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THE NEW SONG.

BY GERALD MASSEY.

Hear what the saint in solemn dream was shown
Through heaven's own gates of gold;
He saw them standing by the great White Throne;
He heard their raptures rolled!
Christ was the Sun of that new firmament,
And there was no more night,
While through the Golden City harping went
The glorious all in white.

These, out of their great tribulation, came
To bow before the Throne!
These lifted up their foreheads from the flame,
And by His name were known!
Some on the rack were living witnesses,
And many fell afield;
But Christ did greet his martyrs with a kiss.
And all their hearts were healed.

These had to wrestle with wild waves of strife,
Long ere they reached that shore
Where they at last have won the crowns of life
They wear for evermore.
There do they drink of life's all-healing stream,
And quench their thirst of years;
All star-like now the precious jewels gloom
They sowed on earth as tears.

Help, us, O Lord, to reach that better land,
Afar from grief and sin,
And join that blessed land, all harp in hand,
All safe with Christ shut in.
Feeble and poor the songs we sing! at most,
Some selfish prayer we raise,
While the white harpers on that heavenly coast
Hymn everlasting praise.

FUTURE JUDGMENT AND THE CONFLAGRATION.

Last week we introduced an argument to prove a future general judgment, based on the fact that the burning up of the world is to take place at the time of the final distribution of rewards and punishments. We now resume the subject for the purpose of showing that 2 Peter iii, 1–14, must be accepted as a plain statement of what will transpire at "the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."

The showing made in our former article, to the effect that there is no necessity for a figurative interpretation of this chapter, growing out of the language employed, nor out of the nature of the event itself, philosophically considered, leaves the presumption fair and strong in favor of the literal sense; and this presumption will stand till positive reasons be given for setting aside the literal meaning of the language, and adopting the figurative. The principal reasons likely to be adduced, and certainly the most formidable ones, were considered last week, and found groundless. We might, therefore, safely leave the question here, but proceed to fulfil our promise to show from the language in question that we dare not apply it as figurative description of the calamities coming on the Jewish nation.

1. The coming of the day of the Lord here mentioned was to be a very sudden and unexpected event—"as a thief in the night." But the overthrow of the Jewish nation and the destruction of their city was not of this character. This great storm of wrath did not burst upon them unexpectedly. It had been foretold by the Lord, was indicated by the dissensions and tumults with which the Jews were exhausting their strength, and by the hostile attitude and preparation of their enemies. All their surroundings pointed to the result as inevitable. And after the seige began, so far from its horrors all coming suddenly, "like a thief in the night," it was protracted from mouth to mouth, until by war, famine, pestilence, and faction, the obstinate Jews were brought under the power of their enemies, and subjected to their dreaded doom.

2. The apostle urged the coming of the day of God as a motive to piety and diligence on the part of all to whom he wrote, intimating that they would be personally interested in the transactions of that day. "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless." But this epistle was not written to Jews alone, nor to Christians dwelling in Judea only, but to the Churches in general, and was addressed to "strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bethynia." If the apostle wrote only of the destruction of Jerusalem, or the subversion of the Jewish polity, such an appeal to "strangers" seattered through all those countries seems to us unaccountable, and we hazard nothing in pronouncing it inappropriate, if not preposterous.

3. The apostles's refutation of the "scoffers" mentioned, proves that he had a literal conflagration in mind. These "scoffers" assumed that Christ had promised to come speedily and destroy the earth, and punish the disobedient, and thought that delay proved the falsity of his promise. Finding nothing like an interruption of the course of nature, which they understood to be connected with the promised advent, they derisively asked, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." They denied the truthfulness of the "promise," because the world was not destroyed, showing that they believed the destruction of the world was connected with the coming again. If Peter had believed as do our modern interpreters who deny the literal burning up of the earth, he would have explained to these "scoffers" their mistake, showing them that Christ's coming had nothing to do with the destruction of the world; that his promised coming, and the subversion of the order of things connected with it, should be interpreted figuratively of the destruction of Jerusalem, and that the "end of the world" meant nothing more than the closing up of the Jewish dispensation! But he did nothing of the kind. On the contrary, he vindicated the "promise" on the ground of the "long-suffering" of the Lord, shewing that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." The entire scope of the argument shows that the apostle never intended to correct the prevailing impression that the destruction of the world, the coming of Christ, and the day of judgment were all connected in point of time. He pointed to the destruction of the old world by water, charging the false teachers with being willingly ignorant of that literal fact, and made it an example and a proof of the destruction of the same world by fire, at "the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." The allusion to the flood would have been inappropriate, if he intended anything other than a literal destruction of the world "by fire."

Some have thought that the apostle had modern Universalists in mind when he described the "scoffers" who denied the second coming of Christ. But we think this is not correct. The "scoffers" denied the second coming to judgment, very much as do the Universalists, but they had no figurative methods of interpretation, and they did connect, in their minds, the coming of Christ with the interruption of the course of nature, as the Universalists do not. It is true that the latter, as did the "scoffers," deny the coming of Christ, and contemptuously inquire, "Where is the promise of his coming?" but their denial is based on different grounds. It can not be questioned, however, that their vehement opposition to the doctrine of this chapter allies them very closely, in spirit at least, with the scoffers of old.

4. The apostle's comparison between the destruction of the old world by water and the present world by fire, proves that one event is just as literal as the other. It is a literal fact that the old world perished by water; it is a literal fact that the heavens and earth which are now, are kept in store, or treasured up, so as not to be destroyed by another deluge; and it is a literal fact, if there is any established meaning in language, that this same world, which is thus kept "standing out of the water and in the water," is "reserved unto fire, against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." This is the apostle's most unequivocal assertion. He spoke of the old world literally, of the heavens and earth which are now literally, of the water literally. His argument may be thus put: "If the old world was overwhelmed with water, literally, must we expect that when the day of judgment comes this present world, now standing out of the water and in the water, shall be again destroyed, not by water, but by fire."

5. The prediction of the new creation, which is to follow the conflagration, corroborates this view of the subject. The state of things following the destruction of Jerusalem, if we have any conception of the facts or of the meaning of words, can not possibly be taken as the "new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." The disorder and general profligacy that ensued were rather proofs of moral degeneracy. But our figurative interpreters will tell us that the old world that passed away was Judaism, and that the new creation was the Gospel dispensation. But the Gospel dispensation came long before Jerusalem was destroyed. Its morning beams shone brightly on Pentecost, and its brightest rays of glory cheered the apostles in their personal toils. If the Gospel kingdom was the new heaven and earth, the new creation preceded the figurative passing away of the old. But sober-minded thinkers can not allow this preposterous assumption. The order of events is too plainly described in this chapter to admit of such perversions of truth, except by those who are "willingly ignorant;" and it was not without foresight of special occasion that this solemn discourse on the judgment was followed immediately by a warning against those who "wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction."

We now submit that it is as clear as language can make, that this grand description of the solemnities of "the day of the Lord," including the burning up of the earth and the works therein, must be taken literally, without the speculative refinement of modern "liberalism." Such was the faith of the early Church, and such has been the faith of the followers of Christ through all the ages, while "scoffers" have never ceased to ridicule it, contemptuously saying, "Where is the promise of his coming?" But despite the scoffs of infidelity, and the sneers and sophistries of the "liberalists," the doctrine of a future judgment rests upon the sure foundation of the infallible Word, and one of the sublime incidents of the day of the Lord will be the conflagration of this sublunary world.—*Western Advocate.*

THE COMING OF THE LORD.

BY THE REV. JOHN HALL, D. D.

The popular impression is that ordinary men live wholly or mainly in the present. It "the present" as distinguished from the eternal be meant, it is true. But it is not true that most men live in the present as contrasted with the nearer future. On the contrary, the present is little in most minds but as a step to the future. The child longs for boyhood, and the boy for manhood. Manhood longs for the time of establishment, and when it is reached—if it be—for the time of rest and relief from care. So the human spirit by its constant projecting of itself into the future, appears in some vague way to own its present unsatisfactory condition, and to "feel after if haply they may find" something in advance. It would be strange if this life-long habit of counting on the future were to be broken off abruptly in death and end in nothing. It is the witness within ourselves of our immortality.

And there is a curious analogy between the eager, ever-hoping human spirit and its one infallible rule. The Bible is complete as a guide to life, but at every point to which it carries us, requires us to look forward.

Moses left the announcement of a greater prophet, and David of a coming King. The Old Testament saints are all looking forward to the coming One. And when He comes, it is not as a finality. He finishes indeed the business of that coming; and carries his Church to a height never reached before. Not however that she may rest there. Her eye still looks onward. Her attitude is still of expectancy, "looking forward and hastening unto the coming of the day of God. The very nature of the human mind forbids resting in the present; and the very structure of the Bible makes the future the resting place of the spirit. "I will come again." Even the complete atonement cannot be looked at without suggesting something yet to be. "Ye do show forth the Lord's death till he come."

If I think of myself simply as a Christian, my hope takes hold of my going to be with Christ. The apostle of the Gentiles was no exception to the rule: "Absent from the body and present with the Lord;" "having desire to depart and be with Christ which is far better." One's mind makes no account of prophetic periods, or diverging interpretations. "I shall be with my Saviour. To me practically the day of my death is the day of his coming." And when the end is near and faith vigorous, the human soul seizes the graphic speech of the Old Testament to express its yearnings: "Why is his chariot so long in coming?" But when I think of myself as a member of Christ's Church, in sympathy with that party, often despised and persecuted; when I feel myself as one of a body which devils and men have accused, belied, condemned, the Lord's second coming suggests the vindication of my chosen friends, the complete and final victory of their principles, the clearing of their character, the triumphant refutation of the slanders of centuries. This great event will thus wear different aspects to Christians as they regard themselves, and it is worth considering whether some of the differences of view as to our Lord's coming have not arisen from confounding passages that speak of the hope of the Christian community, with those that emphasize the simple longings of the individual human soul.

And when will the Lord come? If any one expects an answer such as "In the year of our Lord 1872, his appearing may be counted upon," he can not get it, we venture to think, from any interpreter of Scripture sufficiently judicious to command respect. "Of that hour knoweth no man." Prophecy is not history with dates and particulars written beforehand. If it were, it would defeat its end, tempt men, and infringe upon human freedom of action.

But there are certain great events of universal interest which the Scriptures connect with the Second Advent, and which, we may be sure constitute intimation to us as to time sufficient for all the purposes of the covenant of grace.

1. One of these events is the *Resurrection of all the dead.* It has been sometimes imagined that there is first a resurrection of the good and then of the wicked, after an interval more or less prolonged. But this impression is founded on a mistaken reading of two passages in one of which (1 Thess. iv. 16) the comparison is not between the dead *out* of Christ, and the dead *in* Christ, but between the dead *out* of Christ and the *living* in Christ; and in the other of which (Rev. xx., 1–10) the symbolical character of the passage is forgotten in part, and "souls" is read with a literalness confessedly inadmissible in the rest of the passage. But in the calm, didactic language of John v. 28–29, when he comes, "all that are in their graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth;" or in Paul's argument, "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and the *dead* of Christ shall rise first; *then* we which are alive and remain shall be caught up." &c.

2. But this Resurrection is in order to *the general judgment.* If anything can be inferred with confidence from the Gospel accounts of this momentous transaction, it is that it will embrace both classes, and transpire in the presence of both. Indeed this follows from its nature and purpose. Human tribunals are erected to try the question, "guilty or not," and to measure out punishment. But the Divine Judge tries in no such sense; and the rewards have already been practically adjudged. The manifestation of the divine character seems to be the main object. "The heavens shall declare his righteousness," according to Psalm i. 3–6, in that day when a fire shall devour before him, when he shall call to the heavens and to the earth that he may judge his people, where his saints in covenant with him by sacrifice shall be gathered before Him. But this manifestation implies the presence together of angels and of good and bad among men.

3. But where this has taken place, *the earth has served its purpose* as the home of a race partly good and partly evil. And it appears to have too many scars and derangements from its subjection to a sinful race to admit of its continuing the abode of the redeemed and perfectly holy portion of God's creation. Accordingly, with these august transactions, there is connected the destruction of the existing, and the production of another state of things, called "a new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness."

Beyond the fact that our Lord's return is uniformly associated with the general resurrection, final judgment, and complete renovation of earth, we have no marks of time to guide us. It follows, of course, that the overthrow of heathenism, the turning of the Jewish heart to Jesus, the millennial peace, and a reign of truth as general and as conspicuous as that of error has been, all come before our Lord's personal return, and are therefore effected by other agencies than his personal appearance. To the soul-stirring truths that God has revealed upon these high themes, it is perfectly certain that neither in the ministrations of the pulpit, nor in our private studies, have we given the place they occupy in the Scriptures; and without accepting the views of brethren who connect the thorough reformation of the race mainly with our Lord's Second Advent, we acknowledge gratefully the Church's obligation to them for calling attention to these certain and most glorious prospects.

And when the mandate has been ushered in through his return in visible majesty and the attendant events, what is to be its character? Let my readers go back in thought to their infancy and imagine their parents telling them at the age of three or four what their lives would be at thirty or forty: "You will not be children any more, but men and women; you will not learn lessons, or be under orders as you are now. You shall please yourselves, and act your own judgment," &c. Now let language of this kind be employed to any conceivable amount, and every one knows it yet fails to describe the reality. Life has to be lived to be comprehended. No doubt, indeed, some persons have become great favorites with young children from their skillfully adapted delineation of that future into which, as we saw, even the child's mind is constantly trying, as on tiptoe, to look over and examine. And there is an infant school of Christians who are gratified by corresponding delineations which they often enough forget when they have advanced a little even on earth. They become men and they put away childish things.

How little of this vaticination is in the Bible! It has no "physical theory of a future life." Isaac Taylor wrote *that.* The poors of its New Jerusalem are never half opened, like those of a festive hall, that eager and curious young folk may get a stimulating peep beforehand. Its gates are of another kind altogether; "they shall not be shut at all by day," and as for night, "there is no night there." Not one word has it of planes, or spheres, many or few. An apostle, lifted up in vision, heard "unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter." But men and women without any evidence of such exceptional elevation in views, aims, or life, are troubled by no such scruples, nor conscious of any check upon their utterance. With an easy volubility they can speak, write and print the entire programme of the solemn unknown. They can, as the heathen made gods by exaggerating men, depict the features of the heavenly abode by sublimating the earthy, much as a fluent friend might describe the developing capacities of a seminary for young ladies, where endless learning and matchless accomplishments are combined, "with all the elegances and comforts of a home."

How different is the Bible! Men know what hunger, thirst, grief and tears are. They know what hardship and toil and midday heats are. They know what change, and bereavement, and homelessness, and lonely darkness and curse are. These are facts of world-old and world-wide comprehension. And the Scriptures come and tell us in their grand simplicity that there shall be none of these; and if any one would narrowly ask, "What positively shall we have?" it is enough that "the former things are passed away." The Lord will give us light and we shall reign forever and ever. Who can translate these terms into the vernacular of earth? Who needs to do it? Who would be the better if it were done? To the weary sufferer heaven is rest. To the human spirit, hungry for sympathy, it is love. Each shall find all he hoped—his ideal realized perhaps on a plan which now he could not comprehend—and all his brethren hoped for, too. So let us respect this reticence of our Bibles; let us be wisely and willingly ignorant where God has not spoken, and let us hear our Saviour say to us daily, "Behold, I come quickly."—*Christian Union*

TALLEYRAND'S DEATH-BED

For nearly half a century, this veteran diplomatist acted a prominent part in the affairs of Europe. As the prime-minister or embassador of the Directory, the Consulate, The Empire, and the monarchy of Louis Philippe, he negotiated the important treaties which determined the boundaries of empires and the fate of kingdoms, and formed plans which made Napoleon an emperor, and the emperor an exile. Such a man's view of an eventful life of four-score years furnishes instructive lessons to men who are wasting the energies of being on political ambition or worldly aggrandizement. Just before his death, a paper was found on his table on which he had written, by the light of the lamp such lines as these:

"Behold, eighty-three years passed away! What cares! What agitation! What anxieties! What ill-will! What sad complications! And all without results, except great fatigue of mind and body, and a profound sentiment of discouragement with regard to the future, and disgust with regard to the past!"

Contrast with the exclamation of "Paul the Aged," as he was about closing his earthly career:

"I have fought a good fight; I have kept the faith; and henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day."

A death bed is the triumphant chariot of the useful Christian, however humble; it is the executioner's cart of the worldly unbeliever, however exalted.

THY WORKS.

"I know Thy *works*" are the clarion words repeated in each of the memorable messages to the Seven Churches of Asia. Works, *works*, works ring out from each of the solemn charges—*Thy* works, not works without faith, but such abounding, overcoming faith that it must work. Upon Sardis the fearful sentence was, "I know the *works*, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." The Church is not a hospital but a workshop. Posted all about upon its walls are notices "No idlers nor loungers allowed here." "To every man his work." The Church on earth is for work, the *rest* is beyond. Its watch-word from its Founder is, "Preach the Gospel." It is a call to the intensest activity. Even the weak in body and infirm of spirit often render most affective service in soul-work. But, alas for the drones!

Here is a plethoric professor. He uses the Church as a housewife does her fruit-jar, simply to bottle up his piety for fear of its spoiling. He never dreams of using it in earnest, holy activity for saving lost souls.

There is a pleasure-seeking professor. The Church to her is a spiritual Saratoga to gratify her tastes. She would raise her hands in surprise at the idea of *work.* "O, dear, how very absurd." At her church the "quartette is *so* exquisite, the prayers so beautiful, the preacher *so* poetical and graceful, and the congregation so select." She fans and drinks in the delightful nectar and rides away in her coach, imagining herself in a holy ecstasy.

It may be well enough for Dorcas to look after the poor, but not for our exquisite professor.

Here is our retired professor,

He went through the *usual* experience and forms of admission to the church, and has retired upon this capital. He dives into the world, rolls up his sleeves for sharp bargains, smart trades, all for self, from Monday morning until Saturday night. On Sunday he puts on his religious coat and airs, and attends "divine service." When he has a full purse, and less business, he may do something for the Lord. Just now he can only go to church of a Sunday. He did his duty by joining the church in the usual way. He is a retired professor. It seems a great piety that the Lord should permit him to make the fatal mistake of retiring into the church militant rather than into the church triumphant.

Here is our talkative professor.

He is always ready for discussions or resolutions. He loves crowded assemblies, conventions, any place for remarks, and always improves them. He is full of theology, theories, stories for every occasion. Ask him to visit some out-of-the way place to preach Christ, to head a subscription, or do mission work, and he makes pompous promises, and escapes from work. He is simply a nuisance, the son of Saywell, of Prating-row. There is a certain foul bird that is said to stalk about squeaking out, "Do, do, do," but is itself the laziest and most ill-natured of all the birds in the world. The race is said to have died out now, being too lazy to live long. Happy would it be for the honor of Christ and His cause if this race of professors who are forever talking and lamenting, but never *doing*, should die out also. In the last day the Lord will say, "I know thy works." Not the hearers of the Word, but the DOERS of it shall receive a reward. All others build a house on the sand.—*The Christian at Work.*

STATISTICS OF METHODISM IN ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD.

The following statistics of Methodism are taken from the second volume of Dr. Jacoby's "History of Methodism," a very interesting and comprehensive work, which has just been published in the German language by the Methodist Episcopal Book-room, Bremen:—

	Members.	Ministers.	Local Preachers.	S. S. Scholars.
EUROPE.				
GREAT BRITAIN.				
Wesleyan Methodists	367,306	1,565	12,070	601,801
Wesleyan Methodists in Ireland	20,699	175	.....	17,653
Primitive Methodists	161,229	943	14,169	258,857
Methodist New Connection	26,309	162	1,119	68,592
United Methodist Free Church	68,062	312	3,445	152,315
Bible Christians	26,241	254	1,759	44,221
Wesleyan Reformers	8,650	23	600	18,056
Primitive Wesleyans in Ireland	9,000	125	300	10,000
FRANCE.				
French Wesleyan Methodists	2,158	52	117	2,768
English " "	119	3	37	168
SPAIN.				
Wesleyan Methodists	37	2	.....	257
ITALY.				
Wesleyan Methodists	790	4	61	743
GERMANY.				
Methodist Episcopal Church	6,956	56	29	7,434
Wesleyan Methodists (Evan. Ass. included in America)	1,915	11	53	261
DENMARK, SWEDEN, AND NORWAY.				
Methodist Episcopalians	1,100	19	30	564
AMERICA.				
UNITED STATES.				
Methodist Episcopal Church	1,291,404	7,330	10,278	1,168,839
Methodist Episcopal Church South	535,681	2,495	4,431	500,000
African Bethel Methodist Episcopal Church	200,000	550	1,500	150,000
African Zion Methodist Episcopal Church	64,800	694	700	75,000
Protestant Methodists	100,000	800	800	90,000
Wesleyan Methodists	25,000	236	164	23,000
Evan. Ass. (including Canada and Germany)	60,241	478	382	40,855
United Brethren in Christ	108,122	864	788	106,002
Sunday small Methodist Societies	55,000	200	200	45,000
BRITISH POSSESSIONS.				
Wesleyan Conference in Canada	60,877	580	250	53,024
East British American Wesleyan Conference	16,291	160	119	15,742
Methodist Episcopalians	28,957	216	224	24,000
WEST INDIES.				
Wesleyan Methodists	43,802	90	370	21,577
ARGENTINE REPUBLIC.				
Methodist Episcopal Church	151	7	.....	290
ASIA.				
CHINA.				
Methodist Episcopal Church	1,415	17	64	265
Wesleyan Methodists	104	11	4	312
INDIA.				
Methodist Episcopal Church	578	41	33	3,711
Wesleyan Methodists	635	33	13	5,333
CEYLON.				
Wesleyan Methodists	1,980	30	58	3,765
AFRICA.				
LIBERIA.				
Methodist Episcopal Church	1,830	15	38	1,240
BRITISH COLONIES, INCLUDING MISSIONS TO HEATHEN.				
Wesleyan Methodists	22,223	91	793	17,495
AUSTRALASIA.				
BRITISH COLONIES, INCLUDING MISSIONS TO HEATHEN.				
Wesleyan Methodists	61,175	298	2,786	118,333
Meth. New Connection (other Meth. Society included in Great Britian)	8,329	97	155	6,824
Total	3,389,166	19,049	57,934	3,654,215

DISSENTING PLACES OF WORSHIP IN ENGLAND.

The religious denominations in England and Wales, exclusive of the Established Church, possess 17,589 places of worship, of which 9,935 belong to various sects of Methodists. The Congregationalists have 2,252 churches, the Baptists 1,818, and the Roman Catholics 639. 761 churches are occupied by "Christian Brethren," "Protestants" "Protestant Dissenters," and those who object to be designated by any distinctive appelation. There are 20 Jewish synagogues, 108 Unitarian chapels, and 89 establishments for worship according to the system practised by Latter Day Saints, otherwise Mormons.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LITERATURE.

Christianity has originated a new form of literature wholly its own; a literature not known under any ancient form of mythology; not known under any form of modern heathenism; not known to infidelity; not known to philosophy: and it has, at the same time, originated an institution most effective for applying that literature, and for securing its own influence over the young. I allude to the Sabbath school, and to the literature which has been originated by that institution. This, if there were nothing else, would show that Christianity in its efforts to perpetuate and propagate itself is quite abreast of the world.

The literature of the Sabbath school may not be, in respect to quality, all that could be desired; but it may be doubted whether there is any other department of literature that is exerting as much influence on the destinies of mankind. Infidelity, Mahommedanism, and Buddhism have no peculiar literature for the young, nor have they any peculiar institution where to inculcate their sentiments on the young. Science, with great difficulty, prepares books for the young, but its literature in astronomy, botany, chemistry, designed to guide the young, as compared with the literature of the Sabbath school, is meagre in the extreme. The Sabbath school, and the Sabbath school library, stand by themselves. Both capable, undoubtedly, of great improvement, they are, nevertheless, exerting a vast power on the coming generation, and it is difficult to see how a religion that has such an agency as the sabbath school could be exterminated from the world. One day during each week of every month in the year the children of this nation are brought directly under Christian instruction, with all the advantages, in theory at least, of calling into the service the best talent, the highest intelligence, the warmest piety, the most devoted zeal, existing in the churches.—*Albert Barnes.*

At a recent anniversary of the American Sunday-school Union, the Hon. S. COLFAX, Vice-President of the United States, made the following graceful reference to the interest felt by President GRANT in the work generally: "There is one citizen of the United States, who is absent from press of public duties, who had hoped to be here this evening. I allude to our noble President, U. S. GRANT, who had hoped quietly to attend this anniversary. I asked him this morning before I left Washington what message I should convey from him. His reply was that he could not find language adequate to express his interest in this great cause. Among the happiest recollections of his life was that, when a youth, he was for several years connected with a Sunday school of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and he had not forgotten its teachings."

WORLDLY AMUSEMENTS.

In a late number of the Advocate we published a pastoral letter, prepared by the College of Bishops and indorsed by the general Conference in a resolution, which instructed the preachers in our Church to read it to their respective congregations. The design of the letter was to define, clearly, the position of our Church respecting many of the popular follies of the day. One of the General Rules of the Church forbids its members "taking such diversions as can not be used in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." Under this rule, dancing, going to circuses, theatres, and similar places of worldly amusements, are embraced, and, until recently, there has been no questions as to the position of our Church respecting these follies. The General Conference of 1858, however, introduced a special law forbidding the participation in them on the part of our members. This action was designed to set our position more clearly before the Church, and urge the importance of that General Rule we have quoted more strongly on the minds of the people. The General Conference of 1866, deeming this extra legislation unnecessary, and regarding the General Rule alluded to amply sufficient, removed from our Book of Discipline the special law respecting these evils, and left the Discipline where it was before.

This action has proved to be unfortunate. The removal of that specific rule was interpreted by many to be a withdrawal on the part of the Church from the position it had ever held on this question, and that we have no law on dancing and its kindred follies whatever.

It was to arrest this evil and define our position on these points that the pastoral letter was written. Some of the members of the Conference were in favor of reinserting that special law, adopted by the General Conference of 1858; others, of inserting a foot note to the General Rules, setting forth the sense of the General Conference as to their bearing on this question. It was finally deemed wise to request the Bishops to prepare a Pastoral Letter which would show to the Church and the world that the M. E. Church, South, had no compromise to make with those amusements which have ever sapped the foundations of practical piety in the hearts and lives of those professors of religion who have indulged in them. There is no mistaking the meaning of the address. In pointed language it draws the line between a religion of taste, sentiments and ceremony, and that surrender of the will which bows the affections before the will of God. This letter, with the indorsement of the General Conference, leaves the question no longer open. Our Church has not abandoned one iota of its position respecting these worldly amusements, and those pastors who wink at them, or those members who indulge in them, are strangely forgetful of their vows. We copy again a portion of that admirable letter, and repeat the hope that every pastor has read, or will read, the whole of it to all the congregations in his charge:

So powerful, indeed, are the fascinations of pleasure, so abounding the iniquity, in high places and low, that "the love of many has waxed cold." Young persons of cultivated minds and elegant manners, who may desire to be sincerely religious, are especially open to danger, from the tone of surrounding fashionable society, and from the plausibilities of the worldly spirit. But the law of gratification which rules the world, and offers the present and immediate, is, and ever must be, opposed to the unbending law of duty which conscience and God impose. There can be no compromise here. There can be no inward experience of grace, no valid religion of the heart, which is preceded by a full, unreserved, irrevocable commitment to the Lord Jesus. This commitment devolves self-denial—taking up the cross and following Christ. It is the surrender of the will to a supreme governing purpose—of the affections to a supreme governing love. A religion of mere culture, of amiabilities and æsthetic tastes, of sentiment, opinion, and ceremony, may readily allow participation in "diversions which cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus"—In dancing and reveling, in theatrical, operatic, and circus exhibitions, in the gambling operations of the turf—not to mention the recently revived excitements of the cock-pit. But the religion which is a divine life in the soul of Christ's true disciple, heeds the voice of conscience, and feels the powers of the world to come. It confers the dignity of holiness, the strength of self-denial, the glad freedom of a spirit rejoicing in the Right and Good. Such a religion needs not, desires not, allows not, participation in worldly pleasures, in diversions which, however sanctioned by fashion, are felt and known to be wrong by every truly awakened heart. Its spiritual discernment is not decribed by well dressed plausibilities, by refinements in taste or respectabilities in social position. It has "put on the Lord Jesus," and made "no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof." The influence of this form of religious character may be silent, but it is none the less potent, in the family, by the fireside, at the watering-place, or on the broad thoroughfares of business. What the Church lives will alone affect the world.—*Texas Christian Advocate.*

YARMOUTH CONFERENCE.

RESOLUTIONS RESPECTING THE PROVINCIAL WESLEYAN AND THE BOOK ROOM.

1. The Conference would still express its profound sense of the importance and necessity to the spiritual prosperity of our Connexion, of a well sustained religious periodical, and while grateful to Almighty God, for the benefit which it has reason to believe continues to follow the circulation of our official organ, *The Provincial Wesleyan*, expresses its earnest purpose to do all in its power to make this agency of our Church, by the Divine blessing, more efficient as a means of advancing the work of God.

2. That the Conference, believing the purpose may be better accomplished by earnest and united effort, on the part of our ministers and people, would enjoin upon all who have the interests of the important enterprise at heart, to co-operate in the measures which may be adopted by our BookSteward and his Executive Committee, in giving a much more widely extended circulation to *The Provincial Wesleyan* than it has hitherto attained.

3. The Conference still regards with great interest the success and efficiency of our Book Room, as an important means of checking the current of unscriptural and soul-destroying publications, and spreading abroad a sound religious literature, adapted to all ages and circumstances, and therefore solicits the continued and increased patronage of this agency of our Church, in order that its ample facilities, for distributing valuable religious publications may be recognized and employed; and its usefulness more fully promoted.

4. The Conference gratefully recognizes the hand of a fostering Providence in the success which has attended the strenuous efforts made during the past year, especially by its laborious Book Steward and Editor, to rescue the united offices from serious embarrassement, and most confidently anticipates that with the measures now adopted for their welfare, these valuable agencies will shortly become more efficient than ever.

5. The Conference regards, with feelings of real satisfaction and appreciation, the energy and devotion which have been brought to his new and laborious task, in connection with *The Provincial Wesleyan* and Book Room, by the Rev. H. Pickard, D. D., and would assure him of its abiding sympathy and co-operation in all the measures which, by him, may be adopted for the future prosperity of the interests of the Church to which his talents are now consecrated.

CONFERENCE EDUCATION SOCIETY.

CONSTITUTION.

Article I. The Society shall be known as the Education Society of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Eastern British America.

II. The payment of an annual subscription of not less than Three Dollars shall constitute a person a member; and the sum of such annual subscriptions, together with the amount of the annual collections to be made throughout the Connexion, and the interests of the permanent Fund, or Capital Stock, shall constitute the Current Income of the Society.

III. The payment of Fifty dollars, at any one time, shall constitute a person a life member; and the sum of such payments, together with the amount of all bequests, and special donations, of fifty or more dollars, shall be carefully invested from time to time, to constitute a Permanent Fund, to be regarded as the Capital Stock of the Society.

IV. The Current Income of the Society shall be appropriated annually in manner following, viz.: One-third part to aid in the maintenance of the Mount Allison Wesleyan College, as an agency necessary for the suitable educational