

## The Religious World

We have received from Professor Lewis B. Paton a letter in reply to the recent letter of Dr. F. F. Ellinwood published in the New York "Evangelist" respecting the Rev. Mr. McGilvary, whose retirement from the Presbyterian mission in China because he holds to the opinion that Moses did not write the Pentateuch we have already reported to our readers. In Dr. Ellinwood's letter he intimates that there are some other heresies in the case; but this intimation is so wholly vague that we did not think it worth while even to refer to it. Concerning this intimation, reported by Dr. Ellinwood as coming from a missionary in the same field with Mr. McGilvary, Professor Paton writes as follows:

In his letter Dr. Ellinwood publishes an insinuation in regard to Mr. McGilvary's orthodoxy which is likely to prove most damaging to his reputation. I should have been disposed to let this pass unnoticed if I had not received a number of communications from the family and the friends of Mr. McGilvary, full of indignant protest against the blot which had been put upon his good name, and calling upon me for his sake to make some reply. Mr. McGilvary is on the opposite side of the globe and cannot answer for himself, and it is simple justice to him that he should be cleared of a charge which, if allowed to circulate unchallenged, may ruin all his future usefulness. The publication of Mr. Collins's insinuation in regard to Mr. McGilvary's doctrinal position is unworthy of the Secretaries. "He has found Mr. McGilvary's theological views so much more widely at variance with the doctrines of the Presbyterian Church than he had supposed (and on graver questions than that of inerrancy)." This statement opens the way for the wildest speculation in regard to Mr. McGilvary's heresies, and yet the Secretaries know that Mr. McGilvary laid bare his inmost feeling in his letter of resignation to the Board. In that resignation he painted his own case in the blackest colors, and held back nothing which might be counted as a charge against him or a reason why the Board should accept his resignation. If he has erred in any respect in this whole matter, it has been on the side of over-sensitiveness. In his anxiety to tell everything which might be interpreted unfavorably to himself, he has given just such a one-side picture as an enemy might draw. As one of the Secretaries wrote me shortly after the resignation was received, "I wish very much, instead of hastening at once to tender his resignation, and in such decided, although thoroughly Christian, terms as greatly to embarrass the Board, he had written some of us on the subject in advance." Mr. McGilvary's letter of resignation tells all that is to be told about his theological position, and tells it in the strongest possible way. . . . If Mr. Collins has specified what these "graver questions" are, then let us hear what he says and see whether it is true or not. Mr. McGilvary assures me that he has not changed his views since he was ordained by the Presbytery of New Brunswick, and that he has laid bare his heart to the Board. If Mr. Collins has not specified, then let the Secretaries explain what they mean by publishing insinuations of this sort which are likely to ruin Mr. McGilvary's reputation; and let them tell us how they make this square with the assertion that "the action of the Board was based on other than theological grounds."

We have only to add that, in forming an opinion on this case, the public will disregard, and ought to disregard, such vague and really meaningless charges as that involved in the suspicions of Mr. Collins, and given to the public through Dr. Ellinwood without investigation, and will consider the simple question whether the opinion that the Pentateuch was not written by Moses—an opinion entertained by a majority, probably an overwhelming majority, of Hebrew scholars—ought to disqualify a Christian minister, otherwise proved competent for his work, from preaching the Gospel of Christ to the Chinese.

**The Churches and the Prevailing Destitution** It ought to be long before anything more is heard concerning the "other-worldliness" of our Christian churches.

In all the cities of the Union in which the destitution is great the Christian churches are leading in its relief. Both in Chicago and New York, and we believe also in San Francisco, the question has been seriously raised of opening the doors of the churches as lodging-houses, or at least recognizing the responsibility of the Church to provide lodgings for the poor. Two Christian ministers in San Francisco are leaders in the relief organization in that city. In Chicago the churches are at the front; in New York it is the same. We do not mean that in the various cities the great and rich churches are talking of opening their doors as lodging-houses for tramps, or that as yet they have made any great sacrifices for the poor; but why should the Presbyterian Church in New York be judged by Fifth Avenue rather than what it is doing on the East Side?—by the Fifth Avenue Church rather than the De Witt Memorial Chapel? The Rev. John B. Devins, of Hope Chapel, is a loyal and even conservative Presbyterian, and no man is working more heroically than he. But we do not care to try to distribute commendation

in such a time as this. The fact is that Christians, agnostics, and infidels alike recognize the common human bond and respond, albeit somewhat late, to the call of brotherhood. The Methodists of New York have organized for the relief of such as are directly connected with Methodist churches, and treasurers of a special fund have been appointed in various parts of the city. In order to do this work a central relief committee of seven, with power to add to its number, has been appointed, which committee is authorized to ascertain facts from pastors and missionaries, to issue an appeal for funds, to distribute relief, and to take measures for securing work for those who are out of employment. Thus the good work goes on in all parts of the country, and almost everywhere we observe that great care is being taken to relieve suffering without increasing pauperism.

The Rev. Dr. J. Balcom Shaw has written a valuable article in a recent number of the "Evangelist," in which he gives the facts concerning a recent census of a district in New York, bounded by Ninety-sixth Street on the south and One Hundred and Tenth Street on the north, Central Park on the east and Riverside Drive on the west. Various denominations united in gathering these statistics. The number of families visited were 4,516, divided as follows: Roman Catholics, 1,257; Episcopalians, 933; Presbyterians, 667; Lutherans, 395; Methodists, 292; Baptists, 272; Congregationalists, 30; Dutch Reformed, 40; mixed denominations, 62; Jews, 142; Infidel, 1; Socialist, 1; Greek, 1; Buddhist, 1; Christadelphian, 1; 187 would give no information, and 288 declared that they had no preference. The writer of the article emphasizes three facts—the large plurality of Roman Catholics; the small number of families with no church relations; and the still more significant fact that only one family was willing to call itself Infidel. We desire to emphasize again what we have already called attention to in the past, that our churches and ministers lose very much from not having an accurate knowledge of the field they are working. The churches in every community ought to unite in making a careful inductive study of the localities in which they are situated, as a condition of the most efficient Christian work. We are led to believe that comparatively few ministers have any systematic knowledge of the forces of evil which are opposed to them. And so we say again, study the field as a preliminary to doing the work.

Some one has gleaned the following interesting facts from the last Congregational Year-Book, which we are glad to insert here for the information of our readers:

The ten largest Congregational churches in the United States are:

Place.	Name.	Members.
Brooklyn, N. Y.,	Plymouth.....	1,816
Brooklyn, N. Y.,	Tompkins Avenue.....	1,763
Brooklyn, N. Y.,	Central.....	1,750
Chicago, Ill.,	First.....	1,303
Chicago, Ill.,	Union Park.....	1,271
Oberlin, O.,	First.....	1,245
Oakland, Cal.,	First.....	1,215
New York, N. Y.,	Tabernacle.....	1,148
Minneapolis,	Plymouth.....	1,073
Brooklyn, N. Y.,	Church of the Pilgrims.....	1,045
		<b>Additions.</b>
Seattle, Plymouth.....		205
Oakland, First.....		193
Chicago, First.....		185
Tacoma, First.....		161
Portland, Ore., First.....		147
San Francisco, Plymouth.....		122
Brooklyn Central.....		117
San Diego, First.....		114
Detroit, Plymouth.....		114
Springfield, Ill., First.....		97
San Francisco, First.....		92

In the list of additions it is interesting to note that four of the churches receiving the largest number of members are on the Pacific coast. We believe the fact is to be accounted for by the presence and labors of the Rev. B. Fay Mills, and the large ingathering is, in part, the fruit of evangelistic services held under his ministry. These figures are all from the large cities. When we go into the suburbs, we find the largest church to be the First in Cambridge (Mass.), the Rev. Alexander McKenzie, pastor, and the membership 746; the second, the church at Montclair (N. J.), membership 717; the third, Pilgrim Church at Cambridgeport (Mass.), membership 641; the fourth, the Central of Chelsea (Mass.), 614; the fifth, the church at Brookline (Mass.), 599. Of the churches mentioned in these lists Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, gives in benevolent contributions \$18,200; the

Central Brooklyn, in round numbers, \$17,000; the Church of the Pilgrims, \$20,000; Tompkins Avenue, \$16,000. Of the suburban churches named, the church at Brookline gives about \$14,000; the First Church at Cambridge, \$8,500; the church at Montclair, \$17,300. Going westward, we find that the First Church in Chicago gives \$16,000, and the Union Park \$18,500. The Broadway Tabernacle, New York, leads the denomination with gifts to the amount of \$49,000, and the Old South, in Boston, is second on the list, giving about \$30,000. We add a few facts concerning pastors. Dr. Storrs has been settled longer than any other pastor in the churches named, having been installed in 1846. The next in length of term of service is Dr. McKenzie, of Cambridge, installed in 1867; then are Dr. L. P. Goodwin, of the First Church in Chicago, 1868; Dr. Bradford, of the church at Montclair, 1870; Dr. McLean, of Oakland, 1872; and Dr. Brand, of Oberlin, 1873. Dr. Abbott was installed in 1888; Dr. Behrends in 1883; Dr. Meredith in 1887. The pastors of the other churches named have been in their respective fields but a few years.

We have been interested in the account of a wedding which, before this, has taken place in the city of Spokane, the contracting parties being the Westminster Presbyterian Church and the First Congregational Church of that city. The Congregational people have a very fine building erected in more favorable times, but which, unfortunately, is burdened with debt, so that the people were nearly discouraged. In the midst of their difficulties propositions were made looking toward the union of the two churches. The suggestions were kindly received on both sides, with the following result: The name of the Congregational church is to be changed to the "Westminster Congregational;" the Presbyterians become Congregationalists, and the two churches unitedly assume the debt. The Council called to consider the situation heartily approved of the propositions. How much wiser this action was than it would have been for both churches to endeavor to continue separate existence where both are not needed! Denominational loyalty is responsible for many sins in this world. In more than one city, both East and West, the example set by those churches in Spokane might be followed with the happiest effect. Not only are churches separated by denominational fences, but there are divisions in the denominations themselves, caused by senseless prejudice, which might be easily eradicated, and whose continuance hinders the Christian cause far more than their work helps it.

We have heard an eminent pastor at the East who has spent many years at the West say that it is almost impossible for churches at the West to retain pastors who were called after they had passed their young manhood. After a few years the longing to get back to the associations of their earlier life is too strong to be resisted, and they naturally gravitate Eastward. Many of the strongest churches of various denominations in the interior and on the Pacific coast are vacant, presumptively because of the reason which has just been given. Two large churches—one in the Northwest and one in southern California—have just lost their pastors, one of them to accept a pastorate on the Atlantic seacoast. Few fields in our country are more attractive than Portland, Ore. It is a beautiful city of about one hundred thousand population, with unsurpassed natural surroundings, in the heart of a populous district, and one many of whose residents have come from the East. The churches in that city are strong and vigorous, several of them having noble edifices. Among them few if any have a better record than the First Congregational, which the Rev. T. E. Clapp, D.D., is just leaving for a pastorate in New Hampshire. Dr. Behrends recently said that if he were twenty-five years younger he would go to the northwest Pacific coast and spend his life there. The First Church in Portland has lost a pastor with a most honorable record, but it ought to experience little difficulty in securing his successor. The same mail which brings us the information of the resignation in Portland also brings the news of a similar one in San Diego, where the Rev. W. C. Merrill has done a most efficient and helpful work. He leaves, we believe, not to return to the East, but because of other considerations. But both

resignations illustrate a difficulty which the churches of the extreme West constantly experience. Among Congregationalists on the Pacific coast there is no very long pastorate, except that of the Rev. Dr. McLean, of the First Church at Oakland, who for more than twenty years has ministered to his present people. Another still more prominent illustration—and the prominence comes from its exceptional character—is found in the pastor of the First Unitarian Church in Portland, the Rev. T. L. Elliot, who, if we are not mistaken, has been in his present field fully a quarter of a century. Such pastorates are common at the East; they are uncommon at the far West, and yet we believe that they must become more frequent before the best work for the Master can be accomplished. The minister to whom we referred at the beginning of this paragraph says: "If the churches in the interior and on the Pacific coast wish to retain their ministers for a long time, let them call men under forty years of age." He may be right, and he may be wrong—we give his advice for what it is worth.



### Gleanings

—There will be a public meeting on Monday, January 15, in the parlors of the Madison Square Presbyterian Church to listen to an address by M. Greig, of Paris, an evangelist of the McAll Mission.

—On the occasion of the unveiling of a colored window in memory of Theodore Parker in his old church at Roxbury, Mass., last week, Mr. Frank B. Sanborn, his literary executor, read an interesting paper, made up largely of extracts from his diary.

—The Rev. M. B. Chapman, D.D., editor of the St. Louis "Christian Advocate," is one of the Directors of the Cross-Bearers' Missionary Reading Circle. Having made a tour of the world in order to study missionary life, he desires to see hundreds of American Christians making a study of the problem of missions in all lands. The C. M. R. C. plan of reading and study may be obtained from the Rev. Z. M. Williams, Gallatin, Mo.

—Dr. H. J. C. Harper, Primate of New Zealand, died at Wellington on January 20. Dr. Harper was born in 1807, and was educated at Queen's College, Oxford. He was for many years Chaplain to Eton College. In 1856 he was appointed first Bishop of Christchurch, New Zealand. This diocese was re-constituted in 1869, and made Metropolitan over the sees of Auckland, Wellington, Waiapu, Nelson, Dunedin, and Melanesia.

—The People's Church of St. Paul has, writes a correspondent, performed the remarkable feat of lifting within the past few weeks a debt of \$47,750; in addition the church has raised \$17,295 this year for current expenses. The church has received much financial aid outside of its own membership, but practically all of this \$47,000 came from within. All the societies of the church are out of debt. The church is doing a very successful work at its new parish house and in other outside work. By raising its debt, the society secured title to a piece of land at Bald Eagle Lake for charity work.

—A rare and curious paper which came into possession of the Presbyterian Board of Missions has been placed in the Lenox Library of New York. It is supposed to be the only copy extant of the Act of Parliament of 1649, in Cromwell's reign, incorporating and chartering the Society for Instituting the Propagation of the Gospel among the Indians of New England. The ancient document is printed in Old English lettering. It names sixteen persons who shall organize the Society, and it was evidently intended that the organization should be permanent, for rules are laid down for filling vacancies and for self-perpetuation.

—Secretary Judson Smith, of the American Board, writes us: "At the recent annual meeting of the Trustees of Euphrates College Funds, the resignation by Dr. Wheeler of the presidency of the College was received and accepted, and the Rev. James L. Barton, for eight years a missionary of the American Board at Harpoot, was elected as his successor. Mr. Barton was unanimously nominated to this office by his missionary brethren at Harpoot; and during all his residence at Harpoot he has been esteemed as a son by Dr. and Mrs. Wheeler, and has long been their choice for this post. Every assurance is thus given that the College will continue to be administered in the same careful way, and for the same great Christian and missionary purposes, as in the past; and the Trustees heartily commend Mr. Barton to the confidence and co-operation of all the friends of missions in this country, and especially to those who have become interested in the College through the efforts and personal influence of Dr. and Mrs. Wheeler."