

The Wesleyan.

129

Published under the direction of the General Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada.

\$2 PER ANNUM IN ADVANCE
Postage Prepaid.

R. F. HUESTIS, Publisher.
T. WATSON SMITH, Editor.

HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA, FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 1882.

VOL XXXIV.

No. 17

FROM THE PAPERS.

Under every missed opportunity to do good to others, there are items of loss to ourselves as well as beyond ourselves, which we may not estimate.—*N. Y. Evangelist.*

The *Daily Advocate* of the M. E. Church South says: "The General Conference will make an utterance on the liquor question that everybody can understand—except those who do not want to."

Here is a point from a letter in the *Buffalo Express*: "Christ did not teach science. He taught morality, equality, humility, purity, honesty, integrity, and if Protestant clergymen would confine themselves to such subjects, they would teach Christianity—and not, as now."

A little Moslem child accounted for her preference for the Christian religion by saying: "I like your Jesus because he loved little girls. Our Mohammed did not love little girls." With unerring instinct she had seized upon at least one of the great differences between the two religions.

A correspondent of the *Northwestern Advocate* writes, asking that pastors put up church directories in all hotel offices. He says: "The trade of America is largely shaped by travelling men and no class are exposed to such temptations. Many of them attend church: more of them would if invited and directed."

The year 1882 will be unique upon the calendar, beginning and ending with a Sunday, rich in the possession of fifty-three Lord's days—a Sabbatic year—priestly with a girdle of sacredness, an enclosure entered and passed out by golden gates of spiritual rest and opportunity.—*Christian Intelligencer.*

A writer in the *Christian Union* remembers to have heard Dr. Hodge say that the turning point in his spiritual history was a sentence uttered by Dr. Alexander while preaching, and apparently unconnected with the body of his discourse: "I believe that no prayer soul is ever lost."

The interest manifested in the qualification of the legitimizing and regulating office of the Evangelist, by General Conference authority, may be taken as evidence of a profound realization of the needs of the unawakened millions. There is a work in this land for a thousand men of God who shall go among the people in the spirit and power of Elijah.—*Nashville Adv.*

An esteemed reader wants to know what an Agnostic is. An Agnostic is a man who doesn't know whether there is a God or not; doesn't know whether he has a soul or not; doesn't know whether there is a future life or not; doesn't believe that any one else knows any more about these matters than he does, and thinks it a waste of time to try to find out.—*New York Sun.*

It is thought that we are to have a short session of the General Conference. Such presumption is possibly based on the fact that a few of the brethren that made the last session a long one will not be there. But then we have a heavy enforcement of new material to break in. This may consume a great deal of time. Who knows?—*Southern Christian Advocate.*

The editor of the *Catholic Telegraph* does not enjoy the fact that a number of Roman Catholics have been converted at the revival services conducted at the St. Paul Church, or, as he phrases it, "at the Methodist meeting-house." But the converts themselves enjoy the fact very greatly. Their new experience has given them great comfort and peace.—*Western Advocate.*

The *Indian Mirror*, a native newspaper, says: "Foreigners can hardly realize the extent to which the English language is spoken and written among the educated classes in India. When educated Hindus meet they talk English and when they write to each other they show a preference for English." And with the English language will go the religious influences which it bears with it.

From *The Occidental*: "It is a shame to do the world's work well, and then Christ's work shabbily." I know that if the world's work were done no better than the Church's, by some professed Christians, they would soon find themselves in the bankruptcy court: while if the Church's work were done by them with the same painstaking ingenuity and energy with which they manage their daily business, they would, indeed, be "rich in faith."

It is said that the number of women working in the various mills of England has tripled since 1850: that the position of women in English oilleries is degrading and terrible in the extreme; and that three as many women as men are employed in the factories of both Old and New England. If these facts are true, there is some work for the "Woman's

Rights' movement to accomplish before it demands the universal admission of women to the polls.

"Once upon a time," says the *St. Louis Church News*, "we heard a brother read from a paper a set of resolutions complimentary of a certain preacher, and he finished with the remark, 'I wonder what he has been doing that made that necessary.' Whenever we meet a man with a crutch, we suppose he is lame; and when we see a prop set against a gate post, we suppose the post is rotten. No minister should allow himself to be endorsed too much."—*Methodist Recorder.*

The *Christian at Work* urges with great earnestness that "the one commanding need of our social, political and individual life to day is a radical regeneration of the popular notion of what constitutes a family, and of the obligations of parents personally, persistently and prayerfully to guide their children's religious instincts, and to inspire them with aspirations after an ideal and beautiful Christian manhood. The day school is good as far as it goes, the Sunday school is better, but family religion is best of all."

We met a Methodist class leader the other day who told us that he had been thus accosted by the pastor of the parish:—"Why don't you come to church?" The man replied that he had been converted among the Methodists, and belonged to that denomination of Christians. "But," said the minister (perhaps I ought to say Priest), "You cannot get abolition out of the Church." "God Almighty can abolish me behind a whin bush," was the response. The Rector went on his way—we cannot say rejoicing.—*Irish Evangelist.*

Mr. P. J. Smyth, when questioned some days ago as to his recent Parliamentary conduct by some of his Tipperary constituents, wrote explaining his vote on the *clothing*, remarking that it existed in the old Irish Parliament, and existed now in every free country in the world. He concluded by asking his correspondent to "weep for a land reduced to a condition of savagery." "See these things," he adds, "and reserve your curses for that League of hell that has brought all this ruin, all this shame and dishonour upon our nation."—*London Watchman.*

"Dr. Poor, Secretary of the American Board of Education, has been in Chicago stirring up the Presbyterians. He made some startling announcements concerning the decrease of Presbyterian students, backed by numerous facts. The Methodists and Baptists have seven theological seminaries in the West and the Congregationalists six; while the Presbyterians have only two, and those weakly supported and poorly attended. According to this, the Congregational and Methodist seminaries must soon help to supply our Presbyterian pulpits."—*Evangelist.*

The Baltimore Methodist pleads for a more general attendance of the children at our Church-services. It well says: "The Churches need the presence of the children, and are needed by them that they may be timely and thoroughly prepared to meet the highest obligations of created intelligences, and accomplish the sublimest destiny of redeemed souls. Their happy faces and cheerful voices will lighten and brighten the hearts of all worshippers. They will be an inspiration to every preacher whose head and heart are sound. Our homes will be blessed by having them regularly in the house of God."

The Baptist ministers of Boston have adopted a memorial to the Governor of Massachusetts, setting forth that the annual fast day is no longer kept as a time of penitence, but is made a day of general amusement; and they urge that fast days should only be proclaimed on occasions of great solemnity. We think our brethren have taken the right position on this matter. The annual proclamation of a fast day on which nobody fasts, and people enter upon more than usual recreation, tends to destroy altogether popular belief in the duty and utility of fasting. We join our Baptist brethren in favoring the abolition of the formal annual fast day.—*N. Y. Advocate.*

The New York Methodist appeals to pastors to give the laymen a chance: "We have collected evidence showing that many pastors keep their mouths open and the lay mouths shut, from two-thirds to four-fifths of the time of every service. And the invariable report is that in all these cases the work drags and dies without much result. In ninety-nine cases in a hundred a Methodist revival is the fruit of the active co-operation of the members with the pastor, and in such cases the pastor's tongue is silent two-thirds of the time. Some of our younger ministers seem not to know the value of lay work; and old ones are unconscious of the lapse of time while they are making a few remarks."

FUTURE RETRIBUTION.

We are often asked, says Prof. Phelps, How can you bear to believe in an eternal hell? Why does it not craze you? How can you call such a God as can create a hell benevolent? To us he seems Satanic in his nature.

Whenever I go from my home to the city of Boston, I pass by a building which reminds me of the Castle of Giant Despair. It is constructed of heavy granite blocks to the very roof. It is surrounded with lofty granite walls, and these are surmounted with iron spikes. I see doors of massive iron riveted with iron bolts. I see windows barred with iron. Behind those iron bars I have seen pale, despairing human faces,—faces which have reappeared to me in my dreams. I know that underneath those walls, in a dungeon cell, there lives a man, manacled hand and foot, who has clanked his chains there for seventeen years. Sometimes more than five hundred of my human brothers are locked within those walls of living death.

I have been told that over against a certain window there, on the opposite side of the street, there lives a pale-faced woman who never smiles. Every morning she places on her window-sill a blooming flower, where a certain man behind those bars can see it, and can know that a loving woman is thinking of him. Yet I see, in a turret on those walls, a man in uniform, with a rifle at his shoulder, who, if he sees that brother man trying to clamber over the walls and touch the hand of that loving woman, is instructed to shoot him down like a dog.

Why do I not cry out against the magic power which keeps recalcitrant that suffering wife and husband? Why do I not tramp the streets of Boston, pleading with the crowds to go with me and level that Bastille to the ground? Why do I not move heaven and earth against the infernal tyrant which has devised, and the cold-hearted cruelty which tolerates that granite hell? What is it that sustains my humane sensibilities and yours at the sight of such an anomaly of despair, in a world where robins are singing in the spring-time, and violets are blooming on the hill-sides, and little children are laughing in their glee?

Answer me this, and I will tell you what is it that sustains a benevolent universe in beholding, and a benignant God in devising, an eternal hell for the confinement of eternal guilt. And you must prove to me that it is not so, before you can charge God with satanic wrong in tolerating such a place as hell within the bounds of His dominions.

The question which all such suspicions of God's rectitude bring back like a boomerang upon the inquirer is, What else shall God do with eternal guilt? Shall He forgive it? Shall He, by one grand act of amnesty, proclaim liberty to the damned, to the devil, to his angels, and to men like them? But how would that help the matter, sin remaining unrepented of and unforsaken? Free grace proclaimed in hell forever would not quench for one moment its lurid fires, if sin were still rampant there. Sin is hell. "Myself am hell," says Milton's Satan. Guilt is itself damnation. Again the question returns, therefore: "What else shall God do with it?"

Shall He give repentance, and then forgive? But that is the very thing He has been offering from the first, and will offer forever and ever. Never will man or devil see the moment when he cannot repent if he would. But that is the very thing from which the incorrigible sinner recoils. He will have none of that. Repentance means submission. Better hell than that. Such is the relentless choice of the doomed one. Doomed because self-doomed. Doomed by the fearful omnipotence of his own free-will.

Such is sin; once chosen, and implanted, and indurated in the very nature of man, by a life of probation, in which the grace of God has been scorned, and the blood of Christ outraged. Once more, then, the question comes back unanswered: "What else shall God do with it?" Through all eternity, that is the question which

Infinite Benevolence will ask of an awe-struck, yet satisfied and adoring universe:—"What else shall God do with it?"—*S. S. Times.*

OPPOSITION TO CHRISTIANITY.

Rev. Dr. Maclay in a letter to the New York *Mission Rooms* says: "The enemies of the cross in Japan do not propose to yield the field without a struggle. It is true that the methods of opposition once in general use, such as torture, crucifixion, beheading, banishment to distant parts of the empire, and others of that ilk, could scarcely be applied with success in our day. The government, in its present attitude of at least comparative enlightenment, and with its existing treaty relations with the Western powers, no longer seeks, and we believe no longer desires, to employ barbarous and inhuman methods for educating the minds and controlling the consciences of its subjects. But it does not require a very profound acquaintance with human nature to convince any thoughtful observer that a government so long connected with other and, as we hold, erroneous forms of religious belief, will not, in the absence of a powerful pressure in that direction, break away from the old and adopt a new system of religion; that forms of religious faith and worship so ancient as Shintoism and buttressed by such potent supports in the way of endowments and revenues as Buddhism possesses will not cheerfully succumb to a rival; and that a nation the successive generations of which have been so long accustomed to the teachings and rites of general received and revered religious systems, will not suddenly lose faith in the old gods, and turn to the new. Its confidence a system whose profound teachings involve mysteries which finite minds cannot solve, and whose morality directly antagonizes some of the strongest and most cherished passions of the human heart.

It reflects great credit on the Japanese government that it is evidently trying to grapple with this confessedly most difficult subject in an enlightened spirit; and there is every reason to expect that in due time a satisfactory adjustment of it will be reached. Meanwhile, however, the Shintoists are somewhat jubilant in view of the evident favor of the government toward their system and its efforts, which do not indeed promise to be successful, to make Shintoism the religion of Japan; the Buddhists, chafing under the loss of government influence and patronage are putting forth extraordinary efforts to retain their hold on public sentiment; and a small coterie of Japanese students, guided by some foreign teachers, are quite active in endeavoring to disseminate atheistical principles. These influences and discussions are stirring the minds of the Japanese most profoundly with reference to all questions of morals and religion; and are directing the attention of the entire nation to the work of Christian missions, now making such cheering progress in Japan.

THE TOMB OF AMPLIAS.
Signor Lanciani writes to the *Athenaeum*: "The catacombs of Donatilla, on the Via Ardeatina, rank among the earliest in the neighborhood of Rome. Flavia Donatilla, who, according to unquestionable documents, owned the splendid villa and grounds above during her uncle Domitian's reign, and who had embraced the Gospel, allowed her Christian brethren to be buried within the precincts of her estate. The immense subterranean cemetery, which now extends far away around the original nucleus, is not entirely a work of the first century of our era. It was only at a later period, perhaps not before the third century, that cross galleries were excavated to connect the original deeply venerated *cubicula*, so as to make an uninterrupted network of catacombs from one end to the other of the *prodomum*. One of these antique *cubicula*, recently discovered and excavated, is absolutely unique as regards the style of its decorations. It looks more like a room of a Pompeian house than a Christian crypt. Its architectural paintings, with groups of tiny columns supporting fantastic friezes and enclosing pastoral landscapes, can be compared to the frescoes of the golden house of Nero, of the house of Germanicus on the Palatine, &c., but find no parallel whatever in the whole of the Roman catacombs. Above the *arcosolium* the name of the titular of this conspicuous tomb is engraved, 'Ampliat', and all the circumstances make us believe that Amplias was a prominent leader of our early Christian brotherhood. Such being the case, the mind runs at once to the paragraph of St. Paul's epistle to the Romans (xvi. 8): 'Greet Amplias, my beloved in the Lord. Shall we recognize the man in whose memory this tomb was originally built as the friend of St. Paul? I do not think it is yet time to come to a conclusion. Further excavations in and around the crypt may disclose fresh particulars.'

CHURCHES—WHAT FOR?
Some people regard churches as institutions for the cultivation of the artistic or aesthetic. With such, fine architecture, elegant interiors, artistic music and pulpit eloquence, are the essentials of church success. Another class regard the church as a commercial enterprise. With such, success is a large attendance, heavy pew rents, promptly paid, pastor's and organist's salaries and other bills all paid, no contribution boxes, and no debt. To others the church is a place of entertainment, on the varieties plan—an eccentric preacher, sensational services, quaint or ludicrous announcements of pulpit themes, a rush now and then to hear the great clown-preacher—these make up success. With the great mass of church-goers and supporters, doubtless, the church is regarded a success when it retains the families belonging to it or keeps good the numbers of its congregations, has means enough to meet its ordinary expenses, keeps the services of a satisfactory minister, with proper administration of ordinances, and from

time to time makes good by additions the natural losses in its membership. But is all this enough to make a church successful? We would not suggest that these services are not proper and important work for a church, but they are too narrow for the full scope of Christianity. If there is nothing beyond these, the church is localized and selfish. The church which does not get beyond the idea of saving itself and its own, is a failure. There is no Christianity in hiring a minister to entertain the pews; and the minister who merely seeks to draw and please his crowd, is only an ordained demagogue. The Church—at least, the ideal church—is Christianity organized, and hence should manifest in action the spirit of Christ.

The church exists for the purpose of preaching the gospel to men—to all men. Its own members have no more claim upon it, and no more exclusive right in it, than others. It is no more desirable to save their souls than any others. Its members are missionaries, within their spheres and to the limit of ability, as much as though they were ordained and sent to China. Its organization is a missionary society, of the broadest type; a temperance organization, of the most permanent form; a benevolent society, for all God's poor; a Masonic fraternity, for succoring and defending the weak and needy, not of itself; a knight errantry, seeking the oppressed, and periling all for the good of others.

HOW TO KEEP SAVED.
We are kept by faith, just as we are saved by faith. Faith is a continuous act. Intermittent faith, intermittent salvation. We are saved only so long as we believe. We cannot believe enough in five minutes to last a month; neither does God stereotype the first act of faith and cause it to run through all eternity. Every man is on his best behaviour in this world, and in the next too, for that matter. "Draw nigh to me, and I will draw nigh to you," is a permanent invitation and promise. Conversion is the result of submission to God in Christ. Entire sanctification results from entire submission to God, from perfect self-crucifixion with Christ. We are kept fully saved as long as we keep our submission intact and our contract with Christ crucified unbroken. It is sometimes easy to get sanctified, and hard to stay sanctified. Why? Because when we seek the blessing, it is under a stress of conviction and pressure of desire, and the heart is driven us almost to desperation. We are glad to get relief at any price. We surrender all, and gladly join our destinies with Christ for good or for ill, for time and eternity. Then when the distress passes away and the glory shines, we, for a time, wonder we ever consented to live elsewhere than in "Heaven Land." But by-and-by the tests begin to come; new environments appear, new ambitions are suggested, new disciplines beset. A tempting devil, a fascinating world, a time-serving church, weakness of body, and various infirmities, all pour their floods of suggestion and solicitation upon us, and unless we know, ourselves well, and unless we watch sharply, we shall fall. There is only one infallible rule: that is, to keep on the altar; keep dead; allow no selfish impulse any quarter. You are crucified with Christ now; stay crucified; ware away every seeming good that separates a hair's breadth between you and Christ. "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free."—*Advocate of Bible Holiness.*

A HINT ABOUT PRAYER-MEETINGS.
"What to think or talk specially about at prayer-meeting," says a critic in the *Christian Intelligencer*, "is a question which sometimes troubles the layman who has interest enough to be troubled. To take up on the spot the theme the pastor may suggest is not always easy. What then? We suggest an easy way out of the difficulty. Go back in thought to the previous Sabbath's sermon. In its text or illustration there will always be found a topic for you. You may suggest something additional. You may back your pastor up, in what he has said. You may state the impression for good it may have made upon you. You will thus keep the subject fresh before the minds of the people. As it is generally at least two generally the sermon is preached, and that is the end of it. It is forgotten. Nobly hears about it again. It may have done some good, it is true, but it might do more if it was kept longer before the mind. The pastor would feel as if the truth had lodged somewhere, and be pleased with the hope that it was worth being noticed. It is a large sixth out now his sermons are brought to birth only as still-born things, or if living at all to die quite as soon as born, and without a sign."

THE PROFIT AND LOSS.
We once asked a backslidden man, who lamented the loss of his happy sense of God's approval, which was worth the more, his wealth or a conscience void of offence, and he testified with tears, that to be restored to his first love and peace he would give up all. But he said that giving up all would not blot out the tormenting memory of particular wrongs which could not be atoned for by any acts of restitution. The persons injured were dead and gone, but the fact remained, and conscience would refer to the record. And this man was commercially, a strictly honest man, a man of standing, a man trusted and looked