

We meditated on this story as we walked. Wasps have their uses; but, so far as we have been able to discern, not in churches. Their utilities are decidedly non-ecclesiastical. But sometimes wasps will come into churches. It is very undesirable to have them there. One thing may be said of these insects, that the less you trouble them, the less harmful they are. Another thing is quite obvious: that a greater evil may be brought to pass by an attempt to be rid of a smaller evil. It was bad to have the wasps; it was worse to be compelled to rebuild the church.

And yet, perhaps, the apparent disaster was providential, and the moral which Christendom may learn may be worth the money spent in rebuilding the church.

Into a church membership wasps may come. If, when they are in their nest, the nest can be quietly lifted, and it and its inhabitants set in the open field, so much the better; but don't let us destroy a church in order to destroy a wasp's nest. Let the evil be borne awhile. By-and-by the time will come when the wasps will depart, or be in such a condition that they can be removed with impunity. But whenever any Christian society shall determine to free itself of the wasps, let it be careful as to its modes of extirpation; above all, let it heed the counsel to avoid burning wasps out.

"THE HARVEST IS PASSED."

Just a little trifling; just a little fun;
Just one little hour too late, and life's work is done;
Waiting, vacillating, halting but an hour;
Reaching, grasping, stretching—life's beyond thy power.

Just a little moment slighting offered love,
And with folded wing, far off, grieves the heavenly Dove;
Just a day's neglecting; slowly sinks the sun;
Slowly drops the curtain, and life's work is done.

—Selected.

THE AMERICAN HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF CONGREGATIONALISM.—Work for fifty-five years:—Churches organized, 4,153; brought to self-support, 2,120; members gathered in, 297,700; churches organized in 1871-81, 912; missionaries employed in 1880-81, 1,032; supplying 2,653 churches and stations, and having oversight of about 100,000 Sunday-school scholars; monthly circulation of *The Home Missionary*, 23,000 copies; resources for the year 1881, \$311,365. More than twice this amount needed annually to push the work.

COUNT VON MOLTKE, Germany's greatest military strategist, thinks the invasion of England through the proposed Channel tunnel a sheer impossibility. "You might as well," he exclaimed to a distinguished Prussian officer, who had mentioned the subject, pointing to his library door—"you might as well talk of invading her through that doorway."

Mission Notes.

IN one of our leading British reviews of February last, an article appeared enquiring whether science had yet found a basis for morality? A constrained negative answer is at least implied. Blind force. Annihilation, have not yet proved their fitness to be a basis on which to erect a moral fabric, and yet the imperious nature of man demands such a refuge. Religion *does* satisfy man's longings "as nothing else can do." The following voice, from the same Japan paper above quoted, the *Osaka Nippo*, gives a similar cry, *de profundis*. Thus writes a correspondent:—

"I believe in no religion myself, and I place myself outside the restraints of religion. Yet in the existing imperfect stage of society, and for this imperfect race, I readily see the usefulness of religion. Hence I believe that it is not altogether useless to write about it. It is a question whether we have, or have not, any religion original to Japan. Those who say there is none, affirm that Shintoism never had a *religious* power over men's hearts, but that it is simply a system of honour and respect paid to the imperial family. . . . Were I obliged to choose a religion, I should prefer that of my own country. But our Shintoism is imperfect as a religion, and its influence is limited to the ignorant of this and of past ages. It has no power to make my head bow down before its throne. Year by year it is declining, and at last it will altogether disappear. The reason is evident: it is imperfect as a religious system; it is imperfect as an educator. More than that, it never had a great teacher like Buddha, who underwent the pains of ten years in the Himalayas for the development of his doctrine. It has no disciples like Sakya, who have compiled its scriptures. It has no Moses, no Christ, no Confucius. From the gods of mythology down, there has been no religion of the style of Shintoism. [That is, with so little of that which is essential in a religion.] It has no sacred writings like those of Buddhism and Christianity; it has only traditions and the imaginations of later ages. To be sure, during the reign of Ashikaga, Urabe Kanetomo formulated the system of doctrine, and taught the people; but it was an imperfect system, and had no influence in arousing the feelings of worshippers. Though great men, like Hirata and Motoori, have arisen to make Shintoism powerful, yet because its place was already filled by Buddhism it has never been a popular religion in Japan."

CENTRAL South Africa is still an unknown land. So far, however, from being desert, it would appear to have natural capacities which may yet render Africa, under Christian auspices, one of the most prosperous and civilized of the continents of the earth. Nor