

The Wesleyan.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS.

If God could not save us through the agency of the simplest and most common-place truths, then most men would be beyond the reach of salvation just for lack of knowledge.—*South-western Methodist.*

Are you stewards going to readjust in your final settlement with your preacher because the crop is short and the times are hard? Suppose one of you is a merchant, will the preacher be allowed to readjust when he comes to settle his account at the end of the year?—*Southern Advocate.*

Some Churches in the North have a committee for shaking hands with visitors. The idea is not a bad one. An improvement on it can be made when the Church is resolved into a committee of the whole and each member makes it his or her duty to say a kind word to every visitor who enters the sanctuary.—*Texas Advocate.*

Mr. George B. Dexter, in his recent admirable paper on the "new boys' reading-room," quotes Sheriff Clark as saying: "Many women come to me at the jail, and want to read and talk to the criminals; but I tell them to go and read and talk to the same class that are not as yet criminals, and keep them from being such."—*Boston Transcript.*

In the early days of Methodism a preacher expected a revival of religion in every society, and the conversion of souls at every appointment. The power of God is not limited to time nor to men. Let the Church pray that the primitive power of Methodism will be restored and souls converted in every congregation.—*Texas Advocate.*

At the Boston Ministers' Meeting recently, a speaker said: "I used to think that preaching should be principally for the benefit of adults and youth, but that children may be saved. Now I believe that preaching should be directed to children, but that adults may be saved, if they will heed the offers of salvation."—*N. Y. Examiner.*

In a recent letter addressed to the Editor of the *Christian Advocate* George Bancroft says: "Certainly our great United Commonwealth is the child of Christianity; it may with equal truth be asserted that modern civilization sprung into life with our religion; and faith in its principles is the life-boat on which humanity has at divers times escaped the more threatening perils."

The *United Presbyterian* says that "the religious interest in the colleges seem to be greater this year than for several years past. In some of them nearly all the students have made a profession of religion. The religious impressions among the students are also deep and fervent. The whole number of students is put at 85,000, and of these it is said one-half are members of the churches."

Is it right to hire an infidel or an unbeliever in Christianity to sing in a church choir? Does his singing what he scoffs at and does not believe have a tendency to lead sinners to Christ? This seems to be a question for each Church to answer for itself. In our judgment, it is no advantage to have the singing done by such persons. We do not believe that God will bless it.—*Indiana Baptist.*

In a speech in Congress on the tariff question Hon. S. S. Cox said: "I beg to say I learned my political economy in Rhode Island, at Brown University, from Dr. Wayland. He taught me the morality of the question. This I shall never forget in my votes here." Thus is furnished another instance of the importance of Christian instructors in our higher schools of learning.—*Alabama Baptist.*

Statistics are a fine thing; but they must not go too far. An expert has been before the Health Commission at Ottawa to the effect that better sanitary arrangements would save the lives of 50,000 people annually in Canada, and on the other hand temperance advocates assure us that the use of strong drink takes off 50,000 people annually in Canada. Now, the total mortality returns only figure up 80,000. There must be an error some where.—*Le Monde.*

A writer in the *Boston Advertiser* complains that teachers in that State are respectively removed without just cause, and he calls for the abrogation of the practice of electing teachers for a single year. "Let this annual humiliation," he says, "this crippling anxiety, and this liability of keen and cruel injustices, cease. Let teachers be elected to serve during efficiency and good behavior. Let us have no

possibility of this worse than Greek ostracism in Massachusetts."

The picture which Catholics give of the state of religion in the United States of Colombia is appalling. Infidelity, they say, is in the ascendant and Catholicism is persecuted. What a terrible indictment this, of the Roman Catholic Church, which has had this field all to itself, has been protected by the State to the exclusion of all other religions, and has had the fullest opportunity to mold the people to its own liking! It is but reaping what it has sown.—*Independent.*

"I learned the native language by committing Bible verses to memory one at a time, and repeating them on the street-corners to little crowds of natives," said the Rev. Mr. Clough, of the Telegoo Mission in India, at a Baptist Church-meeting in Brooklyn recently. "I had to change my corner very often, as the natives would get tired of hearing a single verse repeated. My stock of verses gradually accumulated, until I had enough to make a respectable sermon, and soon afterward I mastered the language."

At his first great meeting recently in a new part of London, Mr. Moody asked all who were Christians to rise. Not suspecting what was to follow, about three-fourths of the audience arose, when quick as he could speak, Mr. Moody said, "Now do not sit down, pass out at once. Glad to know that you are Christians, and so you may go, as I want the sinners to come in." As the stewards showed the Christians the way out, a great multitude which had been standing at the door crowded in and filled the tabernacle with the very class which Mr. Moody wished to reach.—*Advocate.*

An esteemed minister writes as follows, and doubtless many others share his opinion: "It must have been a touching sight when the widowed hands drew aside the veil which hid the busts of the two men of God whom all Methodism mourns. But what is most sorrowful of all is that Morley Punshon and Gervase Smith might have been living now only that they were compelled to hew wood and draw water. When shall we learn that such highly-sensitive lives should be spared the toil and heartworry involved in gathering money and keeping account books?"—*London Methodist.*

Cried out one ruffian to the soldiers in Cincinnati: "Wait till night; wait till we get red drunk; then we'll clean you out!" The saloon begins to show its real colors in this light. When quiet reigns, men by twos and hundreds of twos all over the land get "red drunk" and commit murder. When mobs reign, saloons do that same kind of public service by wholesale. During mobs, law prohibits saloons; in quiet times drunken men commit murder and are acquitted by juries of their own kindred. Then, then, Cincinnati riots and riots over the murder, and escape of murderers, in which the saloon is the chief agent.—*N. W. Advocate.*

Dr. Parkergoes to the root of things when he says, in reference to the Out-cast London controversy, "When a woman is compelled to work all day for four pence it is a mockery to build her a Mission hall and invite her to hear prayers from people who ought to have paid her a better price for her labour." It is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. When ladies grumble to pay half-a-crown for an article upon which some needy sister has spent a week of continuous toil, and then on Sunday give away tracts and ring the bells of heaven as if they were the favourite angels of God, they ought to be told that their blasphemy and their benevolence are alike despicable.

In reference to the returns of absentees among church members, an Episcopal paper remarks: "It is only a few weeks ago since we noticed that the Baptists, in one state, claimed more adherents than there were population. Now we see how it is done; simply by classifying all the absentees as members. Now suppose thirty members leave one church, that number is kept on the original list. In the same thirty leave the second church and are kept on the list of the second church. This carried on ad infinitum would give any denomination as many members (on paper) as it wished to have. It is a way of compiling statistics our Church has not yet learned." Methodists are still more careful. They sometimes drop removing members too readily.

Some men have a Sunday soul which they screw on in due time, and take off again every Monday morning.

ENTIRE SELF-SURRENDER.

We miss the lesson contained in the story of the young ruler, if we do not learn that following Christ implies self-renunciation at the outset. Suppose it otherwise, then there must be continual quarrel and resistance throughout the whole after career. Not a few of the hindrances and painfulness of Christian life are entirely due to foolish efforts to retract this absolute surrender, in certain cases and circumstances. Nothing less than Divine grace, maintaining a devout and joyful remembrance of the fact that we are not our own, can save us from the antagonisms and irritations which inevitably spring from any attempt at self-assertion. Therefore it is necessary to teach this lesson of entire submission and surrender at the threshold. Where this is lacking, there can be no true life. If the necessity of this supreme devotion be duly and fairly pressed, formalism becomes difficult, if not impossible. It is to be feared that many seek with some earnestness to lead a Christian life, who never have reached the faintest conception of what it implies. They toil on, doing unwelcome tasks and performing unpleasant duties, in the hope that the very reluctance which they find it so hard to overcome, may be reckoned to their credit. They imagine that God is pleased with the drudgery which displeases them. To escape dreaded pain and to win the hope of a happy hereafter, men may be willing to suffer and toil during their stay on earth; but such suffering and service unwillingly borne and rendered, are not worthy of the Gospel of Christ.

Does that test seem too severe? Does the condemnation of all who are thrown out by it seem too harsh? Nay, what other test can suffice? or what other judgment would be just? Nothing less than whole-hearted acceptance of God's will, can secure spiritual health and happiness. Nor must we forget that He who asks this surrender at our hands, has been beforehand with His own gracious self-surrender. He who asks me to become altogether His own, first made Himself mine, altogether mine. "He loved me, and gave Himself for me." And it is the very same love, in its wise tenderness, which prompted the first surrender, and demands the second. Though our short-sightedness is not always apparent, it is no less necessary for our well-being that He should give Himself for us, than it is that we should give ourselves gladly and unreservedly to Him.—*Word and Work.*

PROTESTANTS IN SPAIN.

The new Spanish Ministry, under Canovas, is very reactionary. It may be that the Prime-Minister thought he would be able, in spite of the entrance of the Ultramontane leader, Pidal, into the ministry of instruction, to preserve to Protestants the small measure of religious tolerance which he had left them under his former government. But he had made his reckoning without his host—that is, without the fanatical clergy, which is now trying everywhere how far it can go with its encroachments and injuries, secure that in Spain the rigor of the law would never be turned against a "venerable pater." On the 23rd of January, a child of seven years old died in the little village of Navarra, Olzagaquia. Its Protestant parents called in the pastor of the neighboring Pamplona, to bury it in the Civil Cemetery; but the judge, at the request of the priest, ordered the body to be buried in the Roman Catholic cemetery. Accompanied by the knelling of the funeral bell, the judge, the town council, and many of the inhabitants came to the house of mourning on the 25th, and required the body to be given up to the priest. Mr. Goicoechea, the father, maintained his right and refused to yield, and the authorities went away. The gov-

ernor of the province sent a written order to the mayor, to respect the right of the parents, and to order that the funeral should take place in the Civil Cemetery. But the mayor refused to obey the order till he had taken counsel with the bishop of Pamplona. On the 27th he came back again with the judge, who said that he ordered, on the ground of higher authority (we suppose that of the bishop), the carrying off by force of the body, and its burial in the Catholic cemetery.

A sergeant and four gens d'armes carried out the act of violence and the burial took place in the Catholic cemetery amidst the cries of the crowd: "Long live religion! Down with the Protestants." Thus, neither the king, the ministers, nor the government, but the priests alone, rule and are obeyed by the judges. Occasionally the people dare to defend themselves. In the little village of San Martin a woman in child-bed called in a free-thinking physician, who baptized the child, which was at the point of death, shortly before its decease. No doctor would dare to omit baptism in such a case. But the priest refused Christian burial to the child, on the ground of its baptism not being valid. For four days—an unheard-of length of time for Spain—the body remained unburied until the people rose on mass, besieged the house of the priest, and took such a threatening aspect that he was obliged to do his duty. Near Besullo, in Asturias, a priest was returning to the village with the viaticum, the holy wafer. Two evangelical boys, who could not get inside on the narrow mountain path, on his front, to avoid meeting him. The priest rode faster behind, and when they court-cously stood aside to let him pass, he took the capsule out of his pocket, and said to the boys: "I have God in here," bidding them take off their caps. But one of them answered, courageously: "The Apostle Paul says: 'The Almighty dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is he served by men's hands, seeing He himself giveth to all life and breath and all things.' The priest at once called on a witness, and both boys were called before the magistrate, where they were punished with four days' imprisonment and a fine of 10 francs each, besides, what is far more, the costs. All these facts are proved by official documents; but, as not a single case has occurred in which the persecuted have really met justice, we cannot wonder that the Protestants despair of meeting with it under this government. How easy it would be for the government to make loyal subjects of them by granting it! They are the only ones in all the country who regularly pray for the king and the government in their churches.—*Independent.*

BABES IN CHRIST.

It is very possible to expect more from young converts than we ought. Their eyes have been opened to discern spiritual things. It would be strange indeed, were they to exhibit all that wisdom in resisting the evil one which usually comes through years of observation and testing. Spiritual infancy demands at our hands the utmost tenderness and charity. "Whoever shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a mill-stone was hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea," that is, a moral catastrophe like that of causing an inexperienced believer to fall away and lose his soul, is attended with the most fearful visitation of the Divine displeasure. "Woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." It is always best to hold young converts closely to the fundamental principles of the Gospel—such as justification by faith, witness of the Spirit to adoption, good works as the necessary fruit of genuine faith, etc., be-

fore offering them the "strong meat" which belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." These are primary scholars in Christ's great school. As in secular training, so it is in spiritual; no progress in higher instruction can be made without the thorough incorporation into the mind of primary and axiomatic truths. While the combination of elementary spiritual principles is to be perfected under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Scriptures, nevertheless, teach us that the divine order in spiritual growth does not materially differ from that which we find in the mental and physical world. That beautiful simile of the great Teacher carries a lesson to all the ages: "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." So it ever is in that kingdom of truth which God sets up in the believing soul.

DEATH IN THE PALACE.

The President of the Wesleyan Conference, in preaching in Glasgow on Sunday morning last, gave beautiful expression to the national sympathy. He said: "I need scarcely ask, dear brethren, for your sympathies and prayers on behalf of our beloved sovereign—our greatly-afflicted Queen—and the newly-made widow, the Duchess of Albany. When you heard, on Friday, the unexpected tidings that the Royal family was suddenly bereaved of one of its choicest members, I am sure that, after the first shock caused by the almost incredible news, your sympathies ran unbidden to the palace and the throne. One has heard in connection with this sad event the strange exclamation, 'The poor Queen!' Strange, indeed, that the greatest potentate on earth, the sovereign ruler of an empire upon which the sun never sets, the Empress of India, the mistress of conquering legions on the Ganges and the White Nile, should be spoken of pitiably as an object of commiseration. But in the presence of death all distinctions are levelled—the rich are poor, the strong are weak, the great are little. Her Majesty the Queen is worthy of the loving sympathies of her loyal subjects. There is no truer woman in her dominions than this first lady of the land, faithful as a wife, devoted as a widow, and as affectionate a mother as God ever blessed with children. Some of us remember the 14th of December, 1861, when the great bell of St. Paul's sounded forth the death of the Prince Consort, and then on the same date a few years ago the Princess Alice passed away; and now the Royal mourner on the throne is overwhelmed with this new grief, caused by the decease of her favourite son. If David the King could say of a wicked, undutiful child, 'O my son, Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee; O Absalom, my son, my son!' how must Queen Victoria feel in sorrowing for a child, greatly endeared by his noble qualities of mind, his intellectual pursuits, and additionally endeared, alas! by his delicacy of constitution. The Queen's bereavement and the Duchess of Albany's bereavement is the nation's bereavement. From the pursuits of peace and of intellectual and social improvement, to which the young Prince was devoting himself, following in the footsteps of his father Albert the Good, much benefit to the country might be expected in the future. It was my happiness to hear the last, or one of the last, public addresses of the Duke of Albany, delivered at Liverpool two months ago. The high qualities of mind, the practical good sense, and the kindly interest in the poor, which the address displayed, greatly raised the Duke's highness in the estimation of all who heard him. But our anticipations of his future career of usefulness are soon ended.

Heaven will be the sweet surprise of a sweet explanation.—*Dr. Robt. P. Rice.*

THE DISSATISFIED RATIONALIST.

If you are a rationalist, you are uneasy and restless, and will become more so as the years go by and the inevitable change comes nearer and nearer. But the habit of doubt has become strong. If you try to lean upon any of the verities of your childhood faith they are found to be unreal as dreams. You have gone the rounds of reason and learned that all things are unstable and variable and unreliable. It is not pleasant to go forward in utter uncertainty; but as all things are uncertain to you, and not even the faintest intellectual star lights the dark future, what are you to do? You scarcely believe in the existence of God; and yet, if you look to it, you will find that you really do have some sort of a hazy faith, a kind of indefinite trust in him. Very well, that is enough for standing ground, or rather for kneeling ground; and if you will take our advice you shall find comfort and rest in your soul. Pray to that invisible power. Hold up your hand and ask him to take it and lead you out into the light of a knowledge of himself. Tell him that you earnestly want to know and to believe the truth, and to conform to his holy will. Christ is a myth to you, but you would like to know of a certainty whether Christ's claims and offers have any verity in them. Ask that great unseeing intelligence to tell you the truth about Christ. You will get a little warmth about the heart and a little comfort and hope—not much intellectual light perhaps, and yet something different from the darkness. With continued prayer and seeking and desire to conform to the light and the truth as it comes, you will certainly emerge into bright hope and confidence and good being. Why, you may ask, does not God reveal himself at once to those who seek him? Because he cannot without working a miracle. The light is all around, but your eyes must become adapted to it. The solid ground is there, but it takes time for you to learn to walk upon it. In due time you will walk without weariness and run without fainting, and see plainly the beautiful mountains and the sun and the moon and the stars above them. Give up that painful and constantly disappointing search by the light of your reason. Hold up your hand and God will take it in his.—*Interior.*

1. Did you ever see a counterfeit ten dollar bill? Yes. 2. Why was it counterfeited? Because it was worth counterfeiting. 3. Was the ten dollar bill to blame? No. 4. Did you ever see a scrap of brown paper counterfeited? No. Why? Because it was not worth counterfeiting. 5. Did you ever see a counterfeit Christian? Yes, lots of them. Why was he counterfeited? Because he was worth counterfeiting. Was he to blame? No. 6. Did you ever see a counterfeit infidel? No; never. Why? You answer, I am through.

I would rather be what God chose to make me than the most glorious creature that I could think of. For to have been thought about—born in God's thought—and then made by God, is the dearest and most precious thing in all thinking.—*George MacDonald.*

How sweetly the dove puts the Church on the watch, when she takes a step toward him.—*The Christian Way.*

It will be an ill day when we are engaged in seeking for a path we forgot the lamb had.

The Christian is not to be punished by secret sins, but by being and doing, but it cannot be deep and full of spiritual power. You can be no exception to this rule.

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