

## RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

## ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN BOARD.

The thirty-first Anniversary of this venerable institution was held at the Richmond-street Church, in Providence, commencing on the 9th ult., and continued until Friday the 11th, with far more than usual interest and happy effect. There were present about forty corporate members, and one hundred and thirty honorary members. In the absence of the President of the Board, the Hon. Theo. Frelinghuysen took the chair. The meeting was opened with prayer by the Rev. President Day. The first document presented was the Treasurer's Report, which, after being referred, was subsequently declared to be correct. The receipts of the Board were stated to have been \$211,619.01, being \$2,378 less than the income of the preceding year. The expenditures, \$216,601.37; exceeding the receipts \$4,910.33: increasing the debt of the Board to \$21,083.42.

The Prudential Committee of the Board then commenced the reading of their Report, which embraced interesting points of information. The several parts were assigned to Committees, whose reports, and the remarks they elicited, constituted the greater part of the doings of the meeting.

The number, condition, and labours of the several Missions of the Board were presented. During the year, 6 missionaries and assistants have died; 21 have been dismissed for various causes; 27 new ones have been appointed; 19 sent out upon the field, viz. 2 to Turkey, 7 to Syria, 2 to the Nestorians, 1 to South Africa, 1 to the Sandwich Islands, 6 to the Indians.

There are now under the control of the Board, 25 missions: the Cyprus mission having been connected with that to Turkey. These missions embrace 80 stations, at which there are 131 ordained missionaries, 10 of whom are physicians; 10 other physicians; 14 teachers; 10 printers; 11 other male, and 186 female assistant missionaries; making in all, 365 missionary labourers from this country. To these must be added the 15 native preachers, and 107 other native helpers; making the whole number dependent upon the Board, 487—six more than ever before.

The number of printing establishments belonging to the Board is 15; of presses 32; of type founderies 5; of churches 55; of church members 17,234: making, in one or two instances, the largest churches in Christendom. Of those received into the church last year, 10,810. The number of seminaries for boys 8, containing 412 boarding scholars; of preparatory boarding schools for boys 6, containing 100 pupils; of female boarding schools 10, containing 295 pupils: making the whole number of boarding schools 24; and of boarding scholars, of both sexes, 807; of free schools 415: affording instruction gratuitously to more than 20,000 children. The number of books and tracts printed during the year, is about 685,000 copies, and 45 million of pages: making the whole of the issues since the commencement of missionary operations, about 250 million of pages.

The missions were stated to be generally in prosperous condition, some of them, as we know, extraordinarily so. The difficulties of the several stations were given, especially the trials of the Sandwich Island mission, resulting from the visit of the *L'Artemise*, excited great sympathy. A paper was presented by the Prudential Committee relating to it, giving the particulars of it, and a forcible statement of the wrongs inflicted upon the missionaries. This paper was referred to a Committee, of which Chancellor Walworth, of New York, was made the chairman: who subsequently made a report, which, emanating from such high judicial authority, was listened to with great interest. As there is no necessity of adhering to strict chronological order in our report, its purport may as well be given here.

The report stated, that, in order clearly to prove the injustice of the whole procedure of the frigate, it was not necessary to take into account the nature of the government of the islands, nor, indeed, its relation to the French. The manifesto of Captain Laplace was manifestly injurious and wrong, whatever the claims of the French. To force a religion upon a people who manifest reluctance to its reception, could be justified by no circumstances. It was clearly against the first principles of international law. Nothing but the express con-

sent of a people could justify such introduction. The right to be tolerant or intolerant towards any religion, is one which inheres in every government; and, however the principles of that government may be censurable, there is no right in any other nation to demand their abrogation. Leave to introduce teachers or missionaries hostile to the government, had never been given to the French; and their thrusting them upon an unwilling people, cannot be regarded in any other light than that of flagrant outrage. Especially, the animadversion upon the American missionaries is to be regarded as false and insulting. The charge made in the manifesto, of their participation in the persecution of Catholic priests several years ago, appears, from every evidence, wholly untrue. Such a persecution would have been opposed to their own views of right, and to every principle of the religion they are striving to propagate. If they had engaged in any acts of intolerance, the Board and the Christian world would not be slow to disapprove it. That they should have regarded the Catholic priests with suspicion and alarm, certainly was to be expected. They were labouring hard to elevate a benighted people. The hope was kindled that it should soon take its station in the rank of evangelized nations. They could look upon the Catholics only as the enemies of their enterprise, whose influence would be to induce a degradation quite as hopeless as their original barbarism. But even in these circumstances of provocation, facts are abundant to shew, that no effort was made on the part of the missionaries to expel them from the islands. It was their duty, indeed, to preach the gospel, and in preaching that, they must have impressed upon the government and people, the conviction of the dangerous character of Catholicism. But beyond that they did not go. They were expressly exculpated from all participation in the expulsion of the Catholic missionaries by the king himself. So far from it, one of them urged upon the king and chiefs the duty of toleration, and of granting the leave of residence to persons of every religion. All that can be said is that the missionaries did not interpose their influence to prevent the expulsion; and that no right or claim could possibly demand of them. No blame can possibly attach to them. They acted with great forbearance, and with the highest sense of justice and honour. And every evidence exists, that no means have ever been resorted to by them, underly to influence either the government or the people. The visit of the war-vessel, and the conduct of the French captain, are, therefore, injurious and disgraceful. It does not fall within the scope of the interests and duties of the Board to notice other parts of this strange procedure. It belongs to the civilized world to pass judgment upon the character of the act of dictating at the canon's mouth, to a helpless people, offensive terms of peace; and forcing, against their will, the introduction of intoxicating liquors. We may trace to the wise and manly prohibition on the part of the government of the use of these, most of the opposition manifested to the missionaries.

The Committee concluded the Report, of which the above is but a meagre sketch, by a resolution expressive of the opinion of the Board, that there lies no just ground of complaint against its missionaries.

The Report expressed also a kindly sympathy with the trials and difficulties of the missionaries; and the confident expectation, that, at the last day, it would appear that a mighty work had been done through their instrumentality.

The Report further stated, that there had been a powerful and extensive revival of religion among the natives; and that, during the years 1838 and 1839, there had been, after due probation and acquaintance, not fewer than 51,698 admissions into the churches in the Sandwich Islands.

**BEYROOT.**—A communication has been received from Mr. Thompson, twenty-five days after the commencement of the rebellion. It is the opinion of the Rev. Eli Smith, that the results of the insurrection would be favourable to the gospel. It appears that the storm is already over, and that the Syrians have submitted to the Pasha. Mehemet Ali will, therefore, be relieved from this perplexity, and can attend wholly to the negotiations made for him in Europe.—*New York Evangelist.*

## MISCELLANEOUS.

## IDUMEA.

(From "Incidents of Travel," by an American.)

I HAD NOW crossed the borders of Edom. Standing near the shore of the Elanitic branch of the Red sea, the doomed and accursed land lay stretched out before me, the theatre of awful visitations and their more awful fulfillment; given to Esau as being of the fatness of the earth, but now a barren waste, a picture of death, an eternal monument of the wrath of an offended God, and a fearful witness to the truth of the words spoken by his prophets:—"For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment." "From generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever. But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it; and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion and the stones of emptiness. They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing. And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be a habitation of dragons, and a court for owls. The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow: the screech-owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate. Seek ye out the book of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate; for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them. And he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line: they shall possess it for ever; from generation to generation shall they dwell therein."—Isaiah xxxiv.

I read in the sacred book prophecy upon prophecy, and curse upon curse, against the very land on which I stood. I was about to journey through this land, and to see with my own eyes whether the Almighty had stayed his uplifted arm, or whether his sword had indeed "come down upon Idumea, and the people of his curse, to judgment." I have before referred to Keith on the Prophecies, where, in illustrating the fulfilment of the prophecies against Idumea, "none shall pass through it for ever and ever," after referring to the singular fact, that the great caravan routes existing in the days of David and Solomon, and under the Roman empire, are now completely broken up, and that the great hadji routes from Mecca to Damascus and Cairo, lie along the borders of Idumea, barely touching and not passing through it, he proves, by abundant references, that to this day no traveller has ever passed through the land.

The Bedouins, who roam over the land of Idumea, have been described by travellers as the worst of their race. "The Arabs about Akaba," says Pococke, "are a very bad people, and notorious robbers, and are at war with all others." Mr. Joliffe alludes to it as one of the wildest and most dangerous divisions of Arabia; and Burckhardt says, "that for the first time he had ever felt fear during his travels in the desert, and his route was the most dangerous he had ever travelled," that he had "nothing with him that could attract the notice, or excite the cupidity of the Bedouins," and was "even stripped of some rags that covered his wounded ankles." Messrs. Leigh and Banks, and Captains Irby and Mangles, were told that the Arabs of Wady Moussa, the tribe that formed my escort, "were a most savage and treacherous race, and that they would use their Frank's blood for a medicine;" and they learned on the spot, that "upward of thirty pilgrims from Barbary had been murdered at Petra, the preceding year, by the men of Wady Moussa;" and they speak of the opposition and obstruction from the Bedouins as resembling the case of the Israelites under Moses, when Edom refused to give them passage through his country. None of these had passed through it; and, unless the two Englishmen and the Italian before referred to succeeded in their attempt, when I pitched my tent on the borders of Edom, no traveller had done so. The ignorance and mystery that hung over it added to the interest with which I looked to the