

Religious and Missionary Intelligence.

THE FORWARD MOVEMENT.

The great topic of the month is the Forward Movement. A feeling of hallowed expectation pervades the air. Methodism the wide world over is girding itself as never before for its God-appointed task to spread scriptural holiness throughout the land. It is bringing in the tithes into the storehouse and is looking for the fulfilment of the Divine promise, "Prove me now herewith, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

There are those who think that undue emphasis has been laid to the mere financial aspect of this end-of-the-century movement. If that means that the spiritual results of the Forward Movement have been overlooked, it would indeed be a dire disaster, and the contributing of a million or of ten millions, without seeking the Divine anointing and consecration, would be a bane and not a blessing. But in such an act of devotion—the giving of our substance and the giving of ourselves—each is the complement of the other. In Browning's poem *Date and Dabitur* are twin brothers, and when we most richly give we shall most richly receive.

It is not a mechanical theory of revival that is held. It is not dictating to the Almighty to appoint a time of special consecration and prayer, and to look for special results therefrom; it is but complying with the very conditions of success, it is looking for the set time to favour Zion.

A widespread revival can result only from the prayer of earnest faith, a prayer that believes the promises of God, and the use of every means that can possibly promote such a work. The earnest preaching of the Word and dependence upon the aid of the Divine Spirit, the use of sacred song, and especially the enlisting of the hearty co-operation of all God's people, in the class-meeting, the prayer-circle, the Sunday-school, the Epworth League.

The main agency will be, as ever, the God-honoured method—the preaching of the Gospel; but this must be accompanied by faithful visitation and individual effort. The old method of the Apostle Paul: "I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you,

and have taught you publicly, and from house to house," . . . "and ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."

In addition to this we know no more important agency than the use of the religious press. The revival issues of the *Guardian* and *Wesleyan*, of the *Epworth Era*, of the Sunday-school papers—these are all a potent means for following up and deepening the impressions made from the pulpit, and, in some cases, reaching the heart and quickening the conscience where the voice of the preacher cannot be heard.

There must be a revived spirituality in the class-meetings, in the prayer-circles, in the households of Israel, as a preparation for a great awakening in our public services. Few more wise counsels have ever been given than those of the venerable Theodore Cuyler to the Methodist ministers of the United States in a recent number of the *Christian Advocate*. His words of weight and wisdom are so timely and so practical that we enrich our pages with a liberal quotation:

DR. CUYLER ON REVIVAL METHODS.

Solemnly determine that with the Holy Spirit's help you will "compel people to come in," by going after them all through the week, and by kindling your pulpits red-hot with love of Christ and souls on the Sabbath. A zealous preacher who carefully prepares practical evangelical sermons, and keeps up thorough pastoral visitation, and interests himself in everybody, down to the little children, rarely fails to draw and to hold a good Sunday congregation. Keep Jesus Christ in your pulpit; let Him "lifted up" be the drawing power.

In the earlier days of American Methodism preachers did their own preaching. Sow your own Gospel seed this year, well steeped in prayer, and reap your own harvest. Put the responsibility down hard on your official boards and church members to back you up in your efforts; never cheapen or dishonour your own pulpit; and "let no man take thy crown." There is no such ecstasy this side of heaven as winning souls to Jesus Christ.

I exhort you not to be caught by the current delusion that this "advanced age" requires entirely new methods and a