

THE RELIGIOUS WORLD ABROAD.

GREAT BRITAIN.

THE BRITISH SOCIETIES which held their anniversary in May last, report a very large aggregate of contributions and a decided increase on last year. We give the statistics of the largest Societies as we find them in the Christian Work.

Table with columns for Society Name and Amount. Includes Foreign Missions, Home Missions, Educational Societies, Colonial and Continental Missions, Jewish Missions, and Miscellaneous Societies.

It will be seen that the income of the Bible Society alone is near a million of dollars in specie, while the grand total for the year is about six and a half millions, on the same basis.

We are glad to note the very decided increase reported in the gifts of the Free Church of Scotland for Foreign Missions; from the paltry sum of fifty-sixty or seventy-five thousand, it has risen to one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars, a gain of 66 per cent. in the year.

The United Presbyterian Synod report on statistics show that the number of ministers belonging to the denomination was 580, and of elders, 4308; preachers, 102; students of divinity, 133; members, 170,590; average Sunday attendance, 199,101; congregational income, £178,858; income for missions and benevolence, £50,696; total income, including miscellaneous revenues, £232,316; average contributions of members, £1 6s. 11d.; number of Sunday scholars, 71,048. The average stipend of each congregation has risen from £156 in 1860, to £171 in 1864.

LORD SHAFTESBURY speaking on the aspect of affairs in the Church of England, at one of the May meetings, said—

"I do not fear any external assault on the Church of England. I believe that the Church of England stands upon a rock, having been planted there by God himself, where it is utterly impregnable against any attack from without. I am not afraid of Tom Paine and his adherents; I am not afraid of Pio Nono and his adherents; and still less am I afraid of that great Zulu deputation which has come Africa to this country. I am far more afraid of treachery within than of these open enemies without. I fear not those who are open foes of our Society, whether they be in the extremes of Tractarianism, or in the extremes of Neology, but I do fear those well-intended, weak-minded, vacillating, soft-hearted, amiable men, who are looking now to the right hand and now to the left. Some of these men are inclined to Tractarianism, thinking that we want a little more of the rubric and a little more church order to give us the force and permanence of Romanism. Others, who do not like to be behind what is called the spirit of the age, are rather disposed to give up to biblical criticism some portions of the Bible. . . . I am sorry to say that I think the educated classes of this country are going deeply into Tractarianism and Neology. The educated classes of this country, male and female, are gradually acquiring a great dislike to all doctrinal teaching; they are gradually maintaining the position that there is much in all the three systems of the Church of England, including Neology and Popery; that there is much in which they resemble each other; and that, in short, it is a matter of little difference which of these systems you embrace. But as regards the great mass of the people of this country, I am quite satisfied that they are quite accessible to our efforts; I am satisfied that, if we address ourselves to the millions of people who never profess to enter a place of worship, we shall have the manifest blessing of God on our labors. If you go among the mass of the people, you will find that they will either have no religion, or will have religion of the best type."

REVIVAL ITEMS.—A correspondent of The Revival of June 1st, writes from Sligo, North of Ireland, as follows:— "When I say that the light of the glorious gospel of Christ has shone into hearts in a hundred houses since last June, sometimes converting every member of the family, I am very far from exaggerating. And this I say of Sligo and its neighborhood alone, not to speak of Boyle, and

Ballina, and Collooney, and Coolaney, and Ballymote, and Killala, and Mullafery, and Ballinglen, and Skreen, at each and all of which places God has done marvellous things in saving souls from death and heaping honors upon the name of Jesus. Of the work in these places a history in itself might be written that would cheer your readers' hearts; of Christians quickened, backsliders restored; drunkards reclaimed, sleepers awakened, formalists brought into children saved, and grey-headed men and women converted."

Another writer from Staleybridge, England, a place whose spiritual necessities may be inferred from the fact, as stated, that thousands of people assemble there almost every week, for the purpose of dog-racing, wrestling-matches, dog-fighting, racing, and other similar objects.

Of this place the correspondent writes:—"Already some of the most noted characters for crime and wickedness have deserted the ranks of the wicked, and are now fighting for the God of their salvation; the Lord is working in mighty power in this town; the devil is fighting too, but we are on the Lord's side, and He is the captain of our salvation." "There are homes now that were six months ago the abodes of wickedness, wretchedness, degradation, and misery, the dwelling of those who were then living without God and without hope in the world, but who are now rejoicing in the realized love of a sin-pardoning God. Husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, are going hand in hand to that better land."

A correspondent of the same journal says the amount received for the purchase of "Derby Theatre" is £500. "Our work is peculiar; to buy, and for all time establish as an unsectarian Gospel Hall for the poor of the town, the Devil's House; surely it should commend itself to all who love souls and the Saviour."

The Second Anniversary of the Spitalfields Gospel Mission was held May 17. The Spitalfields Gospel Hall has been built and paid for during the year. A Missionary, Douglas, has been sent to Auekland, three young men have entered Spurgeon's "College," laborers have been sent to the Victoria Docks and to Hornsey, and services have been held in the open air as well as in the Hall, a "bible carriage" for reading aloud and selling the Scriptures through the streets, with three laborers is sustained; a refuge for the fallen has been fitted up, besides a Sabbath-school and other means of evangelical effort included in this extensive mission of Mr. Lewis.—Joshua Poole and his wife have been holding special services at Swansea, closing May 30th. Mr. Poole gave a heart-stirring, faithful, and practical appeal to the people, urging upon them a sober and religious life. He gave a number of anecdotes from his own personal experience, and put on the ragged calico coat in which he went to Wakefield gaol. The remarkable contrast between the drunkard's coat and the sober man's coat drew its own practical lesson, and appeared to have a good effect upon the crowded auditory. Many hardened cases were reached.—Mr. John Vine, one of the "Theatre Preachers," of London, has been laboring recently in Ipswich among the poor in public halls. The Ipswich and Colchester Times thus speaks of his efforts: "Perhaps he is not particularly refined in manner or language, but his audiences are such as need very hard hitting to know whether they are hit at all, and doubtless Mr. Vine knows well that it is no use trying to cut butchers' blocks with razors. If he has not much polish he certainly has some power—for he can hold a large audience of "roughs" in spell-bound silence and rapt attention for an hour and a half."—A revival of twenty-six days' continuance at Banghurst, Hants, is spoken of, in which seventy-seven souls found peace.

FATHER IGNATIUS, the Episcopal monk of Bristol, has lately excommunicated with Popish formalities and threatenings, two of the monks on charge of drunkenness. A third order of St. Benedict has been established in Bristol. The populace are very impatient at this silly aping of Rome in a Protestant church. Father Ignatius and his Benedictines have been several times mobbed.

FRANCE.

THE PROTESTANT CONFERENCE has recently been held. Pasteur Valette (of the Augsburg Confession) presided over the National Conference; 205 members, viz., 122 pastors and 27 elders, entered their names. Of several propositions presented for discussion one only occupied the session; it was that of renewing adherence to the declaration of principles voted last year. It was voted by 130 against 51. The Radicals having brought up their best and most talented men, this conclusion is regarded as a defeat as complete as last year's, perhaps more so. In addition, they spoke out, though with caution, and that is a great matter. Thus Pasteur Coquerel, Jr., declared that he had often said that he believed neither in the Trinity, nor in Original sin, nor in expiation by the blood of Jesus, etc. Guizot made a suitable reply. In the General Conference, (we do not precisely understand the difference), the following action was taken:—"The Assembly, acknowledging, conformably to the conclusions of the report presented to it, that there is no Christian Church possible without explicit faith in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ." This was voted by 106 members; 52 left in a body before the vote, and two or three declined taking part in the vote. First-rate speeches were made, among which were M. Matter, Dr. Ed. de Pressense, and Pasteur Bersier.

ANNIVERSARIES OF SOCIETIES.—Quite a number of Protestant organizations held their annual meetings in Paris in May. Among these, the French and Foreign Bible Society merged into the Bible Society of France, formed last year by those evangelical members of the Protestant Bible Society who could not tolerate the issuing of the rationalist-Genève-version, by the latter Society. The French and Foreign Bible Society printed last year 273,157 Bibles, and 184,480 Testaments, 40,000 francs had been lately received from America. The Protestant Bible Society is still in existence. Its issues for the year were 10,500 volumes. The Religious Tract Society had an income of 119,178 francs. M. Guizot presided at the meeting. The

Evangelical Society of the Free Churches met May 26th. Pasteur Fisch read the report. The strong appeal made lately for funds has been successful in a measure, the deficit of 100,000 francs has descended to 31,000. The expenses of the year have been 141,690 francs, and the receipts 130,984.

On the 27th the Missionary Society (of the National Church, we suppose) held its anniversary, presided over by Count Jules Delaborde. Expenses, 204,149 francs, receipts, 204,207 francs. The various stations in South Africa prosper; the Mission in Senegal is still in its infancy, a second missionary has joined the first. The Tahiti Mission is growing, and raising from their long sleep the Protestant Churches, authorization has been granted to reopen Protestant schools. The Paris Mission house has but five students at present. A strong appeal was made for funds and men. A letter was read from Dr. Duff, giving a most favorable testimony to the missionaries.—Cor. Christian Work.

GENERAL VIEW.—Rev. Dr. Cairns, of Berwick, at the joint meeting of the Courts of the Free and United Presbyterian Churches, held in Edinburgh last month, gave the following interesting view of the state of Protestantism in France:—"The present state of French Protestantism, represented by 1000 pastors and 1500 or 1600 places of worship, is decidedly in advance of what it was when Louis XIV. began his deplorable aggressions. We must not forget, indeed, how vast the population of France has increased in two centuries, while Protestantism has not increased in proportion; but still it is something to be thankful for, that that great and sacred cause for which the Huguenots bled is still outwardly adhered to by a million or a million and a half of the French people, thousands of whom, beyond all doubt, have in our day been gained over from the Church of Rome. It is a remarkable tribute to the vitality of French Protestantism; that in the recent struggle with unbelief within and without, its noble stand for the everlasting foundations of Christian orthodoxy has arrested the attention of all France. No pamphlet, essay, or letter, of archbishop, bishop, or abbe, against Renan has impressed the French mind like the criticism of Edmond de Pressense; and at the head of the Christian struggle in France, and occupying, in some sense, to say his own eloquent words, the advanced guard of European conflict for miracles, for inspiration, and for the Divinity of the Son of God, stands conspicuous to all eyes a Protestant layman—the illustrious Guizot. To some it may appear a doubtful proof of the alleged revival, that this great name, whose views on all points I do not endorse, should only have escaped defeat in the late election to the Paris consistory by ten votes. But to me it seems one of the greatest triumphs ever achieved that a Protestantism which was so lately sunk in the sleep of death, which only a few years ago suffered the most eloquent of its orators (Adolphe Monod) to be silenced in Lyons, is now able to silence its unfaithful teachers in Paris; to brave the whole ridicule, calumny, and false liberalism of the Parisian press, and even on the ground of universal suffrage to encounter and baffle the machinations of its enemies."

A BRANCH OF THE FREEDMAN'S AID SOCIETY has been organized in Paris by a number of ladies of the various churches, among whom are to be found Madame Laboulaye, (Protestant), wife of Professor Laboulaye of the College de France, and Madame Cochon, wife of one of the most influential of the liberal Catholics of France. Mrs. Sunderland, wife of Rev. Dr. Sunderland, pastor of the American chapel, is a member of the society by special invitation of the wives of the French pastors in Paris. Pastors G. Monod and Pulsford, as a delegation from the Evangelical Conference recently held in Paris, visited the Rev. Dr. Sunderland on Monday, May 15th, and presented to him the addresses prepared for the American churches and Christians on the occasion of our recent national affliction.—Cor. Methodist.

ITALY.

SABBATH-SCHOOLS IN ITALY.—We have already noticed the new and interesting feature which the American and Foreign Christian Union has engrained upon its work in Southern Europe—the organization of a Sabbath-school system for the field. In the July number of the Christian Work, we have an interesting account of the establishment of four schools in Naples, the first of which was as follows:—"It was formed in connection with a little Scotch assembly to which Rev. Mr. Buscarlet preached. As soon as the subject was suggested to the worthy pastor, his reply was, 'A Sabbath-school is just what I want. I have been praying to the Lord these eight or ten weeks past that he would show me how to set my people at work, and here I have the answer.' He at once called his little flock together, by giving notice on the Sabbath that on a certain evening a stranger in Naples would address them on the subject of English and American Sabbath-schools. At this meeting the manner of organizing and the precise mode of conducting Sabbath-schools was described. At the close, those who were disposed to co-operate in an attempt to establish one, were invited to meet in the pastor's parlor. Six or seven most promising young men and women presented themselves, and promptly signified their willingness to become teachers. Arrangements were accordingly made for commencing on the following Sabbath. On invitation, about thirty or forty boys came and were properly distributed among seven or eight teachers. These boys were told to invite their sisters on the following Sabbath, for as usual more than half the teachers were female, and preferred to teach girls if they could get them. This invitation, however, brought very few girls, as they are more immediately under the care of their mothers, and to this day very few women have been persuaded to come near a Protestant meeting of any kind. This school grew rapidly, both in numbers and interest. It has now some seventy or eighty pupils, and is the centre of a deeply interesting circle of young people, who thus for the first time learned that it was possible for them to work for the extension of Christ's kingdom in Italy or elsewhere."

POPULAR IGNORANCE UNDER ROMISH INFLUENCE.—Rev. E. E. Hall, D.D., writes from Florence, Italy, to the American and Foreign Christian Union, as follows:—"The Minister of Public Instruction has recently published the statistics of education, or rather of ignorance, in Italy. Nothing could be more sad and discouraging. In all the kingdom, having a population of less than twenty-two millions, there are seventeen millions who know not how to read or write; of which about eight millions are males, and nine millions females. Piedmont and Liguria have the smallest per cent of ignorance; a little more than sixty per cent of the population being unable to read. This is owing to the efforts of Count Cavour, by whose influence a law was passed establishing a system of gratuitous and obligatory instruction. In Tuscany, the desolating proportion of ignorance amounts to 80 per cent of the entire population. In the province of Naples only 95 in 1000 can read and write; in Sicily, 98 in 1000; and in the Island of Sardinia only 72 in 1000 can read and write."

In the darkness of such frightful ignorance it is not surprising that the people have become the victims of the most stupid superstitions. It is not strange that among such a population, the progress of evangelization is difficult and slow. Great results cannot be expected till the darkness of this wide-spread ignorance begins to pass away. What a fearful responsibility rests on the Roman priests, these modern Pharisees, who have so completely taken away the key of knowledge. To them has been committed, for ages past, the education of the people; they have been, and are now, jealous of all interference by the State in that important part of civilization. Well may they fear the free circulation of the Scriptures. They read their doom in the increasing light of truth and public instruction."

GERMANY.

THE correspondent of the Christian Work reports a highly important movement in behalf of the true faith among the people, as recently inaugurated by the orthodox theologians of the country. Hitherto they have been wrapped up in the subtleties of their science, and have concerned themselves little as to the intelligibility or adaptability of their speculations to the common mind. We rejoice at the change, suggested doubtless by the tactics of the enemy, who has been diligently and successfully popularizing the latest forms of unbelief for the masses of Germany. It has been well remarked, that the Reformation of the 16th century was powerful, because it began among the people and worked its way up; whereas, in the recent conflicts with rationalism in that country, the order has been reversed, the orthodox theologians having begun and continued their work mainly in the universities. A change is taking place, and we hope that evangelical theology will hereafter partake of the practical character which has been manifested by Wichern, Fliedner, Harms, Gossner, and other famous German workers. The effect will be felt to the advantage of orthodoxy all over the world. The correspondent says—"German theologians are becoming every day more alive to the importance of endeavoring to meet the growing unbelief by apologetic lectures adapted to general audiences. Hitherto most of them seemed to have regarded it as *infra dignitatem* to address themselves to popular assemblies; or else they feared not being able to accomplish satisfactorily a task of the kind. Experience, however, is showing that they can be very successful, and success will sweep away false pride. These lectures have been delivered in Berlin and in Leipzig to large and attentive audiences. Professor Held, late in Zurich, is also endeavoring to meet popular wants at Breslau. The welcome accorded to these efforts is proof enough that they are needed, and the thoroughly popular ability somewhat unexpectedly revealed by gentlemen hitherto known only for learning, ought to excite to further undertakings."

BADEN.—Some of the laity are beginning to move for the deposition of Dr. Schenkel. A petition, signed by upwards of five thousand men of all classes—nobles, manufacturers, and working-men—is to be presented against Schenkel to the Grand Duke. This step, simple and unimportant as it may seem, is causing great excitement. Dr. Schenkel, in spite of the boldest avowals of rationalism, is retained by the secular authorities as director of the Theological Seminary of Baden. Hence these persistent efforts for his removal.

A REFUGE FOR FEMALE SERVANTS is in existence in Berlin, one of the results of Dr. Fliedner's Christian sagacity and zeal. Respectable servant girls out of employ are boarded, lodged, and taught all sorts of ordinary servants' work, by Kaiserswerth deaconesses for less than five cents a day! They are also aided in obtaining situations, and are, to some extent, watched, guarded, and befriended afterwards, being taught to regard the Refuge as their Home. They are trained as nurses at a total cost of seven cents a day. An infant school is connected with the establishment, which is designed as a truly Christian agency.

PHONOGRAPHY FOR THE BLIND.—In 1860 a Society was formed in Berlin for teaching the blind to read according to the system invented by Mr. W. Moon, of Brighton. Notwithstanding that Moon's system of reading is incomparably easier than the old ones, it has not yet made much way in Germany, though through the kindness of the British and Foreign Bible Society the sale of his Scriptures is very much facilitated. The chief hindrances are most probably prejudice and red tape.—Correspondent of the Christian Work.

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