

The Wesleyan.

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Published under the direction of the General Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada.

\$2 PER ANNUM IN ADVANCE
Postage Prepaid.

VOL XXXV.

HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA, FRIDAY, MAY 11, 1883.

No. 19

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

We are insulting the Lord when we hire men and women to sing his praises who take his name in vain and scoff at him as soon as they are safely out of church limits.—*Watchman.*

The whisky people of Kansas, it seems, would prefer to have a saloon rather than a church in a town, especially a Methodist Church. The same is true outside of Kansas.—*Western Ad.*

According to *The Inter-Ocean*, the appointment of women as school-superintendents in Illinois has been notably successful. They bring a painstaking care and thoroughness to their work not always shown by their masculine colleagues.

Commenting on the address by the Archbishop of Canterbury after his enthronement, *The Rock* says:—"It is scarcely possible to miss the fact that the Prelate's text was 'The Church.' Had some reference been made to the great Head of the Church it would have been very assuring to many."

Salmi Morse has at last sensibly concluded not to persist in offering the *Passion Play* to a New York audience. He was warned at the inception of his enterprise that there was a Christian sentiment in that great metropolis that would not be trifled with; and so it has turned out. We thank the Lord and take courage.—*Southern Advocate.*

Some of the preachers of the St. Louis Conference have already sent in the full amount assessed on their charges for foreign missions. The success of collections depends mainly upon promptness in taking them up. Do not allow them to be crowded together at the close of the year.—*Southwestern Methodist.*

Lord Bramwell says that in London Saturday may be considered "pay day, drink day, and crime day." Twice as many crimes are committed on Saturday as on any other day. It is lamentable to see the wages of hard-working men so largely thrown away and worse than thrown away upon that which is their greatest curse.

An ex-alderman of this city, who is the proprietor of a gin-mill, was recently arraigned for beating a man. He gave bail and was released; but the party making the complaint, being unable to give security for his appearance as a witness, was shut up to await the trial. The law allowing such imprisonment is simply abominable.—*N. Y. Independent.*

Recently, an errand took a lady and gentleman to a poor home in a secluded part of the city. Lying across the threshold was a woman—drunk. The horror of the awful traffic in strong drink swept over the man's soul, and he exclaimed passionately—"I have opposed prohibition hitherto; now my influence shall all be in its favor."—*Signal.*

One of our exchanges devotes nearly the entire editorial page to the inquiry, "Why are not more of the scholars of our Sunday schools converted?" We are of the opinion that the Sunday school is proving a very effective agency in saving souls. It will be found out, we suspect, if the matter is looked into, that the greater number of our converts come from the Sunday school.—*Central Ad.*

The *Presbyterian Banner* does not take kindly to the exhibition that has been made of the home of the Carlyles. "Were all the dwellings in Christian lands unroofed as suddenly and effectually as the one at Chelsea has been by Mr. Froude, who can estimate the number of householders of the unbaggy? It is not to be presumed that Carlyle is a solitary instance of extortion and self-absorption, and his lonely wife a rare example of unrequited affection."

The Canadian Women's Suffrage Society at a meeting last week in Toronto decided to petition Parliament to amend the franchise bill so as to include married women holding property qualification in their own right. We are quite prepared to advocate such a change, provided that it shall only apply where there is no male voter in the family. So understood, we believe it is no more than will meet with a hearty approval of the country.—*Church Guardian.*

"Our honored guest must not feel that I turn down the glass from any motives of discourtesy," said President Hobbs, of the Chicago Board of Trade, the other day, at the banquet given to General Diaz. "Ah, no," responded the Mexican general through his interpreter. "I perfectly recognize the value of total abstinence principle and example, and myself drink very little, believing that no man of affairs can do either himself or his cause justice unless he keeps a clear brain."

It is Charles H. Spurgeon who says: "At the Lord's table I always invite all Christians to come and sit down with us. The pulse of Christ is communion, and woe to the Church that seeks to cure the ills of Christ's Church by stopping its pulse. I think it is a sin to refuse to commune with any one who is a member of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ. I should think the text would bear very hard on me, 'These are they who separate themselves, sensual, not having the spirit.'"

The *Primitive Methodist World* says, "At the next May Meeting of the English Baptist Union a motion will be made calling upon members of that community who hold excise licenses to give up and abandon the liquor traffic." The Mayor of Birmingham said the other day that as the result of the changes in the habits of the people, twenty coffee-houses had been opened in the Birmingham district, and the number of customers was estimated at 140,000 a week. The opening of these places had caused a great decrease in crime.

A venerable Methodist lady said a few weeks since in a prayer-meeting in Cincinnati: "Some years ago I was in Rome, and, with some other Americans, desired to call upon the pope. He sent word that he would receive us at the Vatican on Sunday. I never did believe in Sunday visiting; so I said, 'If he receives his visitors on the Sabbath-day, I will not go.' So I remained in my hotel, read my Bible, and enjoyed a most delightful season of communion with God." That is an example that can be imitated under many different circumstances, and is worth many sermons.—*Western Ad.*

Christianity is in a condition to come out from behind its earthworks, and boldly to go forth and attack the enemy; it can afford to absolutely refuse all compromise with the world and demand an unconditional surrender. It can and ought to declare its independence of all make-shift devices, defenses and disguises, and stand in its own divine strength alone. And made free by the Truth, the individual Christian not only has the right, but owes it to his Master and himself to show forth the courage, independence, power and dignity of a noble, sanctified manhood, "the measure of the fullness of the stature of a perfect man in Christ Jesus."—*Moration.*

A touching incident is related by the Bay City *Tribune* of Prof. Cocker, of Michigan University. "Shortly before his death he called the attention of his pastor to a worn and faded shawl spread on his bed, and requested to have it wrapped around his body and buried with him. He had made it himself when a young man in England; had worn it in all his journeys to and fro over the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans; when residing in Australia; when he escaped from the Fiji Islanders when they were preparing to kill and roast him, and when he was shipwrecked. It accompanied him when he landed in the United States, and even clad the remains of his dead child when, penniless and disheartened, he first arrived in Adrian. His wish was gratified."

A young lady in Chicago has some very practical ideas about missionary work. She is a student in the Female Baptist Missionary Training School and is not yet twenty years of age. It has been her practice for the past few months to visit the sick and destitute in the lowest and vilest slums of Chicago, entirely alone, at all hours of the day. The little figure dressed modestly in black is known and respected by the criminal classes of the city, and in all her errands of mercy she has never once been molested or even insulted. She says that her object is first of all to do some practical good and next to fit herself by actual experience for her life work as a missionary. Wiser people than this young girl have gone through life without getting as near the ideal of Christianity.—*N. Y. Tribune.*

The material out of which the "average" minister is made is a young man, with such an amount of personal religion as the average church member possesses. He desires to do good, thinks the ministry opens the way to usefulness, and perhaps believes he is specially "called" to it. He studies in college and seminary, becomes engaged to a young lady, feels that he never can settle himself down to real work till she is at his side as his wife, and therefore even before he is married shows how truly Paul said: "He that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife;" and every idea of usefulness in the ministry is subordinated to the one thought of whether there is such salary within his reach that he can venture on matrimony.—*Baptist Weekly.*

"GO FORWARD."

"Faith is unworthy of its name if it staggers at any obstacles, or takes appearances and probabilities into account in its action. Faith must have something to rest on, but its basis is the word of Him who is trusted, not the sight of him who trusts. Abraham was not troubled by his knowledge of 'the laws of nature', when the Lord told him that he should have descendants by the myriad, although he was now childless, and beyond the possibility—humanly speaking—of having a child. 'He believed God,' without regard to appearances. When the Israelites saw the impassable sea before them in one direction, and the impassable mountains in another, they were told to 'go forward;' and forward they went. They would have been lacking in faith if they had doubted God's ability and readiness to enable them to pass the impassable. And so with all the faith-filled children of the Father of the faithful, and with all who are of spiritual Israel from those days until now.

Insurmountable obstacles are no barrier to a believer's progress. Did you never see a self-opening gate at the entrance to some private roadway in the country? It stands across the roadway as though it would absolutely forbid a passage. But if a team is driven resolutely towards it, the wheels of the carriage strike the springs of the hidden platform below the roadway, and the gate springs open just in time to let through the man of faith. Had the driver doubted, and stopped short to see if his way was to be unhindered, the gate would have remained closed against him permanently. But when he moved on resolutely and in confidence, his faith prevailed, and the seeming barrier was no hindrance. These self-opening gates stand frequently across the path of duty. To all human appearances they are impassable. But if a child of God hears and heeds the Divine command, "Go forward," and pushes on resolutely, the wheels of faith shall press the ruts of the promises, and the forbidding gates shall "swing noiselessly," leaving the believer's way open and unchecked. "All things are possible to him that believeth."

METHODISM IN NEW ENGLAND.

It would be invidious to class the New England Congregationalists of ninety years ago, when Jesse Lee preached under an elm on Boston Common, with the self-righteous hypocrites whom our Saviour denounced, but they were members of the established Church—or the Standing Order, as it was called—and were more or less puffed up and secularized by the patronage of the state. A curious and unedifying example of their position toward Methodism thirty years after Lee's first visit is afforded in the ordination of Dr. Gannett, to be colleague with Dr. Channing, in the pastorate of the Federal Street Church, Boston. The fact that this old Congregational charge had become Unitarian in theology does not affect the teachings of the lesson, though the professed liberalism of the actors intensifies the bigotry of their exclusiveness.

As we have said, Dr. Gannett was to be ordained, and an ordination sixty years ago was a much more important affair than it would now be. It was voted by the Church that ministers of all denominations in the city should be invited to participate, except the Methodist, and this insulting discrimination was not only formally adopted, but actually spread on the minutes.

We do not suppose that the resolution was designedly impertinent, but as when St. Paul arrived at Rome, Christianity was the sect everywhere spoken against, so the fervor of Methodism was specially repugnant to the cold formalism and growing rationalism of the Church and state organiza-

tion of Massachusetts. Methodism has survived this snub, however. It is growing in wealth, prestige, and, what is better, spiritual power, within the shadow of the State House and within walking distance of Harvard College; and it has long since outstripped the haughty Unitarianism that deemed it unworthy of recognition.

But early Methodism had other difficulties to contend with in New England besides the social advantages which always cling to a "dissenting body." Unitarianism was not the only rival against the stern Calvinism of the Puritans which occurred during the closing years of the last century and the first decade of the present. Revival influences impelled men to cast off theological fetters as well as formalistic weights. Benjamin Randall, converted by one of Whitefield's last sermons, soon grew weary of the Calvinism of the Baptist Church with which he united, and became the founder of the Free-will Baptist, open communionists and Arminian in theology. About the same time, in New England as in the South and West, other revolutionists appeared, and the Christian connection, a queer union of Arminianism and evangelicalism, was formed. It was not until 1825, when the Free-will Baptists—now better known as the Free Baptists—adopted a specifically trinitarian creed, and became clearly separated from the "Christians."

During the Revolution and the twenty years following it, John Murray and Elhanan Winchester had preached restorationism on a high Calvinistic basis. In 1803 Hosea Ballou founded the "death and glory" school of restorationism, declaring that every sinner, however wicked, passed from this world to heaven without any purgatorial purification, and rejecting the trinity and the atonement. Scedders from the Congregational Churches, both Trinitarian and Unitarian, in many instances, allied themselves to one or the other of these meteoric bodies. Hence Methodism was compelled to fight against fanaticism as well as batter down the walls of petrified respectability.

The figures of the census bureau and the official reports of the various Churches unite in showing the result. Unitarianism is shrieking, and every year assuming an increasingly radical position; orthodox Congregationalism just holds its own, and its modern theology is approximating, in many points, the evangelical Arminianism of Methodism; the Free Baptists are a respectable, but not a growing Church; the "Christians" are now split on the rock of second Adventism, and the irreconcilable incongruity of their Arian tenets and evangelical measures is every year becoming more apparent; Universalism has abandoned Ballouism, and now occupies essentially the ground of Channing and the Unitarian founders.

Methodism meanwhile is growing, and spreading into localities where it has hitherto been little known. If it remains true to the spirit of its founder, and makes its chief aim the conversion of sinners and the sanctification of believers, it has a grand future before it in the East as well as in the West. It matters little whether Paul or Apollon or Cephas is preached if Christ be forgotten. Only upon the corner-stone can a stable structure be raised, and such a building we trust New England Methodism, with the divine help is erecting.—*Western Ad.*

Dannecker, the great German sculptor, spent eight years in producing a face of the Christ, and at last perfected one in which were blended so perfectly the emotions of love, of sorrow, of infinite tenderness, that none could look upon it without tears. His countrymen, afterward, wishing him to employ his wonderful talent upon a statue of Venus, met with this reply: "No; I can never more do any work of this kind, for I have looked upon the face of Christ."

A TELLING SERMON.

The Rev. Benjamin Hellier once gave the following sound advice to the students when he was a tutor at Richmond: "When you are going to preach a sermon, always make up your mind as to the impression you intend to produce." We venture to commend this sentence to all preachers. A sermon ought to have a definite aim. The bow-string should not be slack; the hand that holds it should not be unnerved; the eye should be fixed on the mark, and the whole force of the man should direct the arrow in its flight. It can not be said that all the sermons which are preached remind us of the feats of Tennyson's "master bowman" in "In Memoriam." There are some sermons which do not seem to be intended to effect any purpose in particular. They are loose, rambling, incoherent utterances, which drive a methodical hearer to the borders of distraction. Lacking force in themselves, they are delivered without energy, and their effect never spreads beyond the book-board of the pulpit. But not only must a preacher ask himself, "What impression do I intend to produce?" he must also ask, "Is it necessary that this impression should be produced on this particular congregation?" In other words, sermons must be adapted to the actual needs of living hearers. We fear that many discourses which were delivered last Sunday were written for the needs of a generation which has long since passed away. Now nothing can be less useful than preaching to the dead. A minister should know his congregation sufficiently well to be aware of their average spiritual condition, and he should attempt so to vary his sermons as to meet the needs of that condition.—*The Herald of Life.*

THE BAD CLOCK.

I have a clock on my parlor mantel-piece. A very pretty little clock it is, with a gilt frame and a glass to cover it. Almost every one who sees it says, "What a pretty clock!" But it has one great defect—it will not run, and therefore as a clock, it is perfectly useless. Though it is very pretty, it is a bad clock, because it never tells what time it is. Now, my bad clock is like a great many persons in the world. Just as my clock does not answer the purpose for which it was made—that is to keep time—so many persons do not answer the purpose for which they were made. What did God make us for? "Why," you will say, "he made us that we might love him and serve him." Well, then, if we do not love him and serve him, we do not answer the purpose for which he made us. We may be, like the clock, very pretty, and be very kind and obliging, but if we do not answer the purpose for which God made us, we are just like the clock—bad. Those of my readers who live in the country, and have seen an apple tree in full blossom, know what a pretty sight it is. But suppose it only bore blossoms and did not produce fruit, you would say it was a bad apple tree. And so it is. Everything is bad, and every person is bad, and every boy and girl is bad, if they do not answer the purpose for which God made them. God did not make us only to play and amuse ourselves, but also that we might do his will.

Sin is not in the appetite, but in the absence of a controlling will. There were in Christ all the natural appetites of mind and body. Relaxation and friendship were dear to him; so were sunlight and life. Hunger, pain, death. He could feel them all, and shrink from them. He suffered, being tempted from the forces of desire. But there was obedience at the expense of tortured natural feeling. Remember this: first the way in which some speak of the sinfulness of Christ destroys the reality of temptation, and converts the whole of his history into a meretricious drama, in which scenes of trial were represented, not felt.—*F. W. Robertson.*

PERSONAL WORK FOR SOULS.

To be the means of converting a soul to Christ is to do the highest service to that individual and to society. It is the service that Christ longs for, that he may see of the travail of his soul. It is the service that angels desire and rejoice over. It is a service followed by the very highest rewards in time and eternity. Why, then, has it so small a place in our thoughts and aspirations? Why is it that we do so little with purpose of saving souls? Is it not true that we may be for years in frequent intercourse with unconverted persons without ever speaking one word to them about salvation? We wish to give the children a good education, but is their conversion to Christ the present and main object in view in the family and in the school? We wish that all our neighbors and employes were Christians, but have we ever spoken to them with any manifested anxiety for their salvation? Even if we give a tract or lend a book which we hope will have a good effect, is it not done in some roundabout or half-apologetic way, as if we feared the person so approached would suspect our motive? Should not a frank, hearty, loving interest in the eternal welfare of all around us take the place of this external indifference? Where there is a will, there is a way, and one brimming over with spiritual life can not help imparting (spiritual influence) to others. There need be nothing offensive in this; on the contrary, if rightly set about, the manifestation of interest in the eternal welfare of others is very pleasing to them whether they profit by our labor or not.—*N. Y. Witness.*

ONE MODE OF CRUELTY.

Nothing more cruel to a pastor, or disastrous to his work, can be done than to force upon him a feeling of dependence upon the charities of his flock. He is the creature of popular whim, and a preacher without influence to those who do not respect him or his office sufficiently to pay him the wages due to a man who devotes his life to them. Manliness cannot live in such a man, except it be in torture—a torture endured simply because there are others who depend upon the charities doled out to him. God, many pastors, do not want gifts; they want wages. They need them, and the people owe them; but they take to themselves the credit of benefactors, and place their pastors in an awkward and false position. If Christians do not sufficiently recognize the legitimacy of the pastor's calling to render him fully his wages, and to assist him to maintain his manly independence before the world, they must not blame the world for looking upon him with a contempt that forbids and precludes influence. The world will be quite ready to take the pastor at the valuation of his friends; and the religion he teaches at the price its professors are willing to pay in a business way for its ministry.—*Seaboard Monthly.*

It is said that John Wesley was once walking along a road with a brother, who related to him his troubles, saying he did not know what he should do. They were at the moment passing a stone fence to a meadow, over which a cow was looking. "Do you know," asked Wesley, "why that cow looks over that wall?" "No," replied the one in trouble. "I will tell you," said Wesley; "because she cannot look through it; and that is the way you must do with your troubles, look over and above them."

The development still going on in the ethical consciousness of the world is illustrated by the fact that it would probably be found impossible to discover in any treatise written previously to A. D. 1850 a single assertion that entire abstinence from wine ought to be regarded as a general Christian duty. A venerable writer says in *The Christian* that when he took up total abstinence in 1812 he did not know that there was another man on the face of the earth who had adopted his views.—*Independent.*