

The Wesleyan.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The *Episcopal Register* calls the Rev. Joseph Cook, the distinguished Boston Monday lecturer, "this globe-trotting Gamaliel."

The Boston *Congregationalist* feelingly inquires: "Why do flies bite so much worse in church than anywhere else?"

In Greece the proportion of illiterates is very high. In Thessaly and Arcadia only 5 per cent of the inhabitants can read and write.

At the late Ohio State Temperance Convention, at Bellefontaine, it was resolved by the ladies to wear no gloves during the remainder of the season, and to give the glove-fund into the Treasury.—*Western Advocate.*

Under the head of "Sunday Services," a St. Louis paper recently had the following notice: "The Immaculate Conception Sodality nine will cross hats with the Christian Brothers' second nine, Sunday, at 2 p. m."

"The best feature of every religious sect," says the *Christian Register*, "is the good lives it produces. But a good life can never be sectarian itself. The souls of all saints have a mutual attraction for each other."

The Bishop of Newcastle, England, was recently presented with a pastoral staff of carved ivory. In acknowledging the gift he said that Bishops of the present day ought to be anvils—ever ready to be hammered upon, ever ready to ring true.

I usually put my investigations about the circulation of our Church papers under the head of the spiritual condition of the Church. A religious paper in the family is one of the leading signs.—*Bishop Parker, in Texas Ad.*

The *Christian Register* says: "Babyhood and childhood are so fleeting and so full of interest withal, as day by day develops the young life, that much does the mother lose who yields to another the right to watch and guide this development."

The *Watchman* contends that it is not coddling and flattery that a good pastor needs, but such a sympathy with his aims and efforts, such prayerful and earnest co-operation in his work, as shall be a real support and a cordial to his oft overburdened heart.

A reform in church-building must come. The pressing need of means to spread the Gospel at home and abroad, the crippled condition of our benevolent societies, would seem almost to make it a sin to invest sums so extravagant in edifices erected for show rather than service.—*Chicago Standard.*

Intellectual conscience lies so close to the moral conscience in man that the former cannot be injured without great danger to the health of the latter. You had better stand still and be crushed down into your boots than to fend off by an unfair stroke.—*Wesleyan Ad.*

Dr. Skinner's inaugural remanda one of a Presbyterian lady in good-natured discussion with a Methodist cousin, who, when rallied from a temporary astonishment at the extreme blueness of some quotations from the Westminster catechism, said: "Well, that is in the confession of faith, I believe it."—*Western Ad.*

Your spiritual leanness and barrenness may be owing in part to the fact that you have been reading too much among the agnostics who tell you what they do not know, rather than among the elect souls who tell us what they do know by experience. A Christian biography with a soul in it is what you need.—*Nashville Ad.*

"If the Church didn't work me, I'd backslide"—So said a good steward to us last week. We shook that brother's hand heartily. He and this Editor are fellow citizens of the same kingdom. Commend us to the religion, not of works, but of work, in which doing something for the Master is a means of grace and steadfastness.—*Southern Christian Ad.*

Mr. Wm. Bucknell, a wealthy Baptist manufacturer of Philadelphia, has endowed eleven \$1,000 scholarships in Lewisburg University to aid Christian students who do not use tobacco, wine, or liquors. This may be called a straw, but it shows which way the wind is blowing. The coming Christian student who wants help will have to be an abstainer from all intoxicants.—*Christian Visitor.*

It is wonderful how difficult it is for some men to discern the indications of Providence when they lead them in a different way from the way they wish to go. How easy it is to follow when led where they want to go! How patiently some men can wait

for "a door to be opened," while they are trying to open a number that are fast closed against them.—*Alabama Baptist.*

There is one thing as to which Joseph Cook effectually rebukes his countrymen. He quotes Emerson's phrase, "a fury of expectation," and touches what is really a blot on American manners. Mr. Cook was struck by the fact that the House of Commons is without a cuspidor (spittoon), and that he could not find one in a respectable hotel outside of the smoking-room, which he never entered. Thanks to Mr. Cook.—*Evangelist.*

It is admitted that Methodism wrought a reform in the Churches. It put hundreds of thousands of sound converts into the folds of the different denominations, some of whom became, like Dodge among the laity and Spurgeon in the pulpit, notable men. Methodism is still helping the Churches. Keep a tally of the converts of a single revival, and it will be found that every communion gathering sheaves from the Wesleyan reaping.—*Richmond Ad.*

When the Maulmain Karen Association was formed, under the advice and through the influence of Dr. Vinton and his fellow-missionaries, an article was inserted in the constitution to the effect that no white missionary should hold office. The Karens objected. They said: "Why, we do not know how to carry this on." The reply was: "You never will unless you begin to do it." The result is that the proceedings of the body are a model of promptness and correctness.

We are satisfied that any condescending and patronizing policy to be guilty us with blandishment and flattery, or to lure us from our ecclesiastical separateness and independence, would be met with instant resistance and rejection. The time has long since passed by for us to accept any position of dependence or inferiority or subordination to the English Church, or to listen to any overtures of absorption or amalgamation with it.—*Methodist Recorder.*

That was a practical method of expressing his disapprobation of tobacco using which was adopted by Dr. Elliott Clark in his gift of \$50,000 to the Methodist Seminary at Kent's Hill in eastern New England. One provision of his will is: "If at any time a member of the Faculty or one of the teachers connected with the institution shall use tobacco in any form, and shall refuse to abandon the habit, and the case is not attended to by the Faculty, then for that year the interest shall be added to the principal."

Church Bells sadly exclaims: "How great is the need for Churchmen to repress themselves, and distinctly to declare their views, may be seen from the fact that the *Guardian* gave prominence last week to an account of the stone laying of a new chapel at Hampstead, and in a note on the matter had not a word to say in condemnation of the vicar, in whose district the meeting house is to be built, who spoke on the occasion and was followed by Mr. Carvell Williams, the Chairman of the Parliament committee of this same Liberation Society."

This conventionalism, this habit of praying in a certain way, often shows itself in the "winding up" of a public prayer. Most men seem to think they must, somehow, wind up in heaven; they keep on till they cross the river and strike the banks on the other side. This explains many long prayers; men are trying to stop, and can't. They remind one of a man in a dug-out, in a flushed river, trying to land. The strong current or the whirling eddy is too strong for him, and he can't strike the landing. Remember, it is not in the least necessary to pray every time you get to heaven.—*Dr. Haygood, in Charleston Ad.*

The peculiar method of torture used on the witnesses in Hungary—viz., compelling them to drink large quantities of water, seems to be a revival of some of the French refinements of cruelty. It was used in the case of the noted Mme. Le Noisin. One of the witnesses in the Hungarian case deposed before the higher court that he was compelled to imbibe no less than three litres of water at one time, which is equivalent to more than a gallon. Another form of intimidation was to hold the victim's face to the sun. One who had witnessed this punishment, admitted that he lied outright to avoid it.—*Independent.*

Dr. Hammond, in the last *North American Review*, stated that "because women do not tell the truth with regard to themselves," life insurance companies would not take them as risks. It appears, however, from the *New York Tribune*, that there are two prominent life insurance

companies which do take women, although they do not consider them good risks on account of the difficulty of making a thorough examination of them. Women from sixteen to forty-five years of age pay an additional premium of \$5 on each \$1,000, on account of the perils incident to maternity.

The cause of the decrease in the number of candidates for the ministry, according to the *Christian at Work*, "must be sought in the absence of Worldliness, genuine, and fervent piety. Worldliness reigns well-nigh supreme. Things unseen and eternal have largely lost their impressiveness and charm. Parents do not covet earnestly the best gifts for their children—do not pray that their boys may be inclined to the unostentatious heroism of an humble but devout and useful life in the pastoral office; nor do they train them from earliest years with this blessed object in view."

The *Church Times* is still "outspoken" in regard to the prevalence of showing direct antagonism. Last week, after saying various things about "out-door services," it gives this suggestion:—"And, once more, there is no reason why the movement should not be directly aggressive, planting a capable preacher with a lusty choir of singers on some available plot of ground just on the way to the Methodist meeting a little before the time of service, and holding a short office with good hymns, a collect or two, and a short, telling, uncontroverted sermon, with a promise of repeating the act next Sunday." Is that the Ritualistic measure for leading sinners from their sins?—*London Methodist.*

SPECULATION IN 'FUTURES.'

We live in an age in which the almighty dollar is deified, and love of money causes millions to worship at its burning altar. Speculation in "futures," whether of grain or cotton, is nothing less than gambling reduced to a fine art. We are tempted to say it is an evil as gigantic and destructive of all virtuous principles as intemperance. It has engulfed the greatest minds in its black waves. It has entered the Church of God, and "drowned in destruction and perdition" Sunday-school superintendents, deacons, elders, and stewards. Yea, it has entered the pulpit and drawn into its seething vortex of ruin distinguished ministers—pastors who were mighty in storming the strongholds of the devil. Speculation in futures is driving men every day into suicide, into incurable insanity, and reducing women and children to beggary and want. To a man who stands in the gallery and looks upon one of those bedlams where "futures" are bought and sold, the scene is more like a menagerie of wild beasts turned loose than a company of intelligent human beings. Unless something is done to arouse public sentiment from its sleep of spiritual death, there is no telling how this demoralization shall culminate. It is the pressing duty of pulpit and press and platform to hurl thunderbolts at this gigantic evil until a reaction shall set in. If these conspicuous and alarming examples of stealing which have brought disgrace and shame upon the fair reputations of Alabama and Tennessee, and which were the results of speculation in "futures," shall open the eyes of our Government to the evil of this refined form of gambling, they will not have occurred in vain.—*Texas Ad.*

IN GOD'S ACRE.

Rev. J. N. Cushing, D. D., in returning from Calcutta to Rangoon recently, took the coast route which requires twelve days. In a letter to the *National Baptist*, giving an account of this trip, he makes the following statement in reference to Akyab, a pretty town at the mouth of the Kolday river. "Here Kincaid, compelled to leave Ava, came and settled, in 1840, with the hope of opening and maintaining communication with the Christians at the capital of the Golden Foot. Other missionaries followed, some of whom sleep beneath a great banyan tree in the southwest corner of the cemetery. When the present cemetery wall was

erected, some bigoted Anglican official caused the graves of the American missionaries to be left outside. A gentleman whose wife is a Baptist put forth an earnest effort to have this offensive discrimination against the missionaries cease, by seeking the removal of the wall to the outside of their graves, which would also improve the cemetery by making it a perfect parallelogram. The local officials refused; but when the matter was brought to the notice of the Chief Commissioner, he ordered the wall adjacent to the missionaries' graves thrown down, and a new one constructed so as to enclose them. So finally Churchmen and Baptists sleep within one God's acre."

WHY INDEED!

The officiating priest of the Congregation principally represented in the recent ill-starred excursion to Tivoli said publicly that when he saw his people struggling in the fatal waters amid darkness, terror and death, he granted them all absolution. Who is this that exalts himself above God and tacitly asks of the public supra-Divine veneration? God only can give absolution upon repentance and faith. "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." "If ye believe not on Me ye shall die in your sins," said One infinitely purer and greater than Father Starr. Our sympathy for the families of the dead in their awful bereavement cannot permit an assent to the colossal conceit and impudent blasphemy of a self-constituted hierarchy.

If a Roman Catholic priest can, as Father Starr averred he did at Tivoli, give absolution from sins to the dying Catholics and Protestants struggling in the night and in the waves soon to overwhelm them, why cannot he collectively grant absolution to the living, whether good or bad, elect or heretic, friend or foe? Is not his heart as wide and tender and generous toward the multitudes of ignorant, tempted and tolling mortals who are in the midst of health and hope? Why wait until some untoward and irreparable doom hastens Time's ruthless and relentless scythe? And if both dying and living can be absolved through the supreme will and power of a simple priest what need is there of the more pretentious prelates of the hierarchy? Why any Bishops, Archbishops, Cardinals and Popes? And why any penances and church services? Why so many inscrutable mysteries in foreign tongues of ceremonies, sacraments and idolatries? And why any prayers for the dead.—*Balt. Methodist.*

A MODEL EXCURSION.

A correspondent of the *Baltimore Methodist* describes an excursion given on the 24th ult., by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to its employees, "thus affording the employment between Baltimore and Piedmont, and their friends, another opportunity to greet each other and spend a day in social and religious exercises in company with their friend, the Superintendent of Railroad Evangelistic Work for the Woman's National Christian Temperance Union, Miss Jennie Smith, and her associate, Miss M. A. Sherman, and Mrs. S. H. Martin, Railroad Superintendent of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of the State of Maryland, Mr. George A. Hilton, and other prominent Christian workers."

No better evidence of the power of the Gospel and the permanence of the work of God, through his messengers above named, among the railroad men and their families could be desired,—and it is a source of encouragement to the intelligent and moral classes of our people, that in these days of godless monopolies and selfish corporations there is found in the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company, a mammoth trunk line, which, amid the engrossing cares of gigantic business, finds time and inclination to consider the physical and spiritual welfare of those in their

THE MEMBERSHIP.

The following is part of a paper which recently appeared in the *London Daily Telegraph*: At a recent sitting of the Wesleyan body were presented. They afford much reason for congratulation to an earnest and hard-working Society of Christian men and women, and not a little food for thought to all who desire the spread amongst us of religious principles. We are sometimes told that faith is dying out of the land, and a philosophy taking its place such as led of old time to the saying "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Materialism, declare the pessimists, prevails more and more among the thinking classes; while the classes which do not think remain in their normal state of dull indifference. There is some truth in this, but by no means enough for despair. An attitude of doubt, with an inclination to disbelief, has become fashionable in certain circles, where it passes current as the stamp of intellectuality; but we see no reason to fear that the religious instinct of the masses—see the ten religious in its restricted and conventional sense—is vanishing. The success of the Salvation Army—cherished as it is with extravagance and vulgarity—shows that even amongst the lowest and most degraded sections of society faith only slumbers, and that it awakes in answer to a suitable appeal, while we have abundant proof that the great middle class, always the strong hold of Puritan feeling, and the unfailing source of Christian zeal, is now more than ever earnest in the cause of religion. It statistics prove, many accepted as supporting the statements just made. That great denomination now numbers 407,085 members and has on "on trial" 34,339 candidates for admission. The full significance of these figures hardly appears on the surface. Membership among the followers of John Wesley is a serious matter, involving responsibilities not lightly assumed, and privileges not rashly granted. It means subordination to a system which throws a "fierce light" upon the walk and conversation of all who owe it allegiance, and it involves discipline and self-denial such as efficiently serve to test honesty and earnestness. Under the ordeal many, no doubt, fail. We learn that during the past year 27,710 persons left the Society for various reasons. Probably those reasons were numerous as well as various; but it is not rash to assume that a large number found the yoke too heavy for their shoulders. On account of this the more value attaches to the steady "confession" of the 400,000 that remain, and that form a centre of religious profession around which many more hundreds of thousands gather as willing subjects of the mighty influence a vast and well-organized body necessarily exerts. The point to be observed here is that, though over 5000 members died during the twelve months and more than 27,000 seceded, the denomination increased by 13,331. In other words, 60,606 persons were admitted to membership. This certainly does not look so much like the decay as the growth of religion. It shows that we need not yet expect the predicted collapse of all those beliefs and principles which have helped to determine our civilization.

WAITING AND WORKING.

Who can fail to see a very remarkable answer to prayer in the following facts given in *The Missionary Herald*: "Recently the American Board received a legacy of \$500 from the will of Mrs. Sarah B. Fisher, of Westborough, Mass., who left it as she wrote, 'having a desire to do all I can for the cause of Christ. It appears that Mrs. Fisher was one of the original members of a circle formed 55 years ago in Brookline, Mass., which had for its object the evangelization of Japan. This was 40 years years before the American Board sent out their first missionary to Japan, and at the time almost nothing was known about the country, and the empire was closed to foreign intercourse. It is said that the formation of the circle was occasioned by the sight of a basket of curious workmanship, brought from Japan, in the house of a merchant. These Christian women, in their zealous love for the Master, saw at once beyond the material object, and beyond the strange art displayed in it, the precious value of the souls in that benighted land. But the way of entering the country, the possibility of Christian missions there, they could not see, and could only make it the object of their faith and earnest prayer. Gifts went with the prayer to put in the hands of the Board the means of making an attempt to do mission work in Japan when it would seem feasible. The contributions they made from time to time amounted with the interest to \$4,103.23, which the Board applied to its purpose when the way was opened in so wonderful a manner. The unusual, seemingly miraculous character of the national awakening of the 'Sunrise Kingdom' betokens the motion of God's spirit and providence in behalf of the kingdom of his Son in unusual power; but the fact above related constitutes an event perfectly correspondent to this display of grace. The simplicity of faith, the earnestness of petition, the prayer offered in the thick darkness, is not without its evident answer in the glory of the morning and the light of day now advancing space over Japan.

The faithful discharge of the duty of alms-giving is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit which brings its sweet return in cleansing the soul from the evil spirits of avarice, sloth, and worldliness, and replacing them with liberality, generosity, and unselfishness.—*Bishop Seymour.*

The distance between a prince and a beggar, while both live, is vast, but when both become dust, who can distinguish one from the other? As quaint Dr. Donne beautifully remarks, "When the whirlwind hath blown the dust of the graveyard into the church, and the man sweeps out the dust of the church into the yard, who will undertake to sift those dusts again and to pronounce, this is the patrician, this is the noble, flour; and this the yeoman; this the plebeian, bran?" Most truly, death is a leveler. How like madness, therefore, it is for one man to pride himself as superior to another! The grave knows nothing of superior and inferior. Even God Himself is no respecter of persons.