

The Wesleyan.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS.

"All hortatory preaching must have an exegetical basis." So says Bishop McTear.

The Dean of York deprecates the Reformation as at least "a grave spiritual blunder." What ought to be done with such a man?—*Central Freeman.*

The Holston Methodist says: "Southern Methodism cannot afford to let down on the dancing question. If our young members will 'hop,' let them hop out of the Church."

It is always a good sign when the successor has a word of praise for the preacher that has gone before. An old Meth. dist. steward said that his preacher had ruined himself by his allusions at the fringes to his brethren of the Conference.—*Southern Adv.*

"Watchman" pleads through the *Religious Advocate* that preachers be paid salaries large enough to enable them to get the books they need: "I think, my brethren, we have been crippling the efficiency of our pulpits by not allowing the preacher money enough to get tools to work with."

The *Kalender* in an article on dressing for church says: "Anything that is a distraction to sincere devotion, that stimulates vanity is to be avoided; but is there any way for reaching the case of the woman who wears tinkling bracelets, and those even to the Holy Communion?"

A new agency for good is opened wherever a religious newspaper is introduced. It will be felt in that household—in the parsonage, in the entire community. The preacher will be helped in his preaching. It is a fearful hard work to instruct, interest, and lead to a higher life, a non-reading people.—*Rich. Adv.*

According to the *Irish Christian Advocate*, the contributions to missions embracing foreign, colonial, Jewish, and Irish—of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland average 2s. 4½d. per communicant. The Irish Methodist Church raises for foreign missions £5,317, or an average of 4s. 4½d. per member, and, in addition, for home missions £4,500, making a total average per member of 7s. 3d.

A church without spiritual life and power is a needless burden on any community. It can not command the esteem and confidence of even worldly men. The world wants a church to be true to its mission. The world needs such a church, and God cannot bless any other. But even where there is life in our churches it needs to be intensified by a genuine revival of God's work. The spirit of revival is the crying need of the church everywhere.—*Religious Telescope.*

A Methodist missionary labouring in Africa reports that on going to the coast recently he was saluted by a trader with the remark: "There must have been a lot of heathen people joining your church lately." "Yes, it is so," he was answered; "but how did you come to know it?" "Oh, because there have been a lot of heathen people here buying dresses, shawls, &c." This is another illustration of the way in which the spread of Christianity promotes commerce.

Was it accident? One of the stories told of a recent conflagration in Boston is that of a man who, when apprised that the fire was raging with dangerous fury, in the excitement of the moment seized a pitcher of water and locked it up securely in his safe, without knowing why he did it. To this accidental circumstance he owed the preservation of the valuable contents of his safe, which were perfectly preserved by the steam from the water in the pitcher.—*Home Gazette.*

A member of a Western Presbyterian Church, having been excommunicated for an offense, sued the pastor and officers for libel because they published the sentence of excommunication and the reasons therefor. The lower court gave him \$5,000 damages, but on an appeal, the Supreme Court reversed the decision, thereby establishing the right of the church not only to discipline its members for offenses against its rules, but to publish their decisions in such cases.—*Ex.*

The law for the suppression of monasteries in Portugal, and forbidding the admission into convents of more nuns after its passing, has, in fifty years, taken effect to considerable extent; monasteries being at an end, and nuns so few that there are not more than 175 persons, and these are over sixty-eight establishments, the youngest survivor being upwards of sixty; of the rest four are between ninety and one hundred, and one is

represented to be one hundred and nine years of age.

The Churchman thinks that the final test for a missionary is character, and the scale of merit for Christianity, whether at home or abroad, in the proportion that Christianity has built up the thought and character of the man who represents it. It is, under God, the amount of spiritual force possessed by the Christ, a teacher which causes him to win. Men are more needed than money. If the Christian religion is the best religion, its advocates must be adequate specimens of the best men.

Bishop Ireland, of the Roman Catholic Church, in a recent address on total abstinence and suppression of the liquor traffic, said: "Our discipline and our morality in America is the number of Irish saloon-keepers. I blush for the old race whenever I walk along the streets of our cities and read over doorways Irish names prefacing so seldom the words 'bank,' 'commission house,' 'dry goods store,' so often the words 'saloon,' 'wines and liquors,' 'imported liquors.' To what base uses noble names have come!"

What a sublime figure is cut by this remarkable man, Gen. (Chinese) Gordon, entering, without an army or body-guard, a revolutionary territory swept by blind superstition, enraged by oppression, and in the hands of a triumphant native leader! His act is not audacious, nor the daring of an enthusiast. His previous reputation in the province, arising from his honorable and just rule, has given him this immense power and the abiding confidence of the natives. It is the reverence which ignorance ever pays to justice and high ability.—*Zion's Herald.*

Everything seems to intimate a very large decrease of crime in Britain. Baron Huddleston, in his late address to the Grand Jury of Oxford, said that it was a remarkable and most gratifying fact that in a county so large and populous there should only be one case for trial at the Assizes, and that a very trivial one, for house-breaking. The influences at work in bringing this round are said to be advance of education, the care bestowed on prison discipline, the extended operation of the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society, and especially, in the judge's estimation, the general inculcation by precept and example of the doctrines of temperance.—*Tor. Globe.*

This is not the time to discuss the subject of the use of the Liturgy in our chapels, but we do not doubt that a very large number of persons have become Methodists in consequence of its use; while on the other hand, a large number of Methodists from the provinces have ceased to attend our chapels when they came to London because of their objection against read prayers. The practical lesson would seem to be that it is desirable to secure as soon as possible chapels in the Metropolis within easy reach of populations, in some of which the Liturgy shall be used on Sunday mornings, and in others of which it shall not be used at all.—*London Methodist.*

A few weeks ago, the Earl of Shaftesbury in presiding over a crowded meeting in connection with the Young Men's Christian Association, said that "institutions like that they had met to support were of vital importance to young men and to the safety of the kingdom. These institutions must be placed on the broadest possible basis consistent with the vital doctrine of Christianity. It was insanity in these days for Churchmen to endeavour to separate themselves from Nonconformists in great movements undertaken for the good of the people. Church discipline was good in itself, but to try and shut out the whole body of Nonconformists who held the great doctrines of redemption and atonement and not to join with them in works of this kind was utterly wrong."

Hon. W. M. Everts, in his speech at New York on Fore-fathers' day, said: "I have seen—what I never expected to see in a country like this—a new band of LL D's—a league of liquor dealers [laughter and applause]—that are going to determine what shall be the law and what the methods as between temperance and intemperance in this country. That is not a matter of party; it is a matter of common pride and manhood of the American people. Now, gentlemen, while we have all the great glories, all the splendours, all the pride which have so justly been built around the great reputation of our fathers, let us understand that the American people will never have a heart for all the glories of the feast if they find missing from it the bread and water of spiritual life and health."—*N. W. Adv.*

YOUR DUTY TO SEEKERS OF SALVATION.

The Saviour, however, is always seeking sinners. Some are seeking Him. In some churches a continual revival work is in progress; in others occasionally. The Holy Spirit is ever at work convicting people of sin, throughout the world. In thought or word or deed such are saying: "Oh, that I knew where I might find him." "What shall I do to be saved?" You who have lamented that sinners were so indifferent about their souls, are you now awake and willing to help them, if they should say to you as to them of old, "We would see Jesus?" To be able to give the right instruction, to know the proper word to speak, to exhibit properly the Spirit of Jesus to such a one, at such a time, is a gift "angels might covet;" a work that filled the Saviour's hands. The result will be—souls converted, sinners saved, the Church enlarged, the world made better, God glorified. Wrong counsel, a cold-hearted exhortation, or, to be approached by an inconsistent worldly-minded professor of religion, often tends to check desire and stifle conviction in the awakened sinner, or discourage the "wantering prodigal returning from his ways."

How infinitely important and solemn the state of an awakened soul; how blessed to help to anchor it in the haven of salvation and peace; how wrong to neglect, trifle with or hinder it; how awful will be God's judgments upon those who do it? While many are waiting for more conviction, or feeling, they find they are losing what they had; but others, having the same or less light and conviction, are approached by those alive to God and awake to duty, and "apt to teach" and are led onward through the successive steps to repentance, and confession of sin, and faith in Jesus Christ—into the enjoyment of justification and regeneration; and obtain that "peace that passeth all understanding," and continuing to grow in grace, become "bright and shining lights in the world." You do not need great talents but consecrated talents, all aglow with the warmth of divine love for souls, to make you successful and able "to do good as you have opportunity to all men." Do not wait for a great awakening, but each day strive to ascertain if some near you are thinking about religion, and wishing they were saved; encourage, and converse and pray with them; get them saved right away and united into fellowship with the Church; then when special revival work begins, engage promptly in instructing and leading awakened sinners to Jesus. Do not depend on your pastor to do all the work of counselling seekers. Act carefully, prayerfully and promptly, and God will honor you with success in leading seekers to Christ. At the "altar," at the "anxious seat," in the "inquiry room" and everywhere. Follow every appeal made by the pastor from the pulpit, with earnest efforts to apply the truth to those who listen in the pews. Like other churches whose prosperity you covet, yours also shall be a revival church. As much or more depends on you than on him to make it such. Much time is lost, and labor expended, before sinners are even invited forward, in most revival efforts, because the Church is not prepared to work with seekers, and in many cases the Church is only partly revived and no souls saved and the effort ends. If you will take the Irishman's advice, "Commence before you begin," seekers may be invited at the first services and be saved before the meeting closes, and the new-born souls will grow and be strong, led by the Spirit, under the sheltering care of a living Church.—*W. S., in Central Adv.*

The strong heart must get its strength from some blessed solitude, where none but God can hear.—*Christian Intelligencer.*

FULL REDEMPTION.

We can only be saved from iniquity by being redeemed from it. Iniquity obtains a certain right over us by force of the law of habit. Man has yielded himself to be the slave of that which he has voluntarily obeyed. How shall he be delivered from this abject slavery? Only by redemption. When this redemption had been provided and accepted, the lawful captive has been delivered, and the prey has been taken from the hand of the mighty.

Now, have we grasped this view of the cross? Do we concentrate our faith upon this point as if it were a reality and not a fiction? He hath given himself for me to redeem me from all iniquity, so that the chains of habit shall no longer bind me. My natural infirmities shall no longer exert an imperious sway over me. Has He done it? "All iniquity." That includes your temper, my friend. "All iniquity." That includes your rattling tongue, my sister. "All iniquity." That includes your pride of heart, my brother. "All iniquity." That includes your love of money, my worldly-minded friend, who art yet a Christian. Find it out—whatever it is—the latent evil, the impurity of thought, subtle forms of self-deception; whatever they are drag them from their hiding places, bring them out of the cave, as Joshua did the kings of old; and as you bring them out, put your foot upon their necks and cry, "Christ has redeemed me from all iniquity, from all iniquity, from all iniquity!" No more imprisonment of spiritual death! No more the plaintive cry of inward anguish, "O wretched man who shall deliver me?" The joy of life, the boundless strength of resurrection, the inward, God-like development that makes man in some sense Divine—these are the blessed fruits of redemption, and the glories of the life which by faith in redemption we, through God's mercy, are privileged to lead.—*W. H. M. H. Atkin.*

A STRANGE QUESTION.

A poor child straying into a Sunday-school one day, asked simply: "Is this the way to heaven?" The superintendent was for a moment startled. Was the school, indeed, the way to heaven? Was he trying to make it so? Were the teachers intent on the same object? The artless question struck home. From desk to class the question went round with a thrill. What were they all doing? Whither were they all tending? The question was like an angel suddenly come into their midst to make a record of all that transpired in that school. Oh, superintendents, teachers, make sure of this one thing: with all your efforts to impart knowledge, make the salvation of the soul of paramount interest: whether your school be a model or struggling up to perfection, be sure that every scholar shall feel that it is the road to heaven. That is a poor apology for a Sunday school, where a child can not learn enough of Christianity to find the way to heaven! Now, let us all see if we can not make our Sunday school the way to heaven.—*Kind Words.*

CURSING THE HEATHEN.

There are few things which more clearly illustrate the control which Satan has of this world, than the curses which flow out from so-called Christian lands, to blight and destroy the nations who know not God. Wherever the gospel goes, under the auspices of a modern civilization, it is attended by the blasting, blighting influence of the dominant evils which prevail in lands where the name of Christ is named and exalted. Says a writer: "A ship sailed out of Boston a few years since, carrying a few missionaries to the benighted tribes on the Congo, in Africa; but the same ship also bore fifty-two hundred gallons of the best New England rum to the same benighted tribes.

Its casks are rolled aside at Smyrna and Joppa, and camels carry it upon their backs beyond the deserts of Arabia to Ur of the Chaldees. It is said to be as cheap at the foot of Olympus as among the resorts at the Adirondacks and White Mountains. It curses the shores not only of our own beautiful rivers, but also those of the Danube and Tiber, and carries its blasting mockery to the foot of the Ural chain and the gates of the imperial wall of China."

So this ceaseless curse rolls on. While English and American philanthropy sends to thousands the saving word of everlasting life, British opium and New England rum carry streams of death and desolation to hundreds of thousands of poor, benighted souls. What shall be the end? Should not every Christian pray with the Psalmist, "Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, but establish thou the just!"—*The Safeguard.*

MISSIONARY SHIPS.

That must be a fleet looked kindly after by the Lord of wind and tide, which floats in the name of him who calmed the tempest of Galilee and walked its crested waves. The *John Williams*, in the South Seas, the *Ellenquwan*, *Mary* (and several smaller ones), for New Guinea, the *Good News*, and the steel lifeboat *Morning Star*, on Lake Tanganyika, all of the London Missionary Society; the *Day Spring*, for New Hebrides, of the Free Church of Scotland; the *Henry Wright*, on the south coast of Africa, of the Church Missionary Society; the *Italla*, on Lake Nyassa; the *John Brown*, for the Mendi Mission of the United Brethren, and the *Morning Star*, of the American Board, for the Pacific Seas and Micronesia—all these occur to us: there may be more, but even so, this is no insignificant work.

Our English and Scotch friends have a way of laying the running expenses of some of the vessels upon the hands of the children, who respond in New Year's offerings to the amount of several thousand pounds annually. The *Morning Star* of the American Board was built and replaced by offerings of children who are now, many of them, parents. Another generation of children is now asked to build a new ship; this time with a steam auxiliary, for the more certain and prompt doing of an ever-enlarging work in Micronesia, which no baffling calms can hinder. The call has just been issued and the response seems likely to be taken up with old-time enthusiasm, and the 200,000 shares, at twenty-five cents each, will, doubtless, none of them be left on the hands of the Board, but be found an object lesson of beauty in thousands of homes throughout the country. The new share certificates are very beautiful. Soon may the new ship float, a thing of beauty, and speed on its errands of mercy till all the isles of the sea wait on Him.—*Gospel in all Lands.*

FRANCE.

A late letter from Dr. Dodds, in Paris, says: "Our mission is spreading very rapidly. We have opened a most successful branch at Roubaix and Croix in the 'Nord.' I have news from St. Etienne that the work there surpasses everything elsewhere. It is a densely peopled town (you would say city); the workmen are mostly miners. They cram the hall, and have rather to be invited out than invited in! France is being covered with evangelistic stations. Mr. MacAll has gone to Saintes and Cognac in the two Charentes, to open a station in each. We cannot keep pace with the demands that come from all sides. Lately some Roman Catholics near Bordeaux asked of their own accord for mission meetings to be held in their village; and the Mayor gave his chat-eau for the meeting.

The other week M. Hirsch, whose name is known as a most zealous and able evangelist, spoke at a great meeting of Freethinkers in Paris to protest. They tried at first to stop him, but he is a very plucky fellow, and held his ground. Next morning he received a large number of letters from Freethinkers who said that they had been much impressed with what he had said, and wished to have a conversation with him. This shows the very prevalent disposition on the part of those commonly called *incrodeles* to listen favorably to the gospel."

THE MINISTER AS PASTOR.

The pastor must also be spiritual. This is the first, second and third. This characteristic of the pastor must never be absent. The man is more than the sermon, more than the pastor. Christ must speak through his lips, and through his eyes. His life must be hid with Christ in God. He may not always talk directly on religious subjects; in our modern time boarding-house, or because of some family reason, it may be impossible to have prayer in the family. But gentle, loving words can be spoken for Christ. The child may be kindly remembered; a passage of Scripture may be repeated, which shall come like the benediction of Heaven upon weary and troubled hearts. If Christ, the rose of Sharon, be in the heart, the perfume of his presence would fill all the atmosphere in which we move. The office which has been filled by the laborious Peter, the majestic Paul, and the seraphic John, and by scores of the noblest men who have ever blessed the world with their presence, the office which is filled by some of the best men beneath God's stars, needs no vindication from me. God honors us; let us be true to our calling and to our Lord. There is no nobler motto than this: "Whosoever saveth his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it."—*Rev. S. McArthur, in Pulpit Treasury.*

It is related that the eminent English Baptist minister, Dr. Rylands, cured his wife of the disposition she had fallen into under the old Calvinistic preaching of bewailing her fate, perdition, as she believed, as follows: She was a peculiarly devout woman, and one day her husband interrupted her complaint by the question, "You can't live an hour without prayer, can you, Sarah?" She confessed she did not. "Well, then," said the doctor, "there will be no place for you in hell. The devil allows no praying there, you may be sure; and, seeing you on your knees, he will say, 'There's old Sarah Rylands at it again—turn her out!'" From that time, it is said, she was cured of her morbid fears. What a frightful amount of mental and soul misery has this false old preaching to answer for!

Dr. John Hall says a man came to him and said, "I hear men praying for the baptism and fullness of the Holy Ghost, but nobody testifies that they ever get it." Dr. Hall replied, "They get all they really want." They reach a point where they see what it really means, and they don't want it and the responsibility that attaches to it.

Philosophy has sometimes forgotten God as a great people never did. The scepticism of the last century did not uproot Christianity, because it lived in the hearts of millions. Do you think that infidelity is spreading? Christianity never lived in the hearts of so many millions as at this moment.—*Bancroft.*

Prayer is so mighty an instrument that no one ever thoroughly mastered all its keys. They sweep along the infinite scale of man's wants and of God's goodness.—*Hugh Miller.*