

The Wesleyan.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The *Evangelical Messenger* truly says: "Churches that are doing the Lord's work, and are worth supporting, can be supported without the use of questionable means. Others deserve no support."

The *Interior* well says: "There is no doubt, however, that underneath the very centre of the poverty problem is the whisky problem. The drunken poor are the ones who hang on the relief board and render necessary all sorts of charities."

Dr. Goodell says that when he can get a religious paper into a family, he is then sure that one efficient missionary will make fifty-two visits a year to that household. Dr. Scovel, President of Wooster University, says, "The press is simply the larger pulpit."—*Central Press.*

If you want your preachers to be gentlemen, you must furnish them with "the sinews of war." They cannot be *Chesterfields* with the income of a chimney sweep. The family of the preacher should be placed in such circumstances as to be on social equality with the best families of his charge.—*Richmond Ad.*

The fact that bills, aggregating in amount to no less than five hundred millions of dollars, for all sorts of special appropriations, have already been presented to Congress, shows the mischievous influence of having a large surplus revenue. The temptations thereof are very numerous, and often lead to bad legislation.—*Independent.*

A correspondent of the *Nashville Advocate* says: "The brother that referred to Paul preaching until midnight as an argument for long sermons, forgot to tell that a young man went to sleep during that sermon and fell out of the window, and was killed. So don't preach so long, unless like Paul, you can bring to life those who go to sleep at fall."

Remember that when you kneel down and thank God for protection from the blast, and for food and health, that he is looking at the shivering animals in the cattle yard and in the barn. They may so take his merciful attention that he will refuse to listen to you. Christ honored no man's house by his advent. He was born in a stable.—*The Interior.*

It would be a great triumph of the devil if the women, who compose a majority of the membership of the Church, could be kept content with a passive, negative attitude toward the great Christian enterprises of this age. But now that they have begun to take a part and felt the blessedness of the work, they will not stop.—*Nashville Ad.*

Mother Stewart, speaking of the recent campaign in Ohio for prohibition, says: "The battle was a glorious one, with God and the best men and women in the world on one side, and the politicians and all the powers of darkness on the other." According to this Mrs. Stewart ranks those clergymen who, here and there over the State, fought against the Second Amendment, among the powers of darkness.—*Hous Gazette.*

Methodism has always been more careful of its character than of its reputation. Its standing with the world, its frowns or smiles were never regarded as matters of any moment. We are losing in Christendom when we become anxious about what the world thinks of us. It is not to be reckoned that the world which crucified the Master would court the disciple, except to ensnare and destroy.—*St. Louis Ad.*

"There can be no doubt," says the *Christian at Work*, "of the existence in the Apostolic Church of the order of Deaconesses as well as Deacons. Their office was to care for the poor and sick among their own sex in the congregation, to discharge the duty of hospitality, to look after and visit those who might need either consolation or admonition, and to promote in such ways as might present themselves, the cause and work of Christianity."

Prof. Scott, of the Chicago Theological Seminary, says: "After extensive observation, under the most favorable opportunities for ascertaining the facts, I am satisfied that Germany is sinking in immorality and crime more rapidly than any other nation in Europe. In some of the cities half the births are illegitimate. In ten years saloons have increased by fifty per cent., and the people are fast becoming sordid with their immoderate beer drinking."

The entrance to the preacher's office is not sufficiently guarded. There are

unconverted preachers who are supposed to have been qualified by education and special training; and there are preachers who have been 'born anew,' but who have few or none of the educational qualifications which the pulpit in these days demands. In both these directions reform is needed. Methodism has striven hard to avoid the one extreme but has not kept quite clear of the other.—*London Meth.*

The *Living Church* has the following: "What rascal next will be written up as a saint! Roman papers and preachers are now engaged in pouring the virtues of the Indulgence pedler, John Tetzel. One paper says he was a learned and pious monk, 'full of the spirit of a high and noble asceticism.' How many men, after four hundred years, would know themselves if they could 'revisit the glimpses of the moon' and read their biographies."

School Superintendent Howland, of Chicago, declares that too much home study is required, especially of the younger pupils. "To assign tasks," he says, "for the second or third grade pupils to perplex themselves over at home seems to border very close upon the absurd, if not the inhuman, as regards both pupil and parent. Perhaps when our schools shall be provided with libraries suited to the wants of the pupils, the home reading may become a safeguard and a delight."

Dr. Cuyler says that "ten prayer-meetings are killed by formality where one is by freedom. No one should be called on to participate. As well might a father at a Christmas dinner rap on the table and call on John 'to make a few remarks,' and tell Sarah 'to follow.' Love breeds liberty. Christ's love feasts should have no fetters. No leader should monopolize the time or put a gag on the mouths of others. Aimless prayers should be avoided. Ask for something. Definite requests should be continually presented. Then the meeting gains a zest and momentum that nothing else can give."

Dr. Deems closes a letter in reply to a question as to his views on theaters, by saying: "If any mere amusement of mine gave half the pain to the humblest member of my flock which his going to the theater gives his pastor, I would drop that amusement at once." But a greater than the pastor is grieved when a Christian lends his presence to the theater. No Christian can pretend that duty to his Master or that the inward teaching of the Holy Spirit calls him to seek pleasure in such a place, or to surround himself with the associations that concentrate there.—*Western Ad.*

The Duke of Westminster has provided that in taking the lead in the Federal Reform Association, he fully entered into the necessity of reform in the sad offices for the dead; and when Lord Grosvenor was buried, all the arrangements were of the most simple description. A coffin of plain deal inclosed the remains; an unpretending, unadorned hearse conveyed it to the church; the next day the hands of the keepers on the estate carried it to its resting place, covered with wreaths and crosses of flowers sent or brought by loving hands. No paraphernalia of the undertaker's trade was to be seen, and the funeral attended by all the nearest relatives of the deceased, and by the tenants and work people who could be present, was the more impressive by its intense simplicity.—*London Times.*

CANDIDATES FOR THE MINISTRY.

Every year it becomes more and more important to give increased care in the selection of candidates for the ministry. It is not only necessary for an Examination Committee to see them, but to see, so to speak, the unseen congregations to whom they will have to minister. Keen, clear-headed laymen, intelligent youths, masses of people after whose education the State is busily looking, all these must be remembered. It is most undesirable that young aspirants to the office of the Christian ministry should be allowed to ignore these future members of their congregations. They must be made to feel that, if they are to perform their duty properly for God and acceptably to the people, more will be required of them than piety, fluency of speech, or earnest desire for usefulness. They are living in days when generous scholarship sits in many pews, when cultivated intelligence characterizes congrega-

tions, and when it is required of those who enter the pulpit of the teacher that they should both learn and be taught. Here and there some may advocate the acceptance of men who are 'heedless of grammar' and indisposed to study, but too often such advocates themselves need apologists. But the day has gone past when worthy but inefficient men should be allowed to go forward and become a burden to circuits or a discredit to Christianity. It is not too much to require of candidates that they should diligently prepare themselves to pass the literary ordeal directed by the Conference, or modestly refrain from assuming the position of teachers of the greatest truths. But surely the day has come when Methodism may look to many more of her sons to dedicate themselves to her ministry who have had the advantage of higher education. Kings wood has contributed largely and well to the ranks of our ministry. It has sent to them many of varied abilities. The names of some of its very best scholars are on the Minutes of the Conference. We may hope for a good percentage of its choicest sons in the future. The Leys School has already begun to strengthen the ranks of the ministry, and it is from these and other of our higher schools that we may hope to receive candidates for the ministry who by education and special advantage will be fitted to take their place as ministers in a Church that has myriads from the masses of the people and many who are in every way the equals of the most cultured. We have many of "the common people" and many also of the uncommon, and we need to consider both classes when we appoint to the pulpits.

There is no reason to fear that it will be forgotten that Methodist ministers are "preachers of the Gospel." They must ever be such if they are to do their proper work. It would be too great a price to pay for intelligence, scholarship, or propriety if preaching power were sacrificed. Methodism has no posts of learned leisure; no places for merely cultured men who are destitute of the gift of acceptable and useful speech. Inefficient learning is of no more use to us than inefficient piety. Methodism needs, what the world needs, a quick ministry, a ministry that will influence the head, the heart, the life of the hosts of men and women, youths and maidens, who are busily thinking, feeling, and acting all around us. If the Holy Spirit will graciously influence the converted, instructed, superior youths of Methodism so as to bring them to our ministry. He will enrich our community with treasures infinitely greater than material wealth, and He will at the same time confer on such young men honor greater than any told by coronets or won by swords.—*Methodist Rec.*

MOODY IN LONDON.

A correspondent writes to an English contemporary:—"If numerical attendance is a fair indication of aroused interest in religion then Stratford has never been so aroused before. There were never less than 6,000 persons in the West Ham-hall at night; sometimes there were nearly 7,000. Overflowing meetings were also held each evening at the Congregational church, into which as many as 2,000 were sometimes crowded. The afternoon Bible lectures were not of course so largely attended. About 3,000 were present daily during the first week, which was very wet and stormy. This number was augmented to nearly 5,000 during the last few days of the mission."

Not the charm of the singing, the novelty of the services, and the fame of the preacher are sufficient to account for the large congregations which assembled night after night. But none of these factors, either separately or collectively, could produce the blessed and wonderful results which have been unmistakably produced upon the minds and in the

lives of not only hundreds but thousands of men and women of all sorts and conditions. When we say that upwards of 3,000 names have been sent in by the workers to the central committee as those of persons who entered the inquiry-room at Mr. Moody's invitation as anxious inquirers concerning the way of life, we shall not be understood to affirm that all these are converted, or that they will be additions to Church life; but without doubt a large proportion did leave the room at peace with God. To our minds, the most interesting and impressive side of the whole movement is only seen in the inquiry-room. There one comes into contact with soul agony, with life tragedies, with perplexing mental entanglements, and with sad, sad stories of sin-sick prodigals, weary of the far off land, and just waiting to be led home. The writer has spoken with infidels, Roman Catholics, Unitarians, Christadelphians, as well as church and chapelgoers of all kinds. And a more soul refreshing work it is impossible to imagine.

At Stratford there have been one or two features of special interest. Some 3,000 railway men are employed at the Great Eastern Works. These men have attended in large numbers, and as special seats had been reserved for them each evening right in front of Mr. Moody their presence has always added a serious, earnest element to the appearance of the dense mass of human faces before the platform. Many of these men have been soundly converted. In one case we met with the husband found the Saviour at the Sunday morning service, and the wife came in the afternoon, found her way into the inquiry-room, and went home rejoicing in the favour of God.

But the most unusual feature in connection with this mission has been the presence night after night of a considerable number of professed infidels. Two nights before Mr. Moody commenced his work Mr. Bradlaugh addressed a crowded meeting of his friends and supporters in the Town-hall. There were some thousands unable to get inside, so eager was the desire to hear him. Many who were then his disciples are now disciples of a better Master, and the leader of the Cromwell Club, under whose auspices Mr. Bradlaugh lectured, has not only attended the services every night for the last week, but actually invited Mr. Moody to his home to tea. Mr. Moody went, and when he came on to the platform he brought the man and his daughter with him, and gave them seats by his side. Mr. Moody assured us that the confidence of the infidels in their position had been thoroughly shaken. The evening service, when he specially addressed them from the words, "Their rock is not as our Rock," was one of the most remarkable and powerful we have ever attended. We were not at all surprised that one, at least, who came in a professed atheist went home a happy and humble believer.

A DOUBLE MISTAKE.

In the *Mexican Messenger* for January we find the following incident:—"In the absence of the Presiding Elder of the Mexico District on special duty, the writer spent a Sunday in Texcoco and vicinity. Rising at five o'clock in the morning, although under extra protection of overcoat, duster and shawl, we felt very sensibly the frosty touch of our tropical winter. We have skated for hours on New England ice with less effect from the cold. But a short ride by rail around Lake Texcoco brought us to a station where the preacher of the circuit met us. He had but one horse to take us to the first preaching place one league away. We could not both ride the horse, and each being too polite to ride alone, we made the trip on foot. After a pleasant service with a small but earnest congregation in San Mateo, we walked over to the City of Texcoco, another league dis-

tant, leading our horse. By eleven o'clock the congregation of this ancient and renowned Aztec city was assembled in our own house for worship. Thirty-five persons were present. A window with gratings opened on the public square and market (Sundays), and the sound of the preaching and singing floated out over the heads of three or four thousand of King Nezahualcoyotl's descendants, attracting many to the window and some into the court where they could better hear and see. Doubtless some of these new hearers were pleased, others enraged.

In the afternoon a number of men, probably some of the country fanatics, and instigated by some of the numerous fanatical priests, came to make an attack on the house with stones and clubs. But they made a double mistake. The congregation had gone, and we had taken the train for the City of Mexico. Besides, the attack was made on our next door neighbor, and by the time the zaguan door was battered down, it was discovered to be the residence of the Alcalde of the city; so the intruders were conducted to jail, fined, and required to repair the damages to the house. Our work still goes on quietly, under the care of a kind and watchful Providence."

THE KINGDOM NEAR.

There are periods in the life of every unconverted person that may be regarded as crises. Light is ample; circumstances are propitious; the acknowledgment of need is frankly made; friends with radiant faces exclaim, "He is near the kingdom;" voices celestial are waiting to rejoice over the final decision of a soul. One thing only is now necessary—a full, immediate surrender of all to God. This done, and that soul passes from mere intellectual demonstration to joyful heart-persuasion; from sober reflection to a conviction so deep that all the future will be changed thereby. That one step—*submission*—is very short. The kingdom of God is just at hand. At such an eventful crisis the whole angelic universe may well look down with anxious expectancy, ready to bear the glad tidings throughout the realms of bliss.

It is precisely thus in the subsequent Christian life. There are special times of re-awakening for all God's people—pivotal points of momentous interest upon which a higher or lower religious character is made to hinge. At these periods our deficiencies and weakness, hitherto disregarded, perhaps, are fully disclosed to us by the Holy Spirit. The process is painful, but is altogether necessary to entire restoration. The more perfect knowledge of ourselves leads to that unaffected contriteness which is pleasing to God, and an increasing view of purity deepens our desire to seek after it.

O how profoundly serious are these moments of re-awakening! One step in either direction—nearer to God or further away from him—affects not only the present, but also the life beyond. Jesus is near. The Holy Spirit waits, with infinite tenderness, to perform his work of enlightenment in the soul. The providential arrangements for that soul, as we must believe, are made and are carried forward with the design in view of bringing in a new era of full salvation. The kingdom of "perfect love" is near, just at hand. Rejoice, therefore. Lift up thy heart. Call upon him while he is near. Claim, O soul, thy long-sought rest. With firmness of purpose make this thy song:

On thee, O God, my soul is stayed,
And wait to prove that what I will;
Thy promise by thy mercy made,
Thou'lt cust, thou wilt, in me fulfill.
—N. Y. Ad.

Gardiner Spring, eighty eight years old, folded his withered hands on his breast and murmured, "Now I lay me down to sleep," etc., and so entered into rest. That which he had first learned was deepest and last in memory.

"NOT BOTHERED ABOUT SOULS."

"Tom, you're the kind of Christian I like." The speaker was a young man of no religious profession. His companion was a church member in good and regular standing. "You're the sort of Christian I like. You never seem to bother yourself about a fellow's soul." The words were lightly spoken, but they pierced like an arrow. If we had listened at Tom's chamber door that night we would have heard something like this: "O God, forgive me that I have seemed indifferent to the welfare of my friends! Help me to trouble myself more and more about them! Make me hungry and thirsty for the salvation of those about me! Give me a passion for souls!" Kind reader, are you one of the many members of Christ's Church who are not bothered about souls? You have unconverted friends. You profess to believe the Bible. It declares that all who reject Christ shall be cast forth into outer darkness where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched. Yet you utter no warning, stretch forth no helping hand! One of two things must be true. Either (1) your profession of love towards your friends is mere pretense; or (2) your profession of faith in the declaration of Scripture is a serious error. May the Lord help us to believe in the great verities! If there is a hell, how should we pray and strive to deliver our friends from the danger of going there! If there is a heaven how should we stretch out both hands to help them thither. But if heaven is nothing better than a dream and hell a hoax, then in "not bothering ourselves about souls" we are doing the correct and logical thing. Read Ezekiel iii. 15-21.—*Interior.*

THE BIBLE IN CHINA.

The Bible began to flash its light upon the minds and to touch the hearts of the Chinese even when in the process of translation and printing. Dr. Morrison tells that his first convert, while "employed in superintending the printing of the New Testament, began to see that the merits of Jesus were sufficient for the salvation of all mankind, and hence believed in him;" and then taking the conduct of Philip for his guide, at a spring of water issuing from the foot of a lofty hill by the seaside, away from human observation, he was baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Trae-A-Ko, the first Protestant Christian in China. One of the first American missionaries, Bishop Booth, gave a similar account of the conversion of his Chinese teacher, who assisted him in translating the Scriptures. One day, much to the missionary's surprise, he came hastily into the room, with an open Testament in his hand, and exclaimed: "Whoever made that book made me: it knows all that is in my heart. It tells me what no one else but God can know about me. Whoever made me wrote that book!" The result was his conversion to Christ. The book by its blessed truths attracted and transformed some of the Chinese minds that came in contact with it: their souls, dead in trespasses and sins, no sooner touched it than, like the dead man upon the prophet's bones, they were quickened into life. These are specimens of the transformations it has been working ever since. Literary men and laborers, tradesmen and mechanics, have alike acknowledged its influence and embraced it.

The trouble with us, said Mr. B. F. Jacobs before the ministers, is that we are too far off from men. We do not touch them as Jesus did. His touch seemed like heavenly electricity. "He don't love a fellow enough," was the sufficient objection one had to a certain Sunday school teacher.

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