

Items from India.

THE FAMINE.

The Viceroy says: We are now face to face with a famine of water, of food and of cattle, which in the particular areas affected is unprecedented in character and intensity. Four millions are already employed on the relief-works and more than forty millions are crying for bread!

The "Faith Orphanage" at Ongole—yes, it is now being built. Mr. Huizinga, the director, is appealing for contributions. Every Christian must warmly approve of this effort to save famishing children and train them in the faith of Christ.

THE PLAGUE.

returns of last week reveal 2,579 deaths. The death rate was largest in Bengal.

HINDU GENEROSITY.

The Indian Princes are giving nobly and with great éclat to the Famine and War Funds. One Maharaja says, "To the Hindu there is something irresistible in the call of charity. The relief of suffering is a part of our religion and bound up in our existence." But one who has been long in India says, "I have seen more selfishness in the presence of suffering, more unsympathetic indifference to the welfare of others, less altogether of the altruistic spirit among Hindus than any other community of the Empire. There is no system on the planet which more directly fosters the principle 'every man for himself' than the caste system as it flourishes today. 'I'll give no more,' said a wealthy Hindu, 'until I see what the Government is going to do for me in view of what I have already given.' If our motives were analyzed by the 'X' or some other infallible rays what a revelation there would be. All the ways of a man are right in his own eyes, but the Lord weigheth the spirits.

The sixth annual convention of the

W. C. T. U. OF INDIA

took place in Calcutta, January 29. Fifty Unions and thirty-five Bands of Hope were reported. A number of excellent resolutions were adopted—one indicating the disapproval of the W. C. T. U. of all state regulation of vice in India; another resolution is to be forwarded to the World's Convention to the effect that the power of voting for the World's Union officers should be taken from the Executive and placed with the Convention at large or with an Electoral Conference, representative of work and membership. An effort is to be made to secure medical sanction of temperance principles and a letter discussing unfermented wine in its various aspects is to be prepared and circulated among clergymen and chaplains. The Convention was most encouraging and many believe—

"The morning light is breaking."

A HUMAN SACRIFICE.

A man named Govindah was asked by some men sitting near a cotton mill to have a smoke with them. He acceded to their request. After a few minutes they seized Govindah and thrust him head forward into the furnace. Govindah managed to free himself but he was horribly burned and died a few days afterwards. The natives of Hingole assert that Govindah was offered as a sacrifice to the engine, which had not been working satisfactorily.

OBITER.

A pupil of a certain Indian College wrote to his professor as follows: "If you grant me this favor, I shall, sir, forever prey upon you."

There are now 286 Indian gentlemen and 29 ladies in the West. Foreign travel is growing popular and the rites necessary to re-admission into caste are growing less severe.

There were 25 late marriages in India last year—that is the bride was over fifteen years of age. In 1899 about 160 widows were married. Yes, there are signs of progress. Never was social reform so fully agitated. Men that are most proud of caste and custom are taking light from quarters they most affect to dread. A Brahmin wrote a pamphlet the other day calling upon his castemen to uphold Brahmanism. The appeal was closed with the words: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world but lose his own soul?"

March 6.

MABEL ARCHIBALD.

Easter Thoughts.

BY MISS ANNIE FAIRN.

"All hail the gladsome Easter morn,  
For which the Springtime's flowers are born,  
Earth wears her gayest robes today,  
And casts her Lenten garb away."

Easter is a day of rejoicing throughout the Christian world. Churches are adorned with earth's fairest flowers, sweetest anthems of praise are sung on this eventful day of the glad spring time. It is well thus to commemorate the anniversary of the resurrection of our Saviour, for there had been no Easter had he not given himself for a lost world.

Three days Christ had lain in the silent tomb, and his beloved disciples were sorrowing that their great Prophet, yea, the true Messiah they had fully believed (until he

had permitted death to exercise its power over him) was dead. Yes, this glorious Being with whom they had held so much sweet intercourse, at whose feet they had sat in meekness and learned so many glorious truths, this pure, incarnate One had fallen a victim to the ruthless hand of Death, and his followers' hopes were crushed. They had probably hoped ever since his betrayal that he would use his divine power in releasing himself from his enemies. They did not understand his words when told: "This temple shall be destroyed and raised again in three days." Thus they sorrowed, not expecting to again behold him until the resurrection at the last day. But at this time two women wended their way to the grave, led thither by the fond impulse of true affection. They asked of one another, "Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?" but they found the stone already rolled away. Let God's children draw a lesson from this. If we go about our work for the Master with earnestness, our hearts, filled with love and zeal for his cause, as was the case with these worthy women, the stone of difficulty will always be rolled away for us or God will give us patience and grace to wait until his time comes to remove it.

Two angels sat, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. They ask: "Where have ye laid him?" and they answer, "He is not here; he is risen." Then the Saviour appears to the women and talks with them, commands them to go tell his brethren that he is risen. (Glorious message to mankind). Thus woman is honored by being the first to carry the glad message of Christ's resurrection, and that same "Go tell" has been re-echoed all down through the ages ever since, and woman has continued to obey, following the example of the two Marys.

What joy filled the hearts of the disciples on that first glad Easter morn; and none the less should we be joyful at every glad return of this eventful day which means our resurrection and our life. It throws light into our deepest gloom. When we stand o'er the graves of our loved ones we hear that voice proclaiming, "I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth on me though he were dead yet shall he live."

Albany, Annapolis Co., March 30, 1900.

Heart Treasure.

BY THE REV. HENRY S. GREKLER.

We are frequently told in these days that meditation is a lost art. We are so busy that we have not time to think. It is well that the Christian gospel emphasizes this privilege.

The mother of Jesus is twice said to have "kept" certain things in her heart (Luke 2:19, 51). And in the first instance it is said that she "pondered" them. Every new fact in her Son's life, seen by her own eyes or reported to her by others, was jealously hoarded in the treasury of her heart. And, as a miser lets his gold run through his fingers and never wearies of estimating its total and fondles it as a mother would her babe, so Mary did not bury her treasure out of reach, but handled it and gazed at it and ever anew sought to measure its value.

The gospel was never meant to touch only the surface of our life. It therefore deserves and demands more than our passing thought. The most precious evangel will escape us unless we guard it safely. The good seed, which fell on the path hardened by the tramp of many feet, was forthwith carried away by the birds of the air. What fell on the soft earth remained and brought fruitage.

If, like Mary, we would get the most out of truth, we must chew the cud of meditation. If truth germs are to be developed, we must become familiar with the art of mental incubation. I have heard of a germ—is it the opal?—which reveals its full beauty only as it comes into contact with the human body. Hold it in your hand for a time and it glows and gleams in lusciousness, until you would fain believe it to be a thing of life. Such a germ is truth. Put it into your heart if you would see its real beauty.

The people wondered, whereas Mary kept and pondered the wonderful truth (Luke 2:18, 19). Some elect souls did in Christ's later ministry what Mary did during the infancy and youth of the Saviour. The multitudes are astonished at his wisdom, at his miracles, at the aptness of his parables, at the grace of his utterances, but alas! how few received parable and miracle into the good treasure of the heart! It is the truth we dwell upon that we live upon. You insult the Christ when you give a superficial adherence to his doctrine, and you seriously endanger yourself by the same process.

You have felt the implication in the above that it is a grave mistake to receive only what you fully comprehend. Mary was not deterred from treasuring up the truth by the difficulty in comprehending it. Altogether she and Joseph "understood not the saying which he spake unto them," she yet "kept all these sayings in her heart" (Luke 2:50, 51). Vaguely she felt the force and value of what was transpiring. Sure she was that it was treasure, although she could not have assessed its full value. It was worth keeping, and she could hope to understand better as time went.

A study of the word "ponder" would be worth while.

Literally it means to cast or bring together in one's mind. As we receive new truth into a well-stored mind, we find that the new dovetails into the old. The old becomes larger thereby. Mary knew something of Jesus before the shepherds reported the angelic announcement. That report of the shepherds would confirm much which she had before dared only tremblingly believe. That scene in the temple, when her twelve-year-old son, strangely wise, questioned and answered the doctors, and, above all, his reply to her, "Wist ye not that I must be in my Father's house," was new food for thought, and would grave more deeply on her heart the sayings and happenings of the twelve preceding years. She was to have many another lesson before she could thoroughly understand her son, but by "keeping and pondering" events and utterances she was slowly learning to spell out his Messiahship.—Christian Intelligencer.

Literary Notices.

A Half Century with Brussels Street Baptist Church, Saint John, N. B. Prepared by Mrs. Margaret A. Golding.

This booklet of 95 pages gives an interesting sketch of the first 50 years of the life of the Brussels Street church, which coincides very nearly with the last half of the 19th century. The church was organized as an offshoot of the German St. church, March 29, 1850, with 158 constituent members and with Rev. Samuel Robinson, who had been chiefly instrumental in its organization, as its first pastor. The President of the Council of organization was Rev. J. D. Caswell, and the Rev. E. D. Very was clerk. Mr. Robinson died in September, 1866. After his death the pulpit was supplied for more than a year by Rev. I. E. Hill. In 1868 Rev. Timothy Harby became pastor, and ministered to the church for four years. His successors were Rev. W. P. Everett, 1872-1876; Rev. A. J. Wilcox, 1877-1880; Rev. J. E. Hopper, D. D., 1880-1887; Rev. B. N. Nobles, assistant, 1882-1883; Rev. H. G. Mellick, 1887-1889; Rev. W. J. Stewart, 1889-1893; Rev. G. M. W. Carey, D. D., 1893-1899; and the present pastor, Rev. H. F. Waring, who has but recently entered upon the pastorate of the church. The historical sketch contains much that will be of interest to the Baptists of this city and the province. It can be had from Mrs. Golding. Price 25 cents.

The fact that Richard Whiteing's "No. 5 John Street" is the book of the year in London partly accounts for the announcement of a tenth edition in New York within six months of the story's first appearance. If it were not so good a book—so striking in subject, so delicate and pungent in style—its vogue in England would never have floated it in the United States. But it has been recognized on both sides of the water as the most powerful and polished presentation of extreme social contrasts that has been made in the English language for many a year. "For the great virtues of humanity, sincerity, and all-redeeming wholesome humor, it stands amongst the average output of fiction like an oak in a hedge-row," says David Christie Murray. \$1.50. William Briggs, Toronto.

Steevens' Book: Cape Town to Ladysmith. The Copp, Clark Company, Limited.

The Copp, Clark Company, Limited, have just published in book form the letters written from South Africa by the late Mr. G. W. Steevens to the London Daily Mail, from Oct. 10, the day he landed in Cape Town, on the very eve of the war, to Dec. 6, when within a few days of his fatal illness he wrote the wonderful word-picture, "In a Conning Tower," where he shows us the Naval Brigade manfully playing their part in the defence of Ladysmith. The volume will be treasured by all who read it as a memorial of a man who had won, in a brief career, a well-deserved eminence among his comrades of the press. His friend, Mr. Vernon Blackburn, has added a "Last Chapter," telling us something about Steevens himself. Unlike many who have gathered fame at an early age, he was unspoilt by his success. He had a singularly winning character. One cannot pay a better tribute to his memory than to say, as can be said with truth, that in his few years of strenuous, active life he had made a host of friends and not one enemy. In this, his last work, as in his other writing, the two most prominent features are the wonderful vividness of the descriptions and the simple directness of the narrative. His classical training at Oxford left him the pregnant phrase and the forceful epigram ever at hand, while his experience as a journalist has taught him the folly of long and tedious descriptions. He had, too, a great faculty for entering into the spirit of the thing. The pages of the book bristle with stirring passages. In describing the home-coming of the Dundee column to Ladysmith, he writes,—"Rents in their khaki showed white skin; from their grimed hands and heads you might judge them half red men, half soot-black. Eyelids hung fat and heavy over hollow cheeks and pointed cheek-bones. Only the eye remained—the sky-blue, steel-keen, hard, clear, unconquerable English eye—to tell that thirty-two miles without rest, four days without a square meal, six nights—for many—without a stretch of sleep, still found them soldiers at the end." Of the dreariness of the siege Mr. Steevens gives a most interesting picture, relieving it by glimpses of the humorous side of things. His chapter on the sailors is full of merry conceits. Here is the commanding officer's opinion of a pertinaciously annoying Boer artilleryist:—"That gunner," said the Captain, waving his stick at Surprise Hill, "is a German. Nobody but a German atheist would have fired on us at breakfast, lunch and dinner, the same Sunday. It got too hot for us when he put one ten yards from the cook. Anybody else we could spare. But here also there comes a touch of longing home-sickness:—"Even as the constant blue-jacket says, 'Right Gun Hill up, sir,' there floats from below, ting-ting-ting-ting, ting. Five bells! The rock-rending double bang floats over you unheard, the hot iron hills swim away. Five bells—and you are on deck, swishing through cool blue water among white-clad ladies in long chairs, going home." The moment's dream of the homeward journey on the liner's deck was not to be realized. A few weeks more and there was the midnight funeral in Ladysmith cemetery, under the falling rain, with the Boer searchlight from Bulwan flashing through the darkness. He had gone home.