THE
WESLEYAN

SATURDAY, MARCH 22, 1879.

Tea Meetings extraordinary. In Charles Street Church there are to be three Tea Meetings next week:—On Tuesday night for the congregation; Wednesday for the Infant Class; Thursday for the General Sabbath School.

Educational Sermons will be preached in Brunswick Street and Grafton Street Churches, Halifax, next Sabbath, by Revs. Dr. Stewart and R. Brecken. The former in Brunswick St. at 11, and Grafton Street at 7 o'clock; the latter in Grafton and Brunswick St.

The week has been one of no little excitement in political and commercial circles. On Friday of last week a new tariff was proposed in the House of Commons, Ottawa. Since then it has been discussed, and, with certain modifications, may be confirmed. There are very considerable changes which must affect to a great degree the interests of commerce.

A frightful flood, as will be seen in our news columns, has visited a city in Hungary. The place must be very remote which does not share in the great world's sympathies in our day. The Telegraph has made of one blood all the nations of the earth, so far as community of suffering is concerned. Human beings who to-day are bruised by storm, or desolated by fire, are to-morrow the subjects of commisseration and prayer among the two hundred millions of people.

Joseph Cook's latest published lecture was on the subjects "Chinese" and "Tramps." Against the unreasonable proposition to prohibit the importation of Chinese labour, only prevented from becoming law by the President's veto, Mr. Cook strikes heavy blows. He shows that commercially as well as morally, the country would be doing a positive injustice to itself and the Asiatics by shutting them out. The great lecturer has still immense popularity, his audiences being larger than ever, while there is universal demand for the lectures in printed form.

The *Guardian* closes up sensibly a rather extended discussion upon the subject of ministerial salaries. It is noticeable that there is more or less agitation of the question every year in the Methodist papers of the Dominion. This is not the case elsewhere, or in any other church organs, that we see. The inference is very natural that we need a better system. But we are convinced that the newspapers are not the media through which the discussion should be sustained. A better condition of things would follow, if some central, connexional gathering of judicious, systematic men would give the subject a thorough sifting, and recommend a sensible, commercial basis of action. Till then, hope may sit in expectation and—silence.

While occasionally reflecting upon busy people, who can find no time for Christian work, it is but proper, as it is delightful, to hold up contrary specimens for example, when we find them. A merchant of our acquaintance, a partner in an immense business, in which he takes a large share of work and responsibility recently went to Europe on an annual purchasing tour. Before leaving, he requested the children of the Sunday School of which he is Superintendent, to write him during his absence. Not less than forty letters, in reply to these missives, have come across the Atlantic within a few weeks. The little folk rejoice in having a friend who *answers every letter*, devoting sometimes a whole day to the correspondence. Who can imagine the influence which a man of this stamp wields over children, in the service of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Mr. Currie revives one of the distinctive memories which are cherished on this continent, of a lordly presence and a kingly utterance. Dr. Punshon's pronounciation! Who that has heard him in his gay, grand moods, can ever forget his inimitable inflection of the word "Christian," or the changing solemnity and sarcasm of that unhandsome "corse" which in the case of a certain king was wont to come "between the wind and his nobility?" Dr. Gervase Smith once, before our General Conference, characterized our own word "power," with an accent which we never heard before, and have faint hopes of ever hearing again. Such men are above criticism. Measuring the cathedral of Notre Dame with a foot rule, or Niagara with a pint measure, were quite as much within the canons of popular opinion. God makes mountains to be admired, not to be girt about with tape-lines. And yet, doubtless, even those great orators owe not a little to the art of elocution.

THE LUMBER-CAMPS MISSION.

There is a latent instinct in most natures which is awakened to intense activity by the solitude and adventure of forest-life. It brings a new kind of communion. Nature finds a thousand voices to whisper of glorious things. For a short season the senses seem to be fascinated—we would say intoxicated, but that the word suggests drowsiness instead of activity of mind. Forest-nature, however, is the champagne of sense-stimulants; we sit down to it and sip without wearying of its ever-efferveseing charms. What soft, secret whispers are among the leaves! What a deep, melancholy sigh is that which the winds exhale among the beeches, and maples and lofty pines! All this comes back upon us when we read a missive from Bro. Colpitts or Bro. Johnson, sons of the Nashwaak and the Nashwaaksis. We are back again among New Brunswick's stalwart sons of the Lumber-camps, striking out for a stroll to the old, mysterious, poetic nooks, and the gay waterfalls of the forest. Only we are reminded that—

Misssion work to lumber-men is chiefly winter work. Nature has thrown off her mystic, leafy robes, ceased her weird whisperings, laid her insects of perpetual murmurings to rest, till another voice shall awaken them. Great, gaunt, bare giants of the forest stand all about us as sentinels, their roots clothed with snow of the purest white, their lean, jointed branches, like skeleton fleshless arms and fingers, stretching as if in silent appeal, towards the heavens. A ringing sound of axes in the distance, broken by the crash of branches and the muffled thud of falling trees; a camp, whose thin, curling wreath of smoke makes its fantastic web among the woods, then escapes into the invisible; a savoury odor of food in preparation, strong but welcome; a warm pressure of the hand, a seat in the snuggest corner,—talk, supper, song-worship and prayer, then to a bed luxurious with the spring and flavour of spruce or pine-tops. This is our reminiscence as we read of the Lumber-camps Mission.

Two or three special considerations occur to us as we look back upon our own limited share in this kind of work.

Lumbermen everywhere have a hard reputation. New Brunswick lumbermen—perhaps we should say the Maine-men who come to New Brunswick—are among the world's wonders for profanity. There is no wicked turn which can be given to language—no short, sharp, startling methods of at once throwing contempt upon the Son of God, and bandying most sacred things in commonest discourse, that they are not familiar with. How often have we stood almost petrified with horror—how often been tempted to taunt the blasphemers with cowardice, as we listened to some half-drunken, loutish crew putting Christ to an open shame! Alas, blessed Lord, Thy name is continually blasphemed; but ah! how enduring is Thy patience!

It would be unjust, though, to brand the hardy lumbermen of the camps in New Brunswick with this abandoned character. At least we have seen among them dispositions the very reverse. All is true that is said of their respect for the Missionary, and their avidity for the word of God. On a few occasions we have ministered to men who had travelled from sunrise till eleven o'clock—perhaps ten or twelve miles, and on foot—to be present at preaching.

We all know the tendency of the human heart when left to itself—how prone it is to forgetfulness of good, and to the harbouring of evil. The solitude of lumbering life is even worse than this;—it is the exclusion of, at least, a proportion of devout men from the ordinary, hallowing associations of Christian life, to be constantly brought into contact with others only of their own sex, whose very exuberance of freedom from social restraint becomes a temptation to the grosser vices. It seems, therefore, a duty to contribute by sympathy and prayer to a work whose aim is the spiritual benefit of a class who are making the wealth of the country. If sons of John Wesley—and surely it is an occupation which would have awakened all Wesley's best sympathies and enlisted his aid—can be found with a strong love of the adventure and ambitions of such a mission, it is plain enough to us that they are clearly called of God to a good work, and their Conference as positively admonished to send them. *Providing*—yes, there it is again—that the treasury of the church is not empty.

REMEDIES FOR DRUNKENNESS.

A few weeks ago an article appeared in this paper, recommending a certain medical preparation as a cure for drinking habits. We soon became aware that no inconsiderable effect was produced. From every quarter we were informed that the remedy was being discussed—that its properties were doubted—that it was being put to the test. In short, down beneath the surface of social life a sensation had been caused. Wives were clinging to the new hope which had been awakened; sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, were asking for information. The druggists were at work. It is the duty of a journalist to help suffering humanity, and we did what we could to afford light and comfort.

What a revelation is this! It is only as we see efforts at self-preservation that we become aware mankind are perishing. Who would have imagined that a prescription casually published would awaken so much anxiety? Alas, the patients must be numerous, and the disease desperate, when such results ensue from trifling causes.

It is not our intention to discuss the question whether drunkenness be a disease or a crime. Doubtless it is both, according to circumstances. But in ranking it exclusively in the category of diseases, do we not sometimes afford a little comfort to the enemy? Granted that confirmed drunkards are but children, with as limited will-power; are children assisted or injured by the repeated information that they are helpless, incapable of taking care of themselves from an enemy, and with but feeble power to rise when they fall? It seems to us, with all sympathy for this afflicted class, that the theory of drunkard-disease should be confined to scientific men, and then but seldom discussed, excepting in a scientific way. More, much more, should be made of the fact as we understand it and believe it, that drunkenness is an offence against God, and an injury to society next to irreparable. Appeals to self-respect, to individual manhood and womanhood, are not, we think, sufficiently frequent and earnest. Above all, we do not resort as we ought, to that one sovereign remedy—Prayer, and the Grace of God. The Gospel was designed just to reach the conditions said to exist in the drunkard's character. We preach, and affect to believe, that the most hopeless of afflictions are under divine control. It is well authenticated that the worst forms of drunkenness are within the limits of recovery. Some noble specimens of redeemed manhood are here and there among the people of our acquaintance. With all this present to our understanding, do we honour the Grace of God as far as we ought by calling it to our aid in this most momentous enterprize of recovery and renovation?

THE BENEDICTION.

A correspondent in St. John papers writes forcibly—manifestly with much feeling, and certainly with great good sense—upon the unseemly habit of hasty retirement from Sabbath public services. He designates it the "Amen rush." He includes all *Protestant* denominations in the charge, and half intimates that the preachers share the responsibility of the evil by giving it the strength of their own example. Buttoning overcoats, unbuttoning pew doors, the swinging of arms in the air in hurried effort to bring coats and shawls to time, even the nervous movements of ladies fingers in adjusting ribbons and fastening broaches, this correspondent notices as features of the closing moments of public worship.

We had hoped that improvement followed numerous and faithful admonitions given a few years ago from both the press and the pulpit. It is observed that the conduct alluded to is more common in new than in old countries; and with us it may have been in part a lingering of the habits of backwoods days, We are still inclined to think that, in our own body, at any rate—of whose worship we have the best knowledge—there has been marked improvement in this respect during ten or twelve years. But it is possible strangers may observe what we are not in a position to detect.

The remedy seems not difficult to reach. It is, in fact, in the hands of the officiating clergyman. A word of caution kindly given; an example of quiet, solemn, deliberate movement on his own part; if need be a sermon, or succession of sermons upon the "Benediction" as a most impressive and important part of public worship—one that holds prominence in many of the books of the Bible, and certainly has been a marked feature of public worship through all the ages—would doubtless have a good effect.

ENGLAND'S LITTLE WARS.

The millennium, with its "piping times of peace," has not yet come. Wars and rumours of war still fill men's hearts with fear, and our world with tribulation. But the marvel is, that the most Christian nation to-day is the most belligerent. Within the past fifty years, when science has won some of its most splendid triumphs, and Christianity has attained its widest circumference of power, and the progress of the world in enlightenment and civilization has been without a parallel in history, Christian England has participated in no less than twenty-eight different wars, some of which have been on a gigantic scale. The lull that followed Waterloo lasted upwards of twenty years; but since that time, with scarcely an interval of peace, the British lion has been roaring among the mountains of Afghanistan, and anon along the plains of India; in the ports of China, or amidst the thickets of Abyssinia and of Ashantee. And, excepting a few disasters, such as that which attended the first campaign in Afghanistan, and the recent terrible reverse experienced in Zululand, England's little wars have been so many oscillations of "the swing of conquest."

Of course war, from its very nature, is always an evil, wasting both the blood and treasure of a nation, and drying up the fountains of prosperity; yet, it is not always an unmitigated evil; for in many ways apart from man's remotest thought in the prosecution of war, a wise Providence overrules "the wrath of man" to the furtherance of his gracious purposes, and—

"Out of seeming evil still educing good."

England's little wars would seem to be, not the gratification of any lust of empire, like the wars of ancient Greece and Rome, but rather the natural and necessary working out of her high destiny as the greatest colonizing nation in the world. When civilization and barbarism come in contact, a struggle for supremacy ensues, and the thunder of war, like the clash of contending clouds, reverberates over the world. Then follows the hush of peace and the hum of busy industry, and all other benefits of civilized life. By destroying the tyranny of petty despots, such as Theodore and Shere Ali and Cetywayo, their dominions are made accessible to better influences; scattered, fragmentary tribes are unified; and future advancement in the arts and comforts of national life is ensured, just as the "Wars of the Roses" broke down the power of the barons in England, and contributed towards the organic unity of the English nation. Nor is this the only result of England's little wars. Besides tending to the colonization of remote lands, they have given quite an impulse to knowledge, adding to our linguistic and geographical and literary store. The present Zulu war—the seventh Kaffir war that England has waged—has awakened a wonderful interest in the two million natives under her rule in South Africa. Undismayed at the difficulties in the orthoepy of barbarous tongues, even Cetywayo (Ketchwaio) whose cognomen, like himself, is "a savage of a rather unique sort," has surrendered the secret of his pronunciation, while his people, the Zulus, who are described as "the noblest heathen that ever lived," would impress the outside world with a sense of their own greatness as a nation, by the name they bear. "Zulu," it is said, means "celestial," *izula* being the word for heaven and sky. And such is the high opinion of these African celestials concerning themselves, that if any of their actions excite wonder, they will say, "Wonder not, we are Zulus; Zulus can do anything."

And among this barbarous people, in common with the other aboriginal nations of South Africa, there is said to exist an extensive traditional literature, which the Folk-lore Society recently organized at Cape Town, proposes to collect and preserve in a permanent form.

Equally valuable and interesting is the knowledge recently gained concerning Afghanistan. Here, too, orthoepic difficulties have been overcome, and more accurate information acquired. Instead of Afghan-*is*-tan, according to our school-books, we are now taught to say Afghanis-*tan*, "stan" being a general termination for Central Asian names, and signifies "country." Thus we have Hindo*stan*, Turke*stan*, etc. So of Cabul, instead of being Cabool, with the accent on the last syllable, it is Cawbyl, with the accent on the first syllable, making the word rhyme with "bawble." And as to Afghan literature, several Orientalists have collected it from the most obscure archives, and pronounce it to be as noble in thought and fancy, as are those of Persia and Hindostan. The Afghans it is said by good authority, are as rich in imagination and metaphor as the Arabs. What can surpass the beauty of the following sentiment?

"Shouldst thou bestow but a drop of water on the thirsty,
It will become an ocean between thee and the fire of hell;
Shouldst thou give but a grain of corn to the hungry,
Verily, it will be hereafter thy provision in eternity."

Still more beautiful, because of its allegorical drapery, is the following:—

"Though the bat hideth himself from the light of the sun,
In what manner hath the sun injury therefrom?
'Tis dogs' nature to howl at the sight of the moon,
And, by their yelping, only bring laughter on themselves.
The five fingers once had a quarrel together,
In which the little finger meekly owned its own littleness;
There is a dignity in the very insignificance of form,
Hence 'twas fitting that the little finger should wear the ring."

Now, were the knowledge of such gems of literature as these, the only result of England's little wars, our instinctive horror of bloodshed would be greatly lessened. The cost, of course, were great, but gems are always costly.

But, after all, the main advantage resulting from England's little wars, is the opening up of new mission fields, and the awakening in Christian minds of an intenser missionary sympathy. It is a pity that the citadel of heathenism should need to be stormed by shot and shell in order that the gospel of peace might be introduced. There is a strange inconsistency in proffering the benefits of Christianity on the point of the bayonet; but if stern necessity demands it, let us submit to the inevitable, and rejoice that England's little wars are in any way the means of advancing the world's greatest good. And may all wars be speedily brought to a perpetual end!

WESLEY AND THE HYMN-MENDERS.

In these days of spirited discussion over Hymns ancient and modern, it is but natural that John Wesley should come in for his share of the criticism. Liberties have been taken with the lyrics of both John and Charles, even among their descendents in the various branches of the Methodist body,