

CHURCH GROWTH.

RELIGIOUS STATISTICS FOR THE UNITED STATES.

Complaints frequently appear in both secular and religious newspapers concerning the decay of interest in religious affairs among the people of the United States, but they are not justified by the statistics, which show that the churches are growing in wealth and membership quite as rapidly as the clubs or schools or other social and educational institutions, and several of the religious denominations have more than kept pace with the increase of population. The returns of the census will undoubtedly confirm that conclusion. So far as compiled they show a remarkable growth in some of the religious denominations and a normal increase in membership and the houses of worship in nearly all of them. The New York *Independent* recently compiled statistics for the year 1899, which show an increase of more than 33 per cent. in the membership of all the religious denominations, which is more rapid than the increase of the population of the country since 1890.

The following is a comparison of the *Independent's* figures, with the census returns of 1890:

	Census of 1890.	N. Y. Independent, 1899.	Inc. p. ct.
Members,	20,612,806	27,710,004	34
Ministers,	111,036	153,901	38
Churches,	142,521	187,803	32

According to the estimates of the bureau of statistics of the Treasury department the increase of population from 1890 to 1899 was 21.38 per cent.

The following is a comparison of the membership of the religious denominations having more than 500,000 members in 1890 and in 1899:

	1890.	1899.	Inc. p. c.
Roman Catholics,	6,257,871	8,446,301	35
Methodists,	4,589,284	5,809,516	26
Baptists,	3,712,468	4,443,628	19
Lutherans,	1,231,072	1,575,778	28
Presbyterians,	1,278,332	1,560,847	22
Disciples of Christ,	641,051	1,118,396	74
Episcopalians,	540,509	709,325	31
Congregationalists,	512,771	628,234	22

Interesting comparisons may be drawn from the above figures. There will be much surprise at the enormous gains among the Disciples of Christ, who are found throughout the Central States. Missouri has the greatest number, Indiana second and Kentucky third. The church is also very strong in Illinois, Ohio and Tennessee.

The largest gains by any religious denomination during the nine years covered by the returns were made by the Christian Scientists, who, in 1890, by the census returns, had only 8,724 members, but are credited with 80,000 in 1899. The latter-day saints, or non-polygamist Mormons, show the next largest growth, having increased in membership from 166,125 to 433,620. The Disciples of Christ are third in the order of growth, and the Roman Catholics fourth. The Unitarians show no gain. The Universalists and Spiritualists show a falling off both in membership and the number of churches sustained.

The following table shows the number of ministers in 1890 and 1899:

	1890.	1899.	Inc. p. c.
Methodists,	30,000	36,424	21
Baptists,	25,646	33,088	29
Presbyterians,	10,448	12,073	15
Roman Catholics,	9,196	11,144	21
Lutherans,	4,591	6,685	45
Congregationalists,	5,058	5,639	11
Disciples of Christ,	3,373	6,339	88
Episcopalians,	4,324	4,981	17

The following is a comparison of the number of houses of worship:

	1890.	1899.	Inc. p. c.
Methodists,	46,138	53,023	14
Baptists,	37,671	40,721	14
Presbyterians,	12,469	14,831	19
Roman Catholics,	8,816	11,594	31
Lutherans,	6,710	10,991	64
Disciples of Christ,	5,384	10,298	93
Episcopalians,	5,103	6,623	29
Congregationalists,	4,736	5,620	18

It will be noticed that the Roman Catholics have the largest parishes and the Baptists the smallest. The Methodists have four times the number of churches and three times the number of ministers, and the Baptists nearly five times the number of churches and three times the number of ministers the Catholics report, although they have little more than half as many communicants.

A calculation shows that the average membership of the Baptist churches is 90, of the Methodists 110, and of the Catholics 767. The Baptists have one minister to every 135 communicants, the Methodists one to every 161 and the Catholics one to every 768.—*W. E. Curtis in Chicago Record.*

Home Missions.

Address all communications and remittances to L. A Miles, Sec'y.-Treasurer, 50 Queen Street, St. John, N. B.]

Although your Board has done no special work during the past month, it is pleased to report healthy progress in the finances. We trust the brethren may continue to send on remittances in payment of pledges made at annual, and not infer from the present report that it will not be needed because no special work is being done at present. It has not been deemed advisable by the Board to begin any definite work before the holiday season.

In January a meeting will be held at Tiverton under the auspices of the Board, and from that time onward through the year we hope to have a continued run of meetings. It is intended that some work shall be done at all points where any nucleus of a church exists.

Our proposition to the American Home Mission Board in regard to the meeting at Sydney is to come before that body this month, and we trust to have something definite to report concerning it in our next.

New ideas and plans for raising money have been submitted to the Board and are receiving thoughtful consideration. If any are deemed feasible your readers will hear of them about the beginning of the next century.

In this connection your Board wish to make an earnest appeal to all, and especially to their agents, that from now until the end of the year they make a vigorous canvass for new subscribers to THE CHRISTIAN. Every young and old Christian should take it. In fact everybody should take it, and nearly every subscriber ought to pay for it promptly, but they don't. Remember that every dollar paid for this paper, over the actual, naked expenses goes into the Home Mission Fund. It is not often you get the chance to buy what you need and give to a good cause with the same dollar. We would say to our agents, "Solicit all who love the paper, all who love the cause and all who love yourselves."

The Keswick Building Fund is growing slowly. There are a number of churches that we have not heard from yet, but they are all going to give something for this fund and we are confident it will show up much better next month.

Our financial report follows and looks "good."

Receipts.

Balance of cash from last report,	....	\$54 10
Young People's Band, Coburg Street.	....	4 05
Mrs. Sheppard, Halifax,	....	20 00
E. C. Bowers, Westport,	....	25 00
Church at Letete, N. B.,	....	5 00
John McNabb, River John,	....	50
Wm. Murray, Letete,	....	1 00
Wesley Outhouse, Tiverton	....	1 00
Coburg Street Sunday-school,	....	4 78
Mrs. E. C. Ford, pledge at annual,	....	2 00
E. C. Ford, part pledge at annual,	....	2 50
Church at Cornwallis,	....	2 50
		\$122 43

Expenditure.

Stationery, 25 cts, Commissions, 12cts,	\$0 37
Insurance on Tent,	3 75
E. C. Ford, November,	12 50
W. H. Allen,	12 50
J. C. B. Appel,	12 50
	41 62

Balance on hand, .. \$80 81

L. A. MILES, Sec.-Treas.

Maritime C. W. B. M.

Expect great things from God.
Attempt great things for God.

"The love of Christ constraineth us."

C. W. B. M. DAY.

The November meeting is the time to prepare for C. W. B. M. Day. We want advancement all along the line, and must plan for it. "Missionary Education for the World's Evangelization," is our rallying cry. Let us begin our new missionary year with an observance of our special day that will give the church a joyful glimpse of the work we love. Prepare now for it.—*Missionary Tidings.*

DECEMBER, 1900, PROGRAM—OPEN MEETING.
C. W. B. M. DAY.

VOICES FROM OUR MISSION FIELDS.

Introductory exercises given in regular program.

- A voice from India.
- A voice from Jamaica.
- A voice from China.
- A voice from Japan.
- A voice from the home land.
- Appeal and offering for the work.
- Call for new members and *Tidings* subscribers.
- Closing song—"To us a Child of Hope is Born."
- Benediction.

Permit no voice to speak longer than eight or ten minutes. Glean the very best, most interesting items from the annual report of the Corresponding Secretary given in the November *Tidings* and from other sources. Choose those who can make themselves heard in the church, and who will give a bright report of the work. Serve an attractive menu with attractive dishes, and people will be attracted. God expects our best.

AUXILIARY PROGRAMME FOR DECEMBER.

GOD'S CHRISTMAS GIFT TO THE WORLD.

Opening Song—"Praise the Lord. Ye Heavens Adore Him."

Invocation.

All repeat—

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end; upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this."

Song—"Hark, the Herald Angels Sing,"

Season of prayer and thanksgiving.

"The Beauty and Power of the Gift." Mrs. M. L. Cassell.

"Why Christmas Does Not Brighten All the World." Mrs. G. L. Wharton.

Business period.

Roll-call.

Reports of Committees.

Report of open meeting.

New members.

Closing prayer season.