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Religious Miscellany.

ACCUSATION.

I sat alone with my conscience
In a place where time had ceased,
And we talked of my former living
In the land where the years increased
And I felt I should have to answer
The question it put to me,
And to face the answer and question
Throughout eternity.

Then the ghosts of forgotten actions
Came floating before my sight,
And things which I thought were dead things
Were alive with a terrible might;
And the vision of all my past life
Was an awful thing to face
Alone with my conscience sitting
In that solemnly silent place.

* * * * * * *

Then I woke from my lonely dreaming,
And the vision passed away,
And I knew that the far-off warning
Was a warning of yesterday;
And I pray that I may not forget it
In this land before the grave;
That I may not err in the future,
And no one come to save.

And so I have learned a lesson
Which I ought to have known before,
And which, though I learned it dreaming,
I hope to forget no more!

SPECTATOR.

"ONE CROSS."

One cross the less remains for me to bear;
Already borne is that of yesterday:
That of to-day shall no to-morrow share;
To-morrow's, with itself, shall pass away.
The storm that yesterday plowed up the sea
Is buried now beneath its level blue;
One storm the fewer now remains for me.
Ere sky and earth are made forever new.

—*Bonar.*

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS.

OPENING OF CONFERENCE.

Thursday morning 9 o'clock witnessed the first formal gathering of ministers for the transaction of business. The Conference is almost a full one. The fact of its being the last under the present regime, and other elements of interest conspired to draw together a much larger number than usual. Indeed, when we see from year to year how rapidly the ministerial ranks are filling up, and how many there are pressing their way through a probational career up to full connection, we feel that, painful though it may be, the division of our forces has not come any too soon.

All, however, were not present. Even among the platform representatives some were conspicuous by their absence. The co-delegate, Rev. E. Beettle occupied the chair owing to illness of the President. It was hoped that Dr. Stewart who presided over as last year with great acceptance, might have so far recovered from his prolonged illness as to have been with us on this occasion. It was not deemed prudent, however, we believe for him to leave his home so soon. It is expected that he will be here on Saturday. Besides the President and Co-delegate elect, there were on the platform the ex-President, Dr. Pickard, Rev. Mr. Daniel, Rev. H. Pope and the Secretaries of Conference.

Scattered through the assembly, might be seen a number whose whitened locks and bowed forms told of toils that were past, and of rest at hand. These are the honoured fathers of our Conference, to whom it cannot be said, "Let not him that putteth on the harness boast as him that putteth it off." Conspicuous among these, not only by his age, but by the reverence in which his saintly character is held, is Rev. H. Pope, senr. He seems to us, as we gaze upon him, like a bequest from an age that has past away. Looking back over sixty years of ministerial life, having watched over Methodism from its very infancy, he moves among the ministers of to-day, enquiring after their fathers and grandfathers, whom he calls his children, many of whom have preceded their spiritual father to the better land.

"We faltered, as we looked upon the assembly, upon the old men, and upon the young too, that the year had not passed without leaving its mark behind. A little more whitening of the hair, a little deepening of the lines upon the brow of the aged, a little shrinking of the cheek, a little less of freshness and buoyancy in the young; everywhere a little something to remind us that in the great conflict with time, he ever triumphs at last.

The Conference was opened in the usual manner, Co-delegate in the chair. The 504th hymn commencing

"Jesus, united by thy grace
And each to each endeared, &c.,

was sung, the scripture lesson 2 Tim. 1st chapter, was read by the Secretary, Rev. J. Taylor, after which Revds. J. Sutcliffe and T. Angwin engaged in prayer.

THE PRESIDENT OF LAST YEAR ABSENT.

The Co-delegate announced to the Conference the illness of the President and the consequent necessity devolving upon him of discharging the duties connected with that office. He then called upon the Secretary to read such part of the address of the present Conference as related to the choice of a President and Co-delegate for the ensuing year. The President elect Rev. J. Mcmurray was then welcomed by the retiring Co-delegate to the Presidential chair.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

In accepting this position he made a few timely and appropriate remarks to the Conference. He thanked the Conference for the honor conferred in choosing him again to preside over their deliberations. He spoke of the responsibility devolving upon him, acknowledging his inability to do anything only through Christ who strengthened him. He recalled to the mind of the Conference the abundant blessings which had been conferred on us as a people, and how we should regard this as a call to greater holiness of heart and life. He referred to the progress which our cause had made during the last few years, to the extent to which we had lengthened our cords and strengthened our stakes, and to the many who had been, by our instrumentality born into the kingdom of God. Lastly he spoke of the change which was observable from year to year in the *personal* of our ministry. Old and familiar faces were disappearing from our midst and others were pressing on to fight the battle. We are passing away but the "word of God endureth forever."

CO-DELEGATE'S ADDRESS.

The Rev. G. Milligan was then called to the front of the platform, and welcomed by the President to his position as Co delegate. In a few words he thanked his brethren for this expression of their confidence, and expressed his hope, that, as his duties consisted principally in looking down from that Pisgah top upon the Conference, he should be able to do so to their satisfaction.

The Conference being opened, the Rev. T. Angwin asked permission to read an extract giving an account of the first Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. It was found that this Conference composed of five clergymen of the Established Church, was held exactly 130 years ago, upon the very day that we were assembled there, the 25th of June. On motion it was directed that the minutes be printed in the WESLEYAN.—(It will appear next week.—ED. P. W.)

ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

The Conference then proceeded to the election of officers for the ensuing year, the result of which was as follows, the principal ones being re-elected:—

Secretary of Conference, Rev. J. Taylor; Journal Secretary, Rev. R. A. Temple; Assistant Secretaries, Revs. A. D. Morton, C. Jost, and J. Rogers; Assistant Journal Secretary, Rev. J. M. Pike; Assistant Financial Secretary, Rev. J. G. Angwin; Reporter for WESLEYAN, Rev. J. R. Borden; Conference Letter Writers, Revs. R. Duncan and H. Sprague; Committee on Conference Expenses, Revs. P. Prestwood and C. W. Dutcher.

The thanks of the Conference were then presented to the Rev. Dr. Stewart and Rev. E. Beettle, Ex-President, and Co-delegate, for the faithful, efficient and successful discharge of their duties during the past year.

CANDIDATES FOR ORDINATION.

Who are now to be received into full connection? This question was answered by the presentation of the names of fourteen candidates. These having served four years on probation, and having passed a satisfactory examination, were recommended by their several districts to be received into full connection and solemnly set apart to the work of the ministry. Their names are:—

James Strothard, William Maggs, Ralph Brecken, H. J. Clarke, W. W. Brewer, J. F. Betts, Jesse B. Giles, Wm. H. Evans, Wm. Dobson, J. B. Borden, Caleb Parker, Charles Pickett, Solomon Matthews, Joseph Hale.

YOUNG MEN APPOINTED.

Considerable conversation arose upon a request from the Stationing Committee to be permitted to appoint Revs. J. England, W. C. Brown and T. W. Smith to circuits for a fourth year. It was felt by many, especially by the older members of the Conference, that our rule was a good one, and that to comply with this request, would be opening a gate which it might be found difficult to shut. On motion, however, it was agreed to.

The case of the remaining candidates was then taken up, and a part of them passed when the Conference adjourned till 9 o'clock the following day.

THE SONG IN THE ALLEY.

One evening last winter, a young gambler was sent into one of the narrow alleys that branch off from North Street, Boston, to repair a gas-pipe. The location is noted for its poverty, ignorance and haunts of vice. Almost every building has its tippling shop or dance-hall. It was Saturday evening, dark and overcast. The street lamps were like sentinels in the deep shadows, throwing their rings of light into the billowy clouds of mist that rolled in from the harbor, and revealing the forms of the night wanderers as they flitted by. The North End Mission Chapel is situated here, and is always crowded on Saturday evenings, when temperance meetings are held. In this, as in the dance-halls that surround it, the music is furnished by an orchestra. The inspiring strains of "Coronation," may not unfrequently be heard mingling in the crisp evening air with the "Yon and I" waltzes that come from the other side of the street. The young gambler was somewhat weary, and paused at times in his extra work to listen to the music in the chapel and dance-hall. The alley was very foggy and still, and the airy notes of harps and fiddles were somewhat mellowed by the little distance that intervened. At last, there was a loud outburst of song in the chapel. The rise and fall of the melody heard through the night air brought to mind the fragments of a hymn which he had somewhere heard, and which he somewhat imperfectly associated with the music:

"Jesus the name high over all
In hell, or earth, or sky
Angels and men before it fall,
And devils fear and fly.

Jesus, the name to sinners given
It scatters all their guilty fear;
It raises their hell or heaven.

Jesus the prisoner's fetters breaks,
And bruises Satan's head;
Power thro' creation's earth he speaks
And life into the dead."

The refrain and chorus to these stanzas were vigorously accented, but he could not distinguish the words. He was not a religious man, though his habits were, for the most part, moral and restrained. He had been an irregular attendant on public worship, and had often willed for some change for the better in the religious feeling. The music affected him strangely. There was something in the dashing words, coming out from the beer-rooms more daring and intrepid explorer of his age; and folly of pleasures like these. The strain of praise in the chapel was more in harmony with his feelings, and seemed to fill his heart with a longing for some good unattained.

"I wish I was a true Christian," said the young man, as he resumed the work in the basement. As the bell was striking nine, he again paused, and went to the basement window and listened. The chapel seemed silent; but there was a mingling of people, and a murmuring of voices out on the street, and the tinkling of instruments in the dance-halls still went on. He stood thinking, and the old thoughts returned with greater force, that there was no hope or promise in any pursuit or pleasure which were destitute of God. The music and the sounds of laughter seemed mockery. He again said, as he was about to resume his work, "I would I were a Christian." Something detained him a moment more at the window. A low, bent form flitted through the misty ring of light at the head of the alley, and approached with a pattering step in the deep shadows. It was an old woman returning from the chapel. She was singing. It was the hymn which he had imperfectly heard. He waited for the refrain:—

"Jesus the name high over all,
In hell, or earth or sky
Angels and men before it fall,
And devils fear and fly.

O how I love Jesus,
O how I love Jesus,
O how I love Jesus,
Because he first loved me!"

The old woman passed on, and disappeared through one of the dark doors at the foot of the alley. She knew not the sermon that her song had preached. Then and there the young man saw what he wanted to make him happy, what the world wants to make it happy—the love of Jesus. On the following day, he arose in the Young Men's Christian Association rooms, related substantially the above story, and asked the remembrance of prayers. A great change had come over his feelings. Jesus had been, as it were, revealed to him as both his need and his Saviour, in the song in the alley.—*H. Butterworth in Watchman and Reflector.*

LIVINGSTONE.

There is something inexpressibly fascinating, that appeals to the universal heart, in Livingstone's marvellous career. It is a grand epic poem, a poem both written and acted. It is a life drama, stranger far than poet's dream or novelist's creation. It is rich even to prodigality in marvel and wonder; it teems with romantic incident, and heroic enterprise, and startling adventure; and, above all, it is a sublime illustration of Christ-like self-sacrifice, of faith in God, and of love to man. Fearlessness of heart, vivid and capacious sympathy with sinful, suffering men; unexhausting energy, enthusiasm guided by its own light, and sustained by its own power; apostolic tenderness and ardour in looking out upon a dark and disorderly world; a yearning passion of pity, a grandeur of purpose, that were in unison and harmony with the unresting, self-forgetting love of Him who took the world's burdens upon his heart, and gave himself in death for the life of men—these were the attributes which dwelt in this great soiled, much enduring man. Few men have ever lived who have been inspired with a loftier purpose or who have achieved a nobler work. The influence of his name and the devotion of his life, as the African's friend have lifted up entire continents into respect for the Englishman, his word, his language, his religion. He has given Africa to the knowledge and sympathy of the world, and the result of his life's work will be ultimately to give Africa, backward and degraded though she is, to the county of civilized and Christian nations.

Livingstone was a man with a face of iron and a will of steel, with a soul of fire, and a heart of flesh. In his bosom a stern, inflexible purpose, an indomitable energy of will, were imbedded in the softest, sweetest, gentlest human affections, encasing a ship all the kindness and charities of the Gospel. He has enlarged the domain of geographical knowledge beyond any of his distinguished contemporaries; to him belongs the high distinction of having first took open to our view the interior of the vast African continent, and discovered that it is not an impenetrable, uninhabitable wilderness, of burning sands and hissing serpents and gorgons and chimeras dire, but a land of broad streams and mighty rivers, and sweeping valleys, and towering hills, and vast plots, teeming alike with plenty and with population. And among the results of his discoveries, we may safely assert that he will have opened up new channels of extensive and lucrative commerce; that he will have given new tribes and peoples for our customers, and new markets for our enterprise; that he will have led the way to the development of the resources and the shaping of the destinies of vast tracts of humanity that would otherwise have lain waste and sterile; that he will have enabled his country to do still more to expiate the wrongs and oppressions that for many generations have been perpetrated on the down-trodden sons and daughters of Ham; and, perhaps, be the most honored instrument of Providence in sweeping away from the earth that atrocious villiany of slavery by which Africa has so long been cursed and desolated. Africa was entrampled on every fibre of Livingstone's heart. In his enterprise of mercy to her, he traversed her appalling deserts, he trod her blistering sands, his brain burned in delirious throbbings beneath her vertical sun. To carry to her good tidings, to take to her light and peace and freedom, he confronted many a ghastly terror of fever and pestilence; and, dissatisfied and impatient of ease and honor while Africa was still wrapped in darkness and weltering in misery, he hastened back to her on his last fatal expedition, that so that altar on which he had already expended the enthusiasm of his youth and the bloom and fulness of his manhood, he might pour out all the remaining energies of his body and his soul. What a career! From the rank and calling of a factory operative in a cotton mill, first to be a physician and missionary, then to be the pioneer and intrepid explorer of his age; then to the world-wide influence and celebrity of a philanthropy that enthroned the splendour of his discoveries, the subject and admiration of every land; as his well-dressed inherited, his body carried at last a thousand miles by his faithful servants from the bush of Africa to find interment in Westminster Abbey! and for the big, brave, loving spirit that passed away from the lonely Africa but to the fellowship of the skies, who can conceive the abundant entrance and the glorious recompense?—*Methodist Recorder.*

SEXTONS.

In the course of my ministry I have found the church sexton to be a functionary of no small importance. He is here, there, and everywhere, cleaning, sweeping, collecting pew rents, waiting at the door, seating strangers, carrying pulpit notices to the minister, and having something to say or do for or about almost every body that comes into the church. His influence is great. He generally knows the secrets of the pastor, and pretty much all that is going on among the people. He ought certainly to be one of the most reliable of men. He should have wisdom, great integrity, and, without an immense amount of patience for every body, from the oldest to the youngest, feels at liberty to find fault with him. He has to answer for the sins of priest and people. One wants the window up, another wants it down. One wants more light, another is dazzled with such a glare, and beckons the sexton to turn down the gas. Pastors, I believe, are generally friends to this over present servant of the church, partly because it is for their interest to be so, but chiefly, I trust, for the great service he does them. I have found the sexton to be among my best friends and most efficient helpers. He sees me daily, and says many a pleasant word. He reminds me kindly of forgotten appointments, tells me who is sick, where such and such families live, and perhaps gently suggests that I have not called on them lately. "God bless you!" I say in my heart, and not unfrequently with my lips.

My experience has led me to honor and love the sexton. I have been associated with quite a number of them, and I have always found them to be good men and true. "Father Vincent, my first sexton in Boston, was accustomed in his younger days to wait on the venerable Dr. Stillman from the front door of the church to his seat in the pulpit, and then make a low bow to him in token of profound respect. I never could induce him nor any of his successors to treat me in the same manner. However, I do not complain.

A noble specimen of the sexton I have known in one who resigned an office under the city government rather than take part in turning Anthony Burns to slavery. Charles Sumner, seeing him in his more humble capacity, complimented him for his heroism by an apt quotation of Scripture: "I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." We feel like quoting for the benefit of these faithful attendants on the sanctuary, who are so seldom commended, the words of Milton:

"They also serve,
Who only stand and wait."—*Exc.*

SILENT CHRISTIANS.

I have a hearty liking for these, my silent brethren—especially after I have been pestered with Garrulous Gibbs's sermon-stopped-short, which I have just heard for the forty-fifth time. These speechless Christians number in their ranks some of the most pure-minded disciples that I encounter. They love the place of prayer, even if no one hears them there but that God who overhears the breathings of the humble soul. They are always at the meetings. They sing, they listen intelligently; they are good hearers and *good doers*. If they do not preach, they practice. Whatever sins they commit, they are never guilty of "vain babbling," or of talking nonsense in the name of the Lord. Bunyan's "Mr. Fearing" and "Miss Much-afraid" suffer not a little from their bashful modesty; but they made better headway "by heaven, than loquacious Mr. Talkative," who had a "chapter of Scriptures at the end of his noisy tongue." I can show more than one tongue-and-church member where his is a power in the community. He can open his mouth for the Lord sooner than he can open his purse; he can glorify his Master by bearing much fruit in godly living. But in public meetings his strength is to sit still.

"It is not the duty of pastors or of leaders of prayer meetings to persecute these shy brethren by continually "calling them out." They will not come. It was not forecordained that every converted man should edify the brotherhood by speaking in meeting, or else conversion would bring with it the gift of fluent speech.—*Rev. T. L. Cuyler.*

General Miscellany.

THE ATLANTIC VOYAGE—LONDON.

BY A LADY.

Let me take this opportunity, as it were in a stage aside, to give lady readers who have in contemplation a voyage across the Atlantic, a word of warning. Don't reduce your travelling luggage to the smallest minimum of possibility, or you, perchance, will find that decency and you, on shipboard, become fearfully estranged. Never in your lives did you need for the same length of time so many pairs of clean stockings, so many fresh handkerchiefs, collars, and quffs (providing, of course, that you are not wrestling with wash-basins all the way over, learning how sublime a thing it is to suffer and be strong enough to moan as vigorously last as first), as you will need from Boston to Liverpool. Bear in mind that steamer decks, an hour after washing, are carpeted with sea-spray, little but dashing stars or tears; that the smoke-stack, although an old sailor and quite inexcusable for such conduct, vomits spotless and dust—continually—that you can not sit down or rise without displacing millions of black particles.

It seems as if the feeling of disappointment must be common to all Americans who catch their first glimpses of London from the windows of the cab that conveys them from the station to their hotel. Coming from our crystalline atmosphere into a region of dense airs and smokey stars, it could hardly be otherwise; and moreover, the hasty views from the cab show one such a meaning, steadfast and reiteration of the same architectural idea—street after street of unpeaksbless grey walls staring sombrely out from sightless windows, eyeless at the mockery from architecturally eclectic Boston, as much as to say, "What business have you here?"—that one longs to the real artistic glories of the city, its glorious Abbey, its superb parliament buildings, its classic St. Paul's, its Greek Temple of the British Museum, its marvellously beautiful railroad-stations, and its chaste Palladian Whitehall,—concerning all of which the wise traveller has read before he came. Neither is the disappointment lessened as the hotel is reached, and the jaded traveler is shown his room. Even his air of London is so quenching to all the lovely efforts of taste and shade, so successful to reduce every thing upon which it breathes to a sullen demi-tint and faded hue, that one feels at first that he is plunged into direst poverty as to his surroundings. What a gloomy room that was which was our first haven in London! We had selected, seduced from our original intent by that arch deceiver, the Guide-book, the Arundel Hotel, as one less satyrionate than the many that was far on American travel, and as best suited to our not altogether bloated purse-monnaies. We only wanted comfort, not expensive style, we said, and we believed, as we had always been told, that comfort more than style was the cardinal idea of English behoviors. Our room was as sombre and as dungeon, with ground-glass windows as it the greatness of its furnishing must be composed from the light. The carpet was a crash affair, for I never saw it, nature having given me no power of seeing through an inch of coal dust. Cheerless, dingy, dark, was it any marvel that, in those earlier of our hours in London, we did severely blame our friends at home who had refrained from putting us into straight-jackets at our first intimated thought of going to Europe? And when, after yolent ringings of the bell, with pauses of quarter-hours between, for pious meditations on the futility of all mortal efforts, chambermaid-maids—we succeeded in getting a chambermaid at her water, we found ourselves doomed to yet more rings, with more pious intermission, before our eyes were gladdened by the sight of water. So it was, when we cried out, in bitterness of spirit, for matches to light the gas, for it was dark from the fog, though not yet two o'clock in the afternoon—and for a fire in the grate to cheer our desolate lives, (in, with all our beseechings, it was four o'clock, before we had achieved what we had undertaken at half past one. How long would such careless indifference to bells and the needs of travelers be tolerated in an American hotel?—*Ed.*

When we went to the *table d'hote* at five o'clock, we found tables decorated as for a banquet of lucullus of Lucullus was a man of taste above gaudy artificial flowers, with huge bouquets at short interval, and suggestive black bottles at shorter. But, was it the coquet, we hoped for, or the style, we repudiated, that presented us with a bill of fare composed only of soup, fish (my pet aversion), boiled mutton, and boiled hay; only this did nothing more, save a few note which stated—dessert, sixpence extra. To use a regard both to our colonies and our style that forbade our flying in wrath, and demanding of that tableful of Britons, what Englishmen mean when they expatiate, as they do, upon our national devotion to pie, and to further inquire if ever, in an American hotel, their digestive powers were insulted with six apple-pie sixpence extra? So the next morning, when the incipient sorrowed again over their breakfast of cold baker's bread, muddy coffee, and dropsical butter, their hearts yearned for the fleshpots of Boston, which held warm rolls and hot potatoes, as well as juicy steaks. They again brought the waiter's high-bred scorn upon their heads by asking for baked potatoes. "Potatoes for breakfast! Ho, no! We don't never give 'em. And we are ignorant to this day which it was we paid for, as we settled a bill not more than half a dollar less than we would have paid for the luxurious living of the Revere—whether 'comfort' or 'style.'—*Western Christian Advocate.*

LEGITIMATE BUSINESS BETTER THAN SPECULATION.

A passion for speculation is a marked feature of the times. To do business, fairly, to run great risks, to make a fortune at a single leap, to be ranked with millionaires, are the fascinations of the hour. The man who, like the merchant princes of other days, is content with the legitimate operations of trade, and with regular and safely profitable business, which allow him to sleep well at nights, and eat the bread of industry and quietness, is reckoned a fossil. If business men would but open their eyes, and look back along the latest leagues of life's great highway over which the speculative spirit has passed, like a destroying angel, they would see enough wrecked virtue, reputation, honor and fortune to make them shudder, and say, with that merchant prince of Boston, the late Amos Lawrence:

"The more I see of the changes produced by violent speculation, the more I am satisfied that our maxims (of adhering to safe, legitimate business) are the only ones for a life time together. Different maxims may prove successful for a part of life, but will frequently produce disastrous results just at the time we stand in most need that is, when life is on the wane, and a family is around us."

These wise words suggest the great error in which the spirit of speculation leads, namely, that the aim of a business man should be to acquire a fortune in the shortest time possible—to make haste to be rich, instead of steadily continuing to plod on, year after year, aiming at a moderate competence, to be gained gradually, and as the result of a life faithfully devoted to business. Viewing this error philosophically, one can readily perceive its folly. As the human mind is constituted, it is not possible to derive as much pleasure from hasty acquisitions of wealth as from its gradual accretion. The pleasure attending the gain of a thousand dollars, fairly earned by a man of moderate means, is certainly greater and purer than the mad delight of the speculator who, after weeks or months of feverish anxiety caused by the known risks of his daring investments, suddenly finds himself the winner of a fortune. Moreover, the thousand or ten