

Religious Intelligence.

METHODIST AFFILIATION.

The recent meeting of the joint Commission on Confederation of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at Baltimore, says *The Outlook*, marked a long step in the direction of the closer affiliation of these bodies. It was decided to recommend the preparation of a common hymn-book, catechism, and order of public worship for both Churches; that measures be taken as soon as possible for the joint administration of the publishing interests in China and Japan; and that in foreign mission fields where both Churches are labouring co-operative administration is desirable as a means of lessening the expenditure of funds and preventing duplication and overlapping.

As the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, met in Dallas, Texas, on May 7th, and the report of the Commission came before it for consideration, it will devolve upon that body to say what the next step in the direction of federation with the Methodist Episcopal Church shall be. In view of the fact, however, that the relations of the two Churches have never been more cordial, and that a sincere desire for closer affiliation is growing in both bodies, it is altogether likely that the action of the Commission will be ratified, and that a brighter and better era will soon dawn for American Methodism.

THE MEASURE OF OUR LAVISHNESS.

Appleton's Annual Encyclopedia, 1902, calculates that the amount of money given to religious, educational, and philanthropic institutions in the United States during the past year, in gifts of \$5,000 or more, amounted to \$85,000,000. Dr. Funk makes it \$107,000,000. In 1901, it was \$124,000,000. The enterprise of a Chicago Journal which has kept a similar record is responsible for another computation which makes the total \$77,397,167 in gifts of \$10,000 or more. In both estimates no account is made of the ordinary gifts to churches or schools, or to the Methodist jubilee fund of \$21,000,000, the collection of which has taken three years, although just completed. The distribution of

the funds is significant: to charities, \$36,519,894; to educational institutions, \$28,150,803; to libraries, \$4,970,800; to churches, \$4,869,700; to art galleries, museums, etc., \$2,886,000. Charity has one \$4,000,000 gift, education several million and half-million gifts, but with the exception of Princeton Theological Seminary's bequest of \$1,500,000, on its formal conventional side, religion does not now seem to have been remembered in any lavish way.—*Congregationalist and Christian World*.

NET GAINS OF THE CHURCHES.

The net gains of all denominations in the United States in 1902 were 720 ministers, 1,261 churches, and 403,743 communicants. These are much smaller than those reported for 1901, particularly of communicants. The increase of communicants in 1901 was 924,675, or considerably more than twice as great as that for 1902. The difference is not due to a decrease of prosperity in the Churches the past year, but to the abnormal increase credited to the Roman Catholic Church in 1901. Leaving the Roman Catholic Church out of the count, the increase for 1902 is wholesome and encouraging. The leading Protestant denominations all had a prosperous year. The Methodist Episcopal Church, which has passed the 3,000,000 line, had a net increase in the United States of 35,384 communicants, and in all the world of about 50,000. All Methodist bodies added over 93,000 to their membership. The Presbyterian Church (Northern) had a notable gain of over 24,000, and all Presbyterian bodies of about 30,000. All branches of Lutherans advanced 49,320, if the returns are not at fault; the Disciples of Christ, 27,836; the Protestant Episcopal Church, 16,355; the Congregational denomination, over 13,000; the two branches of the United Brethren, over 10,000; the Baptists, more than 48,600. The large decreases which appear in connection with the Christians (12,071), the Communistic Societies (926), and the German Evangelical Protestant (16,500) are not the losses of one year, but are due to more correct figures in the first-named instance, and to a revision covering a period of years in the