

For the Christian Messenger.

Baptist Statistics.

DEAR BROTHER,—

I have recently examined "The Baptist Hand-Book for 1866," and have gathered from it some information relative to the state of our Denomination in Great Britain and Ireland, which may probably be interesting to many of your readers.

There are 2422 Baptist Churches in Great Britain and Ireland. They are located as follows.

Table listing Baptist statistics by county for England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, including member counts and church numbers.

The estimated number of members is 229,920.

Table showing church membership distribution by size: Churches having under fifty members, fifty and under, etc.

The two smallest Churches are at Harcombe, in Devonshire, and New Whittington, in Derbyshire; each reports four members.

The largest Church is Mr. C. H. Spurgeon's, numbering 3340 members; next, is Mr. Brock's—908 members.

The oldest Church is at Hill Cliff in Cheshire. It was formed in 1523. Two other Churches were formed in the sixteenth century, viz:—Plymouth, in 1540, and Baintree, in 1550.

Table showing the date of formation for churches in the sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries.

Of these Churches, 1835 are reported as having pastors, leaving 587 destitute. Some few of the pastors are pluralists, presiding over two or more small Churches.

We may infer from these statistics that the want of labourers in the spiritual harvest is felt in Great Britain as well as in North America.

Yours truly, J. M. CRAMP. Acadia College, Oct. 25. 1866.

ERRATA.—In your last Number, in the first Column of Page 338, the word "baptize" occurs four times in one of the paragraphs. It should be "baptizo." Also, for "Fije," read "Fiji."

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, OCTOBER 31, 1866.

We received the following communication some time since, but as we designed to insert the Circular Letter referred to, we thought it better to reserve this inquiry until that should appear, so that the sentiment might be seen in its proper connection. The said document will be found on the first page of our present number.

Truro, Aug. 30, 1866.

Mr. Editor,—May I be permitted, through the columns of your journal, to make inquiry with reference to the propriety of certain expressions contained in the Circular Letter of the Eastern Association. I quote from memory. The language, I think, is this:

"The duty of man and the purpose of God, do not always run in parallel lines. Yea, so far from this, they are in fact, often opposed, the one to the other."

Will not some of our more mature divines give us, clearly and concisely, their views of the above paragraph? Is the sentiment scriptural? "To the law and to the testimony." Might it not be well to insert in the columns of the Messenger, said Circular, though it is somewhat extended? However treated by the writer, the subject in itself is not devoid of interest and importance. "The Jews, the people of His choice," are I think destined, at no very remote future, to do a great work in the earth.

INQUIRER.

The following piece of information respecting the Holy Land, received since the Circular Letter on our first page was prepared, or the note of "Inquirer" was written, will be read with interest in connection therewith:

REGENERATION OF THE HOLY LAND.—An important society has been formed in Europe, called the "International Society of the Orient," to prevent the grave complication arising out of the Eastern question, and to regenerate the East by infusing therein the spirit of Western civilization. To accomplish this great result, the society, which enrolls among its members such men as Napoleon, the Rothschilds and Montefiore, propose to favour the development of agriculture, industry, commerce and public works in the East, especially in Palestine; to obtain from the Turkish Government certain privileges and monopolies, the chief of which is the gradual concession and advancement of the lands of Palestine; to distribute at cash prices such of those lands as the company receives, and to effect the colonization of the more fertile villages of the Holy Land.

The society, after having established its commercial bureau at Constantinople and other cities of the Turkish Empire, will construct a port at Joppa, and a good road or railroad from that city to Jerusalem. Upon the north of this road the society expect land to be conceded by Turkey, which they will sell to Israelitish families. These in their turn will create new colonies, aided by their Oriental co-religionists; and it is expected special committees will send thither Jews of Morocco, Poland, Moldavia, Wallachia from the East, and from Africa. The society claim that this plan will reconstruct the Holy Places of Jerusalem in a Christian manner; put an end to the constant conflict between the great powers in reference to them; transform the ancient Jerusalem into a new and great city; create European colonies which will become in time the centres whence Occidental civilization will spread in Turkey and penetrate to the remote Orient.

The society is being rapidly formed, with the strongest influences, financial and political, at its back. The Rothschilds, Sir Moses Montefiore, and other great capitalists among the Jews, are actively in sympathy with the undertaking. The plan has also the favour of more than one crowned head in Europe—among them Napoleon, of whose especial theory of nationalities it is a development. Several prominent noblemen of England, and the leading names of the Faubourg St. Germain, are also among its friends.

REVIEW.

Lecture on the Evils of Superficial Education. By the Rev. Dr. McGregor, Professor in St. Francis Xavier's College, Antigonish, N. S., 1866.

An "Introduction" to this Lecture is dated "Antigonish, Nova Scotia, Feast of St. Rose of Viterbo, 1866." As this is a mystical mode of dating, peculiar to Romanists and Ritualists, it behoves us to explain it, for the instruction of those who are not learned in these matters. St. Rose, then, it is said, was a young female of Viterbo, who gave early promise of sanctity, evinced her holiness by severe austerities, and naturally enough died of it, at the age of eighteen, in the year 1261. Sundry miracles are recorded of her. One part of the legend is quite a pretty tale. She had abstracted some bread from the household stores, and was carrying it away, to give it to the poor, when her father met her and sternly asked what was wrapped up in her dress? She uncovered it, and lo! the bread was changed into roses! No paternal reproof could be administered under such circumstances.

According to the Breviary, the feast of St. Rose is celebrated Sept. 4. She is commemorated by Alban Butler under two dates, March 8, and Sept. 4. He remarks that there are two lives of her, but that they "are not in all parts authentic." That is no uncommon thing.

Dr. McGregor's Lecture was delivered "in the parish chapel of St. Ninian, Sept. 3, 1866, in the presence of the venerable Bishop of the diocese, many of the clergymen of the neighbouring country, and a numerous assembly of the highly respectable people of the town and its vicinity, and was concluded amid the plaudits of the audience."

We agree with the Lecturer on some points,

but we differ from him materially on others. It is clear that he would exclude from the College Curriculum many subjects that have been introduced into it within the last fifty years. He would make it more thoroughly classical and less scientific. He has no faith in general knowledge, but seems to think that it is the parent of innumerable incongruities and evils.

We are almost inclined to write a column or two of "Annotations" on the Lecture, for the purpose of pointing out wherein the worthy Professor, as we imagine, overshoots the mark. But we charitably forbear.

There are two or three slips in composition which may not be inappropriately noticed.

In the first paragraph the Lecturer speaks of "the necessity of a religious education—the necessity, in other words, of raising education from the low level to which would-be patriots in more countries than one have reduced it, to the high attitude required by the nature of itself in order to render it, as it ought to be rendered, the most efficacious, after religion itself, of all engines in elevating and ennobling the human species." This, to say the least, is a very awkwardly constructed sentence.

We doubt whether a "thorough" scholar would allow himself to speak of "a sort of literary, Jack-of-all-tradeism in scholastic proficiency;"—and we more than question the perspicuity of the following sentence,— "One imperfectly understood principle necessitates the ignorance of a long concatenation of consecrations flowing from it."

In illustrating "the evil of imperfect education" by its effects, Dr. M. says,— "The most sacred of all avocations, the seat of religion itself, has been profaned, and the Holy Volume, which 'the ignorant wrest to their own destruction,' desecrated by the caricatured explanation of newly manufactured clerics, whom one day sometimes transfers from the penitentiary to the pulpit."

Dr. M. adds—"I speak of facts." We should have been better satisfied if he had adduced evidence.

It may be true that there are not so many profound scholars as there were a century or two ago; but that the amount of knowledge has increased a thousandfold—that it pervades all classes of society—and that, like "mercy," it is "twice blessed," no one can deny. Nor are we in the least apprehensive that the schools and colleges of this country will promote "superficial education."

THE Presbyterian Witness is "sorry" that Dr. Cramp has published his discourse on "the Bible and its translations."

We cannot administer any consolation to his sorrow. But when he proceeds to charge the Baptists with "tinkering the Bible" because they translate the word baptizo, instead of transferring it, after the manner of the English version, we must protest against it as grossly unfair. Luther did not transfer the word baptizo, but translated it by a word signifying to immerse. The translators into the Dutch, the Swedish, and the Danish languages did the same, as had been done long before by several of the Orientals. Were all those translators guilty of "tinkering the Bible?" And what shall we say of the British and Foreign Bible Society, which publishes those versions, but refuses to aid the Serampore versions, which are constructed on precisely the same principle? We love the Bible Society for what good it has done, but are not blind to its errors and inconsistencies.

The Witness adds "No intelligent christian thinks that sprinkling is Baptism; and none but a few controversialists and their blinded followers would say that dipping or immersing is Baptism. Baptism is something more than plunging or sprinkling; it is a religious ceremony, initiating us into the Christian Church, signifying and sealing our union with Christ."

With this we fully agree, especially the first sentence, which the editor has italicized. We do not think any intelligent reader of the Bible is in danger of the error which our neighbour seeks to avoid. He probably means to affirm that "none but a few controversialists &c., would say that dipping or immersing is (all that is included in the New Testament ordinance of christian) Baptism." If that is his meaning we quite agree with him, but as far as the simple act of baptism is concerned, it is effected by an immersion.

We might say the same thing also with regard to the Lord's Supper. "No intelligent christian thinks" that eating bread and drinking wine is all that is included in partaking of the Lord's Supper, but that is necessarily the act which we are commanded to observe, and constitutes an essential part of the ordinance. In both ordinances we hold that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is necessary in the recipient to constitute the rite a valid act of obedience.

We cannot, therefore, perceive how, on

Bible principles, any person but a believer can fulfil the requirements of one or the other.

Young Men's Christian Association.

The following circular has been issued by the Executive Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association of the United States and British Provinces, and is now published by request of the Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association of this City:—

To all Young Men's Christian Associations:

BROTHEREN: At the International Convention held at Albany in June last, a resolution was adopted, recommending that the first Sabbath in November, be set apart and observed as a day of prayer for the increase and spiritual prosperity of Young Men's Christian Associations throughout the world.

And the Clergy generally were respectfully and earnestly requested on that day to address their congregations on the object and work of these Societies.

It was made the duty of the Executive Committee to present this recommendation and request to the Christian Associations of all lands. In the performance of that duty this Circular is issued.

It is assumed that the day thus indicated will be observed by the Associations, and by all who are enrolled in them, in a spirit harmonizing with that which prompted the recommendation. The numberless reasons which urge such an observance cannot here be properly presented; but they must, upon the mere suggestion as now made, rise with overwhelming force in the mind of every young man who really loves his fellow; who loves these Associations—now proved a mighty instrumentality,—and who loves the Saviour, in whose service they were instituted.

The Executive Committee do not feel called upon to address a Special Circular to the clergy, but as more likely to secure the end sought, would ask each Association to assume the duty of securing a general acquiescence on the part of the pastors in their own locality to the request of the Convention. Their co-operation in this most important effort, as in all others put forth by Societies, is greatly needed, and should never be slighted or undervalued.

It is with gratitude to God that the Committee announce to the Associations, that information from all quarters indicates a material increase in the strength and numbers of our Societies in America; and that the salvation of Young Men comes more and more to be recognized as the chief object of our efforts.

What wait we for in this work but the blessing of God? This is given in answer to prayer.

Then let us all unite on the first Sabbath in November in imploring a blessing in the increase and spiritual prosperity of our beloved Associations throughout the world.

In connection with the above a Prayer Meeting will be held (D. V.) on Sunday, Nov. 4th, at 4 1/2 o'clock, in the room of Y. M. Christian Association, Hollis Street.

Young Men are particularly invited to attend.

We perceive by the N. S. Church Chronicle, a small monthly, we presume under the authority of Bishop Binney, that at a late meeting of the Executive Committee of the Diocesan Synod, it was decided to issue a monthly periodical of popular character at 50 cents per annum.

The last No. of the Church Chronicle has accidentally come under our notice. We were greatly surprised at its teachings, being so decidedly "high," and having such evident inclination towards Puseyism.

The following is given as the title of a sermon preached by Mr. Moore at Conquer, near Bridgewater, on the occasion of some "revived meetings," held at the latter place, August 29th, and following days: "The sole claim to the ministry of the Gospel of those who have received episcopal ordination in succession from Christ and His Apostles." At these services there were present Rev's W. H. Ballock, C. J. Shreve, H. M. Spike, W. H. Snyder, H. L. Owen, and D. C. Moore.

A communication in the same paper expresses great concern for establishing a branch of the Association for promoting the unity of Christendom. The object of this association is a union of the English, the Roman Catholic and the Greek Churches.

"The daily use of a short form of prayer, together with one 'Our Father'—for the intention of the association,—is the only obligation incurred by those who join it; to which is added in the case of priests, the offering at least once in three months, of the Holy Sacrifice for the same intention."

The writer adds:

"Surely Mr. Editor, if it were known that some priest or layman is willing to act as a diocesan secretary, in Nova Scotia, every Catholic would at once join, that he might help on the Holy Work. The following is the prescribed collect:—'O Lord Jesus Christ, Who saidst unto Thine apostles, My peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; regard not my sins, but the faith of Thy Church, and grant Her that Peace and Unity which is agreeable to Thy Will, Who livest and reignest God for ever and ever. Amen.—Our Father.'"