

SPECIAL PRAYER.

The demerit of some of the continued observance of the Week of Prayer, and the decline of interest in its services in some quarters, are not, we think, to be regarded as indicative of an increasing lack of belief in the efficacy and value of united prayer. These quiet protests may have quite another meaning. They may rather indicate a period of transition, when the subjects suited to a year of petitions may no longer be crowded into the services of a week, but may be so taken up at intervals as to permit more intelligent thought and speech and prayer than can at present be permitted upon any one topic. The Week of Prayer, many seem to say, has impressed the world with a conviction of the power of prayer; and, now that the lesson is learned, let such united prayer as has girdled the whole earth round in recent years, in response first to the call of a devoted missionary band, be offered up at certain specified periods in behalf of the several interests of the Church of Christ.

We are impressed with the tendency in this direction as we glance at a circular calling attention to those days set apart in October for special prayer for Sunday-schools. Already there have been similar calls to prayer for colleges, for temperance, for missions, and, on previous occasions, for our Sunday-schools. May we not hope that in coming years the opening week of January may be devoted wholly to earnest petitions for the Holy Spirit's influences on the Church at large, to be followed, at special seasons, by united prayer for special subjects. Thus may earth and heaven witness continued union of Christians at the mercy-seat, and restless pleadings bring down unwonted blessings. The past few years have been rich in plans and schemes: has not the time arrived when the Father shall see his children, knit together in worship and service as one band, crying together to him for his blessing upon one department after another? There is a time for plans and new departures; but there is also a time when the workers must present all these at the feet of the Redeemer, and say with upward gaze, "the machinery is provided; and the quickening Spirit is our general need." Till this is done repeated failures and inadequate results will teach the lesson men are so slow to learn, that "without Me ye can do nothing."

In spite of all that the evils and sneers of modern infidelity may do, the world is not ready to abandon the belief that prayer opens heaven. In advance of the day of final adjustment it places more faith in the humble disciple who breathes the soul of prayer than it does in the knowledge of the philosopher who proudly asks, "of what use is prayer?"

The rapid achievements of science in recent years should strengthen faith and lend point to human appeal to the Divine. The men who to-day cavil and scoff at prayer are men who, half a century ago, would have scoffed at the idea of conquests of science that are annihilating time and space. "Impossible" would have been the remark of one who, seventy-five years ago, should have been told that to pass from Halifax to the seat of our General Conference at Belleville in two days was within the region of the possible. But, as one has said, "men have learned to marry steam to iron and the child of rapid transit has been born." If even twenty years ago a man had been told that it was possible to stand within his office and speak to some friend twenty or fifty miles away, even the scientist would have laughed. And yet men have done this, and much more, until we dare no longer ascribe that he has proceeded beyond the mere threshold of the possible. And this has been done by no violation of material law, but altogether along its line. Who then shall tell what God, possessing infinite knowledge, may do for him who, in simple, unquestioning obedience, claims for the sake of his Son the Divine intervention in behalf of personal need or personal salvation, or, may one not add, in behalf of those grand purposes which lie so near to the heart of Deity? More to be honored for simple consistency is he who gives to his Father alone credit for that boundless might of which each year gives us new illustrations, than he who coldly, in the face of what even man is doing through the forces

God has placed at his disposal, can declare it unreasonable to believe that God, "without breaking a gossamer strand of a single natural law, can so manipulate it as to cause to convey upon the head of a suppliant" an answer of peace and blessing, or more, to vouchsafes to him who asks, in behalf of a community or nation, an answer which is altogether in accordance with his great purposes. The humblest suppliant and the greatest Christian scientist worship very near each other.

HINTS TO CLASS-LEADERS.

So intimately connected are our class-meetings with the vitality of our church that one is not likely to err when he predicates barrenness and dearth to be the normal condition of the circuit where they are habitually neglected. Every resource is in some cases employed to make the class-meeting interesting and attractive—such as varying the exercises, changing the leader, changing the music, and changing the class-meeting into a bible-class. A thousand pities that the spiritual condition of the church should be such as to render such expedients necessary. The following suggestions from the *Primitive Methodist* may set some of our leaders on a new track:

At a recent class-meeting, instead of the ordinary question frequently asked, the following was put to each member: "So far as you know, have you been instrumental in leading any soul to Christ?" In most cases the answer was, No. The evening was spent in discussing various methods of soul-winning, and it was sought to encourage each to put forth efforts in that direction, and report the next week. There were five the next week who had most interesting reports to give; not that either had seen anyone brought directly to Christ, but they had cases for which they desired the prayers of the class. What think you of something of the same sort in your class? Or, would this suit you better? Let bands of young men be formed in every charge throughout the district. Not more than a dozen in a band. Their motto, "The salvation of young men." To meet weekly. Seek and believe for Divine guidance. Fix on one unconverted young man, enter his name in a book, vote for two of the band to speak or write to him that week about his soul. Let special prayer be offered daily by the entire band for his conversion. Be willing to use any means God may appoint to secure the same, and keep a record when prayer is answered and the young man saved. You must do something for souls, or you will lose your own.

The following hints from the *Richmond Christian Advocate* are also appropriate and timely:

Our class-meetings, the training schools of the Church, are almost obsolete. The young convert needs instruction. The pastor in the country is busy. It is revival times. He receives the new members, and is off to another church and in a protracted meeting. In the city the revival ends perhaps just before Conference. There is an interregnum. It may be that a new pastor comes. The babes in Christ are all the while suffering from the right diet.

How ignorant are new members, even if intelligent of the history, doctrines, usages, and polity of Methodism. But how eager they are to learn. Not a moment should be lost in giving the opportunity to acquaint themselves with these matters. A proper book put in their hands is well enough. We all know that while a volume may lie unopened, a periodical seldom is unread. There is no schooling of young converts like a Church paper. Every paragraph is scanned. The spirit of Methodism is absorbed. The weekly journal is, in fact, a working model of the system. The nomenclature of the organization is caught up at once. Interest is started in the different movements of the body. The perusal of the publication certainly, but, more importantly, it makes the plastic reader. The chameleon no more surely changes to the color of the tree it feeds on than the constant patron of a journal receives the impress of the principles of the paper.

The weekly visits of a denominational organ, charged with the varied matters of deepest concern to the Church, never fail to influence the household it enters. Its power is noiseless, without observation or display, but it is pervading and permanent. In every department of human affairs the press is recognized as the subtle power that controls within the range of its circulation.

It ought to be a prime consideration to put the Church paper in the home of every new convert. It is weak, cruel, sinful to leave a young Methodist, so teachable, and so trustful, without the means of learning the nourishing facts of our Church.

MISSION WORK.

The *Baltimore Methodist*, speaking of the encouragement and assistance which should be given by old established churches to weak societies which

are struggling to build up the denomination in new and promising fields, says:—

Many in our larger churches to-day are paralyzed, if not dead spiritually, for the want of work, while fields ripe for the harvest lie at their doors without reapers. An old case, of old associations, of an old church home—even without usefulness to God or souls—is more controlling than an open door at some other place, where success in the Master's work and the upbuilding of the Church in new and hopeful fields invite to effort and promise reward.

O! for a revival of denominational love and zeal that will stir the nests of the inactive and put men to work in fields of need and promise; break down the barrier of money and social caste in our churches, and stay the tide whose flowing current is bearing so many who are seeking rest, in already strong central churches, where their presence and help are not needed, and influence will not be felt, while outlying fields, where we ought, as a Church, to plant and grow, are passed by and neglected or left to a few true, earnest and often discouraged men and women, who need and merit the help of the whole Church.

No effort to control this evil is proposed. This cannot be done by legislation. The only practical way to correct it is for pulpits, pew and press to cultivate a healthful denomination spirit—a love for the whole Church—her success and growth—rather than one's own particular charge, rest, ease, or quiet in some strong, prosperous church, where little is expected and less will be done.

From a certain standpoint there is a good degree of force in the question asked by the Rev. Alfred Osborne in the *Church Guardian*:

Some fear that lay preachers, not being theologically trained, will forget "the proportion of faith," and will air their pet ideas; but are not Deacons (and Presbyters too) airing their pet ideas all over the Church? Is it possible that the present Deacon comes out of college fully equipped and nicely balanced? Almost every ordinarily educated layman of thirty years of age, who has made theology his study, knows more of the things of God than any newly ordained Deacon of 23 years I have ever seen. One remembers well the foolishness of one's early ministry. And shall we forget that the fulness of the Holy Ghost is not reserved for ministers in Orders. Are there no Prophets now? Even Apollon could learn from Aquila and Priscilla, and how often do we, who are older in the ministry, as we sit by the sick bed of some lowly disciple, feel that with all our reading we know nothing at all comparatively of Christ and His salvation, and would gladly change places with the one we minister unto.

We regret to learn that a son of Mr. George Davies, of Bridgetown, was drowned, on Friday last, while bathing with some of his companions. The deceased young man was a grandson of the late Rev. Thomas Davies, well known in this Province. We deeply sympathize with the afflicted family in their sad bereavement.

One of the most forcible statements made by those in favor of removing the old limitation of the pastorate is that presented in *Zion's Herald* by Dr. Wentworth:

You ask, "Should the itinerant term be for only a year? That is its limit now, with power to repeat in the same place for three years. It is this annual appointment that distinguishes, and will forever distinguish, Methodism from Congregationalism, which gains, at the outset, for a definite period. Every minister in the connection is taken up once a year, changed or put back as the work requires. It would be the same as now if the administrative restriction were removed, the only one in a system flexible at all other points, and professedly the 'child of Providence.' At this one point it bars 'Providence' out. It excepts from the iron rule agencies, schools, missions, and a hundred side interests, but is inflexible as death in the direction of preaching the Gospel, the centre concern of all.

The Baptist Convention, on Monday last, adopted the following recommendation of the Board of Governors of Acadia College, viz:—

"The Board having carefully considered the communication from the President of the Toronto Baptist College and Professor McVicar in reference to ministerial education, believe that the hearty and earnest cooperation in the plan proposed will not only enable the Baptists of the Maritime Provinces to develop, for the present, more rapidly than would otherwise be possible, all the literary and theological work committed to their charge, but will also do much to enable us to discharge the obligations which we owe to our brethren in other sections of the Dominion, and thus to unify the work of the Baptists of Canada. Your Board would therefore commend the proposed plan of co-operation in ministerial education for your favorable consideration and action."

Many thanks to Alderman McLellan, Chairman of the Garden Commissioners, for a hand some bouquet of flowers. Their beauty and fragrance are like a sweet benediction in our sanctum, and afford us a gleam of the pleasure which is enjoyed by the multitudes who daily visit the gardens, and are profuse in their expressions of admiration.

The *Presbyterian Witness* reminds the public that "the blue book issued by the Dominion Government, giving the returns of convictions in 1880, showed that while there were 9,304 convictions of all the Protestant denominations put together, including all who were not Catholics, there were no fewer than 10,826 convictions of Catholics alone. In 1881 the figures were 9,922 of all denominations excepting Catholics, and 12,159 Catholics." The *Witness* adds, "Do not our Roman Catholic friends, especially the clergy, make a note of these figures?—We are convinced that lotteries, indulgences, and multiplied holidays have a pernicious effect on the people's morals."

The subject of the extension of the pastorate of Methodism receives less attention in England than in the United States. In the latter country the official papers have sent out circulars, hundreds of answers to which are published by them. The majority of the replies are in favor of maintaining present arrangements, though *Zion's Herald* suggests that a test of weight rather than of number might alter the showing. In the English Conference, on the other hand, memorials from the Liverpool, and Edinburgh Districts only elicited from the Committee the remark: "The Conference does not accept of this suggestion."

In answer to the charge that he had said that he would rather be a cannibal than a Close Communion Baptist, Spurgeon once wrote: "I am not in the habit of speaking disrespectfully of Strict Communion Baptists, for I have a full conviction of their conscientiousness. As to saying that I would sooner be a cannibal than a close-union Baptist, I never thought so and certainly never said so. I have not the slightest wish to be one or the other; but I rejoice in being a loving brother to the latter."

The Baptist Convention of the Maritime Provinces has been in session in this city since Saturday last. About 350 members and delegates are in attendance, representing 344 churches, and 37,489 members. John March, Esq., of St. John, is President. A number of the city pulpits were supplied by members of the convention on Sabbath last.

Mr. H. D. Ruggles of Annapolis and Mr. C. W. Robinson, son of W. J. Robinson, Esq., of Moncton, won the prizes offered for competition at the recent Matriculation Examinations at Mount Allison. The attendance at the College is good—all the rooms being occupied.

The President of Mount Allison College acknowledges with thanks the receipt of several specimens of Saragossa sea-weed and of lizards, Cuba, and drum fish from the coast of Cuba, presented to the Museum by Capt. Eagles, of the Brig "Toronto."

We are requested to correct the following errors which occur in the communication from the Cumberland District published in last week's issue, viz:—Mr. "Carter" should read Coates; and Mr. Fulton's address was not "witless," but artless.

ACTION OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE CHRISTIAN CONF.

The following is the text of the official reply of the English Bible Christian Conference to the memorial of the Canadian Conference in regard to the proposed Union of Canadian Methodism, as published in the *Toronto Christian Guardian*:

In reply to the Memorial of our Canadian Conference on the subject of Methodism Union, we feel to state:—1st. That we approve of the brotherly spirit of the Memorial; that we appreciate the principle of Union, and that we respect the convictions which our brethren have expressed on this important matter. 2nd. Nevertheless, the proposal of their entire separation from our body in England causes us deep regret and pain, and we are apprehensive that

such a separation would diminish the influence and damage the interests of the connexion as a whole.

3rd. That we remind our friends in Canada of the evidence afforded us that as a section of the Church of Christ we exist in agreement with the Divine will, and that we have received an undeniable commission to preach the gospel both here and there, and that according to our best judgment the work assigned us as a denomination is not yet completed.

4th. That we affectionately urge our Canadian friends not to hasten the consummation of this object, for should it be of God no doubt it will yet appear in much clearer light; and we withhold our sanction to the proposed Union until an opportunity shall be afforded for forming a matured judgment on the subject.

P. LABDON, President.
J. MARTIN, Sec'y.

ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS PREMIUM.

The American Sunday school Union offers a premium of ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS for the best book, written for the society, upon

THE OBLIGATIONS AND ADVANTAGES OF THE DAY OF REST.

The book must be popular in character, of a "high order of merit," and consist of not less than 60,000 nor more than 100,000 words.

The treatise may be descriptive, narrative, expository or didactic. The obligations of the Sabbath may be based upon historical, physical and scriptural grounds, and its advantages urged upon physical, economical, spiritual, or other considerations. Each author may also suggest an appropriate title for his work. The MSS. must be submitted to the Committee of Publication on or before October 1, 1883. Each MS. should have a special mark, and the name and address of the author be sent at the same time in a sealed envelope bearing the same mark, and both addressed, post or express prepaid, to the American Sunday-school Union, 1122 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

The MS. approved by the Committee is to be the exclusive property of the Union, and the premium will be paid when the copyright of the same is secured by the society. The society reserves the right to decline any and all MSS. offered, if unsuitable for its purpose. Unaccepted MSS. will be returned to the writers at their expense.

This premium is offered in accordance with the terms and conditions of the John C. Green Trust.—*Sunday-school World*, August 1883.

YARMOUTH DISTRICT.

The F. D. meeting of the Yarmouth District, which convened at Shelburne on the 14th inst., found itself more highly honored than any other within the bounds of the N. S. Conference could possibly be, seeing there is but one Pres. Hertz, and one Sec'y. Rogers. Under the mild and genial ruling of our President chairman, the regular business of the time was transacted during the first session. The lay brethren were conspicuous for their absence, there being present but one, Bro. Crowell of Shelburne itself. Perhaps after the Basis of Union shall have received its final ratification, and we shall all find ourselves working under a new constitution and order of things in the great church, as yet unnamed, the laity will take a livelier interest in all the affairs of our Zion. Excepting Bro. Hockin, now over the sea on a visit to his native land, and Bro. Mellish who had not yet fully recovered from the injuries, communicated by his fall from a barn all the ministerial brethren were at hand and looking as if they might this year, under the blessing of God, do good service in the cause of the Master. After the ordinary routine work had been disposed of the pleasures of the District Convention began to be enjoyed. At three day-meetings thoughtful papers were read and earnest speeches delivered on the subjects named on the published programme. As the discussions proceeded we were all made to realize anew the majesty and momentousness of the work committed to the Church by its Head; to feel afresh our needs as workers upon whom rests responsibilities the most terrible; and again to seek a re-baptism of the promised Comforter and Helper.

The evening services which were fairly attended were felt to be seasons of heavenly refreshing. The Spirit's presence and power were realized to a marked degree. The eloquent and practical discourses of the chairman and secretary, first that of the latter from "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ," and then that of the former from "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin," and the fervent exhortations which followed them were not spoken in vain. The life of believers was quickened, and many who were out of Christ were led to fear the wrath to come or wish the joy and safety of the Christian life. At each of these services those who desired salvation were asked to rise and claim the prayers of God's children on their behalf; and on both evenings several responded to the invitation. Not alone Bro. Mack and his corps of faithful workers, who had hopefully and prayerfully looked forward to this District Convention, and whose hands were strengthened by its means, remain convinced of the utility of such a programme as that the carrying out of which is but indicated above, and grateful to the Lord for putting it into

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the heart of our devoted Chairman and President to devise and adopt the plan; it is not too much to say that not one member went from it to his home, his heart warmed, his zeal quickened and his whole being won anew for Christ, who did not think that every F. D. meeting should include some such services within the scope of its order of exercises, and that the ministers and laymen composing it should come together mentally and spiritually prepared to work in expectation of the highest and best results.

TRURO DISTRICT.

In response to the call of the chairman the members of the Truro District met on Aug. 31, at Middle Musquodobb, or to give it its new and more euphonious name, Laytonville. Here we found Brother Davis nicely situated in a fine new parsonage the result of earnest labor on his part and liberal co-operation on the part of his people. According to previous arrangement the first meeting of the District was a preaching service on the evening of the 31st, at which the Chairman, Bro. Thos. Rogers, gave us a most practical and earnest sermon from Acts 4:2, "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers." He showed the importance of standing true to the fundamental principles of the apostolical religion as given to us in the Bible and re-asserted and enforced by our founder. The obligation of the Sacrament of the Lord's supper, the prayer-meeting and class-meeting were duly emphasized, and the sermon was one which many of us felt ought to be preached by the chairman on every circuit in the District. After the sermon a social service was held in which most of the brethren participated. The Spirit's presence was deeply felt, and it was a delightful season of "refreshing from the presence of the Lord."

Wednesday morning the District met for the transaction of financial business. The roll was called and brethren Rogers, Prestwood, Mosher, Davis, Hale, Shepherdsen, Buckley, Davis, R. S. Stevens and Doane answered to their names. Bro. Hooper was the only absentee. Recording Stewards Oliver Langille, Wm. Huetz, Wm. Layton, and Isaac Gaetz were also present. After the usual routine business was over a little time was spent in discussing the necessity of working more earnestly in the interests of the WESLEYAN and our own literature. In the afternoon a public service was held for open conversation upon the best methods of carrying forward the work of God in the District. All the ministerial and several of the lay brethren took part in what proved to be perhaps the best meeting of all. There seemed to prevail among all the firm belief in, and loyalty to the methods given in our Discipline. Full consecration, individual canvass and the careful working up of the prayer and class-meetings were felt to be necessary to true success. All present seemed impressed with the necessity of more earnest devoted service, and the motto of the English Conference, "a revival on every circuit" was often quoted.

The evening service, the last of the series, was devoted to the interests of the new Memorial Hall at Sackville. Addresses were delivered by the chairman and brethren Prestwood, Buckley and Shepherdsen. Thursday morning found us leaving for our homes much refreshed in our souls by the intercourse with one another and with the Master. By request of the District I send you these few lines. I have tried to condense as much as possible but with poor success. I will only add that the kindness and hospitality of our friends at Laytonville fully sustained the reputation of Methodism in this particular. Our cause is not large at this station but the people stand by their pastor and by each other, and so of course our Church is growing.

H. P. D.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND FINANCIAL DISTRICT MEETING.

The District assembled on Tuesday morning at 9 o'clock in the basement of the Church at Charlottetown, Rev. S. T. Teed presiding. All the ministers of the District were present except the Rev. J. S. Allen and the Rev. J. V. Jost, the latter being still confined to his home by reason of impaired sight. The Stewards in attendance were Messrs. J. M. Hood, Tryon, and G. Smith, Montague. Rev. D. D. Currie was present, perfecting his arrangements for meetings throughout the District in connexion with the Centennial Movement. Revs. J. J. Rice, Bible Christian minister, and B. Chappell, M.A., were present during part of the sessions. The usual business was despatched with order and thoroughness. Last year's report actual circuit receipts were an advance on them was made, were accepted as the estimated income for the present year. Missionary and Educational Meetings were arranged for throughout the District. The chairman submitted a communication from the Secretary of the Educational Society, stating that this District is expected to raise a net sum of \$160 for the Educational Society. After a little conversation a scale, graduated according to the financial ability of each Circuit, was accepted, and each Superintendent promised to do his utmost towards raising the amount allotted to his Cir-

cular. It was decided that Mr. Stevens, the high esteem Mount Allison, be awarded to the Island having his Classes.

Mr. E. F. D. Chairman, J. J. Esers, to the most for the Sa view of the fact ed their full cha heartily encour deep earnest mony.

Resolved, That the members of the Oxford, hereby a of the high este ed by them for Lamert Stevens, kindly words a ministry, while him to all, and ble tribute to his

And further R to convey to the of our deceased our heart felt sy their great lov that in their hou be supported by hovah, and find strength and trouble.

LITURGIC The Rev. J. C on Liturgical Fo Baltimore Method The Lord's Pra being became not tion but, to a cer a symbol of fait ligation. For a lo only set form of ebration of the D the common serv the liturgies, wi that of Clonour.

There can be forms of divine in used in the Chur riation as the lan service was held v forms would for prehend the Lord of David, the for of Baptism and of While the extrao Spirit continued, son to believe, e Spirit made up a dinary service. ed Spirit dwells t tic service will fo will still speak them utterance. This has been a of religion in the era of extempo holy song has the vival ushered in getfulness of litu carelessnes as t fringes and tass sanctuary when mighty wind' is en tongues as of voice of God o books then. The prevalen of liturgical fori deance of spiri toy of the churc crruption that e through the ado of Constantine, glory of the Em for that of God, attested by the embarrassment quer was covere ed sensuous fori

LETTER FRU My Dear Bre ers of the West deeply sympathi our late esteem great trial whi On Friday last ing son of Mr. years, was dr near the residen many excellen only to his rela became acquaint lamented death the entire count of all grace n bliss the bereav Y. Bridgetown The Rev. S. ary of the Lond years ago mad Fly River, New taken by a Eur in an attempt t tion work sudd by the massac teachers.