

Miscellany.

SELECTIONS.

THE NEWSPAPERS ON WATCH-MEETINGS.

It is a noticeable fact that these meetings, once considered the peculiarity of the Methodist Connexion, are becoming so general, that even the daily newspapers take knowledge of them. They are becoming quite a national religious institution, and one which, even if accompanied by some things uncongenial to many spiritual minds, is capable, under God, of becoming the medium of unexpected blessing.

The *Daily Telegraph* gives somewhat lengthy notices of the services held on New Year's Eve, in the leading churches and chapels. Foremost in the list, as the headquarters of ecclesiasticism, we notice that held at St. Alban's, Holborn. Crowds attended, spite of the weather, and, to quote from the *Telegraph*, instead of a "correct and æsthetic service, the priest was unsurplised, minus vestments, the hymns culled from Wesleyan manuals, and the preacher outpreached any Wesleyan in the metropolis as to the doctrine of free-will."

The question arises, "Are these things so?" and if so, what do they mean?

The services at various places of worship appear to have been largely attended and interesting—those at the Moravian Church and Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle deeply so. The list closes with an account of the midnight service at the Cow-cross Mission hall, where, after the old year had died into the past, the congregation adjourned to Clerkenwell-green, to welcome its successor by lime-light.

Another similar service, of the most solemn character, and accompanied with results that will be, as we trust, eternal in their issues, was held at the "Edinburgh Castle," Limehouse. And hundreds more such gatherings were held throughout the land, for which we thank God, and from which we expect many a blessing as the New Year grows old.

MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITY.

ONE Monday morning a minister was informed that a man who, the preceding evening, had listened to his discourse in perfect health, had suddenly been ushered into eternity. His personal responsibility to preach the Gospel as to dying men, as to those who, for aught he knew, might be about to appear at the bar of God, at once flashed upon his mind.

Rising anxiously from his seat, he proceeded to examine the manuscript of the sermon which the departed soul had last heard, with the intensely earnest hope that he should find in it as much Gospel truth as, had it been then and there, through the grace of God, understood and believed by the departed hearer, would have saved his soul. To his inexpressible grief, after the examination was over, he found the contrary. He saw that the hearers might have believed every word of that discourse and remained unsaved. The sermon was scriptural and well prepared, lacking nothing save the Gospel suited to a dying man.

Penetrated with a sense of his own unfaithfulness, he burst into tears, and, falling down at the mercy-seat, confessed before God, with much contrition, his dread omission; and ere he rose from his knees, he made the solemn vow that, with Divine help, to the day of his death, he would never preach a sermon without setting forth as much of the glorious Gospel as would, if truly believed, save any unregenerate soul then present.

WAITING HOURS.

BY ANNA SHIPTON.

"My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from Him. He only is my rock and my salvation. He is my defence; I shall not be moved."—Psa. lxxii. 5, 6.

I WAS recovering from a long attack of Italian fever when I crossed to Naples,