

Northrop, Albert Franklin Park, James Lodowick Phelps, Jun., Humphrey Pickard, Lansing Porter, John Henry Rolston, Dennis Sage, De Witt Clinton Vosbury, Samuel Henry Ward, Hiam Willey.

The degree of bachelor of science and English literature, on Abel Converse. The degree of master of arts conferred upon candidates in course. Honorary degrees conferred. Obligations of the scholar of the present age, with valedictory addresses, Harmon M. Johnston, Auburn, N. Y.; Music; Benediction.

The honorary degree of doctor of divinity was conferred upon the Rev. Robert Alder, of London, one of the secretaries of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, who has recently visited Upper Canada, on business connected with the interests of their missions, and is now in Nova Scotia on the same business.

The exercises were highly creditable to all concerned, and the University opens this term with an increase of about thirty students.

On Tuesday the joint board met for business, and, among other things which they did, elected, by a unanimous vote, Rev. Stephen Olin, D. D., to fill the place of the lamented Dr. Fisk, as president of the Wesleyan University.

Theological.

UTILITY OF CLASS MEETINGS.

CLASS meetings, so far we are acquainted, are not common among any people on earth except the Methodists. Of their origin and intention it is not necessary now to speak. Our own people are supposed to be well instructed on these points, and to most others the subject would be probably uninteresting. With the utility of these extraordinary, or perhaps more properly, prudential means of grace, every member of any considerable standing in the Methodist Church is supposed to be acquainted, and therefore it is only to the negligent and the comparatively uninstructed among us that we need say any thing. We do not profess, in the adoption of these means of grace, to be governed by either an express command or apostolic example, and yet we think there are passages in Scripture that will warrant the practice. Such, for example, are the following. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name," Mal. iii. 16. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another that ye may be healed," Jam. v. 16. From these passages we might argue the propriety of class meetings, and, from their well known results, as also from the effects resulting from the neglect of them, their utility. It is a Christian maxim, that "the just live by faith; but if he [the just] draw back, God has no pleasure in him." If faith, therefore, be the vital principle by which the Christian holds on his way, it is all essential that faith itself be kept alive. This Christian grace is, by our Lord, compared to a grain of mustard seed, and we know that a very small seed deposited in the earth springs up and becomes a plant, small and tender indeed at first, but in due time a great tree. It is necessary, however, that the soil be fertile, as well as warmed by the sun and moistened by the dew of heaven. The plant, while young, might easily be trodden under foot of men, eaten up by wild beasts, or cut down by the scythe of the mower, but when it has become a great tree a small matter will not root it up, or overturn, or destroy it. So a grain of heavenly truth implanted in the human heart, and nourished by the warming in-

fluence of the Sun of righteousness, and moistened by the dew of heavenly grace produces faith—faith in the being of a God—faith in the atonements of Christ—"a divine conviction of the reality of invisible and eternal things." Under the constant influence of this principle the Christian lives, runs the heavenly race, wars a good warfare, and overcomes the world, the flesh, and the devil. This faith if properly cultivated, produces many branches, leaves, blossoms, fruit. Like the tender plant a little matter at first will check its growth, or perhaps destroy it, but after many years of trial it is likely to stand. Among us are there many means of grace well calculated to nourish and strengthen our faith—the preaching of the word, prayer, frequent communion, as also Christian experience, either read or heard, and especially class meetings. These means are strikingly adapted to the wants of young and weak Christians. They are admirably suited to cherish the smallest seeds of grace—to encourage the weak beginnings of faith, and to nourish the feeblest sparks of divine life in the soul. Faith is a plant which must often be watered, and carefully watched, or it will droop and die. Love is a fire which must be well supplied with fuel of it will soon go out, and it can be kept burning only by keeping the brands together. Christians must not forget the assembling of themselves together: they must often think of each other, and so much the more as they see "the day approaching." The two disciples of old, walking together in the unity of the Spirit and the bonds of peace, soon found their hearts warmed together with heavenly love, while Jesus talked with them and opened their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures. The faith of Thomas was greatly shaken, and well nigh destroyed, while absent from the little band—the infant class. Negligence produces carelessness and indifference. Absence produces shyness and surmising, and groundless suspicions, loss of confidence, want of affection, declension in faith and love, coldness, and eventually spiritual death. Neglect of class is a violation of the covenant between us and our brethren, a breach of the terms of admission into the society, which requires that we should evince our desire of salvation by doing no harm, by doing all the good in our power, and by using the means of grace. At our baptism, if baptized in adult years, (and if baptized in infancy, we are taught to believe the same,) we publicly profess that we "believe in the communion of saints," but what fellowship do they enjoy who never meet with their brethren in class, who never speak to each other on the things of God? We are commanded to "let the word of Christ dwell in us richly, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in our hearts to the Lord." There may be seasons and circumstances in which it is quite inconvenient, if not impossible, to attend class, in which, doubtless, the persons are wholly excusable. Sickness, distance, feeble health, and unpleasant weather, age, and other infirmities, and sometimes necessary employment, are among the reasonable grounds of excuse, and no church, society, or judicious leader, will think unkindly of a member when these things interpose to prevent a regular attendance at the class room. The expressions used by St. James, in the passage referred to, imply that rich benefits are to be obtained by a union of the fervent effectual prayers of many righteous persons. "Pray for one another that ye may be healed," are words full of meaning, and intimate at least that the Christian may be sick or wounded. Sometimes the good man's reputation is wounded, and he needs the sympathies of his brethren, and an interest in the prayers of saints. Sometimes his peace is wounded, and then he needs especially the consolations of pardon. Sometimes his spirit is