

## TERMS AND NOTICES.

The RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER, published in the interest of the Free Baptists of Canada, is issued every Wednesday.

Subscription, \$1.50 a year, in advance. When not paid within three months, the price is \$2.00 a year. Subscriptions may begin at any time. The date on the address label is the time to which the subscription is paid. The date is changed within two weeks after payment is received. If not changed in two weeks, we should be notified.

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Advertising rates on application. ST. JOHN OFFICE: Barnes & Co's, 84 Prince William Street.

All letters, whether on business or for publication, should be addressed to THE RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER, Box 384, Fredericton, N. B.

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## Religious Intelligencer.

(ESTABLISHED 1853.)

Manager's and Editor's Office: Fredericton, N. B.

Rev. Joseph McLeod, D. D., - - Editor.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 1904.

## Editorial.

—The World's Sunday School Convention will open at Jerusalem next Sunday. The Convention proper will continue only a few days. Arrangements have been made for trips to various parts of the Holy Land.

—The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, will meet in Mobile, Ala., in May. The General Conference (triennial) of the Methodist Episcopal Church meets the same month in Los Angeles, Cal.

—Said Phillips Brooks: "Do not pray for easy lives! Pray to be stronger men! Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers; pray for powers equal to your tasks. Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle; but you shall be a miracle."

—The British government will appoint a Royal Commission to look into the matter of ritualism in the Established Church. Getting ready for the general election, probably — a concession to the anti-ritualistic wing of the church.

—The Methodist denominations in Japan are uniting. They will be one body, with one publishing house, one theological school and one set of machinery throughout. The union will remove the frictions sure to arise where are separate interests, and will greatly increase the working force.

—The *Morning Star*, of Boston, the organ of the Free Baptists in the eastern states, will celebrate its seventy-eighth birthday next month. The *Star* is a carefully edited paper, deserving the hearty support of the people in whose name and for whose good it is published. We congratulate it on having reached so good an old age, and hope it may be able to round out its century in vigorous health.

—Every Lord's day there assemble in Canada and the United States 153,246 Sunday Schools. It is impossible to estimate the good that is being done by the teaching of the Word of God in these schools. Faithful Sunday School teachers are amongst the most influential Christian workers. They may be encouraged and comforted by the assurance that "their labor is not in vain in the Lord."

—A pastor, sending items of church news, says, "These are fresh from the scene — not copied." The "not copied" has reference to the fact that we sometimes have to copy news of our churches from the daily papers, because they are not sent to us. The course of the brother quoted is the right one — to send the news when it is news, direct, and first, to the denominational paper. We pass his hint along for the benefit of whoever needs it.

—A writer in the *Christian Evangelist*, a very excellent paper published by our brethren of the Disciples of Christ, advocates the union of Baptists and Disciples. He says "the Baptist people and Disciples ought to commit their thoughts, their plea, unto God in the fulness of faith that they can be made to understand each other and to come to a oneness in Christ Jesus. Aside from the names, to which both are quite strongly attached, perhaps too strongly, there is, he thinks, hardly any more difference between the two bodies than there is between different sections and classes of either of them. It would certainly, as he claims, simplify Christian work and give greatly increased power if they could be made one. "Is not the time here for an expression of oneness in Christ Jesus our Lord, by those who love him and obey him?" Amen!

—A new church dedicated last Sunday in Walkerville, Ont., is to be known as the Walker Memorial. This is in recognition of an endowment of \$25,000 provided by the Messrs. Walker. The Walkers are a big whiskey-making firm. It is bad when a church and a distillery bear the same name—bad for the church. The \$25,000 gift does not make the church the real memorial of the Walkers. Darkened and wrecked homes, debauched and enslaved men, broken-hearted wives and mothers, shamed and hopeless children—these and the like, many thousands of each, are the Walkers' true monument. The character of the work they have done, and are doing, is written in tears and blood across the country. And they think they can square the account of their fiendish work by handing a few thousands of their ill-gotten dollars to a church! What mockery of God!

And what of the church which accepts the blood money, and lives upon it? It can scarcely be anything but the creature of the whiskey traffic, with no voice of warning against, nor condemnation of the giant evil of the times. Alas! that a church bearing the name of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of men, should bear, also, the name of a whiskey-maker, and be dependent for its support on a traffic which thrives by the degradation and destruction of men.

## RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS IN FRANCE.

Catholicism in France is causing the leaders of the church at Rome no little anxiety. And well it may. Not only is the faith of the laity shattered, but the attitude of the clergy, also, is far from satisfactory. Hundreds of priests have abandoned their work. A cardinal is reported to have said, in a recent conversation, the number of defections in the priesthood in France is quite astonishing. Rome is much perplexed about how to deal with the situation. It can exercise authority, but it is discovering that the authority of knowledge of fact is greater now-a-days than that of ecclesiastical anathemas.

Mr. Henri Merle d'Aubigne, who is making an extended tour of the United States and Canada, tells the story of the religious condition of France very instructively. Mr. d'Aubigne is the son of the famous author of the "History of the Reformation," and is interesting on that account. But his own character and work command love and admiration, and give impressiveness to his utterances. He has for several years been a leader in religious, temperance and philanthropic work in France, and speaks of conditions there with authority. He was in Toronto a few days ago, where he received a very cordial welcome. In an address on religious conditions in his country, he told in an interesting way of the loosening of the hold of the Romish church upon the intellect and conscience of the people, and of the efforts that are being made by the Protestant church to arrest the trend towards agnosticism and infidelity. The "clerical" party, which he defined as the extreme party in the Romish church, had for long dominated the educational, political and religious life of France. The influence of the Jesuit schools and convents was used to subvert independent thought and obliterate moral distinctions. The "clerical" influence, he said, led, among other results, to the anti-Jesuit campaign which reached its culmination in the famous Dreyfus affair, which he regarded as the turning point in modern French history. The results of the investigations which had taken place in connection with the condemnation of Dreyfus had been such as to arouse a tremendous anti-clerical sentiment, and this has been intensified by the fuller light that had been thrown upon the converts, and orphanages, and other institutions under the control of the church. The result is a law which contemplates the entire exclusion of monastic teachers from the schools, which will, if put into operation, result in five years in the closing of 3,600 schools, which have been entirely under the control of the church.

The general result of this anti-clerical movement has been the great drift away from the Romish church we have already mentioned. Unhappily, the drift has been downwards towards agnosticism and infidelity. The Romish church having been identified in the popular mind with Christianity, the discrediting of the church involves the discrediting of Christianity; so that there is a prevalent tendency towards its entire repudiation. One great effort of the McAll Mission, with which Mr. d'Au-

bigne is identified, is to show the falsity of this assumption, and to make clear that there is in the pure, simple gospel of Jesus what the soul needs, and that it has been obscured and hidden by the Romish church.

There are also great moral movements in which the influence of the Romish church has been practically nil. In all the movements against alcoholism, licentiousness and kindred vices which are sapping the life of the people, it is among the small Protestant element that the leaders are found, and it is to combat these evils that the best men in France to-day are giving their earnest thought.

The McAll Mission movement was begun in 1871 by Robert McAll, an Englishman, who, in visiting Paris saw the condition of the people, and resolved to devote his life to the work of bringing to them the pure truths of the gospel. Its work is not that of proselytism, but its effort is to reach those who are outside of religious affiliation. It is the union of the different Protestant churches, in the work of evangelism among the working people in the cities and rural districts of France. The movement began in the industrial quarters of the great cities, and at first appealed to men almost exclusively, but the movement now includes many women as well as men. It has extended into the rural districts. In the great central wheat and grape growing districts of France there has been a marked falling away from the church, and into these districts the work of the mission has extended. The work is carried on by means of mission boats which are really floating gospel halls, and ply along the canals and rivers of the country.

Mr. d'Aubigne was careful to explain, concerning the religious orders that are leaving France, that the government's course is not one of opposition to religion, but to clerical domination over education, and to the continued existence of these people in "congregations," and their unwillingness to submit to the regulations that apply to all public institutions. All are free to remain if they conform to the law; refusing to do that, they have to go. They are self-banished. And other countries, Canada included, have to be burdened with them.

## CHRISTIAN ETHICS.

An article, in the *Atlantic Monthly* severely criticised the business ethics of so-called Christian nations. It has to be admitted that there is more foundation for such criticism than is pleasant to contemplate. The trouble is not in the teachings of Christ. His teachings are superior. But the trouble is in the failure to apply his teachings to the daily life and practice of business life. As the *Commonwealth* points out, we say and do not. Our religion has been too much of sentiment, and not enough of principle vitalizing and controlling practice. We want a revival just at this point. A man's religion is nothing if it does not make him pure and honest and truthful. It is nothing if it does not make him as upright and conscientious