

The Wesleyan.

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NOTE AND COMMENT.

There ought to be a good history of Methodism on the centre-table of every Methodist household in our borders.—*Southern Ad.*

The *New York Evening Post*, commenting upon the present liquor-license system, says: "One of its most dangerous outgrowths is the appearance in politics of the liquor interest as an organized force."

A Boston firm advertised an importation of artificial flowers for use in Episcopal churches at Easter. Bad; but not so bad as "artificial" music, "artificial" prayers, and "artificial" sermons.—*Christian Index.*

The Rev. Mr. Savage, of Boston, says that many men think it is monstrous for a woman to attend clinical lectures; and yet they "think it is perfectly proper for her to recline on a lounge and get the facts of the clinical lecture-out of a French novel."

The Rev. Paxton Hood not long since preached on "Gospel Notes to be found in Tennyson," and soon after one of his hearers, at a prayer-meeting at Midway Park, asked prayers for his minister, that he "might preach the gospel according to Christ, and not according to Tennyson."

"Whenever a man," says the *Cumlerland Presbyterian*, "finds himself in a place where he cannot teach what he believes to be important truth, let him give up the place and hold on to the truth. Let him lose his honors and save his manhood."

The rank and file of the teaching fraternity should be developed from the native population everywhere, and the most vital investment of funds by any community just waking up to educational life is the provision for the training of teachers.—*Journal of Education.*

We happened to see, says the *London Echo*, a requisition for two pounds of candles signed in duplicate by a school-keeper, a head-teacher, two managers, the chairman of the Works Committee, and the clerk to the School Board; and yet people accuse the Board of not taking care of the rate-payers' money.

A discriminating old lady said: "Socials do for some churches, and for some they don't." Some churches know how to manage a social, and others do not. It is yours a success—not financially or numerically—but as a means of what is social culture? If not, what is the mistake made? Find it out and seek its correction. Don't stay at home and grumble.—*Western Ad.*

Our Bishops are working Bishops. The last one we talked with has every Sunday pre-occupied until the middle of August. Between the Sundays he does a vast amount of work incidental to his office. The others are as busy. There is enough for them all to do—the harvest is white everywhere for the Episcopal sickle. Let the brethren be reasonable: even a bishop cannot be at two places at the same time.—*Nashville Ad.*

The first money paid into the treasury of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the M. E. Church was the gift of a lady in the name of her daughter, who, a little before her transition to the excellent glory, said: "If I should not get well I should like you to give as much money to the missionaries every year as it costs to take care of me." The money was applied to the support of a Bible woman in Moradabad, India.—*Ev.*

Union Theological Seminary, New York, sent forth 37 graduates a fortnight ago. They get this good bit of advice which Spurgeon gave to his students in April: "And do not get courting. That is not good for students. Keep yourselves to yourselves. Come back, as some one puts it, with your hearts and manners uncracked. Walk in the fields like Isaac, by all means, and meditate; but do not lift up your eyes for Rebecca. She will come soon enough."—*Pres. Witness.*

Bishop Wordsworth, of St. Andrews, Scotland, who at the invitation of the ministers and students preached both in the College church and in the Parish church, and was treated with all respect and cordiality, has thought fit to make a very strange return for the kindness he received. He has publicly apologized for his action, and warned the fields to beware of accepting Presbyterian invitations "with the risk of doing more harm than good." Putting Christian principle out of the question, such a breach of good manners makes one blush for the Episcopate. Such petty childish inconsistency and rudeness are intolerable.—*Evangelical Churchman.*

The Erie Railroad Company decides to discharge every employe who is not a total abstainer, and the New York Central orders all the tenants who sell liquor to vacate their premises; there is a general assent to their prohibitory requirements. A railroad enacts a stringent prohibitory law and it is all right. Is there not more reason why the State, the larger body corporate, should do the same?

A report has gained currency that in the opinion of Professor Dwight of Yale Seminary, the "Teaching" edited by Bryennios is a document of very little importance. We are informed that he has expressed no such opinion. He expresses himself very decidedly as to the very great interest and value of the discovery, and his associate, Professor Fisher, has lectured to the students upon it.—*Independent.*

It is stated in the *Churchman*, of this city, that a quartermaster at a frontier reservation post, applied for a Gatling gun, and that the commanding officer indorsed the application as follows: "In my opinion, the Indians at this agency are starving to death, and I recommend that a Gatling gun be sent to compel them to starve peaceably." The Gatling gun was promptly sent. Thus the good work of Christianizing the Indian goes on.—*N. Y. Tribune.*

Says an exchange: "A little romance comes in to light up the sad story of the disaster of the *Asia*, on Lake Huron, in September, 1882. The only two persons, one a single man and the other a woman, who lived to tell the story were strangers until thrown together in an open boat on a storm-tossed lake. The sequel to this strange introduction has been a happy marriage. Better that love should begin in a storm than end in one."

The *India Witness* says: "A missionary in the northwest has received a bona fide application from a Mohammedan, aged thirty-six, employed in government service, fair-looking, who intends converting himself to Christianity, to recommend him to some young native Christian lady, tolerably educated in English and Urdu, as a candidate for marriage. The idea of getting a wife as a part of the reward for changing one's religion is very common among Mohammedans."

When Jesus called his disciples it is a remarkable circumstance that he never called a single idler or loafer. They were all busy people. It is by these busy classes that every thing is done, and it is to them that the world looks for all enterprise and progress. When any thing is to be done in the Church, no one ever thinks of calling upon the people of leisure. The busiest men and women are the only ones that have time to work for God, and they are the ones that bear most cheerfully the heat and burden of the day.—*Meth. Advance.*

The American Medical Association held a convention in Washington a week ago. At one of the sessions a certain Dr. Van Kline, of Ohio, offered a resolution that, as many members of the Association were infidels, free thinkers, materialists, etc., the opening of the sessions with prayer be abolished. The resolution was tabled at once by nearly a unanimous vote. Infidelity has not the power among us that many of its noisy advocates affirm. We may well be grateful that we have God-fearing men in the medical profession.—*Zion's Herald.*

The *New York Tribune*, speaking of the high public esteem bestowed on the late Charles O'Connor, says: "The lesson of this exceptional honor is the value of personal character. It is safe to assume that the repute of Mr. O'Connor, for integrity and high-mindedness, has carried his fame into quarters where merely professional eminence would hardly have made him known. He carried into the court room, as well as into all the circles of private life, upright-ness, simplicity, sincerity and independence. These manly virtues not only adorned his career, but enhanced and extended his professional celebrity."

The *New York Retailer*, an influential organ of the liquor traffic, in a recent editorial says: "The Strength of the Enemy," says: "We call your attention to the fact that not less than one million votes are arrayed against you in the various so-called temperance societies, and almost the entire force of pulpit orators of the country. Add to this 153 newspapers and periodicals especially devoted to the cause, to say nothing of the lay ladies and weeklies which truckle more or less to the morbid and bigoted public sentiment that tolerates summary legislation." The temperance men are reminded of their power: let them use it.

BIBLE DIFFICULTIES.

Let it be understood, then, that this word of God is not a field all blazing with sunlight. Clouds hover over it, for even with this Book in our hands the Apostle tells us we know in part. Shadows fall on its pages—the shadows of the Infinite. It is impossible that we should comprehend God. We may apprehend him—that is, lay hold of his nature, touch the shining hem of his garment blazing with stars, and press the soft hand of his grace; but who shall grasp the fullness or measure the altitude of his being, and comprehend the circumference of his truth? An easy Bible, one having no mystery and no difficulty, might please for a time, but it would soon be exhausted, and would fail to lure and lift the soul toward the heavenly heights. It would not be like God. It has become an accepted principle in the best modern art, largely through the teaching of Ruskin, that in order to attain to sublimity of style in representation of natural scenery, there must always be an element of mystery; a sense that all has not been said and cannot be said; an entrancing suggestion of greater things, beyond the magic of the painter's pencil to express. Nature is not a great crystal, with light dancing in every sparkling atom. She is a boundless sea, over which the sunbeams and the shadows tremble with alternating pulse, while vague horizons allure the imagination into dreams of eternity. And our precious Word has on it the same stamp of divinity. It is open and full of light. It is also vast and full of mystery. Those who study it longest are like the naturalists, who, as they sharpen their vision and look with microscopic insight into the simplest objects of the material world, discover new realms ever revealing themselves in that which seemed so familiar as to be common.

An old saint, once the pastor of Abraham Lincoln, said to me: "I have been studying the Gospel of John fifty years, but it keeps ahead of me all the time. When unbelief assaults this book with the spear called difficulty, faith wreaths the spear from the enemy's hand and turns it into a weapon of defense. A Bible which is without that which is hard to understand might be the production of man alone. But again—and I speak now from painful experience as a believer—how many of our troubles about God's word are the revelations of our own conceit and moral crudeness? We approached the Scriptures with theories and fancies furnished by our reading and speculation, and, comparing these with God's word, they did not fully agree. We were distressed, and could not read some parts of the divine revelation with any comfort and satisfaction. It seemed to us that we included the Bible and more too; but later in our lives we discovered that the Bible included us and much besides. It recognized our truth and other truths equally important which our one-sidedness did not grasp. Many a child has the same experience with its mother. It sees one thing and craves that, and thinks it the only thing needful, and is angry that the mother does not sympathize with this state of mind. But years later the child, grown to manhood, realizes how much broader was the maternal wisdom than his own, and thus we come to reverence what once only fretted us."

Said that noble English Churchman, Frederick D. Maurice, "I cannot understand the difficulties of the Bible, but they help me to understand myself." So many of us have gained the preciousness of self-knowledge in the twilight of things hard to be understood. We have learned humility as Job did after he had been confounded by the sublime mysteries of creation. We have learned self-distrust as Peter did after he had doubted the word which his own sin verified. We have learned to seek for divine illumination through pra-

as multitudes in every Christian generation have done, who, studying God's word as the blessed Fra Angelico painted his pictures—on bended knees—have seen the mists removed, or rather, glorified, even as the telescope of the astronomer resolves the hazy nebulae of the Milky Way into shining stars, eternal and supreme.—*Rev. J. H. Burrois.*

CANADIAN CHURCHES.

The *London Watchman* says:—The *Guardian* of last Wednesday contains a remarkable letter from its Canadian correspondent on matters affecting the Episcopal Church in that country. Passing by questions of personal controversy, we note an ominous hint that the Church in question is exhibiting signs of "decadence." It is undeniable that other religious bodies "have outstripped the Church in Canada in the race, and that they gather in numbers from the non-religious masses of the people far more rapidly than we do." The Bishop of Ontario and Archdeacon Bedford Jones have acknowledged the fact in pamphlets recently published, and assigned some reasons for it. But the correspondent seems to us to have given a simple and most reasonable explanation. He says that each of the other religious bodies "is thoroughly united, whereas the Episcopal Church 'is divided into two bitterly hostile camps'; that the others are, each of them, thoroughly organized, whereas there is no 'possibility of any such thing as a synodical organization for the spread of the Church'; and thirdly, that every member of the other organizations 'believes himself to be a personally converted man, and makes it a part of the work of his life to persuade others to partake in the religious life, the life of God in the soul, which he has himself received.'"

On the other hand "the necessity of personal conversion to God was practically never heard of among High Churchmen" until quite lately, when it has been happily revived by one school among them. The point is indeed a vital one. No Church can live and grow which does not insist on personal conversion. High Churchmen in this country have found this out, and count among their ranks a good many zealous and devoted evangelists who proclaim the doctrine of personal conversion aloud, and many of them with overwhelming unction and power. . . .

Archdeacon Jones complains that the laymen in his Church are, as a rule, "woefully behind in liberality," "in the duty of giving to God." And he proceeds to compare the givings of Churchmen with those of other bodies, notably the Methodists of Canada. In his own country he tells us that the Methodists, though not larger in numbers, or of ampler means than Churchmen, contribute three times as much for missionary purposes. A Methodist farmer will contribute ungrudgingly twenty-five dollars a year towards his minister's stipend, whereas "the Churchman gives only five towards that of his clergyman." "In the small town where I am writing it is quite certain that for every dollar a Churchman pays for the support of a religion a Methodist pays five." The consequence is that other bodies pre-occupy "the outlying regions of older Canada, and by the time we come in there is little left except 'as the gleanings of grapes when the vintage is done.'" So says the correspondent of the *Guardian*. He appears to have shocked some of his fellow Churchmen by his outspoken candour and frankness; but he truly says, "There is no other way to cure the evil. So long as we imagine ourselves healthy and prosperous we shall do nothing;" and accordingly he has set himself to deliver his soul on questions of such extreme moment, and calls upon synods and other organized gatherings to give "time and earnest consideration to these practical matters, instead of wasting it on miserable points of

petty legislation for which no one will ever be the better or the worse." This is very true and very wise; and the bearing of it on the question of personal and conscious conversion will be obvious to our readers. Unless the doctrine of such conversion be generally and faithfully preached in the Canadian Episcopal Church laymen will never understand or feel "the duty of giving to God." Only "the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost" can ever melt away the icy selfishness whose influence so terribly narrows and chills the souls of unregenerate men; and if that truth be not understood by the clergy, and preached moreover with manifest and earnest sincerity of conviction, Canadian lay Churchmen will continue indifferent to the expansion of their Church, and will keep their pockets buttoned up in spite of every effort to shame them into liberality. What is wanted is a mighty and general revival of spiritual life among Canadian Episcopalians.

MAKE FAST THE BOW LINE.

These words are often heard when vessels are making fast to their piers. The bow-line once made fast insures a safe mooring; and, corresponding to the use of this cable, is the exercise of faith which holds the soul in everlasting security. "Make fast the bow-line" is an order that should be heard and heeded by a good many Christians. They are not firmly fixed and are sadly in need of mooring. Their bow-line is of no use because it is not made fast to what is fixed and solid. This applies to the great truths of religion and suggests the importance of a firm hold on the things of eternity.

The use of the bow-line is one of Dr. Bushnell's very happy illustrations of prayer. A man standing on the bow of a boat, drawing up on a line attached to the shore, suggested to his mind the secret of the power of prayer. The pulling at the rope does not move the solid ground; it moves the boat toward the land. This is the office of faith, it does not move the throne of God, but it draws the soul closer to it and holds it in perfect security and peace.

NEW GUINEA.

The Rev. W. G. Lawes, Congregational minister at Port Moresby, in New Guinea, makes an interesting statement concerning that island and its native inhabitants. For himself and his colleagues in missionary work he would prefer that those whom they preach to should be let alone, but if "annexation" is to take place let it be "Imperial," not "Colonial." The climate is a thing to be taken into consideration, as the missionaries know well, and secular explorers to their cost. Mr. Lawes has been nine years at work, together with his wife. There are seventeen stations along 300 miles of coast, and besides the European labourers they have teachers from Tahiti, Rotonga, and Savage Island. Of these latter, whom he has known for more than twenty-three years, Mr. Lawes expresses a very high opinion for character, capacity, and zeal; and character, as he contents, is that which, by the blessing of God, will crush the power of heathenism. There are fifteen hundred children in school, and thirteen young men under training for missionary work, while more than a hundred adult natives are in Church fellowship, and numerous, marauding and piracy, once not only, have received a manifest check. Captain Webb, of the *Patrol of the Lotus*, wrecked at Hood Point, returned public thanks to the natives there for their efficient help and perfect fidelity. "As soon" he says, "as they saw the difficulty I was in, they came off to the vessel, the sea running too high for canoes to be of use. They were of the greatest aid to me in the working of the ship, treated myself and the crew

with the utmost kindness; and, though all things were landed loose, where they lay for several days, not a single article was taken away." "Yet, we there at the Mission-house," adds Mr. Lawes, are "just half the resident white population." As to certain whites, prowling in those seas, this experienced missionary in that region is compelled to aver: "I must say that for licentiousness and downright bestiality the white man beats all!" "We," he says in conclusion, "have annexed New Guinea for God, and claim the sympathy and help of all who love Him."

JOHN WESLEY ON THE TRAFFIC.

"Neither may we gain by hurting our neighbor in his body. Therefore we may not sell anything which tends to impair health. Such is, eminently, all that liquid fire, commonly called drams, or spirituous liquors. It is true, these may have a place in medicine. Therefore, such as prepare and sell them only for this end may keep their conscience clear. But who are they? Who prepare them only for this end? Then excuse these. But all who sell them in the common way, to any that will buy, are poisoners general. They murder his Majesty's subjects by wholesale, neither does their eye pity or spare. They drive them to hell like sheep. And what is their gain? Is it not the blood of those men? Who, then, would envy their large estates and sumptuous palaces? A curse is in the midst of them. The curse of God cleaves to the stones, the timber, the furniture of them! The curse of God is in their gardens, their walks, their groves; a fire that burns to the nethermost hell! Blood, blood, is there. The foundation, the floor, the walls, the roof, are stained with blood! And canst thou hope, O thou man of blood, to deliver down thy fields of blood to the third generation! Not so; for there is a God in Heaven. Therefore, thy name shall soon be rooted out."

A GOOD APPOINTMENT.

Rev. H. Loomis gives an interesting account of an active native Japanese Christian, Hara Tanekaki, of Tokio, who was lately imprisoned for some political offense. He made this prison prove, if not a palace, a temple, by his instructions to his fellow-prisoners concerning Christianity, once spending a whole night in this way. This was continued for three months, when, after a trial, he was removed to the Schipawa prison. Here he found that a man who had special influence had once heard him preach the Gospel, and was now a seeker of more light. Hara Tanekaki, to king to God for guidance, helped him in the way of life, and also preached to 200 criminals every night. He believes that he might not have been able to endure the three months in this prison if it had not been for the consideration and kindness he received as an evidence of gratitude for his efforts to instruct his fellow-prisoners. This Japan preacher seems to think he received a "good appointment," although he certainly would not have chosen it; as he calls his house, "Yen futu do," or the place of heaven's blessing.

In old days there were angels who came and took men by the hand and led them away from the City of Destruction. We see no white-winged angels now. But yet men are led away from threatening destruction; a hand is put into theirs which leads them forth gently towards a calm and bright land, so that they look no more backward; and the hand may be a little child's.—*George Eli.*

"We worship the sermon too much and not God through the service. The sermon should not exceed thirty minutes; but if at the end it finds itself in the midst of a heavenly gale, let it sail on, the people will not grumble."—*Dr. Burton.*