

tributions, 1,000 lire. The "Brethren" do not give statistics as to stations, etc., and those of the English Baptist Church I could not learn. In addition to the above I should say that there are several independent missions, such as those of Mr. Clarke, at Spezia, Sig. Papengouth, at Naples, Dr. Comandi, at Siena, etc., regarding whose work I have written on previous occasions. Decided progress has been made towards

UNION OF MISSION CHURCHES,

specially between that of the Waldenses and the Free Church of Italy, as well as federation of the different societies and churches engaged in Italian evangelization. On the 29th of April, 1884, a number of members of various denominations met at Florence, and after consideration and discussion, decided: 1. That union or co-operation of the churches represented was desirable; 2. That it was attainable; 3. That the constitution of an Evangelical Italian congress, composed of a proportionate number of delegates of the various Churches, was wise and would be useful. Such a congress was then constituted, and rules for membership and action framed. The Synod of the Waldensian Church, and the General Assembly of the Free Church, at their autumnal meetings last year agreed to the principle of union, charged their committees of evangelization to enter into negotiation, and prepare a scheme to be submitted to their respective Synods next autumn. I see that on Sunday, 15th of February, preaching in the Scotch Church in Rome, Father Gavazzi announced that these committees had unanimously adopted a scheme for the union of these Churches. It will be submitted to and doubtless be ratified by the respective Synods this year. The Church formed by this union is to be called the Chiesa Evangelica d' Italia—Evangelical Church of Italy. When I was in the Valleys in the summer of 1883, the professors and pastors had no idea that union was so near as it now appears to be.

The various bodies of

BAPTISTS

labouring in Italy are also contemplating union. In November last the committee directing the "Christian Apostolic Baptist Union," met in Rome, when a special commission, composed of Dr. Taylor, Messrs. Wall, Landels and Tajani, was appointed to study the best means for strengthening the union and bringing it into practical operation.

WORK IN ROME.

Monsignor Campello and Savarese, who abdicated their seats in the chapter of St. Peter's, and left the Roman Church, after vibrating between Anglicanism and American Episcopal Methodism, finally formed themselves along with others into an "Old Catholic" congregation. They opened a place of worship in Rome, giving it the name of the "National Church of the Congregation of St. Paul, where they celebrate mass in the Italian language. The Cardinal Vicar at once issued a notice, declaring the congregation heretical, the work carried on in it sacrilegious, and priests and attendants, excommunicate. They (the Old Catholics) have just published an almanac for 1885 called "La Nuova Roma, and in a brief preface, call attention to the fact that at the date of each day of the month, they have substituted a passage of Scripture for the customary commemoration of the Saints in the Roman calendar. The publication of 365 texts of Scripture by men who call themselves priests of the Catholic Church, is significant, and may do good.

On the 25th of November, 1883, the new

WALDENSIAN CHURCH

in Rome was opened for public worship, and Sig. Prochet, of Genoa, was called to the pastorate. It has been largely attended during the winter months. The greater part of the audience consists, of course, of the middle classes; but I am told that members of the aristocracy occasionally attend and appear to be interested. A Sabbath evening prayer meeting has been established, and there are indications that progress is being made.

On the 21st of January last the provisional hall of the new

SCOTCH CHURCH

in the Via Venti Settembre, was inaugurated by an interesting service, at which were present prominent representatives of all the other Protestant denominations in Rome. The Rev. J. Gordon Gray, D.D., is the pastor. Well do I remember, seventeen years ago, having to seek the Scotch Church outside the

walls, no Protestant service being allowed inside the city. Dr. James Lewis was then the pastor. A few years before the service had been held in his "own hired house," and at the close, according to police regulations, the congregation had to disperse, two or three at a time, *and not in a body*, to avoid giving offence to the feelings of the papal and priestly authorities who then had supreme power in the Capital. To-day each Protestant denomination can have its own Church in the most prominent part of Rome, if it pleases, and can meet and disperse when and how they choose. There seem to be indications of a stirring among the dry bones of the

JEWISH COMMUNITY IN ITALY

at present. Last spring the Rev. Mr. Ben Ahel went to Rome to take the place of the late Dr. Philip, and it appears he has been the instrument of converting two Jews to the Christian faith. On the 29th December last, these men publicly confessed their faith in Christ in the Waldensian Church, before a large audience, when they were baptized by Mr. Ben Ahel, in the presence of representatives of the various Protestant denominations.

A whole family of Israelites—mother and three daughters—were admitted by baptism to the Christian Church in Florence, recently, and two ladies from Edinburgh—Miss McGregor and Miss Smith—who had formerly worked among Jewesses in the East, have secured temporary premises, and have commenced a school for the Christian education of Jewish girls in the Ghetto of Rome. It is computed that there are 6,000 Jews in Italy, the larger portion being within the narrow limits of the Ghetto.

Your readers will, doubtless, have heard of the very successful

MISSION TO ITALIAN SOLDIERS,

conducted by Cavalier Capellini. It is a remarkable work carried on by a remarkable man, and is yearly growing in interest and extent. A sentence or two from the last report will give an idea of the difficulties encountered, and the result. Capellini says: "The first Communion Service of the year yielded to none that have preceded it in solemnity and blessed influence. More than fifty new members were added to the 'Military Church.' This first solemn confession of Christ by the new converts was followed, as has almost always been the case, by a fiery ordeal of persecution. The extension of the conscription to the seminarists has introduced into the Italian army a number of young priests in embryo, who are at once spies upon the Evangelical soldiers and zealots in assailing and tormenting them. There was also at this time, in one of the regiments, an Adjutant-Major, nephew of a Cardinal, who used to boast of his powers in harassing the heretics that were under his command. The 'Evangelicals' were held up to derision and subjected to a thousand annoyances in the dormitories, at mess, in the guard rooms, and outside the barracks, wherever their comrades met them during their hours of liberty. Their Bibles and tracts were taken from them; the notices of meetings sent them from time to time were intercepted, and often at the hours of service duties were assigned them, or undeserved punishments inflicted with the view of hindering their attendance. In spite of all, however, the new converts for the most part stood their ground.

"The military barracks in Rome are chiefly ancient convents secularized by the present government, and in some of them a portion has been left for the use of their old occupants until they have died out. Such an arrangement not unfrequently leads to collision between the Evangelical soldiers and these zealous partisans of the Pope. Thus, in the barracks of San Salvatore, in Lauro, the priest of the parish still inhabits a part of the building. More than once, on leaving his rooms he had to thread his way through groups of soldiers busily occupied in reading the Scriptures. At length, one day he stopped, and began to pour out a torrent of abuse against the Evangelicals in general and myself in particular, till one of the young converts, losing patience, extended to him a copy of the New Testament, and exclaimed with vehemence: 'Your Reverence, be so good as to prove to us from this book, the errors and immoralities with which you are charging us; for I am a lover of the truth, and wish at any cost to know and follow it.' The priest attempted an argument, but soon found that with his confused and hesitating quotations from the Vulgate, he was no match for his young antagonist, who had at his tongue's end, apt and prompt, whole sections of

Scripture in the vernacular of Diodati. To cover his retreat he asked at last for a loan of the book that he might study it, and withdrew amidst the sarcastic smiles of the bystanders, leaving the honours of the field to his opponent. And from that day the discomfited champion has been careful to leave his lodgings by a back door which communicates with the street, without exposing him to inconvenient contact with the Bible-reading soldiers." These soldiers in moving from camp to camp in summer, or to their own homes, act as missionaries, and are doing a great work. Sig. Capellini, himself an ex-soldier, commenced work in 1872, and now his Roman congregation alone is attended every Sabbath by more than 300 soldiers. He is a recognized minister of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, which provides the hall for his religious services and guarantees his personal stipend. But his work continues to be wholly undenominational. The converted soldiers on leaving the army are simply directed to join the Church nearest their homes. T. H.

Clarens, Switzerland, March, 1885.

ADJURING ROMANISM.

In the following paper Mr. J. A. Derome, a young man connected with the family of Bishop Langevin, of Rimouski, and of Sir Hector Langevin, narrates the steps which led to his conversion. His experiences are those of scores of suffering hearts and are the best plea for the work of French Evangelization. The paper was read in the French Protestant Church, of Lowell, on the day the young man joined the Church.

C. E. AMARON.

Of all the questions which relate to mankind, religion is the most important and the most serious one. When we are born in a religion, when we have been taught its doctrines, when we have been accustomed to look upon all those who are not our co-religionists as if they were heretics and irreligious men, then we cannot give up such a religion without having some very strong reasons to do so. Self-interest, position, men, all must be forgotten when we desire to discover religious truth. I will briefly state how I have been led to search into the truth and to leave the Roman Catholic Church. But I do not intend to insult the Roman Catholics, nor to hurt their feelings. Hatred and revengefulness do not enter into my feelings. If I can no longer believe as they do, I will always remember that we must love each other. I will tell only of my Christian experience.

The intellect and the heart are not satisfied with Romanism. The freedom of thought and the liberty of conscience are condemned as the most pernicious errors which exist. The Pope Gregory XVI. for instance, in the year 1832, called the liberty of conscience a silly maxim, a delirium, and he called the liberty of the press a monstrous liberty that we cannot hate and curse enough. Every Catholic owes the Pope, who has been declared infallible fourteen years ago, a complete submission, an implicit obedience, even if the Pope was teaching that evil must be done instead of right. Very often the Catholics accept dogmas without believing in them. They keep silent, they do not dare to express their opinions, but their intellect is not satisfied.

In a like manner Romanism does not satisfy the heart. It neither gives peace to the conscience nor does it soothe the sorrows of the aching heart. Then the influence of Rome produces very pitiful results by driving many Roman Catholics into indifference and infidelity.

I was pretty young when I began to know Romanism as it is. Some readings on its nature and its influence as well as my own experience had shown me what it was. I became irreligious and almost an atheist. I will not narrate all that I suffered when I saw the bulwark of my religious convictions falling to the ground. I had an imperfect knowledge of the Bible. I read it only as a literary and historical work. I remember those gloomy days of the past with a very deep feeling of regret because of my errors, and I pray sincerely God to forgive me.

While I was so tormented by the anguish of doubt and by infidelity, I read in a Catholic newspaper of Quebec an article written against the Rev. Mr. Cote, saying that this apostate, as he was called, intended to establish a French Protestant newspaper in Lowell. I never had heard of Mr. Cote, and I had the greatest horror for the Protestants. From the course of history which I was studying then in the seminary, I had