

'WESLEYAN' ALMANAC AUGUST, 1876.

Table with columns for Day of Week, SUN, MOON, and other astronomical data for August 1876.

THE TIDES.—The column of the Moon's Southings gives the time of high water at Farnboro, Cornwallis, Horton, Hanpsport, Windsor, Newport and Curro.

USE OF THE CATECHISM AND MEMORIZING OF SCRIPTURE.

A paper recently read before the Quarterly Meeting of a S. S. Society.

BY A YOUNG MINISTER.

One of the greatest dangers to the prosperity and happiness of the world is the proneness of men to rush to extremes. This disposition may be noticed in all the walks of life; in all undertakings of a secular or spiritual character. One course is pursued until the ship is threatened with destruction on the rocks of Scylla, when an opposite direction is immediately taken which strands her on Charybdis.

able to maintain his ground. Some one asked him how it was that he was able to give such fine answers to the priest's hard questions. He answered, "I would have been completely confounded by his sophistry were it not for the short and pointed definitions and proofs that I learned from my catechism when a boy." Since I entered the ministry, I have discovered more than ever the necessity of teaching the catechism in our schools. At times when surrounded by strong rivals, I used to ask our young people how they would defend such and such doctrines; few of them could tell me, while if they had known the catechism they could readily answer all objectors. While I earnestly believe that our grand object should be to teach the children about Christ and Him crucified, yet if we do not take care, the old Methodist scriptural landmarks concerning original sin, the extent of the atonement, the witness of the spirit, and holiness of heart will become blotted out. The school is the nursery of the church. The pupils of our schools are to take our places. Where are they to be trained in our doctrines if not in the school? There is a necessity of grounding our young people in the catechism, for it gives no uncertain sound on these grand doctrines, the teaching and preaching of which has given us so much power in the world. I do not say it is necessary for each teacher to use the catechism in the class. The weekly lessons might be explained to the whole school by some appointed person, who could also question the pupils.

The remarks made on the use of the catechism are, to a certain extent, applicable in reference to the memorizing of Scripture. Once it was one of the most prominent features of the school. Many verses, even whole chapters, were memorized, and whoever learned the most gained the prize. This proved very unsatisfactory. Except those who had very good memories, the public became discouraged, and many of them began to dislike the Bible, because of the long tasks imposed upon them. The present system, if faithfully carried out, is a great improvement, but it is not carried out. We have swung back to the opposite extreme from the old system. The lesson leaves are too much depended upon. Even the Golden Text is not memorized by half the school. When it is called for, many glance at the leaf, and just know the text long enough to repeat it, and then it is forgotten.

Fellow-laborers, we must be on our guard, or our splendid Sabbath-school system will prove a failure. If fully sympathized with the following extract from the "Christian at Work":—"There is reason to fear that the children of to-day, when they go into the pulpits and business circles ten years hence, will not have a minute and accurate acquaintance with the Bible promises as the men and women who were cultured in our inferior Sabbath-school twenty years ago. What we want, more than anything else, for our children, is the Bible packed away in their hearts, so that they can, in times of trouble and temptation, recall the inspired passages without the omission of a word or transposition of a sentence. God's word is just right, and cannot afford to be twisted or misquoted. Long after we are dead, these children will be assaulted by trouble, in which times three chapters of general facts about Joseph or Moses will not do them as much good as one passage, like this, resurrected from their memory,—"The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee." How true is this last declaration. I shall ever remember the first verse I learned at the Sabbath-school,—"Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God believe also in Me." How many dark hours it has brightened! How frequently it has come to me as fresh from my Father's lips, strengthening me to struggle on against temptation and sin: No doubt you have all read that beautiful extract in the May Journal, called, "Get your Class to Commit the Lesson." It will bear repeating:—"An aged man lives in a very plain home. His wife is almost a cripple. His widow daughter's health is poor, and her son is a deaf mute. The family is an afflicted one. A heavy piece of timber once fell on the head of this man, almost destroying his hearing, and afterward, while he was engaged in his daily toil as a mason, lime so impaired his sight that now he can hardly distinguish a man from a tree. Yet this home is not a sad one. It is made cheerful by the pleasantness of the Christian love which reigns there. The aged man has a face that beams intelligence and peace. He told me the secret yesterday. He says that, as he is employed in a kind of labor that allows him time to think, much of the Scripture which he committed to memory comes back to him in those quiet hours of the afternoon of life, and gives him comfort and food for thought, and fills his soul with bright anticipations of that heavenly home of which it speaks when it tells us of the "many mansions," and the land where the inhabitants never say "I am sick," and where there is "no night." Friends, by the memorizing of Scripture in youth we provide ourselves with strong consolation for future sorrows, and a strong fortification against future temptation. The Psalmist said—"Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee." When Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness, He answered "Thus it is written," and the tempter fled; and if we can educate our pupils to memorize the precious declarations of God's word, we will send them forth well equipped with the strongest weapon against the enemy—"The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." I believe we should insist upon the memorizing of Scripture for the other reason that while mature minds are more powerful to grasp great truths, young minds can more easily memorize Scripture word by word. Here arises an objection to the memorizing of Scripture by young children. It is said to be a mere mechanical process. It need not be, but even if it is, the seed sown is fixed in the soil, and the genial influence of the Spirit will cause it to germinate. Many a soul has been saved from ruin by some passage, learned at his mother's knee and then forgotten, now flashing through his mind, and checking his downward step. I firmly believe in acquiring a verbal remembrance of Scripture in childhood; * "If a S. S. teacher accomplishes no more than the thorough memorizing of a single verse each week on the part of each pupil, so that its words and its meaning are fully understood and well remembered, an important work is performed. A constellation of spiritual gems have been set in the imperishable framework of immortal thought, to shine, in resplendent beauty for eternal ages. Precious stores of sacred truth have been placed in the foundation of the child's character upon which shall rest the superstructure of a Christian life. The memory of such truth will often lead to repentance and faith, to true conversion and sanctification, when years of indifference and carelessness may have intervened. The Bible seed sowing in early years, vitalized by the power of memory and quickened by heavenly influences has brought many a soul to the cross of Christ."

credit among men, for more religion than they have, while others of a sanguine temperament, vivacious and buoyant, are not credited with as much piety as they really possess. We may, however, if we will, always find the safe line of duty in his matter. The observance of one direction of Paul will keep us ever in that pathway: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." Many persons talk much of the doings of Mr. C. He is so close-fisted, and screws so tightly in a bargain, that I fear he is little influenced by the generous principles of the Gospel. True, no one can charge him with downright injustice, but can a man who shaves so closely as he does have the love of God in his soul? I suppose we must put him down as a stingy Christian. "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." Then there is Mr. D. a prominent man in the Church; but he tipsles. Yes, he frequently takes a glass, when he meets a friend. The sparkling beverage, which God calls a mocker, he places on his table before those he considers his most respectable guests. He is well aware of the havoc intemperance is making in the world, and has already made among his own relations, but he persists in disregarding the sage advice of Paul to the Thessalonians, "Abstain from all appearance of evil." This man is not afraid of his co-religionists, or pastor. It doesn't pay to exclude some men from the church for inconsistent conduct. Surely if such men could see how largely their influence interferes with the welfare of the Church of Christ they would no longer remain among the children of God, as abettors of evil, but would at once adopt the Scriptural and safe principles of total abstinence. The morals of the world will never be what they ought to be, while ministers and professors of religion connive at the incipient evils of drunkenness. There is another class of church members, who although not doing as much harm as those referred to, yet are inconsistent; I refer to idlers. They are at ease in Zion—will not work in the vineyard. When urged, they say they have no talent; to work for Jesus, but it is only an excuse. Every sane individual has both talent and influence. Yours may be but one talent, but that may be used for the glory of the Master, and for the benefit of the church or world. Remember the slothful servant will, by and bye, be dealt with as a wicked servant. There is doubtless, in the vineyard work for all. No longer can any excuse themselves by saying, "No man hath hired us." The work is before you, and the wages you know. Begin at once to work and live. Without exercise Christians become dwarfs. The unused ability of the church is an alarming consideration. Every follower of Jesus should say with the Master, "I must work," &c. While we grieve over the inconsistencies of some in the church, we rejoice that there are many whose lives agree with their profession. These are the great thinkers and workers who are proving a great blessing to our world. May their numbers be increased, by many recruits from the ranks of inconsistent professors. OBSERVER.

WISKEY'S WORK. Twelve years ago, in a thrifty young city, in the Empire State, there resided a highly educated, eloquent and popular Episcopal clergyman. He was in charge of a prosperous church and much thought of by all. While there he contracted the habit of drinking. It grew upon him very rapidly. In time he was compelled to give up his church. Time passed and he became so abusive that his wife left him. The road to ruin was an easy one, and he travelled with fearful speed. Five years ago he came to Fon du Lac. He was here more or less a year. Earnest efforts were made to get him to reform, but all were in vain. The appetite had made of him a despicable brute—an ungrateful scamp. Those who labored hardest for him, and who spent the most time and money in his behalf, he treated the most shabbily. Finally he left here, so much of a wreck that no one thought he would live a year. He became a member of a band in the regular army. Here he was compelled to forego sprees most of his time. That was too much for him. He discharged himself, changed his name and has ever since led a life of shame, being compelled to go from shanty to shanty in the lower part of great cities, begging in order to keep soul and body together. Sooner or later whiskey stings like an adder. Periere got a little tired of returning the bows of an uncomfortably polite man in his establishment, and finally gave the polite man this conundrum of point-blank range: "Sir, what would become of the hours if the minute-hand stopped to bow to the second-hand every time they met?"

OBITUARY. ALICE F. C. COOK. Not dead, but passed away from the sufferings of earth to her Father's house, "to be with Christ," Alice F. C. Cook of Port Mulgrave, daughter of the late E. G. Fuller, of Horton, about noon on the 29th of July, aged 38 years. We seldom say more concerning the dead, whom we try to appreciate while living. In this instance our pen moves involuntarily on for a "just woman" has fallen at her post. The hallowed and benign influence of a great Christian soul is withdrawn from earth, where it seemed so necessary to abide, and gone to swell the glory of Him whom here she glorified. She walked as an angel of light here, and has only stepped from the ranks of the militant to the triumphant host. At the age of nineteen she commenced so to walk as to please God, and so had not to prepare to meet him in the midst of earth's dissolutions, and in view of the solemnities of eternity. In this she rejoiced, saying, "Bless God, I am ready to depart." I need not say she was a Methodist; she was a loyal one, but she was something as far above and beyond as the sky is above and beyond the sea. It is something to be a member of the largest Protestant Church in the Western hemisphere and perhaps in the world, but 'tis better far to be a Christian! Her whole life was a living rebuke to the contracted, shrivelled sectarian bigotry of many of this day. She commanded the respect, and involuntarily won the love of all who could appreciate true nobility and royalty of nature. Coming from the school of Christ, by whose word she modelled her life, she was eminently calculated, with her talents and literary ability to train others by word and example; which she did most faithfully in day and S. school. The Methodist Sabbath school at Mulgrave owes its existence to her careful, earnest and wise management. She would say to her scholars, "My dear children, it seems to me I could scarcely enjoy the happiness of heaven without you," and as the result of her influence nearly every scholar is now in the Saviour's class following her. Her husband, her children, and her Sabbath school, her church class, her kindred and her friends will miss her sadly. But God will supply her place. Selfishness, so deeply engrained in human nature, and the cause of the most of sin, seemed to be unknown to her. She was unselfish almost to a fault, denying herself and bearing burdens for others, not only for friends, but also for mere acquaintances, and that without seeming to realize that she did so. "Only the sorrows of others cast their shadows over me," was the language of her true heart. Summing all up in a word, we can say after a fourteen years acquaintance, we have scarcely ever met her equal as a pure, noble, earnest, faithful, lovable, happy and conscientious Christian woman, always the same, through the weeks, the seasons and the years. But the end came—came unexpectedly to us all; only her work remains; though dead she speaketh. Her end was just as we expected, as the fruit of such a life, confident and triumphant. Called to her bedside shortly before she died, in response to a few words she said, "I'm going home," she then quoted the hymn commencing, "Jesu lover of my soul." Also many stanzas containing the expression, "Come, O my Saviour, come away," &c. She then broke forth into strong expressions of exulting and triumphant exclamation, moving her hand above her head and saying, "The clouds disperse the shadows fly, And God is seen by mortal eye." We all bowed lowly about her bed and felt that God and the angels were there. J. B. H. Port Hawkesbury, Aug. 7, 1876.