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For One Dollar—cash with order—the WESLEYAN will be sent from this date to Dec. 31st., 1881.

THE WESLEYAN

FRIDAY, MAY 20, 1881.

HINTS FOR BUSY DAYS.

The days preceding our annual District meetings and Conferences will afford brief space for the work to be done. Some weaned brethren, who have been looking forward to these gatherings of the clans in the hope of rest, may even long, in view of the many threads to be gathered up, for power to turn Time backward in his flight. Unable, of course, to do this they can only address themselves vigorously to the "ordinaries and extraordinaries" of circuit work, taking care to meet their brethren at the appointed place on the appointed date. Less haste would render these yearly gatherings more rich in spiritual profit than they sometimes are, yet the closing of financial business, the tabulating of results, and the recurrence of numerous unforeseen contingencies, often unavoidably interfere with that thoughtful preparation which is sure to render such meetings "seasons of grace and sweet delight."

Such haste is not always unavoidable. A thoughtful people may often efficiently do a hurried pastor. It may be pleasant to have him call at the home, but if that visit, for the collection of a missionary subscription, a promised contribution to other Church funds, the annual payment for the fifty-two visits of the WESLEYAN, or the collection of statistics, must cost him the use of much-needed hours, and oblige him to neglect some special duty, a regard for the work and the workman will prompt a visit to the parsonage, or the dispatch of a message, which may cost little while it confers a great benefit.

Both pastor and people have some special duties at the close of the ecclesiastical year. In some circuits, in the absence of an efficient official board, the pastor must take a prominent part in the collection of his stipend—generally small enough in such cases—and present the circuit returns for official signature as little more than a matter of form. Need it be said that in such cases care should be exercised in striking the most correct balance possible, neither on the one hand giving an unworthy circuit credit for what it has not done, nor on the other placing too low an estimate upon those irregular contributions which now frequently supplant the more regular sources of circuit income. Happy are the many pastors who are not under the necessity of thus "leaving the word of God" to "serve tables."

Another important duty—in which no pastor should act alone when possible—is the preparation of lists of membership. Circuit records are not transcripts of pages of the Book of Life, but they are solemnly suggestive of its contents, and therefore no true minister will rashly deal with names once placed upon them. When obliged to do so through moral lapse or obstinate non-compliance with well-known rules, he will seek by some private list to intimate to a successor their former relation to the Church. The consequences of the neglect of such precautions are often charged against the itinerancy when the system itself is not deserving of blame.

A retiring pastor should place himself in a proper relation to his successor by recognizing, in advance of the fact, that in the regards of the people, "he must increase while I must decrease," and will therefore seek to prepare them for the transfer. In this way much may be done in the brief remaining space. Some years ago a highly popular minister, when revisiting a circuit, spoke at length to an elderly member of the Church of the large congregations and numerous special services of his pastorate. The old lady listened to him, and then quietly remarked that she feared he had "taken away all the good" with him. Her remark is of wider application than some imagine. Pastors may move along in a halo of popularity which is soon dispelled; or they may lead men to Christ, and into His Church, and making the Master and not the man prominent may set in motion a wave of influence for good which shall roll on with ever increasing volume until it breaks on the eternal shore.

Many years ago a Methodist minister was preaching his last sermon to a people who had not shown a proper regard for his comfort. At the close some one remarked to him on the pulpit steps

that they had not done all they ought but that God would make it all right. "Ah madam," was his reply, "God will do His part, but he has not promised to do yours." His reply is commended to all persons who may be about to allow a pastor to depart from their neighbourhood deficient in his salary, perhaps perplexed as to his financial ability to pay his debts and then reach another field of labor." In the business of life ministers are treated as men, in their support they must be treated as men. If any official board is allowing these closing days of the ecclesiastical year to pass, while some pastor about to retire is burdened with care and perplexed as to his future, let them gird themselves to the work of meeting their financial responsibilities. Heaven takes cognizance of these, and Heaven's King has said "the laborer is worthy of his hire."

A BOOK FOR YOUNG MEN.

Such, in truth, is the attractive-looking little volume entitled, "Memories of James Bain Morrow," from the pen of Rev. A. W. Nicolson. Soon after Mr. Morrow's lamented removal, we learned with pleasure of Mr. Nicolson's intention. The pleasure was two-fold—a life so widely known, and so rich in godly lessons, was to be kept as fresh as possible in the memory of the large circle of acquaintances, and few, if any, seemed so well qualified to sketch Mr. Morrow's life-record, and present the prominent features of his Christian service, as was the author of the volume now before us. The task was not an easy one. An artist now and then finds a face so noble in expression that any transfer to canvas is doubly difficult; and he who takes as the subject of his pen-portrait some harmonious, well-rounded character, has before him a task harder by far than that undertaken by the caricaturist, or the biographer of the man, whose life is varied by even the weaknesses which are often strangely combined with great force of character.

Mr. Nicolson has succeeded well in his labor of love—better perhaps than he would have done had Mr. Morrow left some carefully-filled journal. In the absence of any aid of this kind—crowded out by an aim to bless men rather than to study self—his biographer would have been less free to use what preachers are wont to call the "topical" style in the preparation of a sermon. As it is, we have eleven chapters, brief in some cases, yet calculated to keep before the reader the purpose of the writer. We regret that the volume had not reached our table a day earlier, and thus permitted us to dwell more at length upon its many points of interest, and its many suggestive and touching incidents. How a revival, commencing in the old Argyle St. Sunday-school and extending to the congregation, marked the turning point in young Morrow's life; how Francis Johnson, the once ignorant Roman Catholic soldier so lived, that the hesitating youth could not withstand his combined logic of life and lip; how the same man of God insisted upon his leading that band-meeting which was probably the first among the exceedingly numerous services conducted by him, how later in life he profited by his relationship to the Rev. Dr. Richey, whom he so greatly admired and loved; how he exemplified the Scripture counsel to "be not slothful in business" while "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;" and how he proved that one may be a consistent, devoted Methodist, without being a bigot are all well told.

The chapters which tell of needed rest and recreation, of active work in connection with the Young Men's Christian Association, and of the scenes preceding and following the sudden call which reached him at Londonderry are no less interesting. To the concluding part of the narrative an additional charm is given by statements from the pen of Mrs. Morrow.

In a note which has met our eye, the Rev. W. H. Withrow, A. M., editor of the Canadian Methodist Magazine, says of the book: "I have found it of fascinating interest. I got it yesterday, and took it up last night, intending just to dip into it, but could not lay it down till I had read it through. As a piece of high-class literary work it is one of the best biographies I have ever read. It will be an inspiration to many a Canadian youth."

The book is published in the best style of our Toronto Publishing House, and bears also the imprint of our own Book Room, to which, by arrangement with the author, all orders are to be forwarded.

Send absent friends the WESLEYAN. We offer it until the end of the present year for only One Dollar.

CHRISTIAN HEROISM.

Only a few months ago the editor of a Methodist paper placed at the head of an article the question: "Shall the age of heroism return?" Just then some of our American brethren were disposed to charge the younger ministers with being more inclined to cling to the centres of Christian work than to go out to the distant and destitute fields on the frontiers of their great country.

The question, it seems to us, assumed too much. There is no reason to believe that the heroic spirit has departed from our Church, though it must be admitted that the tendencies of the age are not in its favor. The influences which surround our youth tend to enervate, and the prevalent love of physical comforts and social enjoyments demands the presence of strong incentives to self-denial in Christian service. But there seems little reason to doubt that our Church to-day has men who would prove worthy successors of Thomas Beard, the first ministerial martyr of English Methodism; of John Stephenson, whose strength was weakened and whose days were shortened by Bernadine imprisonment; of those fifty or more sons and daughters of English Methodism whose dust rests in one cemetery in the pestilential climate of Sierra Leone; and of John Hunt who, with his heroic wife, landed on Fijian shores, from a vessel whose captain scarce dared approach the scenes of cannibalism. And doubtless American Methodism has many among her millions who would be disposed, were it possible, to follow with equal steps in the track of those early heroes whose lives and labors, as told by Abel Stevens, have all the interest of early romance. A second Columbus can only be seen when a second America can be discovered; and a second St. Paul could only arise when such a work should lay before him as called forth the sanctified energy of the apostle to the Gentiles. Yet from time to time our mission-fields develop men who have strong resemblance to the members of the martyrs' noble host, and prove that duplicates of the earlier confessors would not be sought for in vain. Only to-day, in another column our readers will learn how quickly a minister was found to fill the place of a brother minister murdered in Mexico, the first martyr by Methodist ranks in that dark Roman Catholic country.

He, however, errs who regards the presence of physical danger as the sole test of heroism. More difficult by far is the passive endurance of life's many unseemly and almost untried trials. As we look at brethren in our own country, who for the Gospel sake have turned from paths in which early companions have won comfort and wealth; and who, with their families, are year after year with the strictest economy—often amounting in the eyes of the world to meanness—scarce able to maintain their position; and as we remember that too often a statement of their difficulties calls forth but little sympathy from those who might be expected to cherish it, is it strange that we seem to see Christian heroism near home, and find in our own brethren, and in their partners in their peculiar trials and cares, and in the self-denying efforts of those lay-helpers whose presence often cheers them in discouragement, living proofs that apostolic love and heroism are not high qualities peculiar alone to the past, and that there are yet men whom the "dry-rot" of worldliness has not robbed of the Apostolic spirit.

DISTRICT BUSINESS.

DEAR MR. EDITOR.—Will it be prudent in one who takes no part in the official meetings of the Church to suggest a topic or two which he thinks to be not unworthy of the consideration of the approaching District Meetings, when they come to the question—"What can be done for the promotion of the work of God?" If you think the subject hints would be well received, and be in any degree helpful towards the object our Church steadily pursues, their early insertion would oblige.

THE CLASS MEETING.

Respecting this institution, and the determination to maintain it from a well founded conviction of its proved service to the highest purposes of the Church, might it not be well to enquire whether its advantages have been sufficiently set forth in the sermons of our ministers—whether the implied and the expressed objections to the class-meeting have been completely answered; and whether the utterances in public on this subject have been frequent enough and followed by private, personal appeal and invitation? Many thoughtful Christians outside of Methodism consider the class-meeting of high importance both as a means of grace, and of Connexional strength and progress. Their judgment supposes the fitness of leaders and the convenience of the time and place of meeting. Would it not be well to enquire if all these constantly receive due practical attention from ministers on every circuit?

There is now a not inconsiderable number of Supernumeraries. Would it be proper to ask if their qualifications are fully utilized in some class in the neighborhood of their residence? There must be in the class to which it is the writer's privilege to belong a supernumerary who commonly after the opening prayer proposes a brief passage of Scripture, and speaks on it from three to five minutes. This has proved a valued help to the leader, and is acknowledged to be edifying to all present. Perhaps this exercise, or one that is better, may be in operation in every place in which a Supernumerary is located. When the Rev. R. Watson went to live in London, being a Missionary Secretary, he joined the class of a good man in lowly circumstances, and attended its meetings with exemplary and profitable punctuality. Might not enquiry be also made of the effect of the envelope system for raising circuit funds, both on the class-meeting and the leaders' meetings? and whether any additional guards are needed to prevent this novel fiscal measure from impairing those parts of Methodism which former generations of ministers worked so wisely and successfully? Does the charge referred to present no ground to fear lest essential portions of Wesleyan Methodism should become things of the past, and their substitutes be changes for the worse and not the better? If the latter, what shall be said of fidelity to the trust committed to the Methodists of the age following that of Mr. Wesley and those excellent preachers whom he loved to style "his sons in the Gospel?"

There is another subject which some may think of equal importance to that above mentioned, namely the

READING OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES IN ASSEMBLIES FOR WORSHIP.

It will be borne in mind that Methodism long ago ceased to be a connexion of societies merely, whose services were regarded as supplementary to those of the national establishment. Sanctioned by a benign Providence and fostered by the God of all grace, Methodism has grown into a complete Church. It has called itself by this great name. It has consequently made itself responsible for the adequate Christian instruction of its adherents. Who can overestimate this solemn responsibility? The Church's methods of instruction are various. Attention is here to be directed to only one of these—the lessons of Holy Scripture as a part of public worship. Is it not the rule that a lesson from the Old Testament should be read at the forenoon service on the Lord's day, and that in the evening one lesson at least should precede the sermon? Those who are familiar with the "Discipline" may find more rules than are here produced for the reading of the Scriptures in public worship. One hopes they may. It is believed that the Rules of the Conference in England require that a chapter from each Testament should be read at the two preaching services on the Lord's day, and a portion of Scripture at every public service on week days. The Psalms would very properly be included. Indeed the Psalms would often be read.

One would willingly believe that the letter and the spirit of these rules are most generally observed in Methodist sanctuaries. But is not the reading of the Word of God in assemblies for worship so weighty an exercise as to justify careful enquiry occasionally on the subject? What would be the feeling of a congregation if the minister had to announce to it for the first time that the lesson was a message from Jehovah? Is His word less precious for being ancient? Ministers have the selection of the lesson; what is the principle on which lessons are selected? How often in a year is the Moral Law read as found in Ex. 20: 1-23? How often our Lord's Sermon on the Mount? Do none of the ministers read but one chapter at a public service on the morning of the Sabbath? Does no one content himself with presenting a part of a chapter only before his sermon? On the week day services, and at the regular church prayer meetings is the reading of the Holy Scripture never omitted? Are there none in the congregations, either merchants, farmers, mechanics, or labourers, or belonging to their families, who search the Scriptures but very little in their homes, either from want of leisure or inclination? Would it not be well to consider also that there might be among the worshippers those whose education is so limited as scarcely to be able to read any book intelligently? To such persons, if very few, what a boon it must be to hear the pure word of God, His precepts, and promises in the house of God, by a minister who so reads with emphasis, tone and pause as thereby to convey to the hearers impressively the sense? They might thus be led to peruse the same places in their devout privacy. The Book would thus become to them more than ever previously, not the word of man, but, as it is in reality, "the word of God which liveth and abideth forever."

The minister who has learned to make the utmost use of Holy Scripture for the edification of the worshippers, and the efficiency of his own discourses, is in possession of a great talent. And is it not a talent within the reach of nearly every authorized, worthy occupant of the pulpit? Will not every faithful, loving servant of the Lord Jesus Christ reverently emulate the example of the Master as recorded in Luke 4: 16-22. He so read out of the prophet Isaiah on the Sabbath that the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him, they listened with the most interested attention, and when He preached from the text He had read, all "bare Him witness and wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth."

With the best wishes for the happiness and success of all our ministers,

THE CHURCH PAPER.

The Herald and Presbyter has these important statements:—"I can't be bothered canvassing for a newspaper. If you want subscriptions in this town you can send an agent." So says a much-respected minister of a village church. As we cannot send an agent to every town and village in our field, and as this brother's field is particularly small and difficult of access, we must give up all hopes of canvassing among his people, unless we can convince him that it is his duty to co-operate with us. In the effort to do this, let us remind him and all others of like feeling, that the object of the religious press is one with the work of the ministry, and wherever good papers are largely circulated the results are manifestly good. Our paper, if well circulated in his field, will help him in his work. His people will be well informed as to the work of the Church, and as to its great mission enterprise. They will be prepared by Christian reading to appreciate good sermons and more inclined to heed good exhortations. "The religious paper," says an exchange, "is the minute-hand marking the period of the Church's mean temperature, the ebb and flow of her life. The religious paper is the weekly commentary on the Word of God, as it appears in doctrine, conviction and providences. This is all lost in the family that takes no church paper, and the result is too apparent."

The same writer speaks of the value of church papers, especially in families where there are growing children. Without the family paper "they grow up out of the spirit of the Church. They have imbibed nothing of its missionary life—have caught nothing of the spirit of its progress, and have no well-anchored affections toward it. They know nothing of its great and good men—nothing of its vital thought throbs along the circulations of their soul life. They have no knowledge of its doctrines in their practical application in human struggles, hopes, victories and disasters." The parents of such children wonder, in their declining years, why their children have left the Church. The writer answers—"They never had a church paper, and know no more of the Church in which they were born, of its spirit, progress and triumphs, than they do of Confucianism. The effect is also apparent in the Church when its benevolent causes are presented. Of the people who contribute to the pastor's salary two-thirds of it comes from those who read the church papers."

This, we believe, literally true. The people who are most liberal in proportion to their means, in contributions to mission work and to the pastor's salary, are those who read the weekly religious paper. They are in sympathy with the work of the church; and not only so, they are the efficient workers.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The Cyclopaedia of Methodism in Canada, by Rev. George H. Cornish, has just been issued from the Methodist Book and Publishing House, Toronto. A glance shows even a careless eye that no pains have been spared in its mechanical preparation; but few have the ability to judge of the toil it must have cost the author. A request to trace the career of several of the senior ministers of the Maritime Provinces, whose names appear in its pages, sent us on a thorough hunt among old Minutes, old journals and old letters. Unfortunately Conference Minutes, and Hill's Arrangement, based upon the Minutes, however correct in regard to English ministers, are of little value in determining the position of the Methodist missionaries of former days. In one or two instances Mr. Cornish, we think, has been misled by them, not at all to our surprise. His book is a marvel of literary work—work which costs weary hours and when performed has none of the glow and glitter of volumes dashed off from a rapid pen. It contains 850 pages, in which he treats of the history of the various branches of the Methodist Church of Canada from 1791, and gives a list of the circuits on which each minister has been stationed, the period of his reception on trial, ordination, &c., together with historical, educational and statistical information. A good portrait of the author, and several engraving of other ministers and churches add to its attractions. We wish Mr. Cornish a successful sale for this standard work. It ought to be found on the shelves of every Methodist minister or layman who desires a standard work of reference on the history of our Churches.

An English correspondent of the Christian Advocate gives some interesting particulars respecting Dr. Punahon's early life:

"He was again in Hull in 1838, in which year the Rev. Samuel Romilly Hall, a young Methodist preacher in his third year of probation, was attracting large audiences, especially of young people. William M. Punahon attended his ministry, and under its influence he decided to give his heart to God, and joined the Methodist society in that town. He threw his energies, heart and soul, into the cause he had espoused, although only in his fifteenth year. He became an active Sunday-school worker, and his addresses to the children soon marked him out for more important work. He was received as a local preacher at eighteen; his first sermon was preached at Ellerby, near

Hull. His career was at once determined; preaching the gospel was to be his life-work, and this was so evident in his early sermons, that his uncle, Sir Isaac Morley, proposed to send him to the university, pay his expenses in travelling through college, and secure him a living in the Church of England. This was it; but it was not God's plan, more William M. Punahon. Converted among them, and to them he clave with loving fidelity."

The funeral of Mrs. Brettle—wife of the Rev. Elias Brettle, of Newport, took place on Saturday last. Seven ministers, including the Chairman of the District—Rev. S. F. Huot, and a large number of other sympathizing friends, attended the remains to their last resting-place in the Oakland graveyard. At the church addresses were delivered by Revs. J. McMurray and W. M. Pike, the latter of whom related some touching incidents connected with the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Brettle in Newfoundland. Mrs. Brettle's death was sudden: she rose on Thursday morning as usual, soon after became speechless, and at one p. m. of the same day ceased to breathe. Our beloved brother, himself an invalid, has the hearty sympathy of his brethren and numerous friends. His bereavement is an unusually sore one. May Heaven grant him "uncommon consolation."

A memorial service for Rev. Dr. Punahon was held in St. James Street Methodist Church, Montreal, on the 11th inst. The Rev. E. Botterell, in a brief note, states that "the Rev. Mr. Stafford, Chairman of the District, opened the service, which was impressively continued by Rev. Messrs. Longley, Johnson and Dr. Jenkins, of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church. Mr. Johnson, who was with Dr. Punahon on his sad journey from Italy to England, and up to within a few hours of his decease, spoke principally of the final illness of the justly lamented minister, whose personal friendship he had enjoyed for a number of years." Mr. Botterell adds:—"The congregation was large and devout. Still more would probably have been present but for heavy rain which fell in the afternoon. The church was draped in black. The choir sang two hymns and two anthems. It was a sweetly solemn service."

Methodists have sometimes pleaded official position as a reason for making their homes scenes of gaiety and temptation. We once heard one of this class plead that his presence at a public ball was an official and not a personal matter. Such attempts at discrimination cost a man at once his self-respect and the respect of others. In reference to the course pursued by Lord Mayor McArthur, a writer in the London Methodist says:—"It is noteworthy that our Lord Mayor is keeping aloof, not only from mere political movements, but from fashionable entertainments, including dancing parties, and is going strongly for the religious and philanthropic. This is an example worthy of the chief magistrate. Fewer gastronomic achievements and more practical help and patronage of the things that are pure, lovely and of good report would add dignity to the civic chair in hundreds of English towns and cities."

The Register of the Vanderbilt University, at Nashville, Tenn, for 1880-1 has been received. Its seventy-six closely printed pages contain a large amount of valuable information. The several schools during the past season were attended by six hundred and thirty-two students. We observe that on a recent Sabbath the new Theological Hall of the University was dedicated, Bishops Tyre and Paine, officiating. The building cost \$100,000 and is the gift of William H. Vanderbilt. For the establishment of this magnificent University the Southern Methodist Church is indebted to the late Cornelius Vanderbilt, who in 1873 made a donation of five hundred thousand dollars, which was subsequently increased to one million dollars.

The Nashville Christian Advocate says,—"It is a noticeable fact, and honorable to human nature, that many of the most liberal benefactors of education in the United States are men whose own early educational advantages were very small. Noble spirits! They find in their own hard fights against odds the reason why they should smooth the path for others."

Some interesting items, having reference to one of our principal circuits, will be published as soon as the writer forwards his name. The name is needed as a guarantee of correctness, and not in every case for publication.

Able and half of the Church, w by Revs. and Robe The forme the mornin tive lesson Samaritan, Brunswick text Isa 33: ledge shall and stret words to lo Timothy, a subject of from M. Grafton S was wisely discussed.

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LITERARY.

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