

The Wesleyan.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The *Evangelist* asserts that the object of college education is not to strengthen the biceps, and develop the muscles, and train men to be unequalled cricket players, pedestrians, rowers, or prize fighters; but to excel others in knowledge, and the ability to use it for human welfare.

Says Dr. G. H. Hepworth, in the *Independent*, "I have infinite respect for the venerable saint who said: 'I have all my life been striving for a contented mind, and now I propose to sit down contented without it.' Overlooking the play on words, how unconsciously we sometimes reach our goals!"

How much help the Church of England Temperance Society gets from some of the Church papers may be gathered from the reeling remark of *The Church Times* that "the physiology [sic], economics [sic], ethics [sic], and theology [sic] of the orators [sic] of total abstinence" [sic] is "clotted nonsense" [sic].

The *Nashville Advocate* traces the cry that Christianity is "dying out" to its source when it says, "The man who thinks Christianity is dying out of the world because he hears it sneered at and denounced in whisky saloons and beer-gardens, would have a change of opinion if he would make a change for the better in his associations."

Zion's Herald offers the following advice, which we hope does not need wide application, but is very good advice when it is needed at all: "Don't permit your pastor to be one of the largest contributors to his own salary. What he chooses to give toward the charities of the church is all right, but let him not humiliate himself by helping to pay his own salary."

Methodists ought to know what they will come to in the opinion of *The American Baptist Reflector* if they remove the limitation from the itinerancy. It means in the last stage, the "decay of infant baptism and sprinkling." The *Reflector* adds: "The tendency of the Christian world is to Baptist principles." It would be better and truer to say the tendency of the religious world is to Christian principles.

Last winter this question was asked in a village church: "Where is the best place to put a stove in the church?" The pastor, a deeply-pious young man, replied, "In the pulpit." The best place for a revival to begin is in the pulpit, in the heart of the preacher. A dead preacher would soon clog the wheels of a live Church, while few Churches are so dead as not to feel the warmth, and glow, and power of a holy man of God fully alive to his work.

Receipts for killing a Church: 1. Endow the Church liberally so that the people need not pay. 2. Secure a few rich members who will, for the sake of running the Church, bear the expense, so that the people will not pay. 3. Place a tall mortgage on the Church, creating a heavy debt that the people cannot pay. According to latitude and other circumstances, one of these receipts for killing a church is sure to succeed. Satisfactory references to those who have tried them.

Some Northern man, writing back from the South, we see, is very much shocked to find some of the negro Churches so ignorant as to engage in "the holy dance." What will he think when we tell him some of our educated and cultivated white Church-members engage in the *wholly* dance? We can also tell him that the Shaking Quakers, in Logan county, Ky., who are all white people, engage in the "holy dance" every Sabbath.—*Western Recorder*.

The *Presbyterian Observer* comes to the defense of the apostle Thomas, believing that he had been unjustly dealt with in having been installed as "the rationalist par excellence of the twelve." And it makes out so good a case that some of its readers we suspect will revise their judgment in regard to him and they will no longer think of him as the "doubter." "Thomas to our mind," says the *Observer*, "was the first Christian Cowper" struggling through the dark into the light until he could say "My Lord and my God."

A writer in the *Catholic Review* thus vents himself relative to Columbus: "We view him as a great lay missionary of our church; we view him as a saint; and we unite with millions of Catholics in petitioning the Holy See to grant the process for his canonization." Better hurry up in this canonization business! Two continents are getting ready, not indeed to enroll the great discoverer among the

"saints," but to give him a place in a calendar quite as worthy and possibly more select!

Here is a temperance item from a speech in the House of Commons, which suggests a new method of dealing with toppers:

"I am proud to say that there was only one man in the famous charge at Tel-el-Kebir who was under the influence of drink, and he was promptly chloroformed by the doctor to prevent his making a noise and so marring the effect of the charge. With that one exception all those engaged in that charge went through it upon a ration of cold tea and without spirits at all."

Put them in the doctor's hands and chloroform them to keep them out of mischief.

The Christian religion, though it has made great advances during its eighteen centuries of propagation, still includes less than one-third of the population of the globe among its adherents. The present estimate by the best German statisticians puts the total at 1,500,000,000, of whom 450,000,000 are Buddhists, 235,000,000 Mohammedans, 247,000,000 heathen, 225,000,000 Catholics, 140,000,000 Protestants, 110,000,000 Brahmans, 85,000,000 Eastern (Greek) churches, and 8,000,000 Jews.

A French writer, M. Andre Berthet, has issued a "Lay Catechism" for the instruction of young agnostics. Here are some of the questions and answers:

"Q. What is God?"
"A. I don't know."
"Q. Who created the world?"
"A. I don't know."
"Q. Whence comes humanity, and whither does it go?"
"A. I don't know."
"Q. When and how did man come on earth?"
"A. I don't know."
"Q. What will become of us after death?"
"A. I don't know."
"Q. Are you not ashamed of your ignorance?"
"A. There can be no shame in being ignorant of what no one could know."

We now understand a passage of Scripture. The ox knoweth his owner; but the ass knoweth only his master's crib, without knowing his master, and that is the case with M. Berthet. He knows the crib where he gets his food, but not the Master who provides it.—*N. Y. Independent*.

We have heard it stated *ad nauseam* that the Puseyite party have been the means of a great revival of "spiritual life" in our English parishes. Now, we have often been inclined to think that this so-called "spiritual life" consisted in the frequent ringing of church bells, in the multiplied and rapidly muttered services, in dressing up "altars" for festivals and undressing them for fasts, in "quills" for young men and women in which the world and religion are mixed up in a very remarkable manner. The Rev. H. Arnott, of Bursage, however, has set forth the matter in its true light, for, speaking a few days ago at a Ritualistic "working men's society" meeting, he said that "the clergy were no longer an idle class, and their hands were continually being held up in the Eucharistic sacrifice, and in the multiplication of Eucharists consisted the life of a parish." If this be true, then this wonderful "spiritual revival" does not suggest much cause for thankfulness.—*Rock*.

Some of the teachers among the Chinese in New York have grown quite fond of their work. One of them, a lady, says:

"I took up this work as a matter of duty, with a prejudice against these people. It is now a work of love. Before this near contact with them I saw only stolid indifference in their faces; they now beam for me with intelligence. And more deep and heartfelt gratitude than they express for any little favor shown them I have never met. This work is a most inspiring revelation to me. I have come to love these Chinamen for their many beautiful qualities of heart, and I respect them sincerely for their admirable qualities of head. All that I have come in contact with appear to me to be possessed of the highest and best instincts of the gentleman. They are modest, yet self-reliant. Although to Caucasians they are uncleanly in appearance, they are exquisitely polite and in the best sense well bred. Under many a laundryman's blouse is hidden a scholar and artist, and it is only the depressing conditions under which they are forced to earn their livelihood that prevents their better side from coming into general recognition."

Her experience is to the effect that the most difficult—well-nigh hopeless—cases are those of opium smokers.—*Even. Chronicle*.

IRELAND AND THE LAND ACTS.

BY REV. WM. BUTLER, D. D.

We are waiting for the "monsoon" in India to come within a month of its close, and then we sail from Liverpool to Bombay, so as to arrive there as the dry weather opens. Meanwhile we are improving the time here among our friends, and find much to interest us. I have been visiting the different parts of Ireland, and have also attended the Irish Conference. In passing through the country I have had an opportunity of comparing the present condition of things with the past, and have sought for information in regard to the "Land Acts" and their results upon the condition of the people. I have conversed with Protestants and Romanists, with farmers and tradesmen, landlords and tenants, and with our own preachers, who itinerate so extensively among the people, and I think the information which I have gleaned may interest the readers of *Zion's Herald*, especially after all the long agony of crimes and their punishment which the past few months have witnessed in that unhappy country.

I was certainly not prepared, after all the sensation and outcry made by men who profess to speak for Ireland and its wrongs, to find the country in such a condition of prosperity. Everywhere I went I saw better cultivation and more comfort among the people than I had ever seen before. Their clothing and homes are much improved, and the wages of the laborers nearly double what they used to be. In the single item of shoes and stockings, for instance, the change for the better is remarkable. In fair and market, or on the streets there were hardly any barefooted persons to be seen, and certainly there were fewer beggars around. Education, too, has made great strides in the land; more people are reading, and the talk is far more intelligent than it was some years ago. Everything seems altered for the better except Romanism. That, alas, is as unrelenting and debasing as ever was! Poor Ireland! It is hard for it to rise with such a fearful incubus controlling its soul and perverting its conscience. We may well cry out, "Lord, how long!"

How shocked has the world been during the past few months as it has gazed with horror at what has been done on the gallows at Kilmalshin Jail! Here were a number of men convicted of planning and committing some of the foulest murders that have ever outraged the laws of God and man, coming to their execution in the bitterest defiance, and without any compunction for their fearful crimes or any honest confession of their guilt, or a word of sorrow for having perpetrated the blackest of all crimes upon innocent people. Yet, for a purpose, such wretches were carefully tended, and all "the consolations of religion" conferred upon them by the Romish priesthood—their sins absolved and the holy sacrament administered to them, as though they were saints instead of being murderers against whom their brothers' blood was crying out to God for vengeance; tenderly ministered to up to the last moment, and sent out of the world under the idea that, being "absolved," they were now innocent, and could meet their God without fear of punishment! Even their very mouths standing beneath the gallows were led to encourage their guilty sons to "die game" and defy law to the last. And this is Romanism—Irish Romanism! Poor Ireland! May God pity her! No wonder her priests fear the Bible and try so hard to keep the people away from Protestant teaching. Nevertheless, "God is not mocked," and these men thus sent into eternity "with a lie in their right hand" have to answer at the tribunal of Him who has declared that "No murderer hath eternal life abiding in him," but that, on the contrary, all such "shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

What a relief it is to pass out of the port of Ireland where this fearful system holds sway, into the province of Ulster, where God's Word is not bound, and behold its enlightened and law-abiding people under their Protestant civilization enjoying both prosperity and peace! It is the Bible and the creed that make the difference; the climatic conditions and the soil and the government are all the same in both. "By their fruits ye shall know them." How well this rule of judgment applies here! Surely, every good man should pray earnestly that the hour of mercy, which God must have in reserve for this long-degraded land, may be hastened and its people be redeemed out of the misery and shame in which priestly despotism has sunk them. There are some intimations that lead us to hope that such an hour is dawning at last. Though Romanism still tries to control the upward tendency in her own interest, yet the people are increasing in intelligence and are learning to appreciate the beneficent legislation that is now opening out to them—a prosperity to which Ireland, in her south and west especially, has been so long a stranger.

Mr. Gladstone's Land Acts, commenced in 1871, and supplemented in 1882, are lifting up the country to hope and prosperity. Ireland will yet do him justice as her true friend. He has had, evidently, a hard struggle to accomplish the advance already made. The landlord influence has been against him, strong and bitter. With a few exceptions the Irish landlords have been for generations past selfish and heartless, squeezing out of the tenant, on the one hand, and made to pay in the shape of rent for each acre which the poor man cultivated, and then often turning him out of the home where he was born when the lease expired, because another man was willing to pay fifty cents more per acre for the place, and generally without allowing the evicted man a cent for the improvements he had added to the farm during his occupancy of it. It is a sad record of selfishness, wrong and oppression.

I quote one sample of this record: Conversing lately with one of my old friends—a Methodist class-leader—I learned with surprise that he sympathized with the "Land League." But he silenced me when he stated the facts, one of which was that his own landlady (whom I knew well), after receiving from him £2, 5s rent per acre for a farm he held under her for years, had the heart some time since to add on 15 shillings more, and required him to pay £3 per acre (\$15 rent per acre yearly); so that the man, after purchasing the seed, hiring help to plough, sow, cultivate and reap the result, had to first take out and hand to her \$15 rent for each acre before the seed and the help and other claims were met. What remained after all those were deducted was his own share, and this, too, after taking all the risks of a poor season or a deficient harvest! But my friend's experience was not singular; there were thousands of similar cases all the time, until the groans of the Irish agriculturists reached the British Parliament, and Mr. Gladstone took up their cause, and had redressed their wrongs and made their repetition henceforth impossible. So that Ireland is entering upon a new era of prosperity, and thousands of her people, who would otherwise have emigrated, will now remain at home and cultivate their own soil under greatly improved conditions.

What these conditions are, I will now try to state: The new Land Acts have conferred upon the Irish farmer what they call "the three Fs"; that is, Fair Rent, Fixity of Tenure, and Free Sale. To accomplish these results, commissioners' courts are established, to which the tenant can appeal, and whose decisions are binding equally upon tenant and landlord. They hear both parties, examine the land, and then decide upon what is a reasonable rent for it, and this cannot be raised on the tenant.

The Fixity of Tenure secures the land to the tenant for fifteen years to come, when each case will again be investigated and settled on its merits, and as long as the tenant is willing to pay, he cannot be turned out by the landlord, which is exactly the right secured to the ryot cultivator in India, only that in India the settlement is for thirty years; and this law has made the government very popular with the ryot, who thus knows in advance exactly what he has to pay, and that he has only to be honest and his holding is secure. Free Sale means that the Irish farmer, if he wishes to remove or to emigrate, may sell his interest in the farm and all his improvements to whomsoever he will without the landlord's leave, so that all he puts into the farm, or on it, is to his own advantage. The new tenant takes his place and pays the same rent. He has now what he never had before, a fixed moderate rent, freedom from ejection, and a full interest in the "betterments" which his industry or money puts into his farm, in ditching, draining, subsoiling or manuring. There is even provision in the Land Laws for a prudent loan of money by the government for approved improvements on easy terms of repayment, and some provision, also, by which, in certain cases, the landlord's rights may be purchased out and the tenant become the owner of the land he cultivates. An honest looking tenant said to me one day, "Sir, we have good reason to be satisfied. We hardly know how yet to utilize the full advantages which these laws have brought within our reach. We only need peace and freedom from agitation, and we shall soon have prosperity beyond what we have ever known before."

But there is the difficulty. Poor Ireland seems cursed with a few noisy and restless men who make a trade of agitation, and they follow it because it brings them profit and leadership—men who stir up excitement and will not let the people rest in quiet and improve their good opportunity; and then there are those human fiends in New York, who are abusing the hospitality of our flag, "foaming out their own shame" and counseling "dynamite and blood" to a people who have already more legal advantages for their own improvement and welfare than their fathers ever knew, or than they themselves can utilize for many years to come. Between her religion and her agitators Ireland has a hard time of it. Nevertheless, she is beginning to think and to discriminate. May the Lord help her to shake herself free from the trammels which both have thrown around her, and to manfully assert her liberty to consult her own conscience and her own welfare!

Liverpool, July 21, 1883.

REFLECTED LIGHT.

A mirror gives no light; but it may reflect light, and thus turn rays of light where they would otherwise never have gone. It is related that, about the middle of the eighteenth century, "At a meeting of the Mathematical Association at Liverpool, a member stated he could read a paragraph of a newspaper at ten yards distance by the light of a farthing candle. This being on all sides doubted, a wager was laid; when the member took a wooden dish and covered it with pieces of looking-glass, which he fastened to the dish with putty. Having thus made a reflector, he placed it behind a farthing candle, and then taking his position ten yards from the light, he read to the whole assembly, and won the wager amid the greatest applause."

Among the company was Captain Hutchinson, the Master of the Docks. He viewed this little experiment with extraordinary interest. He saw at once, that, trifling as it appeared to be, it contained the germ of a invention of the first importance. In a word, what he then conceived upon

the subject, was speedily reduced to practice; and with him originated the invaluable reflecting light houses built at Liverpool," and since extended through the world. By means of mirrors of this description rays of light can be concentrated and reflected, and so made to penetrate regions, the darkness of which they otherwise would never have reached.

The Church of God is a light in the world, but it shines by reflection. The Lord God is a Sun, pouring forth light from an eternal fountain; but the light thus poured forth is mellowed and softened, so that with our feeble vision we may behold "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." As Moses, after communing with God upon the mountain top, descended with his face radiant with the reflected glory, so we, with open face beholding the glory of God, are changed from glory to glory as by the Spirit of God.

The Christian who would be a light in the world, must walk in the light, as Christ is in the light. He draws his light from the fountain of light, in whom there is "no darkness at all." He reflects that hallowed glory which the world hath never seen; and they who were sometime darkness and are now light in the Lord, are bidden to walk as children of the light, and to let the light so shine that men seeing their good works, may glorify their Father which is in heaven. They are the light of the world, but it is only in his light that they see light; and having been turned from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God, they radiate the light which he has given them, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom they shine as lights in the world.—*Christian*.

"ONLY BELIEVE."

But the ingenious, intelligent young man says: "I can't obey such a command as that. I can't force my will. The will must follow reason." We wish the will always did follow good reason. But we have not asked you to believe without reason. If the Christian religion is not reasonable to you, don't accept it. Take Mohammedanism, if that is better. If that is truer than Christianity, then believe it by all means. We do not ask you to make a tool of yourself in your belief; and if Christianity is folly, don't believe it. Whether it is folly or not only you can decide. We would have you decide right.

But is not Christianity reasonable? You reply that you question this, that and the other thing which Christians teach. But are not Christ's teachings reasonable? Is not Christ himself reasonable?

Have you read the four stories of Christ's sayings and doings? It will take but a little while. The four stories together are shorter than a single novel you read on a leisure Sunday. They are worth reading, and probably you have never read them carefully in your life. Take the little volume and read those four accounts—Gospels we call them—and see if what you there read of the teachings of Jesus Christ, his religion, is not good reason. Where else will you find such a religion as that? Does not that Sermon on the Mount appeal to your own conscience? Do you not believe that to be right? Then accept it. Accept Christ's teachings and obey them. Be his disciple, and be as much like him as you can. Confess your sins, like the publican, and trust, like him, for forgiveness. Be willing to receive the forgiveness which God offers in the Good News of Jesus Christ.

We are not now asking you to settle the great theological questions to understand the Infinite; only this to read the teachings of Jesus Christ, and having accepted them with a manly intelligence as wise and true and good, then to accept them also with the obedience of a little child. In that way, reasonably and simply, "only believe."