

CHURCH NEWS.

GENERAL.

BOUSAADA Presbyterian church has, according to a telegram from Algiers, been destroyed by a shock of earthquake.

THE Free Church Sustentation Fund shows an increase of \$1,000 over the corresponding period of seven months last year.

THE Free Church of Scotland numbers 1035 separate congregations, with a membership of 324,000, and 221,502 teachers and scholars in Sabbath Schools.

THE United Presbyterian Church of Scotland has 557 congregations, a membership of 179,891, and 103,578 teachers and scholars in Sabbath Schools.

IN Ireland, Presbyterianism embraces nearly one-half of the Protestant population. The orthodox Presbyterian Church has 533 congregations and 101,452 communicants.

THE remarkable and gratifying statement is made that the converts this year in Japan will more than equal the total number made during the first twenty years of missionary work in that empire.

NUMBERS of Jews in London, though unapologetic, are believers in Christ. Though afraid openly to confess Him, it is not from fear of being put out of the synagogue, or called apostates, but mostly from fear of losing employment.

THE sale of Bibles, religious books and magazines through the colporteurs of Mr. Spurgeon's church amounted during the past year to nearly \$45,000. Seventy-eight men were employed in the work, and 1,500 towns and villages were visited.

THE sixty-two Sunday Schools connected with the New York Presbytery, increased their membership by 5,049 during the last year, the aggregate number being now 21,050. The largest school is that of North Church, which numbers about 800.

THERE are now seven Protestant churches in Rome and it is reported that the Pope is both anxious and indignant at the fact. But that is very foolish in the holy father, for those seven churches are there to stay, and, in addition, there are many more to follow.

THE American churches which call themselves evangelical claim 11,318,257 communicants. In a year they have contributed \$3,330,931 for foreign missions. The number of missionaries in the field is 2,393; and these are assisted by over 10,000 native workers, representing nearly 370,000 converts.

THE Czar has recently issued a ukase abolishing the right of the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic clergy in nine western provinces of Russia to collect a tithe of grain, which has been levied there from time immemorial. In some places in those provinces the tithe was paid not in grain, but in a money equivalent.

GROWING out of the Woodrow controversy is a minor controversy between the editor of the Christian Observer and three pastors in Memphis, Tenn. The Presbytery of Louisville is called upon to investigate charges, chiefly of untruthfulness, made by Dr. Boggs and others against Rev. F. H. and T. E. Converse.

WHY is not the argument from prophecy used more in these days of scepticism? How many weak disciples, who are tossed too and fro on every wind of doctrine by the sleight and cunning craftiness of men, know that there are in the Old Testament more than 600 prophecies; that 250 of them refer to Christ; and all met in Him and Him alone, that not one of all the 600 has ever been contradicted by subsequent events, and some are even now in process of fulfilment before our eyes, as in the history of the Jews?

IT is said that wherever you go you find a Scotchman there before you. The same will soon be true of the Chinaman. Recent mission news from the Sandwich Islands gives 20,000 as the estimate of their numbers there. Organized Christian work was begun among them only four years ago. Between four and five hundred have professed Christianity. A movement is on foot to educate a native ministry. The Chinese Y. M. C. A. in Honolulu renders efficient help to the Church. Recently a member of one of the most influential and wealthy Chinese firms in the city was baptized, and his two children. On the whole the Chinese Christians compare favourably with the Christians of other nationalities residing on the Islands.

AT the end of 1885 the Salvation Army sent out a statement of the year's progress, showing that the army had increased during 1885 from 910 corps with 2,164 officers to 1,322 corps with 3,076 officers, showing an increase of 412 corps and 912 officers. The increase of officers is really larger, since this year the employees at the different business centres have been excluded from the list. The Army now claims to preach the gospel in thirteen different languages or groups of languages. The plans of work for the present year include the extension of the work in every sphere, especially in that of the Salvation Army, which is to be organized into naval brigades as the army is organized into corps.

ON 14th December Lord Balfour of Burleigh, in presence of a large concourse of spectators, laid the memorial stone of a handsome new hall, which is

being built to accommodate the Sabbath School and other work connected with the parish and congregation of North Leith. The hall will accommodate 920 adults, or upwards of 80 classes of 8 children each, and there will be besides a large infant class-room with gallery, three class-rooms, which upon occasion can be thrown into one room, and will accommodate 200 adults. The whole work will cost £3,300, and the hall will be called the Smith Memorial Hall, in remembrance of the late Dr. William Smith, Convener of the Endowment Scheme and minister of North Leith.

IT is cabled that the Spanish bishops after a long and secret consultation, have issued a letter, which proclaims "what in Spain is a novel doctrine. Henceforth politics and religion must not be confounded in Spain. The plith of the document will be in clauses which state that, 'provided that the faith and Catholic principles be respected, all forms of government are admissible,' and that, 'no newspaper or publication in Spain shall in any way be considered an organ of the Vatican as to any form of government that may be adopted.' The bishops denounce all who may oppose this doctrine as bad Catholics, and plumply informed the ultramontane journalists that their ravings have just as much authority as their arguments, but no more." Is there progress here?

THE young man who succeeds Mises as King of Uganda, has sited the blood of three young converts of the Church Missionary Society. Like his predecessor, he is easily swayed. The captain of the royal bodyguard, Mugal, was the ringleader in the persecution which, fortunately, did not last long. It was he who directed the execution of the three Christian lads. Their arms were first cut off; then they were bound to a scaffolding, under which a fire was made, and they were slowly burned to death. "Mugal and his men mocked them, and bade them pray now if Isa Masaya (Jesus Christ) would rescue them from his hands. The dear lads clung to their faith and in the fire they sang 'Daily, Daily Sing His Praises.' At last accounts the mission was in favour with the King.—The Independent.

A LARGE number of the members of the Evangelical Alliance of the United States, and of prominent clergymen, were present recently at the meeting in Association Hall, in New York, in memory of the late Dr. S. Irenzeus Prime. Mr. William E. Dodge presided, and the Rev. Dr. A. C. Wedekind led in the opening prayer. The hymn written by the late Dr. Prime, and entitled, "The City of the Lord I See," was sung, and Dr. Shafl followed with a memorial paper on the minister's life and works. The Rev. Richard S. Storrs spoke at length upon the character of the man whom all had come to honour. He eulogized him as a man of great depth of feelings and as an accurate judge of human character. "He was a man of great force of mind and will, and would have been eminently successful had he confined himself to pastoral labours." The Rev. Drs. Bright and Buckley also addressed the assemblage.

"THE Present Temper and Spirit of the Churches in regard to Foreign Missionary Work," was the subject of a paper read by the Rev. H. Arnold Thomas, M.A., of Bristol, at the last meeting of the Congregational Union, and since published. In reply to the plea that the money spent on missions is wasted at home, he points out how little is being done, in comparison, for the millions in foreign lands. For example, "there are 363 duly appointed ministers for Bristol, to say nothing of the army of laymen; that is tantamount to saying that about as much is being done for Bristol as for the whole of China, with its population of 300,000,000 at least." Again, it has been stated that £200,000 is raised annually by one single religious body for the instruction of the people in the county of Suffolk, which contains about 380,000 inhabitants, but "this is just twice as much as the London Missionary Society spends on the 800,000,000 of the heathen." And yet there are people who are ready to speak of missions as "a failure."

BISHOP WILLIAM TAYLOR, who recently led a party of nearly fifty Americans into Africa as missionaries, has returned to Europe, and at last accounts he was in Lisbon, and had an audience with the King of Portugal with reference to the slave-trade in Angola and the Portuguese treatment of the natives. It is the testimony of the explorer Cameron that the Portuguese in Angola are accomplices of slave traders and kidnapers who sell natives of the coast regions into Central African bondage. Mr. Monteiro said also, a few years ago that the wretched pay of the Portuguese officers in Angola compelled them to prey upon the defenceless natives, and that they were depopulating the country and stifling any attempt at industrial development on the part of the blacks. Cameron adds, that if Angola were well governed it might rival the most prosperous of the British colonies. If Bishop Taylor is able to incite the Portuguese to a more vigorous, wise and humane policy in Angola, he will be hailed as a great benefactor in a large and interesting district of Africa. The bishop's missionaries now occupy six stations, stretching for 304 miles along the direct route from Loango, on the coast, toward the centre of the continent. Fresh reinforcements will extend the work still further inland, will before long be sent from this country, and Bishop Taylor expects to rejoin his pioneer band early next year.—Christian at Work.

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