehouse of mutually destructive oracles. It is needless to say that the result of such handling of the Holy Word is very sad. Anything can be proved by such a style of quotation; one consequence of which is, nothing is proved. And, in fact, it is by no means an uncommon remark, "Oh, you may make the Bible prove anything." So you may, as many folks handle it.

We wonder how many times within the space of a generation our Lord's words, recorded in John 17, "I pray not for the world," have been exhibited as though they were hard to reconcile with other passages of Scripture affirming the universality of Divine love. Only the other week one of our correspondents permitted himself to set the above-named utterance of the Christ in antithesis to another text asserting God's love to all men. But now, let us think for a moment what a grievous wrong

is thus done to the passage to which we recall attention. That it is a mere clipping of a few words from their context goes without saying. The words are but a single clause in a continuous discourse—that discourse being the longest recorded prayer uttered by Jesus while on earth. So that we are not dealing with a self-contained proverb or an axiom complete in itself; but with words which give and receive light from the occasion and scope of the prayer of which they form a part. As soon as this is noted, and reference is made to the actual setting of the words, two decisive facts come to light. The first is, that before the prayer is ended the speaker *does* pray for the world; twice over his petition rises in the world's behalf; twice over the world is borne up before the Father of lights, that there may be given it the greatest boon Divine mercy could bestow. And this broad issue lies in the very climax of the prayer; and therefore, of right, conditions all that has gone before. That is one fact, which there is no getting over—that the Master does pray for the world before he has done. So that already the obvious qualification of the earlier and narrower petition is suggested: "Just at this moment, in what I am here saying, I am not praying for the world." And this leads straight to the second fact, which guides us to our Lord's intent in momentarily excluding the world. For the thought, "I at this particular time am not praying for the world" carries with it the further idea, "in the particular thing for which I am now asking I pray not for the world." We are indebted to one of the princes of living expositors—Dr. James Morison of Glasgow—for the bright suggestion that what our Lord was at this moment praying for would not have been a blessing to the world—quite the reverse. He was praying for unity—a blessing of immense value for His disciples, but just the very thing the world did not need. Union is strength, but strength in evil would be to the world a curse and not a blessing. Paradoxical as it may appear, it is nevertheless true, that the world must be broken up in order to be sacred. Individuals must be detached from it. Men must be regenerated. They must individually come out of the world and be separate. The world does not need unity, at least in the first instance. It needs reconstruction; and in order