

Religious Intelligencer.

THAT GOD IN ALL THINGS MAY BE GLORIFIED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.—Peter

VOL. XXXVIII.—No. 52.

FREDERICTON, N. B., DECEMBER 23, 1891.

WHOLE No. 1971

At Christmas Time.

At Christmas time last year.
So many friends that now are gone were here:
So many hopes were glowing then, unspoken;
So many faiths were strong that now lie broken,
And loving hearts that trusted without fear,—
At Christmas time last year!

At Christmas-time this year,
So many of us find the world a drear
And barren desert, wherein blooms no rose;
With mountain-peaks surrounding it, whose snows
Have chilled our hearts and turned life's foliage sear,
At Christmas-time this year!

At Christmas-time next year,
Who knows what changing fortunes may be near?
Take courage, then! our night shall turn to day;
From brightening skies the clouds must turn away,
And faith and love and hope shall all be here
At Christmas-time next year!

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

THE QUEEN is having a portrait of herself painted to be presented to the Government of France.

SOUTH CAROLINA is moving towards prohibition. The House of Representatives has passed a prohibitory bill by a vote of 40 to 34. Its fate in the Senate is not yet determined.

THERE is a steady increase of insanity in Ontario. In 1887 the insane in Ontario numbered 3,563. In 1890 they increased to 4,187.

GOVERNMENT STATISTICS show that French smokers consumed in 1890, 2,000,000 francs worth of foreign cigars, 2,600,000 francs worth of home cigars, 10,000,000 francs of cigarettes, 29,000,000 francs of snuff and 91,000,000 francs of pipe tobacco, or a total of nearly \$30,000,000 for tobacco in various forms.

THE LATEST advices about the earthquake in Japan make it one of the most terrible calamities ever known, the number of dead being over 7,000, and the number of injured over 10,000, while nearly half a million people have been rendered homeless and destitute.

INDIA now has 17,300 miles of railway. Of these the Government owns 12,900 miles; companies (subsidized), 3,040, and the native States, 1,300.

THE NUMBER of lepers in the United States is increasing. The latest case is that of a Chinese leper who has been running a laundry in Peoria, Ill. His Chinese friends got him out of town, and none of them can remember where he went. Those who patronize Chinese laundries must take the risk.

A HINDU PRIEST of considerable sanctity in the eyes of his co-religionists has, it is said, just completed in Bombay a fast of sixty-one days, which he sustained on nothing more than warm water. The affair is declared by European witnesses to have been genuine, and it is certain that the priest's followers believed in his *bona fides*, for 5,000 of them, men and women, joined him one day in his fast, and subsequently subscribed 7,000 rupees for religious purposes.

IT IS ALWAYS interesting to read accounts of the achievements of young men. These records inspire other young men to attempt important and heroic things. No less interesting is the story of the great deeds of old men. These examples help others to resist the forces which destroy manly vigor early and to maintain their activity and usefulness to an advanced age.

Hayden was seventy when he produced his masterpiece, "The Creation;" and Michael Angelo finished "the Last Judgment" when he was sixty-seven. Gladstone is still eloquent at eighty. Bismark is a mighty man at seventy-seven. Oliver Wendell Holmes is eighty-two, and his poetic genius has not forsaken him. The Christian religion by inculcating virtues which tend to preserve physical and mental health, and by forbidding those habits which cut short the days of man, favors longevity. "With long life will I satisfy him." "They will bring forth fruit in old age."

A NATIVE of Calcutta is lecturing in the United States on India. Says the

Standard: He publicly charges the British Government with encouraging the consumption of opium among its subjects in India for the sake of revenue. In order to encourage and stimulate the cultivation of the poppy plant, upwards of 500,000 acres of the best land in India, he said, are devoted to its cultivation, and the annual production is 10,000,000 pounds, which is consumed in India, China and Burmah. It causes incalculable misery and vice, yet the Indian Government is the sole manufacturer. During the last year 125,000 pounds were brought to Victoria, B. C., prepared for smoking, and nearly every pound of it was smuggled into the United States.

EDISON'S FERTILE POWERS are now at work upon an electric motor for use on railways and street-car lines. Whatever he has set his mind and hand to do has generally been well done. We may reasonably expect, says the *Guardian*, that his new motor will revolutionize railway traffic. He claims that it will produce a speed of 200 miles an hour, and that passenger travel will be safe at the rate of 100 miles an hour. The experiment is to be tried at the coming World's Fair, and then, if successful, the motor will be gradually introduced on the railways. The new invention seems really less wonderful in itself than three or four others he has perfected, and in all probability we shall soon be whirling along at the rate of speed mentioned. Like his other inventions, by general adoption the motor will soon cease to excite wonder. What will be the next flash of genius in the wizard's brain?

A Year of Bible Work.

We have before us (says the Presbyterian Witness) the Eighty-Seventh Annual Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Our readers never fail to peruse with interest our gleanings from the successive volumes which record the wonderful work carried on throughout the world by means of the Word of God. It is in fact a yearly issue of the Acts of the Apostles, a yearly narrative of the noble efforts of faithful men to spread the glad tidings of salvation through the life and death and resurrection of the Son of God. For eighty-seven years the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society has been going on with steadily accelerating pace, so that last year the Bible was in the hands of a greater number of men in a larger variety of languages than ever before.

Progress, as the Report says, has been gradual in some directions, rapid in others; safe and sure in all. Almost four millions of copies of the Scriptures, in whole or in part, were put in circulation last year. This is an increase of more than a hundred and thirty thousand copies on previous years.

The income of the year showed a slight increase. Total receipts, £217, 148 17s. 3d. [of which £115,845 8s. 4d. was Free Income, and £101,177 8s. 2d. the sum received for Scriptures sold]; payments, £231,583, 16s. 9d.; deficit, £14,434 19s. 6d. Last year's also there was a deficit of £15,488 10s. 6d. The Free Contributions from Auxiliaries in England, Wales, and the Colonies, have, during 1890-91, been £62,010 9s. 10d.

The Report is a goodly volume of nearly 500 pages. Its survey of work begins with France, passes through Belgium, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, every country in Europe—then to Eastern Russia, Siberia and Central Asia. From these it turns westward through the Turkish Empire and Greece into Africa; from Africa eastwards again, by Palestine and Arabia to Persia, to India, to the island-world of Malaysia, to China, to Australia; thence, across the Pacific, to South America and Canada, until, taking leave of the Dominion and Newfoundland, it comes to an end among the cities and villages of England. In all this review of the countries and the people of the globe there is nothing more impressive than the evidences which everywhere meet the eye of the gradual establishment of a kingdom which is destined to include them all. When the century which is now closing began its course the area of Christian knowledge was a very limited one, and but few of the world's languages had become familiar with the Story of the

Cross. But it is different now. Four new versions, begun during the year and soon to make the Gospel vernacular in as many tongues, have brought up the total of the Society's translations to close upon three hundred. This number includes all the greater languages of the globe, and the large majority of those which are of secondary compass and importance. As the eye passes from land to land it sees everywhere the scholar at work upon the Word of God, moulding with patient care some new version into shape, or giving an earlier one more perfect form. Nor is it in productive work alone that so liberal energy is being expended, for the accounts of the year report that some 330 Bible-women are busy in the Zenanas of the East; that over 600 colporteurs are, in almost every country, familiarizing the people with the Bible; and that more than 230 Depots, like centres of light, are diffusing among many races the knowledge which not only refines and elevates, but saves. The workers in this great enterprise are of every nationality—of every grade of national character and education. What is it that unites them in a brotherhood so cordial, and supports them in the face of the dangers and depressions which so many of them have to endure? There is only one competent answer, and it has boundless meaning. It is the love of Christ that constrains them, and His Spirit that animates their own.

Such is the eloquent language of the Report which we gladly make our own. Our own missionaries in the New Hebrides and elsewhere have found the value of the ready aid ever afforded by the Society in issuing new translations and versions.

There appears to be a revived interest in France in spiritual matters. More than one edition of the Gospels have been published and circulated with the approval of R. C. bishops. A colporteur testifies thus after an experience of twenty-five years:

The difficulties on our way are less; the prejudices against our work are weakening; if our books are not sold so freely as we desire, still our persons are respected.

The following traits give an idea of Breton superstition and blindfoldness. A woman purchases a pig at the fair at Pont l'Abbe. Arriving at her home at le Guilvinec, the animal falls ill. The woman borrows two francs from a neighbour, makes a cross on the pig's back with the money which she gives to the cure to say a mass for the pig's recovery.

Near Quimper there is a small chapel named St. Adrien, where are seen two wooden statues representing men extremely ugly, but revered as saints by the Church. But they must be unruly saints, as one of them has an arm broken, and to my question how this had happened, a woman answered that the two had quarrelled, and one had proved stronger than the other, but they both worked plenty of miracles!

Eight colporteurs were at work in Belgium, and circulated nearly 10,000 copies. Even in Austria an impression has been made, though not easily. In Italy 33 colporteurs circulated nearly 154,000 copies. This is better than any previous year. What a miserably oppressed and taxed people the Italians are! For sugar they have to pay 7 to 8 pence a pound; for tea from 4 to 6 shillings; for salt three pence a pound; for coal 80 cents for 20 cents worth in England. Coarse bread costs more than the best bread costs in London.

A writer, himself an Italian, says: It is worthy of note that the nearer one gets to Rome the more the criminality increases, and that the provinces which have been for centuries under the dominion of the Pope are those in which the most atrocious crimes are still committed to day. Italy shows a much greater amount of crime than any other country in Europe. In 1888, 150 people were sentenced for homicides in England, 175 in France, 1,800 in Italy, and yet our population is considerably smaller than that of either France or England. Any one who considers seriously these facts must be drawn to the conclusion that no country needs the Gospel more than Italy does. The religion it has followed for so many centuries has of the Gospel merely the name, not the moralizing power. The Word of God has been too long denied this people and the consequences are what I have related above.

One of the saddest facts of the social condition is that nowhere is infidelity so prevalent as in our schools of all degrees, from the communal primary

school in the country village to the universities of the highest rank. Bonghi, in a recent article in our principal review, the *Nuova Antologia*, well portrays Italy's position in this respect when he says: "Everywhere religion is now more than ever an important factor of education. But we, imitating the worst things of France, have been hunting down religion everywhere. We have no more any school in which religion is taught, but we have many in which it is denied." These and other similarly severe words of the popular author of the *Vita di Gesù*, and of so many other works of note—of a man who has occupied the place of Minister of Public Instruction, are certainly the worst thing that can be said of Italy of the present day, and are full of bad omen for the future. Our new Minister of Public Instruction, Prof. Villari, the author of the best *Life of Savonarola* that has perhaps ever been written, said, many years ago, "We are thirsting to believe, but we do not know what to believe." This sentence he repeated not many days before he was rather unexpectedly called to take in hand the supreme direction of Italian schools.

Did space permit we could go through hundreds of pages of this Report culled out items of interest. Canada might well do more for the great Society whose work is so manifestly for the good of all and the injury of none. Much, very much, still remains to be accomplished before all have the Gospel within their reach. Let us hasten the happy consummation.

Courts of Conciliation.

Norway has a system of Courts of Conciliation which might be imitated in this country with great profit. A court is provided for even the smallest village. The officers are elective, and the fees for an entire case are only seventy-five cents. The position of these officers is regarded as one of honor, and the place is usually filled by elderly and well known men of the community, who have perhaps retired from business, and are willing to serve their community for the small compensation allowed. The trials are all secret, which rids the room of the lawyers who throng our Justice and Police courts. The court has no power to compel settlement; it can seek only to bring men to an agreement, and to induce them to settle the case outside of law. The judges do not, therefore, need to be lawyers, but merely common sense men of the community, who go straight to the common sense right of the case, and who seek to gain concessions from the parties which will bring about a friendly settlement.

Their influence is far greater than might be supposed. They have power to compel attendance, and both parties must come into their presence and talk the matter over. Attorneys are not allowed. No offer of settlement or admission of facts before this court can be used in a regular trial in the courts above, so that the parties can talk freely with the judges, and either one can offer any compromise without impairing his rights in the trial above. If a settlement can not be effected, the judges certify the case to a higher court for trial in the regular way, but they also state whether either party was willing to follow their advice, and whether he offered concessions and appeared willing to settle on fair terms. If so, this counts very much in his favor at the regular trial, and the man who is obstinate and determined not to come to an agreement, must make out a very clear case in the upper courts to win. Practically, therefore, this court of conciliation succeeds in settling nearly all the cases which come before it, and relieves the higher courts of all the petty quarrels, and suits involving small sums. A case involving important law points and a large sum of money goes to a regular trial. This system is worthy the attention of all interested in the reform of our system of jurisprudence.—*Journal*.

Temperance Notes.

—The Missouriian's "cure for the drink habit" was entirely successful—"Quit yer drinkin'."

—The money paid in one month for two glasses of whiskey a day would pay for a suit of clothes.

—We have a great horror of arsenic, and fifty other things; the fact is, all these things are a mere bagatelle in relation to the most direct, absolute, immediate and certain poisonings which are caused by alcohol.

—It is estimated that no fewer than seventy thousand girls are employed in the public houses and drinking-bars of the United Kingdom. One of the *Daily Telegraph's* correspondents advocates legislation prohibiting the employment of women in any licensed house.

—A parliamentary return gives the number of convictions for drunkenness in England and Wales during the past year, and, keeping with the four previous returns, reveals a decided increase. The convictions in England numbered 173,036, and in Wales 10,250. There had also been an increase in the number of convictions for Sunday convictions for Sunday drunkenness.

—In Washington, D. C., are 30,000 young men, but less than 3,000 of them are members of churches. On a single evening 168 young men entered ten church prayer meetings, and the same

girls went up for the Government examination, of whom ten were successful. One gained a scholarship; another, though only seven years of age, was married. The women teachers have taken the yearly course of study arranged for the Bible women.

Motasi, the largest and probably most prosperous school, has 95 pupils and three teachers,—one Brahmin pundit, and two Christian women. The schoolhouse is large and commodious, and the tone of the school elevating. Miss N. M. Phillips has a thriving Sunday-school here.

Porameet has 37 enrolled. The teachers are a Hindu pundit and a Christian woman. Many of the children of this school are poor, but it has always ranked well. The children are more than ordinarily interested in the Bible lessons.

Manikham has 44 enrolled. It also has one Hindu and one Christian teacher. The attendance of the children at this school is very irregular. As they marry very young, and are not allowed to attend school after marriage, their time for education is limited.

Kasmilla.—A mile by road and a mile over rice-fields brings us to this school, which is in charge of a Christian teacher. She is a good woman and a successful teacher. The school numbers 30. The children are very poor, often eating one meal a day. From this school, one or more pass successful examinations each year.

Remna, four miles from Balasore, is taught by a Hindu pundit. Being in a wicked and intensely heathen community, it is below the mark in scholarship and requirements in Bible knowledge. Efforts here have availed so little that, were it not for the hope that ultimately it may be a little light in heathen darkness, I should take steps to close it. The last time I visited it, there were more hopeful signs than ever before.

Sahaja is five miles from Balasore. It, too, is in the midst of a strong heathen element. The house is built on land dedicated to the gods. From the door, I can count five heathen temples. Here are some of the dearest, brightest little girls that can be found in any of the schools. They can repeat the Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the catechism very nicely. Four of these children passed this year, one of whom was but seven years of age. The teacher is a Hindu, and the enrollment 33.

Pardua Pada.—In this school there are but fifteen enrolled, and they are very, very poor. Their only clothing is a rag, and often they are obliged to fast all day. I am obliged to supply many books here, but books alone do not make good scholars. Emmy, the Christian teacher, though patient and faithful, sometimes gets discouraged. But the good seed has been sown unsparingly, and in Bible knowledge the pupils compare favorably with other schools.

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—In Washington, D. C., are 30,000 young men, but less than 3,000 of them are members of churches. On a single evening 168 young men entered ten church prayer meetings, and the same

evening, in one hour, 365 entered ten of the 1,000 saloons licensed by our government under the shadow of the capitol.

—There is one thing vastly more important than the cure of every drunkard in the country, and that is the cessation of drunkard-making by legislating against the liquor traffic, and by each person's own abstinence. If we could have emphatic testimony against the drinking habit, it is the welcome that is given by thousands to the news that a drug has been discovered that will deliver them from the curse of rum. One need not go any farther than this fact for a pretty cogent temperance lecture.

—The drinking habits of the world cost something. *Gambinus*, the organ of the Austrian brewers and hop-growers, answers this question every year by publishing a conspectus of the annual production of beer all over the civilized globe. The total quantity of beer brewed in 1890 was 1,956,000,000 hectolitres, or 92,834,000,000 gallons: whereas in 1889 it was only 1,736,000,000. Great Britain and Ireland held the pre-eminence with 567,000,000; the German Empire followed next with 523,000,000 hectolitres.

—The following from the *Nashville Christian Advocate* is to the point:

The friends of temperance must not abate their opposition to the whiskey traffic simply because they can not agree with one another in regard to methods. More and more we are convinced that this traffic is the prolific parent of all the ills that afflict our modern society. There is not a sin nor a crime which it does not foster and promote. It must be stopped. Whether this desirable end shall be speedily reached depends entirely on the practical good sense of the temperance people. If they will ignore all side issues, and concentrate exclusive attention upon this one thing, they can very soon work wonders.

—Total abstinence, instead of "moderation," is to be preferred. 1. Because scientific research and experience have demonstrated that alcoholic beverages are in no sense a necessity to the human system. 2. Because we teach by experience as well as by precept, and to the young, and to those tempted by the abnormal alcoholic appetite, our example for total abstinence would be a source of strength to resist where the "moderate" use of intoxicants might tend to mislead others to alcoholic indulgence. 3. Because the human body, as the temple of an immortal soul, ought to be kept free from the poisonous taint. To poison the body is to impair the action of the mind and cloud the spiritual vision.

Among Exchanges.

A HINT.
In the fixing of pastors' salaries, churches do not often enough take into consideration the extra expenses which pastors, as such, have to meet. Dr. MacArthur of New York mentions the fact that of sixty-three letters sent out by him in two days just three were on his own business, and he estimates that during the past ten years he has paid out \$1,000 in postage which others should have paid. Every pastor has to do considerable of this.—*Morn. Star*.

RANT.
Rant in the pulpit is not eloquence, any more than the noise of a bass drum is music. He who expects, by imitating Orator Puff in dealing in gorgeous descriptions of commonplace things and in wordy outpourings and rhetorical outburst containing no real thought or sentiment, to attract and hold large congregations, will in due time find himself sadly disappointed.—*Telescope*.

WHY NOT?
There is no reason in the world why a God-fearing community should not abolish all places and agencies of prostitution, as well as the licensed and unlicensed saloons where men and women degrade themselves with strong drink.—*Pres. Witness*.

THE CHURCH ACCOUNTS.
How are your congregational accounts likely to stand at the end of the year? Is there a large balance in the treasury? How does it happen to be there? Does the balance owe its existence to the great liberality of the people or to the fact that the congregation has not done anything during the year? A balance may mean nothing more than that a congregation has made no progress—no improvements of any kind. A balance against the congregation is never a good thing. It is always disheartening to begin the year in debt. The time to attend to that matter is now, December is usually a good business month. Make it a good month in Church business. A little liberality during the next three weeks will put almost any congregational balance right.—*Can. Presbyterian*.