

## GENERAL RELIGIOUS NOTES.

—There is said to be an evangelical church of 1,400 members at Ur of the Chaldees.

—The Churches of Protestant Switzerland have fixed upon January 1st, 1884, as the 300th anniversary of the birth of Zwingle, the immortal reformer of Zurich.

—The success of the evangelistic work carried forward in the Italian army is manifested by the fact that within the last nine years 700 of its soldiers have professed their faith in Christ.

—The Gospel in All Lands estimates that 100,000 Jews have been converted to Christianity during this century and that about 1,000 embrace the Gospel every year. Of those about one fourth become connected with Protestant churches. The rest go into the Greek and Roman communions.

—A church in Denver, Colorado, has a mission among the Chinamen. Several among them have been converted, and their testimony has touched the hearts of some "Melican" men. A young man testifies, "I resisted all that I could, but when the Chinaman began to plead and tell of Jesus, I couldn't hold out."

—A Swedish Congregational church of seventy-four members has recently been recognized in Worcester, Mass. This movement is in sympathy with the reformation which is represented by the Swedish Ansang and Mission Synod, who receive none to the communion except on the evidence of regeneration.

—An Armenian weaver was converted at Aintab, and, returning to Urfa, engaged in evangelistic work. The result was the formation of an evangelical church which now numbers 1,400 souls. Is God, then, raising up "children unto Abraham" on the very spot where Abraham lived and prayed in the days of his youth and early manhood four thousand years ago? It is even so, if the Modern Urfa, as it is generally supposed to be, the ancient "Ur of the Chaldees."

—Mr. Robert Arthington, of Leeds, has made a new offer to the Wesleyan Missionary Society of £2,000 (\$10,000), conditioned upon the Society providing £8,000 (40,000) more for opening a mission from the East Coast of Central Africa to the Victoria Nyanza and doing its best to keep it open, and for giving to its populations (particularly the Wamasai, the Wakaurher, and the Wakuafi) portions of the New Testament—viz., the Gospel of Luke, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Gospel of John. He expects the young men of the connection to undertake the support of the mission and proposes to have it called "the Punshon Memorial Mission to Central Africa."

—The Working Men's Lord's Day Rest Association, of Bedford row, London, England, has just issued an appeal to the public, printed on a large six-sheet double crown bill, as follows: "The Sabbath was made for man. Why not for the railway man? Why not for the cab, omnibus, and tramway men? Thousands of these working men have no day of rest. They work ten to eighteen hours a day, seven days a week. Englishmen! do not enslave your fellow-men by employing them in needless Sunday work. If you would not like to work yourselves on Sundays, don't make others work for you on that day." The opinion of the late Lord Beaconsfield is quoted. He said: "Of all divine institutions the most divine is that which secures a day of rest for man. I hold it to be the most valuable blessing ever conceded to man. It is the corner-stone of civilization, and its removal might even affect the health of the people." Mr. Gladstone's opinion is also given as follows: "The religious observance of Sunday is

a main prop of religious character of the country. From a moral, social, and physical point of view, the observance of Sunday is a duty of absolute consequence."

## TEMPERANCE NOTES.

(From S. S. Times.)

—A new temperance colony has been organized in New Zealand. It occupies lands about seventy miles from Auckland.

—Army Coffee Taverns are being established for the British soldier. The Queen, it is said, is greatly interested in the movement.

—A thousand dollars has been given by a friend of temperance in Holland to aid in placing Dr. Richardson's Temperance Lesson Book in the schools of that country.

—It was decided at the recent State Prohibition Convention in Mississippi that an attempt should be made to secure a prohibitory constitutional amendment from the next legislature.

—Queen Victoria is reported to have declined the gift of an elegant barrel of "Victoria Whiskey" from a Kentucky distiller. Her good sense gave the associations an unpleasant flavour.

—Australia pays a compliment to Mr. Gough in the establishment of Gough Town. The new town is to be strictly temperance; no intoxicants will be sold within its boundaries, and the streets are to be named after well-known temperance workers.

—The *Retailer*, of New York, a journal issued in the interests of the liquor trade, is seriously alarmed on account of the free ice-water fountains, which it considers a public danger. It is not often that the *Retailer* shows such a zeal for the public health.

—That is a good example which is given by the African King Merambo, who, ruling over a territory of from ten to fifteen thousand square miles, is himself a total abstainer, and is doing all he can to encourage the spread of temperance principles among his people.

—Cigarette smoking is on the increase, if the recently issued statistics of the International Revenue Department are to be taken as a criterion. The increase of revenue from this source for the year ending June 30, 1881, over that of the preceding year, was about twenty-eight per cent. Evidently it is time that a little knowledge respecting the composition of the trade cigarette were diffused among our youth.

—Three premiums of a hundred, fifty, and twenty-five dollars respectively, are offered by the National Temperance Society for tracts bearing on the importance of abstinence among, or the evils of intemperance to, railway employees. Three similar premiums are offered for the three best pictorial sketches bearing on the same subject. Each manuscript or drawing should be distinguished by a motto, and accompanied by an envelope bearing the same motto and containing the competitor's name and address. The competition is open until November 1.

—Now that the Welsh Sunday Closing Bill has passed both Houses of Parliament, and has received the Royal assent, England is the only section of the United Kingdom in which the public selling of liquor on Sunday is legal. In some sections of the Kingdom, however, the Sunday liquor laws are practically dead letter, on account of the privileges granted to hotels to supply travellers, who are such in good faith, with liquor. On the highways leading to and from some of the large towns, a steady stream of habitual drinkers may be seen tramping out three or four miles to the nearest country hotel, there to announce themselves as *bona fide* travellers, and to obtain the

much desired alcoholic refreshment. So great did this evil become, that, in Scotland for instance, the term "*bona fide* traveller" in popular slang denotes an habitual drunkard. Of late years, this evil has been much checked by sharp police surveillance of the lower class of hotels.

## MISCELLANEOUS NOTES.

—The national debt of Great Britain was reduced by only \$31,453,580 during the last year.

—Stephen Paxton, the well-known Sabbath-school missionary, who recently died, is said to have organized in the Western States 1,400 Sabbath-schools, with 11,000 teachers and 70,000 scholars.

—Rev. Alex. Stark of Tighnabruach, Scotland, almost the last of the Disruption worthies, and Father of the Free Church of Scotland, recently died at the age of ninety-six years, in the seventy-fourth year of his ministry.

—It is said that an aged rag-picker, who died at the age of ninety-nine, was she who, in the Reign of Terror in Paris, was adored as the Goddess of Reason. If true, it is a striking instance of the "revenges of history," and the "wages of sin."

—The *Athenaeum* says that the last literary work done by Dean Stanley was the article on Robertson of Brighton, which was intended for *Scribner's*, and which the *Century* people have been obliged to send back to England to be translated into English that can be read.

—Bishop D. W. Clark tells us that when the celebrated Neander was asked the cause of the defection of the German churches from sound doctrine, he replied, "A dead orthodoxy." There is nothing that can so guard the purity of the Christian faith as spiritual vitality in the Church.

—"Ecclesiastical freebooters," is the title applied by a lecturer to those pastors who seek by their pastoral visits to gain over adherents from other churches. The same authority calls those who always find fault with the preaching "constitutional and perennial ecclesiastical growlers."

—According to the *London Standard's* correspondence at Rome, the report of the Pope's leaving that city was circulated from the Vatican with the intent of arousing the Roman Catholics abroad, and embarrassing the Italian government. The Catholic Powers continue to advise the Pope not to leave Rome.

—At a meeting in the chapel of one of the hill towns of Connecticut a short time since, while the lady was playing the cabinet organ and the congregation singing a hymn, an adder some three feet long crawled out from under the organ, lifted his head and apparently listened to the music. The lady had presence of mind to continue her playing till the hymn was sung.

—The Chinese Government, some years ago, tore up the only railroad in the empire, a "Celestial" wisdom like that which for many years refused to work their coal mines, lest the removal of so much ballast should upset the earth. But the late war with Russia disclosed to military men the worth of the rails. And now they are to be laid, post haste, from the capital to Tien-Tsin, and from there to the river Yang-tse-Kiang, 500 miles farther south.

—Polygamous Mormonism is extending from Utah into the neighbouring territories and bull fights are passing over from Spain into France. There have lately been such public exhibitions at Nîmes, at Avignon, and at Marseilles, and they have been accompanied with shocking loss of life. Were it not that our own country is so gentle with polygamy, we should allow ourselves to be shocked at the barbarism of France.

—Now and then a Bishop loses patience and frees his mind. The Bishop of Bangor in the course of his late triennial charge said he could not disguise his feelings of shame and indignation at the manner in which lay ecclesiastical patronage was exercised. Most unfit and incompetent men were preferred for livings owing to political sympathy or family ties, and when inducted they alienated Churchmen, owing to their indifference and negligence. He hoped the time would come when the parishioners would at least have a negative voice in the selection of the man to whom their spiritual welfare was intrusted. The advertisements of sales of livings in ecclesiastical journals were scandalous.

—The British Museum contains a very interesting coin, which came from Gaza, and is probably of the fourth century B. C. On one side is a helmeted Greek face, only partly in profile; on the other the sun-god, in the form of the Greek Zeus, seated in a chariot of fire. Above his head are the old Phœnician letters Y-H-U; i. e., *Yahw*, or *Jehovah*. It would appear from this that the Philistines of Gaza had adopted the national god of the Jews, and identified him with their own Baal or Sun-god. We know from Neh. xiii. 23, that the Jews intermarried with the people of Ashdod. It is clear that in the fourth century B. C. a superstitious dislike to pronounce the sacred name had not yet grown up among the Jews.

—A singular treatment of the ruins of Babylon, and one which might readily be overlooked in its bearing upon the predictions of Scripture in minute detail respecting this city, has not escaped the observation of Mr. H. Rassam, a thorough explorer of the site.

"There is one fact connected with the destruction of Babylon and the marvellous fulfilment of prophecy which struck me more than anything else, which fact seems never to have been noticed by any traveller, and that is the non-existence in the several modern buildings in the neighbourhood of Babylon of any sign of stone which had been dug up from its ancient ruins, because it seems that, in digging for old materials, the Arabs used the bricks for building purposes, but always burnt the stone thus discovered for lime, which fact wonderfully fulfils the divine words of Jeremiah—namely: 'And they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations; but thou shalt be desolations forever, saith the Lord'" (ch. li. 26).

—Praying for the dead is, according to general Protestant tradition, a great offence. We suppose that is because it is supposed that the prayer is only for delivery of the soul from the pains of Purgatory, the aforesaid Purgatory being a "Romish invention." But, if the prayers be not for deliverance from purgatorial pains, but the expression of a longing desire before God for the supreme bliss of those we loved on earth, it is difficult to conceive in what the imagined offence can lie. There is certainly no doctrinal heresy involved. Such seems to be idea of the Brahmo Somaj of India. In *The New Dispensation*, which is devoted to the expression of their practical and devotional sentiments, we find the following prayer for the soul of the Dean of Westminster:—

"Eternal Life, we ask thee to bless the departed Dean Stanley. He lived and worked here on earth as one of the most large-hearted servants of Christ. He has left an example of uncommon Christian fidelity and unselfishness. He deeply appreciated and sympathized with the spirit of the New Dispensation in India. Let the celestial perfume of his holy and sweet life incite us to do the work of our lives faithfully and joyfully. Confer on him; O God, a rich crown for the noble services he has rendered to thee here and open his eye to behold thee face to face."

To which we say Amen. May his soul rest in peace.—*N. Y. Independent.*