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The Provincial Wesleyan.

Published under the direction of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference of Eastern British America.

VOLUME XIV. No. 10. HALIFAX, N. S., WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5, 1862. WHOLE No. 660.

Religious Miscellany.

Who, and Whence?

BY HORATIUS BONAR.

Not from Jerusalem alone,
To heaven the path ascends;
As near, as sure, as straight the way
That leads to the celestial day,
From farthest realms extends;
Frigid or torrid zone.

What matters how or whence we start?
One is the crown to all;
One is the hard but glorious race,
Whatever be our starting-place—
Rings round the earth the call
That says, Arise, Depart!

From the balm-breathing, sun-loved isles
Of the bright Southern Sea,
From the dead North's cloud-shadowed pole,
We gather to one gladsome goal—
One common home in Thee,
City of sun and smiles!

The cold rough billow hinders none;
Nor helps the calm, fair main;
The brown rock of Norwegian gloom,
The verdure of Tahitian bloom,
The sands of Mizraim's plain,
Or peaks of Lebanon.

As from the green lands of the vine,
So from the snow-wastes pale,
We find the ever open road
To the dear city of our God;
From Russian steppe, or Burman vale,
Or terraced Palestine.

Not from swift Jordan's sacred stream
Alone we mount above;
Indus, or Danube, Thames or Rhone,
Rivers unsainted and unknown—
From each the home of love
Beckons with heavenly gleam.

Not from gray Olivet alone
We see the gates of light;
From Merven's heath or Jungfrau's snow
We welcome the descending glow
Of pearl and chrysolite,
And the unsetting sun.

Not from Jerusalem alone
The Church ascends to God;
Strangers of every tongue and clime,
Pilgrims of every land and time,
Throng the well-trodden road
That leads up to the throne.

Richard Weaver, the Revivalist.

A correspondent has supplied us with a sketch of the life of this extraordinary man, whose name, of late years, has been much associated with open-air meetings on religious subjects and revivals. Richard Weaver is connected with Mr. Reginald Radcliffe, of Liverpool, who is, we believe, now in France, on an evangelizing mission, and who first induced "the collier" missionary to abandon his labor in the mines, and sell Bibles at Hyde, near Manchester, in the streets. Long before that time, he had turned from the evil of his youth to serve God; and his youth had been passed among wicked companions. His father seems not to have been a careful man, but his mother was anxious for the welfare of her children in their secular, and especially their spiritual concerns. His mother's counsels and prayers had always some power over her son, although his treatment of her was occasionally even cruel. She lived until he had evinced a complete change of life, and had her reward in finding him engaged in a good work.

Some parties have objected to Richard Weaver's addresses because they are "crude in style," "unconnected in reasoning," "strong in assertion,"—too strong—"full of enthusiasm"—too full; and perhaps "incautious" or "blunt" or "not sound in a theological sense;" and many other matters are urged against them to which our correspondent makes some answer in the following sketch; and of which we would say in addition that the objectors forget perhaps the circumstances of the speaker. He is not a man trained to address audiences on "speculative" questions. He is probably not a man of literary taste; although he must improve in that respect by the careful study of the Scriptures. He passed his youth among the coarser class of midland miners; a different race from the northern miners—different but not preferable. He is even said to have been a "pugilist," although he was always drinking, and not therefore suitable for that trade. Looking to these circumstances, the natural eloquence, genius, and force of character shown in his subsequent life prove him to be a man of extraordinary gifts. No person, we believe, ever doubted the genuine nature of his faith. He is from these facts the man for a class, but that is a very numerous class; and he has obviously been made an instrument of doing among them a great work.

He would be an admirable missionary in a very dark and destitute district, if he had not, as it were, outgrown the qualifications. He could address a number of persons collected in an attic or a cellar, but then the attic would be so crowded that the house might come down; or the cellar be so packed that the audience would be smothered. Are such men to be refused a hearing? Must we reject a laborer because he is *too good, too gifted*, and therefore "too useful" in his work.

Richard Weaver belongs to the Wesleyan Church, and he has been probably overwrought. A man must read much to speak long, and speak well. This man is only in his thirty-fifth year, and an occasional retirement for two or three months in any of the Wesleyan seminaries would allow him time to gather new ideas, and re-arrange old thoughts, and recruit him for the field, stronger in person, perhaps also in spirit; for his labor and incessant speaking, and visiting, form a great waste of corporeal and mental strength.

The following outline is by our correspondent:—Very few whom these pages will reach but have heard of him as an honest, valiant, and energetic man, whose fight is that of faith—whose sword is the word of God, whose deeds are not marked by the track of human gore, but followed by the blessings of the grateful living, ascending as sweet incense before God—one who has helped to roll back the tide of sin and stem the torrent of iniquity—with the Gospel for his message—the love of God the theme, and present salvation the subject of his discourse—instrumentally bringing home to many and many an hardened sinner heavy blows of Divine mercy, melting the hearts with melody of grace, and entrancing the soul with the rapture of peace and pardon through the finished work—himself a monument of the change effected by redeeming love—once a persecutor, but now commissioned to bear aloft the blood stained banner of the cross right into the world's turmoil, down into the dark places of the earth, in hot-beds of iniquity, where sin, sweltering with impunity, threatens to crush what it fails to corrupt; and thither does this intrepid soldier of the cross nobly fulfil his arduous duty—ever in the van, never in the rear.

He was born on the 25th June, 1827, at Asterley, a village near Shrewsbury. His father was a farm-labourer and an ungodly drunkard; but his mother was a pious woman. His references to her are very touching; and well they may be! Born as he was in what is called the Midland Mining District, the inhabitants of which are addicted to drunkenness and to the most inhuman and brutal sports, and being brought up as a miner, he soon excelled his companions in fighting, and every species of immorality—requiting his godly mother's prayers by open profanity, and her advice by abuse and oftimes by blows. On one occasion, we are told that she took hold of his arm convulsively, and said, "This is hard work, Lord, to nurse and watch our children until they begin to be men, and then to hear them say that they will murder us for asking Thee to save them! But though Thou slay me yet will I trust in Thee." And then, turning to her son, she said, "I will never give thee up." How she pleaded with him—*for* him—the Listener to the importunate alone knows. Again and again for long weary days—months—years—unceasingly did she pour forth the agony of her heart, "Lord, save my son. I will never give thee up, my child." A mother's love is unutterable—in life—and even though her little one be dead, and is now scarcely remembered—yet her heart has one spot ever green—sacred to his memory. Oft when kind sleep lulls agony, and rocks thought into oblivion, *she* hears again his merry laugh, feels again his curly hair, and listens to his pleasant prattle—till with the morrow comes a view of that yawning gulf 'twixt the living and the dead.—But the appointed time rolled on when the praying mother's petition was answered.

During the month of May, 1852, while under the influence of drunkenness, "the terrors of hell got hold upon him." When he became sober, he crept into a sand-hole and poured out his soul before God. That day, in his capacity as a pugilist, he was to have fought a man—but "in that sand-hole," he says in his characteristic way, "I had a battle with the devil—Christ and Satan fought it, and Christ gained the victory, and I came off more than conqueror through Him that loved me."

For six months he continued steadfast in the faith. But we have to record the painful fact of his backsliding. His sin was natural; but the gradations of his fall were terribly swift. Nevertheless, again was he enabled to cry, after pleading for forgiveness for Christ's sake—

"Redemption through Thy blood I have,
And perfect righteousness."

"Through Thy blood I have it; not through my prayers or tears, but through the precious blood of Christ."

He soon after joined the Wesleyan Society, of which, we believe, he is still a member. In January 1853, he was married to a young woman, who has, it is said, proved in every way a suitable partner in life to him. Subsequently he was tried circumstantially; and not in vain did he trust in God to supply his wants. We cannot enter very fully into the details of the various occurrences of his eventful life; a very excellent biography has already been published by Morgan and Chase. He first spoke publicly on Good Friday, 1856, at an open-air meeting near Hyde, when many were converted. A little while after he was introduced to Mr. Reginald Radcliffe, with whom he has since laboured in the glorious cause of the Gospel, first as a missionary and then as an evangelist. It was while he was a town missionary, at Prescot, that most of the events occurred which he so vividly narrates.

In December, 1858, he visited his mother for the last time. She was, as he described it, "foot to foot with her last enemy!" While he prayed and knelt by the bedside, she laid her hands upon his head, and said, "Lord bless my child. When he was a child he knelt at my knee, in the room below, by the old rocking-chair, and Thou hast sent him now to kneel at my bedside and cheer me through the dark valley. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me; bless His holy name! Thou hast done me good, and not evil, all the days of my life! I am now ready to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand!" He bade her "good bye," and she blessed him in the name of the Lord, crying after him as he left the room, "Farewell! the next time we meet it will not be in this old chamber, but in the land where parting is no more!" She shortly afterwards departed this life, and is now numbered among those who are *gone before* into the realms of eternal glory.—Valiant mother! thy heroism was more than Spartan—it was Christian. Little didst thou think that the effect of thy memorable words would be found to-day, all over England, Scotland, and Ireland, and yet more abundantly when all things shall be made manifest.

He came to London, for the first time, in January, 1860, to supply the place of Mr. Radcliffe, who was engaged to address a sweeps' meeting at the Euston Rooms, but was unable to attend. Previous to that time, it appears that he had received nearly ten thousand letters from the same number of persons who date their conversion from his preaching. He has since preached at the theatres in, and at chapels about London, and in many parts of Great Britain. Wherever he has preached, God has owned and honoured his efforts, and made him instrumental in the conversion of vast numbers from nature's darkness into the marvellous light of the Gospel. It is impossible to estimate the good he has already accomplished, principally among the working classes, or how far his career of usefulness may be extended. The recollection of the evils from which he himself has escaped, impels him to warn others with great earnestness; this, perhaps, being the secret of his success. Some of his phrases are not always acceptable to "ears polite," but we must bear in mind the circumstances of his birth, and the associations of his early life. In many passages he exhibits remarkable eloquence. His sentences are short, his style anecdotal, and his delivery rapid. Bold in denunciation, vigorous in conception, and fervent in declamation, he excels most as an exciting speaker, and especially in the hold he readily obtains over the working classes, who care very little for learning or fine-spun arguments. To these he is all they need, and them he is eminently qualified to address, thoroughly in earnest, speaking the truth, not as though it were a fable, but as all-important, both for time and eternity.

May his life be long spared. Tempestuous and stormy it has hitherto been; yet when his tempest-tossed bark has finished its course, when the winds have ceased to blow, and the roaring waters have been kissed into peaceful slumber, with the setting of the sun may he leave a long shadow of his memory behind him, lengthening as it goes down.

Let us not, in viewing the result of his labors, lose sight of the fact that he is loaned to us by One above, in whose hands he is but an instrument, to whom, therefore, we ascribe all the praise and glory for ever and ever, Amen.

An Affecting Story.

The following affecting story was related by Dr. Dudley, an agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, at the anniversary of the Birmingham Sunday School Union:

In the county of Kent lives, or lived, a clergyman and his lady, who took an active part in the Sunday school connected with his Church. They had in the school a boy, the only son of a widow, who was notoriously wicked, despising all the earnest prayers and admonitions of the clergyman, who, out of pity for his poor widowed mother, kept him at the school eighteen months, but at length found it absolutely necessary to dismiss the lad as a warning to others. He soon after enlisted as a soldier in a regiment that was soon ordered to America, it being the last American war. Some time after, the poor widow called on the clergyman to beg a Bible of the smallest size. Surprised at such a request from an individual who was on the verge of eternity, and who, he knew, had one or more Bibles of large print, which she had long used to good purpose, he inquired what she wanted it for. She answered:

"A regiment is going out to America, and I want to send it to my poor boy, and, O! sir, who knows what it may do?"

She sent the Bible which the clergyman gave her, by a pious soldier, who upon his arrival at their destination, found the widow's son the very ringleader of the regiment in every description of vice. After the soldier had made himself known, he said:

James, your mother has sent you her last present."

"Ah!" he replied, in a careless manner, "is she gone at last? I hope she sent me some cash."

The pious soldier told him he believed the poor widow was dead; "but," said he, "she has sent you something of more value than gold or silver, [presenting him the Bible], and, James, it was her dying request that you would read one verse, at least, every day; and can you refuse her dying charge?"

"Well," said James, "it is not too much to ask, [opening the Bible], so here goes."

He opened the Bible at these words: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

"Well," said he, "that's very odd. I have opened to the only verse in the Bible that I could learn by heart when I was in the Sunday school; I never could, for the life of me, commit another. It is very strange; but who is this me that is mentioned in the verse?"

The pious soldier asked if he did not know.

He replied he did not.

The good man then explained it to him; spoke to him of Jesus, and exhibited the truth and invitations of the Gospel. They walked to the house of the chaplain, where they had further conversation; the result was, from that hour he became a changed man, and was as noted for exemplary conduct as before he had been for wickedness.

Some time after this conversation, the regiment in which he was, engaged the enemy; at the close of which, the pious soldier, in walking through the field of blood, beheld, under a large spreading oak, the dead body of James, his head reclining on his Bible, which was opened at the passage, "Come unto me all ye that are weary," etc. Poor James had gone to his eternal rest.

Extemporaneous Preaching.

Dr. Alexander, though he read his own sermons, administered the following advice to other preachers:

"Carry no scrap of writing into the pulpit.

"Beware of undue length. Touch and go in these early attempts.

"Begin at once. When a friend of mine inquired of the celebrated Gilbert Stuart, how young persons should be taught to paint, he replied: 'Just as puppies are taught to swim—*chuck them in!*' No one learns to swim in the sea of preaching without going into the water.

"The more special the subject, the richer will be the flow of thought."

One Cent a Day.

"Go ye into *all* the world, and preach the Gospel to *every creature*," was the last parting injunction laid on the churches by the ascending Lord. Are they able to fulfill the task? They are, and more than able, were the proper system adopted to raise and collect the required means. To show the churches this, we beg leave to submit to their consideration the following facts:—

One million of persons contributing *one cent a day*, would raise daily a mission fund of $10,000. In one year this would amount to $3,650,000. At a salary of $500 a year, this would keep in the field 7,300 missionaries. Or two millions of Christians contributing one cent a day would keep in the field 14,500 missionaries.

This system adapts itself to the poor, and gives to all and every one alike opportunity of glorifying God with their substance. It asks not for rich nor great gifts. Could the yoke of Christ be made more easy or his burden more light than this system makes it? Who through the day would feel himself the poorer for the want of the cent which in the morning he dropped into the mission-box?

Shall not the system be immediately adopted in the churches, and acted upon by them all? Neither talking nor publishing will raise the funds necessary for our mission boards; but this system will, would all of the churches act upon it. No other means to collect funds would be necessary; it alone would yield funds enough and to spare.

One cent a day would preach the Gospel to *every creature*. Shall it not be given?—*American Messenger.*

A Family Religious Paper.

We copy from an exchange the following paragraph respecting the benefits of a good family religious paper:

A good family paper is of untold benefit to the children and youth of a family. They are forming characters for life and for eternity. A religious paper placed in their way weekly, will silently yet effectually influence them for good. It will bring truth before them in new forms. It will furnish them with the means of distinguishing truth, and of defending it. It will tend to make them more intelligent, and give stability and enterprise to their characters. It will fit them to go into the world and resist its temptations, and induce them to seek to accomplish something for others. We feel to-day, and have felt every day since our boyhood, the influence of the religious paper which parental love and parental wisdom furnished for the family. It imperceptibly modified and corrected our wrong views, and caused us to look intelligently and religiously at the aim of life. And we can hardly conceive how, in this age, any one can do without a family religious paper. Better deny the body in some respects, than deny the mind and the soul this blessing. Better withhold from the children some other thing, rather than this. Put down a Family Religious Paper not merely as a luxury, but as one of the conveniences, the *necessaries* of life, and provide accordingly.

Peace in Trusting.

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."—Isaiah xxvi. 3.

Oh, this is blessing, this is rest!
Into thine arms, O Lord, I flee:
I hide me in thy faithful breast,
And pour out all my soul to thee.
There is a host dissuading me;
But, all their voices far above,
I hear thy words—"O taste and see
The comfort of a Saviour's love."
And, hushing every adverse sound,
Songs of defence my soul surround,
As if all saints encamped about
One trusting heart pursued by doubt.

And oh, how solemn, yet how sweet
Their one assured, persuasive strain!
"The Lord of Hosts is thy retreat,
The man who bore thy sin, thy pain.
Still in his hand thy times remain—
Still of his body thou art part;
And he will prove his right to reign
O'er all things that concern thy heart."
O tenderness—O truth divine!
Lord, I am altogether thine,
I have bowed down—I need not flee—
Peace, peace is mine in trusting thee.

And now I count supremely kind
The rule that once I thought severe;
And precious to my altered mind,
At length, thy least reproofs appear.
Now to the love that casts out fear,
Mercy and truth indeed are one.
Why should I hold my ease so dear?
The work of training must be done.
I must be taught what I would know:
I must be led where I would go;
And all the rest ordained for me,
Till that which is not seen I see,
Is to be found in trusting thee.

Waring.

Religious Intelligence.

Gov. Hincks' Reply to the Wesleyan Address.

The government of the Hon. Francis Hincks seems to have been very successful, having received the approbation of the Imperial authorities, as is indicated in his appointment to the more important post of Governor of British Guiana. Mr. Hincks has also made himself extremely popular among the people of Barbadoes and the other Islands, during his stay among them, for we observe that addresses expressing regret at his departure have been presented to him from all classes, and from most of the religious and other bodies. Among others, the Revs. H. Bleby, H. Pladoom, H. Soper, James Nicholson, and A. G. Ward, Wesleyan Missionaries stationed in Barbadoes, have presented an address, expressing their estimation of the candid and friendly spirit he had always shown to the various missionary labourers, and particularly to those of the Wesleyan body. To this address Governor Hincks made the following:

REPLY.

"Reverend Gentlemen,—The address which you have presented to me, as expressive not only of your own sentiments, but of those of the Societies and Congregations in connection with the British Wesleyan Methodist Conference has been most acceptable to me, and in offering to you my acknowledgments for your friendly congratulations on my appointment to the Government of British Guiana, I have to request that you will convey to the congregations under your care the expression of my thanks, not only for the support which I have invariably received from them, but likewise for their uniform good conduct, and their willing obedience to the laws of the land.

In these Colonies, as in every part of the world, where Wesleyan Missions have been established, they have been attended, with the most beneficial results, but it would be difficult to point out any country in which the ministers of your church have had a more useful or more interesting work to perform, than in preaching the Gospel and in spreading education among the people who were indebted to the justice and magnanimity of the British nation for their emancipation from the galling bonds of slavery.

Considering it hardly possible to over estimate the extent of the aid rendered to those charged with the maintenance of law and order in the British West Indian Colonies by the ministers of religion, I have deemed it my duty not only to evince my gratitude for that aid to the extent of my humble ability, but to endeavour on suitable occasions to impress on the community at large the importance of giving effectual support to the Missionary cause.

I should be extremely sorry if, in taking this course, I should be thought to have undervalued the service of the Clergy of the Established Church, which I sincerely believe to have been faithfully and zealously rendered in this Island, as well as in the neighbouring Colonies; but I have never observed an indication of hostility to that Church, on the part of your ministers, and I am well aware that you would disclaim any such feeling.

On the other hand you must be aware that there has been a gradual change in public opinion with regard to your missions, so much indeed, that I venture to indulge the hope that the day is not far distant when their value will be publicly recognized.

Meanwhile it is due to the people under your care, who, especially in the rural districts belong chiefly to the industrious classes, to bear testimony to their persevering efforts to sustain, by voluntary contribution, not only the general funds of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, but the schools under its care, and the special missions to the heathen lands. No better proof can be afforded of the zeal and devotion of your Ministers than these voluntary efforts on the part of their congregations.

It is with the most lively satisfaction that I notice your acknowledgment of the beneficial results which have followed the abolition of slavery. I regard such testimony as most valuable. As Missionaries you have had opportunities of observing the condition of the people in the various colonies in succession; you have associated with all classes of the population, and you have no personal interest to bias your judgement.

I believe with you that the islands and territories in which freedom has been established exhibit to the world the spectacle of an improving peasantry; and while I am inclined to hope that you are correct in asserting that their commercial prosperity is increasing, I am fully persuaded that there can be no real security for life and property, and consequently no reliable commercial prosperity under a system of slavery.

In bidding you farewell, Reverend Gentlemen, I have to express my earnest hope that with God's assistance I may be enabled so to discharge my duties as to retain the confidence which you on behalf of the Wesleyan societies and congregations in Barbadoes have done me the honor to express in me.

F. HINCKS.

Government House,
Barbadoes, 19th *Decr.*, 1861.

—*Christian Guardian.*

Evangelical Work in England.

Mr. Denham Smith, whose usefulness in Dublin, and in the midland and southern counties of Ireland, has been remarkable, recently visited London, and held meetings at Freemason's Hall. Mr. Reginald Radcliffe has been similarly employed, as has also Mr. John Hambleton, who is described as from California. Crowds attend their preaching. Mr. Radcliffe has now gone to France and Southern Europe for special evangelistic work. A London letter in the *Presbyterian* says:—

"A recent Conference was held of the leaders and preachers of the London revival movement, to consider the best mode of dealing with the unconverted. Mr. Radcliffe, in reference to the question as to whether the Holy Ghost, and the necessity of a saving change wrought by Him, should be taught *first*, before the declaration of Christ crucified, said in substance, that the true gospel is to exalt Christ and glorify Him, and that it is the Spirit's office, not to glorify himself, but Christ. I submit that both truths are embraced in one conversation or discourse of Christ (John iii.), and therein the necessity of regeneration, (which, in its proclamation, cannot save a soul, but convince it of its lost condition), is preparatory to the glorious announcements, 'As Moses,' &c., 'God so loved the world,' &c."

Richard Weaver is described as a more impassioned and less reliable preacher, being uneducated and of an impulsive temperament. Among those affected by his addresses, more chaff is found. It is remarked that "his dealings with inquirers after his terrifying addresses, are marked by singular noiselessness, gentleness, and Christ-like tenderness." One of his own recent letters says:—

"I have had some good meetings at Manchester, and many sinners found peace with God there. One man took hold of my hand, and said, with tears in his eyes, 'The Lord bless you, Mr. Weaver, that you ever came to Manchester; for before you came to this city, I was an infidel; but I came to hear you; the Lord convinced me of my error, and, bless God, now I can say, 'Christ for me,' for the Lord has pardoned all my sins, and my home is like a little heaven, for my wife has found the Lord as well. Bless his name. O, Mr. Weaver, the Lord bless you, for I know that I am a sinner washed by the blood of the Lamb.' Last Sunday night a Roman Catholic got up on a bench, after I had done speaking, and said, 'Thank God that I ever came to hear Mr. Weaver, with some more of my friends, who were Roman Catholics, for we have found that it is not beads, nor saints, nor crucifixes, nor anything else, but it is Christ, and Him alone, that can save.'"

Mrs. Ranyard, at the head of her Bible women, still rejoices greatly in the continued success of patient labor. According to the annual report just published:

"More than 29,000 copies of the Scriptures (chiefly Bibles, *not* Testaments), have been sold, *not given*, in the lowest parts of London, during the past four years. During this year the poor of London have paid nearly $53,000 for Bibles, $20,185 for clothing and bedding; and the total payments, including salaries, rent, and furniture for mission-rooms, and discretionary aid to Bible-women and distressed cases, $74,105. Thus a great sanitary reform and temperance movement, but the "Book" and "the gospel" are ever put foremost. "We cannot agree to temperance put *first*, or industrial reform of any kind *first*, or any thing first, but the good news of a present salvation. And *God is blessing us daily in this.*' Such are the words of the able and indefatigable promoter of this noble enterprise. Mrs. Ranyard, author of 'The Book and its Story.' And such is the aim of all the one hundred and fifty-six Bible-women, and also of the lady superintendents who direct and encourage them in their respective districts. Country districts are largely imitating this London enterprise, and everywhere God is honoring His word, at the very time that false teachers in high places are, by their wicked errors, depreciating it, and undermining its divine authority."

Methodism in Australia.

Religion, both in the capital, and through the Colony, is wholly sustained by the voluntary efforts of the several denominations. No Government money is here given to any section of the church; but every community of professing Christians is left to itself. The Episcopal Church is feeble comparatively. The bishop, in his gabled residence at North Adelaide, is supported by a beneficent endowment from Miss Coutts; but most of the clergy have to eke out their scanty livings by teaching, or by cultivating vineyards. Roman Catholics, too, though said to number seventeen thousand in the Colony, having no State aid, are feeble and low. Methodism is strong and prosperous. By the Colonial returns, it numbers nearly twice as many attendant at its worship that are found in connection with any other Christian Body. It was the first religious community organised and established in the Colony. It was introduced by two excellent men, Messrs. East and Boots, who had worked together at Kingscot, on Kangaroo Island; and who in remembrance of Wesleyan services at home, had there worshipped God together in their carpenter's shop, with as many as could be induced to join them. Immediately upon the formation of the settlement, and before any house could be erected upon the surveying allotment of Adelaide, a Class Meeting was held by Mr. Abbot, in a rude hut on the bank of the river Torrens. This was the first place of Methodist worship in the city. The next was in the kitchen of the English wooden house of Edward Stephens, Esq., son of the late Rev. John Stephens, known and venerated in British Methodism. In this kitchen, Methodism, for Adelaide and South Australia, was first organised in 1837. The foundation stone of a chapel in Hindley street was soon afterwards laid by Mrs. Edward Stephens, daughter of the late Mr. Baron, of Hull. The appointment of Local Preachers followed, and, true to the Missionary character of Methodism, the services of one of them were wholly given to the Aborigines. Before the end of the year 1838, the Rev. William Longbottom, a Wesleyan Missionary, proceeding from Tasmania to Swan River, was, with his family, wrecked on the coast of South Australia, when he took the charge and oversight of the church thus providentially prepared for him by the previous and voluntary association of the Methodists there. Since then Methodism has continued to advance; and now, in the Colony, there are 133 chapels and preaching places, 15 ministers, 152 Local Preachers, 202 Class Leaders, 5,652 Sunday scholars, 2,841 Church members, 20,000 regular attendants at its public services; and beyond its own support it supplies £1,030 a year for Missions to the heathen in regions beyond Australia.—*Jobson.*

General Miscellany.

A Startling Discovery in the Solar System.

The *American Journal of Science and Arts* for November, contains two very important papers, explanatory of a discovery hitherto unknown to the general reader, which has been made by eminent astronomers within the past year. These are 1st. The observations of Professor Turner, on the periodic meteors of August, and 2nd. The August Ring of meteors, by Professor A. H. Newton.—We quote from the New York *Journal of Commerce*:—

"It may now be regarded as a new and startling feature of the solar system, that there is at least one ring of meteoric formations surrounding the sun, which has a regular revolution. The recurrence of the meteoric display in August of each year, is explained by the fact that the earth passes, at the time, through the Ring and the contact of its formations with our atmosphere renders them visible in combustion. The article of Professor Newton is specially valuable and interesting as presenting the fact that the inclination of the ring to the ecliptic has been measured, and so far as fixed as to render it certain that the meteors of other known annual recurrence, cannot belong to the same ring. Whether other rings exist or not, remains to be shown, but this for the present may be regarded as ascertained, a meteoric ring with an inclination of from 84 to 96 deg. to the ecliptic, and with a periodic time of 281 days, actually forms an important part of the solar system; that the world passes through this ring annually in August, and is several days in passing from side to side, so that its thickness is five to ten millions of miles.

The general reader will perhaps understand this discovery better by placing it in very simple language. Most persons are already familiar with the fact that meteors, or shooting stars, as they are often called, are annually visible in great quantities during the month of August on certain nights. On any one of those nights two or three persons, watching the sky, may count from one to two hundred of them in an hour or two. It may now be taken as an ascertained fact in astronomy, that these meteors which consist of various minerals, are a few, out of many millions of millions, which are located in a great ring that surrounds the sun; and is as regular in its revolution as the earth or any planet. Professor Newton, taking one morning's observation, makes a rough calculation, that there are more than 300,000,000,000,000 of these bodies in a ring.

The mind at once recurs to the ring of Saturn, and wonders whether this meteoric ring in any manner resembles that. The telescopic power of new instruments has already resolved that most beautiful phenomenon of the heavens, into a series of rings, instead of one ring only. Its substance is unknown. It may be conjectured that the loose and scattered masses which lie in the Solar ring, and which are, perhaps, too far apart to present even a nebulous appearance to an observer [illegible] star, may have their counterpart in the compact and brilliant disc which surround the planet Saturn.—But speculations of this kind are very crude in the present state of our knowledge on the subject, and we recur to our first remarks, that new and startling discoveries like this only show us how little we actually know of the secrets of immensity.

It is just half a century since the Nebular Hypothesis of Sir Wm. Herschel startled the thinking world, and for a long time scientific men believed the theory of growing suns and planets, formed from misty impalpable matter accumulating around centres of revolutions. The Rosse telescope resolving nearly all the known nebulæ into groups of stars, exploded that theory, and the *Westminster Review* is the last of its defenders. But from attempting to enter the secret places of God's creative power, which, as we have already remarked, are closed to human ingress, it now seems as if the human intelligence may possibly be permitted to learn something of the decay of suns and stars. A little while ago we learned that in a wide space in our system, where a planet might have found its place, there were vast asteroids, whose number we are yearly increasing, which follow, as its were, in the order of the lost planet, like fragments of an exploded sphere.

And now, we have this ring of meteoric bodies, lying in an orbit around the solar centre, the orbit itself by some convulsion hurled out of his place, so that our own planet now passes through it; as if in some former period, a planet had rushed flaming along its course of destruction, and vanished, leaving the track marked forever after with the strewn fragments of its material.

Hitherto we have searched space for stars and planets. Hereafter, possibly we may look successfully here and there among the vast hosts of heaven for the ruin of planets and systems which have accomplished their mission, and whose fires have burned low and gone out in remote and unknown periods.

An Outrage in Church.

It has never been our misfortune heretofore, even to hear of such an outrage as has been recently committed in an Episcopal Church at Alexandria, in Virginia. It is quite true, that such outrages were common enough in England during the days of the Commonwealth, when the soldiers of Cromwell dragged ministers from their pulpits. They began with Episcopalian clergymen, but soon learned to treat Presbyterians in the same fashion. In general, these outrages were perpetrated by some "godly" corporal who imagined he had a gift of preaching, and who proceeded to exercise his "independent" function. In those days there was fanaticism enough; but now, they seem in the Federal States to have the fanaticism without the religion.

The following is an account of the outrage in question, drawn up and signed by twenty-six respectable inhabitants of the city of Alexandria:

"A scene occurred in St. Paul's Church, Alexandria, Virginia, on Sunday morning, Feb. 9th, 1862, which has, perhaps never had a parallel among civilized nations, certainly not in the history of this country. The officiating clergyman, Rev. K. J. Stewart, had just got through the Morning Prayer of the Episcopal Church as far as the Litany, the prayer for the President being omitted. One of them, Capt. Farnworth, of the Eighth Illinois Cavalry, who sat near the chancel, dressed in uniform, with some five or six of his soldiers near him, undertook to officiate in prayer, (if prayer it can be called) by reading the prayer for the President of the United States. How far he went it does not appear in the confusion, but soon quitting his position as officer of prayer, he advanced to the alter where Mr. Stewart was kneeling, still continuing the Litany, and ordered his arrest. Mr. S. was dragged from his knees by the soldiers. The ground of arrest Captain Farnsworth distinctly avowed to be omission of the prayer for the President of the United States. With this avowal, he said, "I arrest you by authority of the United States, as a rebel and a traitor." "And I," responded Mr. Stewart, who by that time had advanced to the chancel rails, to Capt. F., "summon you to answer at the judgment seat of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords for interfering by force of arms, with his ambassador, while in the act of presenting the petitions of His people at His altar." The solemnity of this appeal apparently caused the parties to fall back and pause, but soon the soldiers were ordered to seize Mr. Stewart, which two of them did with great violence, forcing the prayer book from his hands, one of them drawing a revolver. Another revolver was presented to an old and venerated citizen within the chancel, when the officer ordered the soldier not to fire. Very soon, a considerable number of armed soldiers appeared in the church. Mr. Stewart refusing to yield voluntarily, was dragged by force from the altar, and through the aisle, out of the church. He was in the surplice, which he wore through the streets, and at Capt. Farnsworth's quarters where he was taken.

"Capt. Farnsworth said that he went to church intending to arrest Mr. Stewart if he should offer any prayer for the Confederate States. Near him and in the same pew sat Mr. Morton, the "detective" agent of the United States Government, who there gave orders to Captain Farnsworth to make the arrest, which was executed as above described. Mr. Morton has declared that he was acting under authority from Washington. The scene in church was such as may be imagined under such circumstances. Gentlemen were indignant and excited, and ladies giving utterance to their feelings of grief and indignation, but, of course, no serious effort was made to prevent the arrest. Mr. Stewart was taken away, and the congregation dispersed.

"It is proper to state that these proceedings were without the knowledge of Gen. Montgomery, the Military Governor of the city, and were strongly condemned by him when they came to his knowledge. He telegraphed to Washington for instructions, which, when received were of such a nature as to lead to Mr. Stewart's release after a few hour's detention.

"The issues involved in the transactions, thus imperfectly sketched, are too grave to admit of comment. It will, however, be well to state that