

General Religious News. Editorial Outlook

—There are 101 Baptist churches in Manitoba, with 6,000 members.

—A religious census of the Jews in London, taken by the *Daily News*, showed an attendance at the synagogues of 26,612—about one in four of the population—which, according to the Jewish year-book, is 104,000.

—Sixpenny books in large quantities antagonistic to religion are being circulated in England, and an organized attempt must be made to meet the atheists on their own ground as the evil is becoming a pestilence, dangerous to the people.

—The Protestant Truth Society of London reports contributions of more than \$27,000 made last year for the purpose of carrying on the work of protest against ritualism begun by Mr. Kensit. There are thirty branches connected with the London office, all under the direction of Mr. Kensit's son.

—In Cuba no fewer than twelve different Protestant churches are at work, with Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians leading. There are now on the island ninety-two Protestant churches and preaching stations, and 137 Protestant missionaries, not a few of them native Cubans. Protestant membership actually enrolled is 2,500, and there are seventeen native candidates for the Protestant ministry. There are fifty-one church schools and the missions are to be found in all the six provinces.

—The Congregational Union of Ontario and Quebec returned at its recent meeting in London, Ontario, a gain of 219 church members and an increased income. The churches were visited a year or two ago by a deputation from the Congregational Union of England and Wales, who found that their growth was hampered by the burdens of debt. In view of the representations of this deputation the English Congregational Union offered what the Canadians call a "challenge" to the churches, proposing to pay a certain percentage of the debts on condition that the rest is raised. The challenge was accepted at the recent meeting, the Canadian churches promising to try to raise \$100,000 in consideration of the English brethren contributing 10 per cent. The church property of the denomination is valued at \$867,511, against which the indebtedness is \$194,615.

THE DEATH VALLEY.—Says the *United Presbyterian*: There is in Inyo County, California, a remarkable valley known as "Death's Valley." It is at the south end of the Sierra Nevada range, and is two hundred feet below sea level, while the surrounding country is about five thousand feet above. The heat is terrible, hot winds blow through it, drying up all moisture. The streams from the melting snows of the mountains are dried up. No bird flies across it. Like this is the valley of sin to the soul. There are no fountains in it, there is no herb for food, there is no place for rest or shelter from the hot winds of hell. There is no God in it. The soul that attempts to live in it dies, dies of utter waste of life's forces. You may look across it to the heights beyond and think you can cross it, but Death owns this valley, he knows no mercy, and allows no escape.

URGING A CRUSADE.

It is reported that "Mussulman priests at Constantinople and in other parts of the Turkish Empire are making an effort to inaugurate a religious war, and to rally the forces of Mohammedanism to a fanatical crusade against the Christian population of the empire. It is told that sheiks from Medina have declared that Mahomet was seen recently to rise from his tomb and cry, "Allah, save the people," and that six eunuchs who were guarding the tomb fell dead with terror.

THE MISSING.

London police statistics show that in a single year not less than 35,033 persons were reported missing. Of these, half were found, but the other 17,500 remained unaccounted for. That high figure, no doubt, must be very largely discounted by cases in which lost persons are found without the mediation of the police. And in many instances more or less satisfactory reasons for the disappearance are known to the friends of the individual reported missing. Business muddles on the part of men and self-willed love affairs on the part of girls account for numerous disappearances. There are not a few cases in which temporary disorder of mind or loss of memory cause people entirely to lose themselves. About one missing person in 70 is reported as having committed suicide, but probably a considerable number of the cases unaccounted for are due to this cause. Whimsical reasons—perhaps the mere desire for a change—appear to be at the bottom of some sudden disappearances.

MORE CONCILIATION.

Encouraged by the remarkable success of the conference between Irish landlords and tenants, Capt. Shawe-Taylor is attempting a still more delicate and difficult piece of conciliation. He proposes to invite representatives of the Orange Society and of the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches, and also the heads of the various colleges and educational centres to meet together in Dublin with a view to finding an amicable *modus vivendi*. The conference is especially to attempt to settle the University question and that of education in Ireland generally in an equitable way, acceptable alike to Catholics and Protestants. He and others feel that religious differences lie at the root of many of Ireland's difficulties, and they are cherishing hope that the conference will end once and for all the religious war of centuries. If that happy consummation is too much to expect, at least the conference can do nothing but good.

NOTES.

The King and Queen of Italy are to pay a visit to the King and Queen of Britain some time this month.

The Turkish government recently ordered 170,000 pounds of smokeless powder from a German firm.

THE STRENGTH OF THE PULPIT.

People sometimes get a false impression of the operation and influence of intellectual and moral forces because of changed conditions. "Is the Strength of the Pulpit Declining?" was the subject of an able discourse delivered by the Rev. Dr. McArthur recently, in the Calvary Baptist Church of New York. The *Christian Intelligencer's* summary of it says he took the ground that the pulpit is not declining in power, and marshalled a strong array of arguments in support of his position. To a casual observer it might seem that the pulpit is not the potent, intellectual, and moral force it once was. He overlooks the powerful rivalry the pulpit encounters today, such as the newspaper press, which Dr. McArthur denominates "the university extension course for the rank and file of the people," the cheap magazines and the free libraries. Nor does he take into account the fact that intelligence has increased and the professions have multiplied. The pulpit is not lower and weaker, but other professions are more numerous and higher. "Once the preacher was almost the only educated man in the community; today college graduates abound in the country village. Once the clergyman stood apart from his fellow men in a unique eminence; today he is a man among men. The clergyman today does not claim the asceticism of John the Baptist; he rather and most rightly imitates the noble humanism of Jesus the Christ." Touching on the great preachers, he said: "We are at the close of a great era of preachers on both sides of the Atlantic. Henry Ward Beecher was fearless and peerless in the American pulpit; his great brain was matched by his great heart. There was not a mercenary drop of blood in his whole body. He was a prophet of patriotism and religion. He has gone, but Plymouth Church and Dr. Hillis move forward. Phillips Brooks was matchless within his own sphere. Moody was king in his own realm. Campbell Morgan has become his successor, and has entered upon a wider field than it was possible for Moody, with his limited education, to occupy. Spurgeon is dead, but his son Thomas draws thousands to the cross and the Christ whom his father preached. The mighty Joseph Parker, who for a generation filled the world with his clear thought and loving heart, is dead, but the brilliant R. J. Campbell promises far to outstrip his mighty predecessor in attracting, inspiring and saving the thousands who hang on his words." He also alluded to the special offering by the Methodist Church of \$20,000,000 in which great achievement the pulpit led, and to that by the Presbyterians of \$17,000,000, and the Baptists of \$16,000,000 for all purposes the last year, the latter erecting three new churches a day. This is the barest outline of his argument. Dr. McArthur made out a strong case.

When the church of Jesus Christ is clad in robes of pride instead of humility, the world is pleased, but not convicted.—*Free Baptist*.

THE JERUSALEM CONVENTION.

Interest in the Sunday School Convention at Jerusalem increases, and the prospects are that there will be, notwithstanding the distance, a monster delegation. There will be two steamships, instead of one, as first intended, to visit Palestine. The "Grosser Kurfurst" will leave New York on Tuesday, March 8, 1904, and the "Fuerst Bismarck" will leave England on April 1, 1904. The first steamship will carry the delegates from the United States and Canada, and the second the delegates from England and other countries. During the voyage and in Palestine many lectures will be given bearing upon Bible study, methods of Sunday-school work, and the places visited.

CAUSE AND EFFECT.

It is not always easy to discover "which is which." Some people say: If there was more spiritual life in our churches there would be more generous giving. But may we not turn this sentence, and say: "If there were more generous giving there would be more spiritual life?" That is how the prophet Malachi put it 2,300 years ago: "Bring ye all the tenths of your increase into my house," saith the Lord. Then look for blessings you cannot hold. Mal. 3: 9, 10. We knew one church that put this to the test. There was not a conversion in a year, but they increased their gifts from \$200 to \$600. Next year the pastor, without the aid of an evangelist, baptized 130 persons and a general spiritual awakening prevailed for two years in succession, twelve months in each year. Suppose, instead of bemoaning our spiritual state, we all take to being honest with God, for a few months, and see how it will result. We are persuaded the result will be rich spiritual blessing.—*North-West Baptist*.

CONUNDRUMS.

1. If a professing Christian pays ten dollars a year towards supporting his church, and twenty-five toward one of the fraternal societies of which he is a member, which of them does he love most?
2. If he pays nothing for the church, on the ground that all he can spare from necessary expenses must be paid to a club of which he is a member, which is of the more importance to him the club or the church?
3. If he pays five dollars to the church and twenty dollars for tobacco, are we to understand that tobacco is worth to him just four times as much as religion?
5. If he can take two or three secular papers, but cannot afford to take his church paper, is it necessarily inferior to them?—*Messenger and Visitor*.

Marriages.

GASKILL-DIXON.—At the Free Baptist parsonage Grand Harbor, Sept. 19th, by the Rev. A. M. McIntosh, pastor, Eben Gaskill and Ella Dixon, both of North Head, Grand Manan.

ROBERTS-ROBERTS.—Sept. 23rd, 1903, at the Free Baptist parsonage, Central Argyle, N. S., by Rev. Sydney A. Thurlow, Mr. Murray Roberts and Miss Alberta Roberts, both of Argyle.