

OUR NOTE BOOK.

WHILE the work of human butchery and outrage, on the one hand, and the severity of the season on the other, have been cutting off hundreds of sufferers in the east of Europe, the benevolence of the English people has been aroused, and has responded to the appeal for help for the distressed refugees in Serbia. Money, blankets, clothing, and food have been contributed without stint; but the cry still reaches us, and calls for further sacrifices on the part of those to whom an abundance has been given. Surplus clothing, and many articles of little or no use, stowed away in domestic recesses, would be very acceptable to the poor sufferers.

Messrs. Moody and Sankey's Labours in Chicago have been blessed with cheering success. The "Tabernacle" specially built for them has been erected with marvellous celerity. The building is capable of accommodating 10,000 persons, and since the opening has frequently been packed with hearers, thousands being drafted to other buildings opened for the overflow. The temporary absence of Mr. Moody, through the death of his brother, caused little diminution in the attendance, Major Whittle taking charge of the meetings. The churches generally have experienced a gracious visitation of the Holy Spirit, and a higher and healthier tone has been given to the piety of their members. Meanwhile the cry of many has been heard, asking the way of salvation.

The Conference Hall, Midway park, ever the scene or centre of operations having for their object the highest welfare of the people, is now busy with its winter's work. The Men's Night School is well attended, as many as 300 and upwards having presented themselves for instruction. The work is undertaken chiefly by the deaconesses in attendance. To the various branches of a good English education are added the privileges of Biblical instruction, which is accompanied by singing and prayer. Coffee is supplied at a penny per cup, and is partaken of by the majority of those in attendance. May such institutions be largely multiplied!

The Wesleyan Revival Missions, both in London and the provinces, have been signally blessed. Conventions have been held in various centres, and a week of services has followed, consisting of noon prayer-meetings, special sermons by mission preachers, with after meetings for prayer and inquirers, children's services, experience meetings, and services of praise. It is impossible to tabulate the results, but the religious zeal of each week records large numbers of conversions, and the quickened press and piety of church members. In London the work was preceded by a ministers' meeting at Jewin street Chapel, when a large muster collected, and spent some hours in prayer, the reading of papers, and discussion. A convention of Christian workers met at City-road Chapel on Nov. 1 and 2. The meetings were presided over by the president of Conference and Dr. Osborn. We have not space to record the proceedings in detail, but it was felt that the period was one of very hallowed intercourse, and must have exercised a powerful influence on those who went forth to engage in the special work of the mission.

The Sheffield Mission Services in connection with the Church of England were abundantly successful. Nearly all the churches participated in the services. The Archbishop of York engaged zealously in the work, while the labours of the Rev. W. H. M. Aitken were remarkable for their power. The large Albert Hall was filled to overflowing when Mr. Aitken preached there. Services were held in many of the factories, and separate classes were addressed in services specially held for each, embracing business men, post-office officials, policemen, cutlers, colliers, armour-plate makers, etc., while the Gospel was "preached to the poor" in the workhouse and the infirmary. Besides the "mission preachers," numbers of laymen assisted, and rendered valuable aid in the work. Many conversions are reported, and the mission will long be remembered by the inhabitants of that large town.

The Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, in his late visitation at Gloucester Cathedral remarked that sceptical and irreligious thought had made advances during the last half generation which were now startling and disquieting all serious observers. Formerly unbelief was flippant and repulsive; now it was assuming a much more earnest tone, and there was not only a large amount of latent unbelief, but a very unrestrained avowal of it.

The town and neighbourhood of Bodmin has been blessed by a remarkable visitation of the Holy Spirit, more than 300 conversions being reported. Mid-day services, Bible readings, praise meetings, and the nightly preaching of the Gospel, with after-meetings, have all been well attended, and though the centre of the work was the Wesleyan Chapel, its blessings extended to those belonging to every denomination in the neighbourhood.

A Union Conference "for the promotion of the righteousness, peace, and joy of the true Christian life," has been held in the Assembly Rooms, Defoe-road, Stoke Newington. The conference extended over four days, commencing on Saturday, Nov. 11. Christians of all denominations were invited. The arrangements for each day were:—Prayer and conference, at 9 a.m.; ladies' meeting, 11 a.m.; lunch, 1 p.m.; general meeting, 3 p.m.; tea, 5 p.m.; conversational meeting, 6 p.m.; general meeting, 7 p.m. The ladies' meetings were conducted by Mrs. W. E. Boardman and others. The Rev. W. E. Boardman, author of "The Higher Christian Life," etc., presided over the conference. Several gentlemen who have devoted themselves to the promotion of the entire consecration of believers, took part in the conference.

A congress was held recently at Geneva, the object of which was to further the observance of the Lord's Day. Representatives attended from England, France, Russia, Greece, Canada, and the United States. An international federation to promote the observance of the Sabbath was the result, and much good is expected to follow.

The winter meetings of the Wesleyan Missionary Society have commenced in earnest. The Leeds Auxiliary Anniversary, which is considered to inaugurate the new year of the society, which was first formed there, was a great success. The collections amounted to £1,753 2s. 8d., in addition to which £1,138 were promised at the Gledhow Breakfast meeting. The London Districts Auxiliary Meeting in Exeter Hall followed, when a large assembly entirely filled the hall. Dr. Punshon, Revs. G. T. Perks, M. A., W. O. Simpson, J. Jackson Wray, etc., were the speakers, the latter addressing himself to the children, of whom 500 were gathered together on the platform as choir for the occasion. Mr. Henry H. Fowler, of Wolverhampton, presided. Dr. Punshon shadowed forth the introduction of their mission into Japan, the natives of which country are said to be very intelligent and receptive of the truth.

OUR PROGRAMME FOR 1877.

WE have no reason to be dissatisfied with our success or our reception, but at the same time shall endeavour to excel ourselves next year. As an evidence of this, we would direct attention to the following especial features which our January number will introduce.

I. RANDOM THOUGHTS.—A series of racy sketches on topics of social interest, by the Rev. ARTHUR MURSELL.

II. GOLDEN TRUTHS.—Under this title will be given a brief exposition, tersely and pointedly written, of the international lessons for the month; useful to the teacher, and interesting to the general reader. By the Rev. THORNLEY SMITH.

III. COMPLETE TALES.—Each number will contain, as at present, a complete tale, suitable for all ages, and by well-known authors, amongst whom we can promise will be found Miss M. A. PAULI, LILLIE MONTFORT, Mrs. E. R. PITMAN, Miss BEATRICE A. JOURDAN, Rev. JAMES YEAMES, Rev. JOHN THOMAS, Miss MARY BASKIN, Mrs. GEORGE CUPPLES, Miss EMILIE SEARFIELD, NELSIE BROOK, and others.

IV. THE MONTHLY SERMON.—Every number will contain, as now, a sermon by some celebrated divine (unmindful of denominational distinction), accompanied by a well-engraved portrait. The January preacher will be the late Rev. ROWLAND HILL.

V. THE HEROES OF THE COVENANT, and other Papers. By J. FULTON SMITH.

VI. OUR MUSICAL BOX.—A new piece of music, by the very best authors, will be given monthly under this heading.

VII. OUR NOTE BOOK will be as far as possible a reflex of the doings of the times.

VIII. THE CHILDREN'S CORNER will still be found interesting, and we trust useful, to children of all ages.

IX. MISCELLANEOUS ARTICLES, Short Sketches, Poetry, Notices of Books, etc., will be found in every number, and several other features will develop themselves as the year goes on. The paper will be also improved, and several typographical alterations made.

We trust, therefore, that with this attractive programme before them, our readers will do their very best for us, and, through us, themselves.

NOTICES OF BOOKS.

The Zoology of the Bible. By Harland Coultas. (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 4s.) A most attractive book. The author writes succinctly and thoroughly; the work is scientific and exact in the highest degree, and is yet so popular in its style as to commend it to every thoughtful young student. Mr. Coultas is a high authority on zoological matters, and this volume is well worthy of him.

Sacred Heroes and Martyrs. By J. T. Headley. (London: Ward, Lock, and Tyler.) These biographical sketches are deserving of our warmest commendation. Written as a narrative, in ordinary language, they are well calculated to be read with avidity by many to whom the Bible—so far as thorough study is concerned—is comparatively unknown. The author very happily shows the grandeur of the character of his heroes from even a human standpoint; and then, with great catholicity, introduces the moral and religious lessons to be derived therefrom. The article upon the life of our Saviour is especially good.

The Footsteps of St. Peter. By Rev. J. R. Macduff, D.D. (London: Nisbet and Co.) Dr. Macduff is a most indefatigable writer, and this, his last book, evinces a careful study of the subject which few men could rival. The history of Peter the Bold is traced from his birth to his martyrdom with great fidelity; not an extraneous point is missed, and the many-sided character of the great apostle is vividly portrayed; in aid of the author's personal researches in the Holy Land rendering the narrative most readable and reliable.

The Seed of the Church. By Mrs. Dickinson. (London: Nisbet and Co.) It seems to us almost a pity that the outside of this book should be so theological and dry in its appearance. The story is graphically told of the trials and victories of a band of Roman Christians in the time of Trajan. The scene, and perhaps the plot are well-worn, but our authors carries us from the first page to the last with thrilling excitement, and a power of description absolutely entrancing.

Uncle Tom's Story of His Life. (London: Christian Age Office) Everyone who has read "Uncle Tom's Cabin" (and who has not?), ought to have this book. We have here the actual story of the life of Uncle Tom (Rev. Josiah Henson), which Mrs. Stowe so graphically illustrated in her world-renowned book, and the narration is all the more valuable from the fact that the author—now seventy-eight years of age—is at this moment in England.

Northern Lights, or Pen and Pencil Sketches of Modern Scottish Worthies. (London: Wesleyan Conference Office.) A grand array, truly. Such men as Guthrie, Irving, Macleod, Hugh Miller, and Chalmers names which the world will ever be proud to own, are here assembled to incite us to noble deeds, and firmer faith in God. Whoever the author is, he has done his work well: he has a master hand, and brings out in relief the grander qualities of these true heroes. The narrative is a most interesting one for all readers, and we hope, as occasion serves, to give a few extracts from its pages.